

Wheatland County

Department Report

Regular Council Meeting

July 7, 2020

Report prepared by: Tracy Buteau, GM of Corporate and Financial Services



Corporate Services Report to Council

Recommendation from Administration

That Council approves the Corporate and Financial Services Monthly Report dated July 7, 2020 as information.

Report

Staff in the Corporate and Financial Services department continue to be very active improving current processes through innovative ideas, software, and process improvement. The Procurement Policy has been finalized and added to the July 7, 2020 Council agenda. An asset management cross functional staff committee has been formed to research and apply for a grant for asset management through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM).

Assessment

- Staff continue to respond to ratepayers' inquiries regarding assessment values included on the 2020 tax notice. The assessment value is based on a July 1, 2019 market valuation date. The deadline to file an assessment complaint is July 14, 2020.
- Staff are preparing information for a detailed assessment audit by the Assessment Services Branch of Alberta Municipal Affairs.
- Staff continue to work on a new process called the Residential Request for Information (RRFI) survey. The purpose is to update the 2020 Assessment within the compulsory general assessment re-inspection cycle of improved properties situated on the east side of the County within ranges 17 to 20:
 - There are approximately 255 total improved properties within ranges 17 to 20 subject to the re-inspection cycle
 - In early June, staff mailed out 198 surveys to properties with a single residence requesting the property owner provide pertinent information about their residence and residential outbuildings.
 - The RRFI survey response options include online, email, mail, or fax. As of June 24, the County has received 57 responses. The response deadline is July 31.
- The Senior Assessor is preparing for Designated Industrial Property (DIP) inspections within Ranges 20 and 21, as per a contract with Alberta Municipal Affairs.
- On June 11, staff received 2020 orthophotos. The photos were added to MuniSight.

Financial Services

- Accounts Payable:
 - Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) payment system enablement is being tested to allow vendors invoices and employees, Councillors, and board members expenses to be paid electronically instead of by cheque.
 - EFTs will require less mail outs which will see a savings and be more convenient for recipients.
- Budget:
 - Finance and IT continue to implement Questica, an easy to use and comprehensive operating and capital budgeting software solution.
 - Finance reviewed and streamlined the operating budget account number and naming structure to create consistency of accounts across all County departments.
 - The 2020 Final Approved Operating Budget was uploaded to the County's Questica website.
- Cash flow management: Monitoring expenses and incoming cash flow to ensure interest income is optimized.
- Financial reporting: Review of general ledger to ensure accruals are recorded and reversed for financial reporting.
- A revised Capital Project Tracker will be sent to staff each month to update capital projects.
- Taxes:
 - Staff processed June TIPPS payments. Regular general ledger to sub-ledger balancing occurred, as well as answering various inquiries from residents.
- Utilities:
 - Staff processed June utility consumption and utility bills. Utility bills for June consumption were mailed in the first week of July.
 - eSend is being planned for release in August. This will provide residents with the option to receive their bills by email. E-billing (eSend) will allow cost savings on processing letter mail and postage.

Information Technology

- Neptune 360 is fully implemented, and staff is now working with the Utilities and Finance team to integrate Lakes of Muirfield customers into the Neptune / Diamond system for future billing.
- As part of the digital signature project, two key vendors that are locally supported and can integrate with Laserfiche are being considered. This provides the ability to have auditable documents signed remotely and securely.
- The new website has been released which will allow for easier template updates, service-based navigation, self-serve functionality and the ability for Administration to keep their content current.
- Firehall onboarding continues with installs completed in Cluny. We are looking to consolidate the internet between the firehall and the grader maintenance shop via wireless transmitters to reduce monthly internet fees. Gleichen, followed by Carseland, are the next sites to be onboarded to our

corporate network and security.

- MRF equipment installs have been completed for the ASB AVL/Spray Truck project and training will begin early July.
- Continued remediation of Information Service & Security items:
 - IT Directives continue to undergo internal revisions.
 - Further testing is occurring with backups to assist in hardening our backup strategy.
 - The County is looking into network level scanning technology for identifying hidden communication threat patterns that may not be caught by antivirus software or firewalls.
- Laserfiche Business Process / Workflow Automation projects:
 - HSE Incident forms are undergoing revisions by Administration.
 - Building inspection forms are almost ready for production release and use.
 - Accounts Payable workflow automation continues in project discovery phase and have demoed a Laserfiche based “turnkey” solution that integrates with Diamond.
 - Building permit workflow automation process is now in the build phase and the initial forms have been created.
 - Event request, workflow and permitting process is also in the build phase. This includes fireworks permits, community firepit permit, noise bylaw exception permit, and other public works and dignitary request processes.
 - Vehicle & Equipment Inspection forms (DVIR/CVIP) from MRF have been completed and are ready for initial review.
 - EFT Payment Request forms have been completed and are undergoing workflow testing.
 - eSend, the ability to email utility bills, including the request form process has been drafted. With the direction of the Finance team, this process will be fully ready for release in August.
- Records Management projects:
 - As return to work is in sight, we are looking to seek action and decisions around engaging offsite storage vendors to reduce our onsite storage risk profile.
 - Since many on site projects have been deferred, a new strategy to store, scan and deliver documents is underway.
 - Work is currently underway to better understand how the County can proceed with digital documents and files, especially documents that require corporate seals.