

NEWS *letter*



M.D. of Bighorn

Issue 25, June 2010

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Draft Land Use Bylaw Receives First Reading: Public Hearing Dates Announced

The draft Land Use Bylaw No. 04/10 received first reading by M.D. of Bighorn Council at its meeting of April 13, 2010. The Land Use Bylaw – the document that regulates the use and development of buildings and land within the municipality – has been undergoing a comprehensive review since August 2008. Council will be holding the formal public hearing on three separate dates in different locations to increase opportunity for public input, and you are invited to attend on any or all three days. Those days are as follows:

THURSDAY, JUNE 3, 2010 AT 7:00 P. M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, NO. 2 HEART MOUNTAIN DRIVE,
EXSHAW

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2010 AT 7:00 P.M.
WATER VALLEY COMMUNITY HALL

TUESDAY, JUNE 15, 2010 AT 7:00 P.M.
BEAUPRE COMMUNITY HALL

Landowners, residents and other interested parties are invited to provide comments on the draft bylaw to Council at the public hearing. Council may then request changes to the draft Land Use Bylaw prior to considering the bylaw to receive a second or third reading. Comments may be presented orally at the public hearing and will be limited to 5 minutes, except that a person speaking as a representative of a group of persons may speak for a maximum of 10 minutes. Interested persons or groups may only make a presentation once, although that can be at any of the three possible locations.

Copies of the draft Land Use Bylaw No. 04/10 and associated land use maps, and the M.D. of Bighorn No. 8 Municipal Development Plan and the current Land Use Bylaw No. 19/96 may be inspected by the public at the Municipal District of Bighorn Municipal office in Exshaw during

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regular working hours. A copy of draft Land Use Bylaw No. 04/10 is also available for download from the Planning and Development Department's section of the M.D.'s website (www.mdbighorn.ca). Or, a digital copy on a CD may be obtained by mail, at no cost, upon request.

Please direct any questions comments, or concerns regarding the draft Land Use Bylaw, the bylaw review process or the public hearing process to Tracy Woitenko, Community Planner for the M.D. of Bighorn at (403) 673-3611 or Calgary direct at (403) 233-7678, or by e-mail at tracy.woitenko@mdbighorn.ca.

Bighorn Senior's Celebration

Calling all Bighorn Adults with Experience!

Join us in an afternoon of socializing, entertainment, and treats as we celebrate Senior's Week.

When: Tuesday June 8, 2010

**Where: Heart Mountain GoGetters Hall
Exshaw**

Time: 1:00-3pm

Who: All Bighorn Seniors

No RSVP required, but if you'd like more information, give Emily a call at the MD Office.

Use of Fireworks in the M.D. of Bighorn

One question that is asked, from time to time, is whether the M.D. has any bylaw or regulations on the use of fireworks. With both summer and the various "reasons" for setting off fireworks (such as Canada Day celebrations, or the August long weekend) approaching, it's probably an opportune time to advise residents and visitors, on fireworks' usage within our municipality.

The M.D. does not have any municipal regulations/bylaws prohibiting or restricting the use of fireworks (other than the M.D.'s Hamlet Reserve Protection Bylaw 09-05 which specifically prohibits the discharge of fireworks on any reserve lands in any M.D. hamlet), but instead relies upon the regulations in Section 5.7 of the 2006 Alberta Fire Code. The Fire Code indicates that no person shall discharge, fire or set off fireworks from, on or over public land as defined in the Public Land Act, nor within a forest protection area designated under the Forest and Prairie Protection Act.

Sustainable Resource Development has advised that the Municipal District of Bighorn is entirely within the forest protection area, under the Forest Protection Area regulation, AR 149/99. Therefore fireworks legally cannot be set off, within the M. D. of Bighorn.

If you would like more information, please contact the M.D. office at 403-673-3611 (Calgary direct 403-233-7678) or the Sustainable Resource Development offices in Calgary at 403-297-8800.

Attention Commercial Operators

"No Idling" Provisions In Effect – May 15 – October 15

Operators of commercial vehicles should be aware that, effective May 15th annually, the M.D. prohibits the prolonged idling of commercial vehicles within M.D. hamlets. The Streets and Roads Bylaw read that "...no operator of a Commercial Vehicle shall stop or park or leave his Vehicle at a standstill with the engine running or idling for longer than five (5) minutes, anywhere within a Hamlet in the M.D."

The ban takes into account concerns with both air and noise pollution: many hamlet residents keep their windows open, on a seasonal basis, and want neither the smoke/smell nor the noise from idling engines in their homes.

Council Briefs

What follows are some of the highlights of Council actions since the last newsletter published in March 2010

M.D. residents may have been following the recent media coverage regarding the possible “separation” of a portion of Rockyview County, due to some dissatisfaction with that County’s planning/direction, and the apparent intent of those Rockyview residents to seek amalgamation with the M.D. of Bighorn. Most of this consideration has occurred without any discussion with the M.D. of Bighorn; however, at their April meeting, M.D. Council did receive a letter from the Reeve of Rockyview, seeking some input from Bighorn. M.D. Council authorized the Reeve to sign and forward a letter on this issue: in short, the letter basically said “thanks but no thanks” on the issue of accepting a portion of the County that might separate from that municipality.

Following a sparsely-attended public hearing (one member of the public was present), Council decided to move further in the process to sell a small portion of Municipal Reserve to affected owners of property on Windridge Road in Exshaw. The M.D. will proceed with the removal of the municipal reserve designation from a portion of Lot 15MR Block 1 Plan 8610481, upon receipt of an offer to purchase and agreement on a sale price. The owners had approached the M.D. to purchase a small strip of the Municipal Reserve lot, in order to extend their own properties, suggesting that the revenue received by the M.D. could be used to expand a nearby playground.

On the delegation front, Council received five parties over the past while: Julia Ko and Joe Obad of Water Matters, a Canmore-based society comprised of citizens concerned about water and watershed protection, advised Council on their organization and its mandate. Barry White of Sustainable Resource Development, spoke to Council regarding the Province’s wet areas mapping project, explaining that, via airplane remote sensing programming called Lidar, the landscape is surveyed and the results show not just where surface water (streams, rivers, lakes, etc.) is located, but also senses and shows where such features as small ephemeral/intermittent watercourses, damp patches, and ditches are located. Steve Shawcross of the IBI Group, and David Cowley of Rafter 6 Guest Ranch, provided Council with a presentation on the Conceptual Master Plan for the proposed development of the Guest Ranch, indicating the goal is to build Alberta’s first five-star hotel, within Phase I of the project: a 109 unit, graduated four storey building. Dave Day and Councillor Adams (Chairman of the Calgary Regional Airshed Zone, or CRAZ) updated Council on CRAZ activities: the main part of their presentation was a proposed funding formula, that would see municipal members on CRAZ pay an annual membership of \$0.10 per capita. Councillor Hugh Pepper, the M.D.’s rep on the Bow River Basin Council, provided a presentation on the Upper Bow Basin Cumulative Effects Study, a project that the M.D. had provided funding for,

approximately two years ago (along with a number of other jurisdictions and parties). The presentation covered the declining amount of water within the Bow River basin area, and the prospects of future growth, with its effect on water demand.

Two policies were approved, within the past three months: the M.D. has joined a number of other organizations in prohibiting the use of cellphones in municipal vehicles (or personal vehicles being operated while on M.D. business, and a new complaints policy was approved, to replace an older, generic policy.

The M.D. abandoned any further interest in preserving the Superintendent’s Residence and old Seebe School in the former Seebe Townsite, and also declined to intervene and preserve the 1907 portion of the old St. Bernard’s Catholic Church in Exshaw, given that there did not seem to be strong support nor a local volunteer group willing to take on the task. All three structures face demolition in the near future.

A number of decisions were made, with regards to the fall 2010 municipal elections. Council appointed Natalie Germann, the M.D.’s Executive Assistant, as the Returning Officer for the elections, and confirmed the general election date of Monday, October 18th, 2010, with voting hours to run from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. An advance vote will be held (date and location to be determined), for those unable to attend on October 18th, and there will be an incapacitated elector
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voting opportunity as well. No deposit will be needed, when filing nomination papers, and an elector's list will not be prepared for the elections. Please note, however, that as per the M.D. bylaw, voters will need to provide identification at the voting stations, when coming in to vote.

A number of bylaws were dealt with, over the past three months: second and third reading were given to Bylaw 04/09, a bylaw to adopt the new Bar C Area Structure Plan, and subsequently final readings were also given to Bylaw 05-Z/09, to amend the Land Use Bylaw with respect to the Bar C Ranch and Resort. Bylaw 09/09, to close a portion of road in the very north-eastern corner of the M.D., was given final readings, after receiving Ministerial approval; Bylaw 11-Z/09, to amend the Land Use Bylaw with respect to re-zoning lands next to the Kananaskis Dam near Seebe received final readings; and all three readings were given to Bylaw 03-10, to amend Council's Procedural Bylaw, pertaining to Public Hearing procedures.

Three more land use-related bylaws were given first reading, and public hearing dates set: Bylaw 02-Z/10, to re-zone lands on Highway 1A near the Summer Village of Ghost, Bylaw 05-Z/10, to amend the Land Use Bylaw with respect to the Kananaskis Ranch District, and Bylaw 04-10, a new Land Use Bylaw were all received by Council. Bylaw 04-10 will have three separate public hearings: June 3rd at the M.D. office in Exshaw, June 9th in the Water Valley Community Hall,

and June 15th in Beaupre Hall – all three will commence at 7:00 p.m.

Council adopted, by resolution, the River's Bend/Limestone Valley Concept Plan for the BHB lands in Dead Man's Flats. The 35 acre site will eventually be developed into a residential subdivision and a light industrial park.

With changes made, at the Provincial government level, on property assessment appeals, Council adjusted the fees payable for making appeals: the fee for Residential/Farm Land appeals moved from \$25.00 each to \$50.00 each, while the fees for Commercial/Industrial appeals went from \$50.00 each to \$650.00 each.

Council also approved new solid waste management rates for the Commercial and tax-exempt properties in the MD: the M.D. arranges, for those commercial and tax-exempt properties seeking same, the pick-up of solid waste, provided the right containers are utilized (containers compatible with the Haul-All system). Tipping fees at Calgary landfills, and increase fuel costs, are the main reasons behind the increases.

The M.D. has entered into an agreement with the Harvie Heights Community Association regarding the maintenance and management of certain community facilities located in the Hamlet of Harvie Heights. While the Community Association has had its community hall building (and other facilities) on M.D. lands for

many years, there hasn't been an agreement stipulating roles and responsibilities for the use of municipal lands, until this agreement was recently reached.

Council accepted the draft Terms of Reference for the Municipal District of Bighorn/Graymont Western Canada's "Use of Lime Kiln Dust (LKD) Stabilized Biosolids for Quarry Reclamation Demonstration Project." The project involves adding LKD to biosolids (the solid material left behind after waste-water has been treated in a treatment plant), in order to eliminate pathogens and heavy metals as contaminants, and produce a material suitable for application to land. The terms of reference are part of the M.D.'s request to the Province for authorization for a test project, to allow the application of LKD-treated material to a Graymont quarry site.

Finally, having received legal advice, Council has indicated, to the Municipal Planning Commission and other such bodies, that site inspections for subdivision/development permit applications will no longer be conducted. It had been the practice of the MPC to do site visitations, when considering development and subdivision applications: legal advice had indicated this was not a recommended practice.

(Please note that unadopted Council minutes, in their entirety, are usually posted on the M.D. web-site within a week of the Council meeting being held. Go to www.mdbighorn.ca/, and click on "Minutes" under Virtual Bighorn on the right hand side of the page.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

2010 Property Taxes – A New Way of Doing Things and Important Dates

This year will see a change in the way property owners are informed of their property's assessed values and the taxes to be paid, with the splitting of the assessment and tax notices into two separate items. Due to a change in the legislation regarding the deadlines and procedures for filing an appeal of assessed values, the M.D. found it necessary to send out separate notices to ensure all assessment appeals had been received prior to the preparation of the tax notices. The length of time a property owner now has to appeal their assessment is 60 days from the mailing date of the assessment notice. What hasn't changed is that no appeals can be filed after this date and that taxes are still due on or before June 30th. Payments post-marked on or before June 30th will be considered on time but those post-marked after this date will not.

If you have not received your 2010 tax notice, please contact the M.D. office, as they were mailed on May 19th. Taxes are due June 30th, 2010 and a 9% penalty will be applied on July 1, 2010 to current taxes that are not paid on time and all arrears shall have an additional 9% added on January 1, 2011.

Included with your tax notice is information on the taxes being assessed, joining our TIPPS program for monthly payment of your taxes, and information on new banking requirements for those on our TIPPS program. Please read these items carefully and contact our office if you have any questions.

The following table depicts this year's important assessment and tax dates:

Item	Date
Assessment Notices Mailed	March 19 th , 2010
Appeal Deadline	May 17 th , 2010
Tax Notices Mailed	May 19 th , 2010
Taxes Due Date	June 30 th , 2010
9% Penalty Applied on Unpaid 2010 Taxes	July 1 st , 2010
9% Penalty Applied on Tax Arrears	January 1 st , 2011

2010 Garbage Rebate – Residents North of Township 27

Garbage rebates are issued to those residents who are not provided with garbage service and notices were sent out to those entitled to a rebate. If you did not receive a notice and believe you are entitled to a rebate, please contact the office. The 2010 rebate has been credited to the property tax account of those qualifying residents, thus reducing the property taxes otherwise payable for 2010.

Address Changes – Utility Bills

For those residents who receive water and/or sewer services from the MD, you are billed for these services every two months. When you move, you are responsible for the utilities up to the date possession changes, even though the bill for this period of time may not be issued until a couple of months later. To ensure that you are only billed for the utility services up to the time you moved and to avoid possible late payment penalties, please contact our office to make payment arrangements or to provide your new address.

How Can I Make My Utility and Tax Payments?

When you make your tax or utility account payment, please ensure you include the top, remittance portion of your bill with your payment, as it includes a barcode, which we use to ensure that your payment is credited to the correct account.

In order to serve you better, the M.D. of Bighorn accepts the following methods for paying your utilities and taxes:

1. On-Line through your bank:

In October of 2007, the MD of Bighorn began offering telephone and on-line banking payments options. If your financial institution is one of the following: Royal Bank, Bank of Montreal, Bow Valley Credit Union or CIBC, you can make a tax or utility payment through electronic banking.

We have tried to add the Alberta Treasury Branches and TD Canada Trust banking institutions to the list, but have been informed that the request has to come from their customers and not us. So, if you bank with a financial institution not on our list, we encourage you to contact your banking representative to request the addition of the M.D. as one of the bills you can pay on-line or through telephone banking. We would be happy to work with any interested institution to try and offer these payment services to all of our ratepayers.

For tax payments, the description listed in the payee section will be MD Bighorn Tax or Bighorn Tax. For utility payments, the payee description will be MD Bighorn Util or Bighorn Utilities. Please ensure you are using the correct payee or payments will be applied to the wrong account.

You will need to have your invoice or statement in front of you for the account number information. If you find that there are not enough spaces for the full account number, please use the numbers following the first three numbers. For property taxes, these are the numbers following 382 and for utilities they are the numbers following the initial three numbers, which will be 100, 200, or 300.

For example, if your property tax notice lists your account number as 382 123456, you would enter 123456. If your utility invoice indicates that your account number is 200 123456 005, then you would enter 123456005. If you are having problems setting up the payment, it is best to call your bank for assistance.

Please remember to allow at least two (2) business days for your payment to reach us. While they are electronic, they are not automatic and payments made in the evening or on the weekend are not always processed that day. If you are paying the last day of the month, your account may be subject to penalties.

2. Cash or Cheque:

Payments by cash or by cheque can be made in person at the M.D. offices from 8:30 to 4:30, Monday through Friday. Cheque payments will also be accepted via the mail or in the mail drop box located to the right of the front door of our offices.

3. Join our Monthly Automatic Payment Plan:

If you want to ensure that you pay your utilities and taxes on time and avoid any penalties, please consider joining our monthly (in the case of taxes) or bi-monthly (in the case of utilities) automatic payment plans. For utilities, your bank account is automatically debited for the utility account balance owing on the payment due date every second month. For taxes, the year's taxes are divided by 12 and on the last business day of each month this equal payment is automatically withdrawn from your account. You can choose to sign up for both utilities and taxes or just one or the other.

If you are joining the tax payment plan partway through the year you will need to make a payment to "catch up" before we can start you on the plan. What does this mean? If your taxes payable for 2010 are \$2,400 and you join the payment plan starting in July, you will need to pay \$1,200 ($\$2,400/12 \text{ months} = \$200/\text{month} \times 6 \text{ months (January to June)} = \$1,200$) when you join and then \$200 per month for the rest of the year will be taken from your account on the last business day of each month.

If you are interested in joining our automatic payment plan(s), forms for doing so can be found on our website or call the office and we would be happy to mail one to you. Then you just need to complete the form and send it and a cancelled cheque back to us.

Please note that debit and credit card payments cannot be accepted for taxes, utilities, or permit fees but will be accepted for purchases of goods and services.

The Burning Question

With annual spring yard maintenance well underway, we are often asked about burning debris and other materials. Here is some helpful information:

- MD residents are only permitted to burn clean wood, no yard waste, garbage or scrap. This includes any treated or painted wood, tires, shingles, etc.
- Avoid the burning of green wood or any other natural material that may cause excessive smoke and create a nuisance for neighbours.
- From November 1st to March 31st residents within the hamlets (and Kananaskis settlement) require approval from the District Fire Chief to burn brush. Contact him through the MD of Bighorn office for more details.
- Burning permits are not required in the rural area, during the November-March period, however, we ask that you notify us of your intention to burn ahead of time.
- April 1st to October 31st, all burning within the M.D. of Bighorn requires a permit. Please contact the Bow Ranger Station in Calgary at 403-297-8800 to make arrangements. Due to an increased danger of fires growing out of control, a Forestry Officer will come out and inspect the pile to be burned.
- Fines and costs have been levied in the past, for those caught burning without a permit or burning in contravention of conditions outlined on the permit.
- What can hamlet residents do with their accumulated yard waste during spring cleanup? Bighorn offers two annual clean-ups in all our hamlets. Check the Bighorn website, this newsletter or call our office for dates.
- The above conditions for permits do not apply to warming/cooking fires in fireplaces, fire pits and acceptable appliances. This type of burning is allowed year-round (except during a fire ban) without a permit.

For more detailed information on burning go to our Notice Board at www.mdbighorn.ca

2010 Fall Clean-up

Bighorn's semi-annual hamlet brush clean-up will take place on the following dates. Please check our website or call our office for the details on acceptable materials, amounts allowed and other conditions of the pick-up.

LOCATION	CLEANUP WEEKEND	PICK-UP DATES
Benchlands	September 18 & 19	September 20
Harvie Heights	September 4 & 5	September 7
Lac Des Arcs	September 11 & 12	September 13
Exshaw	September 25 & 26	September 27
Dead Man's Flats/ Kananaskis Settlement	October 2 & 3	October 4

Bow Valley WildSmart

How WildSmart Are You? Check out the new brochure with this newsletter from Bow Valley WildSmart for great information on how to reduce the potential for wildlife encounters and what to do if you find yourself in that situation. WildSmart's website has loads more information, including a weekly bear report which you can sign-up to receive via email. Check it out: www.wildsmart.ca
The MD of Bighorn is a funding partner of Bow Valley WildSmart.

The Cowboy Trail Tourism Association



Nestled between the Rocky Mountains and the Canadian prairie is Alberta's high ranching country, home to the historic Cowboy Trail. This 700 km trail winds its way through the foothills on Highways 5, 6 and 22 from Waterton to Mayerthorpe. Many western vacations and adventures are offered along the way. Visitors can stay at a guest ranch or a working ranch, in a western hotel or motel, a bed and breakfast or a pristine wilderness campground. They can experience a horseback trail ride or a packtrip, attend rodeos, festivals and Aboriginal events, enjoy shopping and visit one of the many world class attractions of the area. From various points along the road they can turn west into the heart of the Rocky Mountains to experience beautiful Kananaskis Country, Bighorn County and Banff National Park.

The Cowboy Trail Tourism Association actively promotes tourism along the Trail and its surroundings and facilitates collaboration among the communities, tourism operators and other relevant businesses to attract visitors and enhance their experience of the area.

Exciting new initiatives to meet the needs of our members include redesigning our website to make it much more interactive and informative. In addition to featuring in the highly successful guide brochure, Cowboy Trail communities will be encouraged to develop and promote by-way tour maps on the website, enticing people from the big urban centers to visit us and find the many local gems and hidden attractions of the foothills. CTTA is also partnering with a local tour operator in order to attract international visitors.

Bighorn residents are encouraged to enjoy the Trail at their leisure and we would welcome members from the area. To experience the real west, please visit www.thecowboytrail.com

For a complimentary travel guide and map of the area or more information, please call Toll Free: 1-866-627-3051 or contact: info@thecowboytrail.com. For other inquiries, including membership, contact: secretary@thecowboytrail.com

Summer Programs

There are a number of great summer programs happening around the Bow Valley and in the neighbouring communities of Canmore and Cochrane.

Parent Link – Exshaw programs will continue on Thursday mornings from 9:30-11:30am during July and August with Parent Link in the Park on July 21st and August 11th at Centre Park. Beaupre is closed over the summer, but great programs are ongoing at the Cochrane site.

Summer Reading Program – Join the Bighorn Library in Exshaw for two great summer reading programs: Tuesday at 11am for preschoolers and Wednesday at 3pm for older kids.

Summer Soccer Camp in Exshaw – a great local program from July 12-16. Call David at 403-673-3081 for more information.

How to Contact Us

Reeve

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Deputy Reeve

Maria Dunki..... 932-6863

Councillors

Hugh Pepper 932-3700

Paul Ryan..... 673-2287

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