



# WHEATLAND COUNTY

## Reeve Monthly Report

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Reeve: Amber Link

Division: 2

Reporting Period: November 2019

Report Date: November 25, 2019

### **November 4 Meeting with Developer**

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### **November 5 Council Meeting**

Full agenda packages (with back up documentation) are available on our website:

<https://wheatlandcounty.ca/wheatland-county-council/agendas-and-minutes>

You can also watch the recording on our YouTube channel:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRJrvIs0eygNM7zERLnviOg?view\\_as=subscriber](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRJrvIs0eygNM7zERLnviOg?view_as=subscriber)

Council passed first reading and scheduled Public Hearings for 2 bylaws, Bylaw 2019-22 (to redesignate +/- 0.29 acres within SE-7-23-25-W4M from Agricultural General District to Country Residential District and +/- 0.79 acres within Plan 001 2255, Block 1 from Country Residential District to Agricultural General District) and Bylaw 2019-26 (to redesignate +/- 2.27 acres within SW-2-24-26-W4M from Agricultural General District to Country Residential District).

The County Annual General Meeting was scheduled for March 31 at 7pm in Rockyford.

Reeve's Report, including a letter I had received from the President of the Gleichen and District Community Association regarding the former Gleichen School Shop and potential plans for recreation and a small museum, Council majority voted against the proposed plan. I also brought forward a request to amend the Fire Board Bylaw to include representatives from each of the villages in membership that was approved, an amended Bylaw will be brought back to Council.

Staff reports and requests for decision included the approval of a new auditor, approval of unaudited financial statements, approval of a gravel pit lease agreement, license agreement, and a progress report on proposed application process regarding Emotional Support Animals (ESA) within Hamlets under the Animal Control Bylaw.

Closed session items included fire mediation requests, water licensing, former county public works site, fire board membership, permanent CAO hiring process, and a solid waste contract.

Councillor Wilson brought forward the **Alberta First Resolution**. I'm including it in its entirety here, because it wasn't submitted in time to be included in the Council package:

**Whereas:** Alberta contributes more, per person, to the national economy than any other province. With only 12% of Canada's population, Alberta attracts one quarter of all capital investment in the country and is responsible for more than one fifth of all Canadian goods exported.

**Whereas:** Albertan workers contribute far more to the Canada Pension Plan than its retirees take out. In 2017, 16.5% of all CPP contributions came from Alberta workers, while just 10.6% of CPP expenditures made their way back to the province. If Alberta were to remove itself from the Canadian pension Plan, the current CPP rate (9.9%) would have to increase to 10.6%, resulting in up to \$367 in additional contributions (in the form of payroll taxes) for workers outside of Alberta. Meanwhile, Albertans would pay just 5.85% for a CPP-like program for the province.

**Whereas:** A Statistics Canada 2017 report states that the Government of Canada generated \$50.3 billion from Alberta taxpayers and only spent \$28.5 billion in Alberta. Albertans pay more in federal taxes than we get back in federal spending. Meanwhile, the federal government generated \$53.7 billion from Quebec taxpayers and spent \$70.1 billion in Quebec.

**Whereas:** The Province of Alberta is under-represented in both houses of Parliament. While holding 12% of the nation's population, Alberta only commands 10% of the seats in The House of Commons with 34 seats, and 5.7% of the seats in The Senate (6 seats). The Maritime provinces; Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island hold 5.1% the total population of Canada, yet they hold 22% of the seats within The Senate (24 seats).

**Whereas:** The North-West Mounted Police were founded in 1873 with a military culture, and that remains a central aspect of the RCMP culture today. Over the last number of decades the changing of society has caused the RCMP to change into an inefficient and poor service. As Wheatland County has found, having five different Divisions and many detachments under staffed, with no future plans of reaching the organizations own recommendation of officers per capita, the national police force is no longer fulfilling local needs across the Province of Alberta.

**Whereas:** Alberta accepted 38,683 immigrants in 2018 and Quebec (with a populations twice the size of Alberta), accepted 47,903 immigrants. The Province of Alberta accepted 61% more immigrants per capita than Quebec, while having no way to regulate or refuse immigration. Alberta is allowed only to choose 5500 economic immigrants, unlike Quebec which has stronger authority over the province's immigration.

**Therefore be it resolved:** The Government of Alberta act on the following recommendations in order to insert Alberta's constitutional rights within confederation.

- a) That the Province of Alberta withdraw from the Canada Pension Plan and create an Alberta Pension Plan offering the same benefits at lower cost while giving Alberta control over the investment fund. Pensions are a provincial responsibility under section 94A of the Constitution Act. 1867.
- b) That the Province of Alberta collects its own revenue from personal income tax, as the province already does for corporate income tax. There is no reason to have Ottawa collect Alberta's revenue. Any incremental cost of collecting our own personal income tax would be far outweighed by the policy flexibility that Alberta would gain.
- c) That the Province of Alberta use Section 88 of the Supreme Court's decision in the Quebec Secession Reference to REMOVE EQUALIZATION from the Canadian

Constitution. The federal government and other provinces must seriously consider a proposal for constitutional reform endorsed by “a clear majority on a clear question” in a provincial referendum.

- d) That the Province of Alberta again uses Section 88 of the Supreme Court’s decision in the Quebec Secession Reference to demand Senate reform.. Alberta has acted decisively in holding Senate elections. Now is the time to drive the issue further.
- e) That the Province of Alberta start preparing options to replace the RCMP as the province’s police force. Alberta is a unique province and needs a police force operated, owned, and directed by the people they serve. Like the other major provinces of Ontario and Quebec, we should have our own provincial police force that answers to the Government of Alberta and understands the regional needs throughout the province. We have no doubt that Alberta can run a more efficient and effective police force than Ottawa can.
- f) That the Province of Alberta enter into an agreement with the federal government, similar to the Canada-Quebec Accord, allowing Alberta to oversee its own immigration that depicts the regional, cultural and economic needs of the Province.

**Further be it resolved:** If the federal government does not deal with these demands in good faith; if they block, hinder, or otherwise prevent Alberta from exercising its rights as outlined above, that the Government of Alberta will hold a Referendum with a “clear question”, as defined by The Clarity Act, on the secession of Alberta from the Canadian Confederation on October 18th 2021.

Council approved the draft, in principle. This gives us the opportunity to begin engagement with Wheatland County residents and other municipalities in Alberta. I have received feedback from several ratepayers regarding this resolution. I have heard tremendous support and some questions and concerns.

Some comments regarding Council’s jurisdiction and the appropriateness of a municipal Council considering this matter. In order to address this I think it’s important to understand what a resolution is.

I’ll share some information from the website of the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA):

“Resolutions are crucial to RMA’s advocacy efforts. They allow members to have a direct role in the advocacy process **by identifying priority issues that require action by other levels of government.**

RMA uses resolutions to guide our advocacy positions and the issues we prioritize when working with other levels of government or stakeholders. Resolutions are typically directed toward the provincial or federal government, and seek changes to legislation, regulations or policy, address funding or program issues, or encourage alternative policy approaches related to a specific rural municipal issue or concern.” <https://rmalberta.com/advocacy/resolutions/>

So Resolutions are a formal advocacy mechanism we use as a municipality. Advocacy works to ensure that provincial and federal decision-makers, industry and other relevant stakeholders understand and incorporate rural Alberta’s best interests in their policies.

I’d also like to clarify Resolution process, following Council ratification resolutions are typically sent through a review process by our District Directors, then put out to a vote at our District meeting. If a resolution is supported at the district level it is brought forward to a Provincial Rural Municipalities of

Alberta convention to be voted on. Alternatively there is a mechanism for independent resolutions to be considered as well.

I've also seen some misrepresentation regarding our power as an individual municipality, in terms of municipal powers I'll reiterate this is an advocacy mechanism, currently in draft form, approved in principal. Clearly a municipality does not have the power to demand changes to the constitution, nor is the resolution an end run around the legislature, as it may be represented in the media. That being said grassroots movements can be powerful and the frustrations of the west need to be addressed in a fair manner.

The ideas in Councillor Wilson's proposed Resolution are not new, they're based on much of the Alberta Agenda, also referred to as the "firewall letter", written in 2001 by six conservative Calgary thinkers, including a younger Stephen Harper. The principles in this letter have been brought forward several times over the last two decades and our provincial government has clearly been focusing on these principles prior to this Resolution.

I supported approving this motion in principal. By doing so it gives us the opportunity to engage. To hear different perspectives from our ratepayers. This is a draft resolution that may or may not be ratified by Council. It's possible it may evolve and a different iteration of it may be ratified. Like every issue brought to Council I'm committed to listening to Wheatland County residents, to thorough analysis of available information, and to critical thinking. We, as a Council, look forward to discussing the draft resolution and hearing from our ratepayers.

## **November 5 Budget Review**

We started the process of reviewing the draft capital budget. Council discussed reserve levels, rationale for reserves, reserve calculations and considerations,

Significant impacts to our budget include anticipated changes to provincial assessment models, reduction in MSI funding, and downloading of service requirements from other levels of government.

Council, with significant action by senior administration, has reformatted our budget process. We're spending substantially more time going line by line through both operating and capital budgets. Discussing factors like service implications, urgency of expenses, how essential expenses are to staff performance, promises made to ratepayers by previous resolutions, alignment with strategic goals, alternative options, and risk tolerance.

Council is reviewing our mill rate comparatively to neighbouring municipalities and is focused on continuing to deliver services in the most fiscally responsible way. We are committed to finding efficiencies. We have approved a 0% increase to salaries for 2020 with the organization chart being maintained or reduced depending on department review recommendations.

## **November 5 Hussar Intermunicipal Development Plan**

The Hussar Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) committee met and reviewed the draft IDP and timelines for completion, including anticipated dates for Resolution to approve at both Councils (likely February 13 to Hussar Council and February 4 to Wheatland Council), a date was set for community engagement –Open House on January 13, 7-9pm in Hussar.

### **November 6 Fire Mediation Meeting**

A facilitated meeting regarding issues with Fire Service. Updates on action items from previous meeting. Discussion around elements of good partnerships. Discussion regarding debriefing process, fire chiefs meetings, fire service agreements, and fire board.

### **November 7 Wheatland Housing Management Board Meeting**

Plan strategy for meeting with Assistant Deputy Minister of Health.

### **November 7 Community Futures Wild Rose Organizational and Board Meeting**

Started with Special Meeting of the Shareholders and appointment of Directors.

I'm honoured to be elected as Chair of the Board and will sit on the Audit/Finance, Management/Personnel, Governance, and Sustainability Committees. A draft terms of reference to establish a Community Economic Development Committee will come to a future meeting. Loan subcommittee members were appointed. Financial variance and semi-annual financial report to Western Diversification were approved. Board training options reviewed. Monthly loan report with arrears. Updates on Chinook Entrepreneurial Challenge, Rural Opportunities Fund, Agritourism Cluster Challenge, potential Wheatland Mercantile project, and Winter Open Farm Days pilot.

### **November 11 Remembrance Day Ceremony in Gleichen**

It was my honour to represent Wheatland County at the Gleichen Remembrance Day Service.

### **November 12 Wheatland Housing Management Board Meeting with Assistant Deputy Minister of Health**

Board members and the CAO of Wheatland Housing Management Body and the Wheatland & Area Hospice Society President met with Assistant Deputy Health Minister, John Cabral, and Corinne Schalm, Executive Director, Continuing Care, in Edmonton. Our Seniors' Housing Needs Assessment and Business Case was presented outlining future needs, as well we highlighted the collaboration between [Wheatland Lodge](#) and [Wheatland & Area Hospice Society](#). Mr. Cabral has asked for an update to the AHS Provincial Needs Assessment Report, last updated in 2014. Discussion around time spent travelling taking up home care time, for example a client in Gleichen may have 50 minutes of care allotted, but if 45 of those minutes are spent driving to and from Gleichen, care can be compromised. Discussion about "Enhanced Lodge" model.

### **November 12 Growth Management Board Rural Caucus Meeting**

Meeting of all rural municipalities in the Edmonton and Calgary Region Growth Boards. Updates on land use work, appeal and dispute resolution, Rocky View's emergent resolution - Dissolution of Mandatory Growth Management Boards, Edmonton's Agricultural Master Plan, impact of changes to Provincial funding model for growth boards, and police costing model. Return of investment for the Edmonton Board was discussed.

## **November 12 Reeves and Mayors Liaison Committee Meeting**

Elections for Chair and Vice Chair, discussions on role of Ombudsmen, bridge funding (Tangible capital asset, Titled to Government of Alberta, but deemed ownership to the Municipality with responsibility, like roads), Rocky View's emergent resolution regarding Dissolution of Mandatory Growth Management Boards, FCM Membership value – Bonnyville is not reviewing membership, and health services delivery in rural Alberta.

## **November 13 Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) Fall Convention**

**Honourable Kaycee Madu, Minister of Municipal Affairs** shared a strong message on behalf of the Government of Alberta. He spoke of Alberta always having been a lighthouse of opportunity for economic refugees from across Canada, North America and the world, attracting those who want to build and create, without government standing in the way. He shared that we are some of the most innovative people in the world, and that there's no doubt that if we work together, our best days are ahead.

**Breakout Session: What is Black and White, & Grey All Over? Navigating the Political/Administrative Interface with Gordon McIntosh** - The political / administrative interface is akin to driving a car. If the wheels are not aligned, we add wear to tires and use extra fuel. Likewise, if council and staff are not aligned, organizational efforts are diverted from the strategic matters requiring civic leadership. In this hands-on session, participants will use a "take away" checklist to identify and then develop strategies to address or enhance real-time governance and organizational matters of interest. Take away tools and ideas to make a leadership difference in your organization! I am bringing back some practical ideas we can consider implementing in Wheatland County, ideas like a pending report with actionables outlined after Council meetings, a focus on communicating RFD outcomes, a policy and bylaw review process, check in on what's working well and areas for attention, and improved CAO performance review. A solid foundation for organizational success, focusing on strategic direction, policy choices, service delivery, and system coordination, divided appropriately between administration and Council.

**Rural Broadband Panel** with Jordan Young – CEO of CCI, Peter Casurella – Executive Director of SouthGrow Regional Initiative, and Stephen Bull – Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Service Alberta. "Connectivity is fundamental to rural success..." Alberta is significantly behind and our densities and topography make it more challenging. Businesses are relocating. Connectivity is required for quality of life, including education and health care access. Connectivity can decrease capital expenses by 20%. If we're going to be competitive, attract investment, and keep our rural municipalities sustainable we need to be connected.

**MLA Joe Ceci, NDP, Alberta's Official Opposition**

**Irene Martin-Lindsay, Executive Director & James Nibourg, Vice President Alberta Seniors Communities and Housing Association** shared an organization profile, housing continuum, employment statistics, economic driver, municipal contributions, rural seniors housing trends, crisis of housing needs, and ASCHA's response.

**Breakout Session: Balancing Development with Conservation** - As rural municipalities cover approximately 85% of Alberta's land mass, understanding the role that municipal governments play in managing the landscape, balancing development and conservation, and contributing to provincial,

national, and international sustainable development goals is critical. This workshop will introduce participants to the concept of natural asset management, as well as the role of municipalities in helping Alberta meet conservation requirements under the “Pathway to Canada Target One” initiative. UN Sustainability Goals. Sturgeon County shared their Sustainable Development and Natural Resource Management plan, focusing on environmental, social, and economic goals, and defining sustainable development as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Red Deer River Watershed Alliance shared Sustainable Watershed Management, outlined what a Watershed Planning and Advisory Council is and key responsibilities, how to integrate land and water in statutory planning, and outlined some tangible tools, like GIS mapping of hydrologically significant areas, Nature Conservancy of Canada online decision support tool, and mapping of riparian areas aids in prioritization. I’d encourage everyone to read their Blueprint document:

[https://www.rdrwa.ca/sites/default/files/pdf/Blueprint\\_Phase1\\_WaterQuality\\_Online\\_Final.pdf](https://www.rdrwa.ca/sites/default/files/pdf/Blueprint_Phase1_WaterQuality_Online_Final.pdf)

Ducks Unlimited shared Capitalizing on Natural Green Infrastructure: Municipal Opportunities, wetlands, grasslands, and boreal forest provide extensive benefits. ALUS presented their mission & why farmers support them.

**Alberta Municipal Affairs Open House** – an opportunity to continue conversations with Minister Madu

I also had an opportunity to chat with **Red Deer County** Mayor, Jim Wood, about their current fiber optic network initiative.

<https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/red-deer-county-awards-fiber-telecommunications-contracts-808192355.html>

### **November 13 Joint Meeting with County of Stettler with Honourable Kaycee Madu, Minister of Municipal Affairs**

Wheatland County and County of Stettler held a joint meeting with the Honourable Kaycee Madu, Minister of Municipal Affairs while we were in Edmonton for the RMA Convention. Discussion focused on Section 684 (4) of the Municipal Government Act and challenges it creates surrounding repeated reapplication on Permits Deemed Refused and the significant costs (time and financial) of recurring appeals. Minister Madu listened and noted potential solutions we presented.

### **November 14 Meeting with Federation of Canadian Municipalities President, Bill Karsten and Robin Kurpjuweit**

Discussed our Resolution, Opportunity for Improvement in FCM Representation of Rural Issues and Western Perspectives and FCM’s new initiative Western Economic Solutions Taskforce (or WEST).

WEST is comprised of:

- **Chair:** Randy Goulden, Chair of FCM’s Prairies and Territories Regional Caucus
- **Co-Chair:** Al Kemmere, President of RMA
- **Co-Chair:** Charlie Clark, Mayor of Saskatoon
- Bill Karsten, FCM President

- Darren Hill, FCM Third Vice-President
- Ray Orb, President of SARM and FCM Rural Forum Chair
- Gordon Barnhart, President of SUMA
- Michael Fougere, Mayor of Regina
- Don Iveson, Mayor of Edmonton and BCMC Chair
- Naheed Nenshi, Mayor of Calgary
- Barry Morishita, President of AUMA
- Ralph Groening, President of AMM
- Brian Bowman, Mayor of Winnipeg
- Garth Frizzell, FCM First Vice-President \*ex-officio
- Joanne Vanderheyden, FCM Second Vice-President \*ex-officio
- Vicki-May Hamm, FCM Past President \*ex-officio

“The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) has long understood that—for Canada to thrive—its communities need to thrive. Yet right now, countless communities in western Canada are hurting. When the economic downturn hit there, the impacts touched all of us.

No order of government has been closer to the impact of this downturn than our municipalities, as the government closest to the daily lives of Canadians. No matter the size of the community—both urban and rural—we see Canadians losing their livelihoods, losing their homes, and worrying about their family’s future.

For over a century, FCM has united the cities and communities that millions of Canadians call home. When they confront a crisis like the economic downturn facing western Canada today, it is a shared one. There is no doubt that this crisis has left families and workers in these provinces feeling alone in the search for solutions, and we are now facing growing concern about that feeling of isolation within our proud Confederation.

FCM knows the challenges that come with trying to speak with one voice from coast to coast to coast. When federal or provincial politics leave us feeling at odds with our fellow Canadians, municipal leaders are able to step beyond the politics to share solutions. Local governments are the bridge builders.

Right now, this national conversation about unity and how best to support western communities struggling with the economic downturn demands engagement from every level of government. That is why FCM has struck a subgroup of municipal leaders from western Canada and beyond, called the Western Economic Solutions Taskforce (or WEST). Together, this group of elected officials will convene important conversations between the municipal and federal orders of government to ensure the perspectives of western communities are voiced, and to drive new solutions on how to best support them through this economic crisis.

This taskforce will, in the coming weeks, seek to engage a respectful direct dialogue with the federal government on how to support communities impacted by this economic crisis. FCM has already called on the Government of Canada to support our country’s energy producing regions through nation-building energy infrastructure projects, including projects that support a responsible transition



to renewable energies. Now, we are taking the next step by actively fostering more of those solutions to this complex array of challenges.

We look forward to those conversations as we do what local governments often do, reach across traditional and regional boundaries to collectively address a national challenge.”

<https://fcm.ca/en/news-media/news-release/statement-creation-municipal-western-economic-solutions-taskforce>

## **November 14 Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) Fall Convention**

**RMA Annual General Meeting** – President’s Report and Executive/Financial Report.

**Rural Crime Panel**, rural crime has been a major issue across Alberta for several years. Both the causes and solutions of the rise in rural crime are complex. What is not complex is the importance of safety in supporting strong rural communities. This panel will include speakers with expertise in different areas of rural crime. It will allow for a better understanding of the causes of rural crime and the strategies being undertaken by both the RCMP and municipal leaders in preventing and responding to rural crime to make Alberta’s communities safe.

### **Resolution Session**

- 1-19F Priority of Unpaid Property Taxes on Linear Property (MD of Opportunity) 97%
- 2-19F Government of Alberta’s Police Costing Test Model (Rocky View County) 96%
- 3-19F Development of a Rural and Remote Lens for Government Services (Yellowhead County) 89%
- 4-19F Alberta Environment and Parks Water and Wastewater Facility Approvals (Foothills County) 83%
- 5-19F Landowners’ Rights (County of Warner) 95%
- 6-19F Municipal Recourse for Solvent Companies Choosing Not to Pay Taxes (Starland County) 96%
- 7-19F Utility Distribution Rates in Rural and Northern Communities and Public Facilities (MD of Greenview) 93%
- 8-19F Opportunity for Improvement in FCM Representation of Rural Issues and Western Perspectives (Wheatland County) 93%**
- 9-19F Setback Referrals for Development Near Sour Gas Facilities in Crown Land Areas (MD of Greenview) 92%
- 10-19F Community Peace Officer Access to RCMP Radio Channels (Foothills County) 79%
- 11-19F Requirement for Municipal Authority Input on Energy Resource Development Projects (MD of Bonnyville) 90%
- 12-19F Libraries Act Review and Rural Library Services (Athabasca County and County of Wetaskiwin) 88%

**13-19F Provincial Extended Producer Responsibility Regulations (Wheatland County) 85%**

14-19F Provincial Funding for Regional Air Ambulance (Cypress County) 77%

15-19F Provincial Highway Access and Setback Authority (Sturgeon County) 75%

16-19F GST for Grants and Subsidies Interpretation (Mountain View County and Northern Sunrise County) 90%

17-19F Airports Capital Assistance Program Funding for Regional Airports in Canada (County of Grande Prairie) 79%

18-19F New Homeowner Warranty (County of Wetaskiwin) 55%

19-19F Water Security in Southern Alberta (MD of Taber) 68%

20-19F Policies for Supporting Community Hospice Associations (County of Stettler) 92%

**21-19F Cellular 911 Call Answer Fees Increase (Wheatland County) 67%**

**\*Amendment by Foothills County approved to increase rate to \$0.97**

22-19F Realtor Certification Requirements (County of Grande Prairie) 45%

23-19F Mandatory Agriculture Education in the Classroom (Lac La Biche County) 87%

Emergent Resolution Dissolution of Mandatory Growth Management Boards (Rocky View County) 90%

All resolutions were passed with the exception of 18-19F and 22-19F.

**Keynote – Jeremiah Brown, The Future is Yours: What Can You Achieve in the Next Four Years**

**Election of Vice President and District Directors**

**November 14 Meeting with Honourable Jason Nixon, Minister of Environment and Parks**

Council and senior administration met with Honourable Jason Nixon regarding composting regulations and concerns pertaining to a licensed Class 1 Compost Facility in the county. Minister Nixon attentively listened to our concerns, committed to investigating, and requested we follow up with a white paper regarding changes to the regulations.

**November 15 Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) Fall Convention**

The Associate Minister of Red Tape Reduction, Honourable [Grant Hunter](#) outlined steps our government is taking to cut the red tape and streamline regulations.

Have your say at:

<https://cutredtape.alberta.ca>

**Rural Municipalities of Alberta Ministerial Forum**, the “Bear Pit”, thirteen Ministers joined us to answer questions, from across the cabinet, Finance, Environment and Parks, Labour and Immigration, Agriculture and Forestry, Economic Development, Trade, and Tourism, Service Alberta, Municipal Affairs, Transportation, Advanced Education, Infrastructure, Community and Social Services, Justice, Indigenous Relations, and Red Tape Reduction. Over thirty questions regarding several issues including; increasing ethanol and biodiesel content in fuels, dissolution of growth boards with Minister Madu responding he doesn’t want Metro Boards to be an impediment to progress, K9 units to search lockers for drugs, response to drug epidemic, agricultural disaster/relief, restitution process for victims of crime, criminal code and rural perspective, rural crime technology, taxation in energy sector, farmer mental health, provincial roads, charitable gaming formula, education funding, who owns Alberta debt, Bill 207, broadband gap, accessibility of post-secondary education to rural students, elk issues for farmers, rural homelessness, municipal budget challenges with so many unknowns, flow of federal infrastructure funding, and collaboration with Indigenous neighbours on land use planning. Councillor Koester asked about EMS shifting and the impact on staff by fatigue as well as retention. Councillor Wilson asked about truth in labelling plant based products to not include the word meat.

I spoke with **Honourable Nate Glubish, Minister of Service Alberta**, about our broadband initiative.

**Honorable Jason Kenney, Premier of Alberta** spoke about a bit of carelessness during the good years with regulatory burden, municipal capacity for that red tape, certainty to industry with Royalty Guarantee Act, opportunity for municipalities to give tax breaks, competing with Texas and other US states (friendlier policies, no price differential, and not landlocked), exodus of investment, replacement for Bill 6 for farm safety, commitment to MacKinnon report conclusions, stated increased funding from rural and small urban municipalities for policing will go to more boots on the ground, and gave a message to Quebec in French.

### **November 15 Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN) AGM Showcase**

The [Alberta Rural Development Network](https://www.ardn.ca/) held their AGM Showcase in Leduc. Wheatland County has applied to be part of a rural crime pilot project with ARDN. Initiatives showcased included Substance Use Awareness – Rural Community Opioid Outreach Program, The Agribusiness Mentorship Program, Rural Crime Initiative, and a new Rural Immigration initiative.

The Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN) is a not-for-profit partnership that uses the combined expertise of nine Albertan post secondary institutions, working together to support and enhance rural development. These institutions have combined their expertise, ideas and resources to strengthen Alberta’s rural way of life and support rural development in Alberta and help rural communities grow through research and learning. The value of this network is that it draws on the strengths of diverse organizations, gathers and disseminates information, conducts research, and perhaps most importantly, has deep connections in all regions of the province.

ARDN supports the sustainability of rural communities. We work with communities to amplify the "rural voice". We collaborate to identify and bring focus to rural issues, build local capacity, and find innovative, rural-based solutions to unique issues.

<https://www.ardn.ca/>

## **November 16 Marigold Library Board Meeting**

It was my pleasure to bring greetings from Wheatland County to the delegates at our meeting in Carseland.

Meeting highlights included approval of financial statements and the draft operating and capital budgets (thankful for continued provincial funding support so we didn't have to utilize our Armageddon budget), update on the new headquarters building (which is at the schematic design phase), approval of updated policies, congratulations to Lennox Gomes on his appointment as Vice President of the Alberta Library Trustees Association, declaration of Freedom To Read Week, web portal demonstration, CAO updates, and a discussion about ways to reduce red tape that will be forwarded to the provincial ministry. I shared the great news of the passing of Resolution 12-19F - **Libraries Act Review and Rural Library Services** at our recent Rural Municipalities of Alberta convention.

"Rural Municipalities of Alberta request that the Government of Alberta review the *Libraries Act* and *Libraries Regulation* through a comprehensive public consultation process; and that the review include a focus on amending population density and service point indicators related to requirements for hiring professional librarians; and that RMA requests that the Government of Alberta update population lists to the most recent census information to ensure proper funding is provided to rural library boards."

<https://rmalberta.com/resolutions/12-19f-libraries-act-review-and-rural-library-services/>

During our break at the Marigold Board Meeting I popped in to Carseland Community Library and checked out a couple books.

It's evident the library is a hub in the community and contributes to the sustainability of the hamlet.

"We contribute to the well-being and health of our community by providing information, supporting literacy and bringing people together. Through our participation in Marigold Library System, our library is a single point of access to millions of books, audiobooks, eBooks, DVDs, events and more."

<https://www.carselandlibrary.ca/>

## **November 16 Christmas Party for Wheatland County Fire Services**

It was my pleasure to represent Wheatland County Council, with Deputy Reeve Klassen and Councillor Ikert, at the Wheatland County Fire Service Christmas Party. We have a phenomenal group of firefighters who commit their lives to providing fire service for our municipality and words can't adequately express my gratitude.

## **November 18 Broadband Meeting**

Representatives from the Village of Standard, an industrial representative, our IT Manager, and myself met with 2 companies who provide fibre services and broadband solutions to municipalities.

### **November 18 Rockyford Intermunicipal Development Plan Meeting**

The Rockyford Intermunicipal Development Plan (IDP) committee met and reviewed the draft IDP and timelines for completion, including anticipated dates for Resolutions to approve at both Councils (likely February 12 to Rockyford Council and February 18 to Wheatland Council), a date was set for community engagement –Open House on January 15, 7-9pm in Rockyford.

### **November 19 Municipal Planning Commission**

Appointed the Chair – Tom Ikert and Vice Chair – Donna Biggar of the Municipal Planning Commission.

Approved 7 Development Permits (including a Motorcycle Parts and Service Shop, community sign in Carseland, 2 accessory dwellings, Construction of Vehicle Accessories Home Based Business, Greenhouse, and contractor services) and 2 Subdivision applications.

### **November 19 Budget Review**

Continued in depth review of draft Capital Budget.

### **November 19 CP Holiday Train Meeting**

Meeting in Gleichen was cancelled due to weather, but Wheatland County staff, a Community Futures Wild Rose representative, and myself met to further plan the event. Mark your calendar for the evening of December 18<sup>th</sup>, it's going to be a fantastic event!

### **November 20 Broadband Meeting**

Wheatland County IT Manager and I teleconferenced in a meeting hosted in Taber. Analysis of different operational models based on quotes, turn-key, outsourced, PPP, and DIY. Discussion on draft MOU. Frustrations continue, but we do have a move forward plan.

### **November 20 Rocky Mountain GTL Tour**

Wheatland County Council is proud to have innovative companies like Rocky Mountain GTL in our municipality.

“Rocky Mountain GTL Inc. is a privately owned Canadian company that designs, constructs, and operates small scale gas to liquids plants to economically convert natural gas and natural gas liquids into synthetic Diesel, Naphtha and Jet fuels.

Our patented Enhanced Gas to Liquids (EGTL™) is a direct “Well to Wheel” solution for the Natural Gas Industry, bridging the clean-burning, low emissions qualities of natural gas, into high performance, low carbon liquid paraffinic fuels for the road, rail, marine and aviation markets. Our process is carbon efficient resulting in increased production and economics.

In 2017, Rocky Mountain GTL acquired world-wide licensing rights for the patent process technologies Enhanced Gas to Liquids (EGTL™) from Expander Energy Inc.

Rocky Mountain GTL's "first of its kind plant" is located in Carseland, Alberta, Canada and is to be manufacturing synthetic fuels by second quarter of 2019."

<http://rockymountaingtl.com/>

"Rocky Mountain GTL's "first of its kind" modular facility now under construction offers the efficiency of a large facility on a smaller scale with better economics.

Our patented EGTL™ technology and current design infrastructure used in this plant is a smarter way to make synthetic diesel (and jet fuel) from natural gas and natural gas liquids feedstock.

Rocky Mountain GTL's first EGTL™ plant in Canada is being built in Carseland, Alberta, located 50 km east of Calgary. The plant will be capable of producing ~470 barrels per day of superior synthetic diesel fuel from 5000 mcf of natural gas and natural gas liquids."

<http://rockymountaingtl.com/projects/>

### **November 20 Wheatland Family and Community Support Services Board Meeting**

Financial statements and reconciliation report were approved, CAO report included updates on insurance, GST on home support invoicing (below threshold to charge), computer upgrade implementation, Wheatland Seniors Transportation Society support, resource packages for young adults with disabilities, impact of Children's Services Budget announcement, staff recognition was discussed, and the Chair updated on the Christmas Hamper meetings.

### **November 21 Strathmore Seed Cleaning Plant AGM**

Strathmore Seed Cleaning Plant held its Annual General Meeting. I'm proud to serve on this innovative, committed board alongside many of Wheatland County's agricultural leaders.

The seed plant has been providing seed cleaning, treating, commercial separation, transloading, and Pedigreed Seed to its diverse customer base through leading edge technology for over 60 years.

<https://www.strathmoreseedcleaningplant.com/>

### **November 21 Wheatland Housing Management Board Meeting**

Organizational meeting, followed by regular meeting. Financial reports for social housing and the lodge were approved. Maintenance supervisor's report, social housing report, resident manager, and CAO reports were approved. Review of meeting in Edmonton. Board passed resolution to accept the present Strathmore Townhall site as the preferred building site for a new lodge. Building committee membership was amended and made responsible for Board communication, will prepare elevator pitch for Board.

## **November 22 Calgary Metropolitan Region Board Meeting**

The Board reviewed and signed the Code of Conduct. The Town of Strathmore shared their municipal context report. The challenge to IREF# 2019-04 was tabled to our January meeting in order to provide time for potential amendments to be considered by Calgary Council and potentially result in the challenge being withdrawn. Governance committee update and approval of terms of reference to expand membership. Q3 Actuals and the budget were approved. Discussion around Edmonton Region budget trends. The Regional Employment Analysis status quo projections, the Natural and Managed Capacity of Regional Water Supply in the Calgary Metropolitan Region Study, and the Calgary Metropolitan Region Existing Water and Wastewater Servicing and Regional Potential Report were approved and will be used as input for the Growth Plan. A discussion around Special Study Areas resulted in being referred to TAG for review and framing. Updates from Land Use and Servicing committees. Discussion on a potential regional conservation education strategy, which could extend life of infrastructure. Question regarding gaps for growth plan consultant, possibly a housing needs assessment missing, but working around. Discussion about follow up with Minister Madu about future of board. Roundtable discussion sharing each municipality's budgets. Discussion about lack of recognition of regional benefit to large events, like Grey Cup. Planning for strategic session, potential topics: lessons learned from previous IREF approvals and challenges, possible improvements, areas where IGP is too high level or silent on issues, role of admin.

## **November 26 Meeting with Town of Strathmore Mayor, Deputy Mayor and CAO**

Submitted report for Council package inclusion prior to meeting, will update verbally.

## **November 27 Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA) Conference and AGM**

Submitted report for Council package inclusion prior to meeting, will update verbally.

## **November 28 Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA) Conference and AGM**

Submitted report for Council package inclusion prior to meeting, will update verbally.

## **November 29 Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA) Conference and AGM**

Submitted report for Council package inclusion prior to meeting, will update verbally.

Signature: Amber Link