Despite a presentation from Morinville Chamber of Commerce president Shaun Thompson outlining several stress points facing the business community, Morinville town council unanimously approved a rate bylaw which will raise the mill rate hike on a 1.5% average increase in assessment of existing businesses for an actual impact of 30% in the municipal portion of the property tax bill for businesses.

Adams showed council the actual average impact on business — going from $4,705 in 2018 to $6,147 for 2019 — as an increase of $1,442. The dollar increase is actually $120 more to compare apples to apples because 2018 property taxes covered stormwater services but that is being charged as a 2019 at double the rate of the residual rate.

Thompson pointed out that businesses have been facing numerous stress points besides the change to the split mill rate and assessment increase — including provincial legislation increasing the minimum wage and imposing the carbon tax. He confirmed that the town’s increase was intended to take place with the 2019 rates, before requesting that council review the increased bill to business taxpayers.

Corporate and Financial Services director Shawna Jenson from using a $300,000 sample assessment determined in earlier documentation to council, to stating the actual average impact on business. The “non-residential - commercial assessment” of $674,800 in 2019 is now being assessed at $763,606 for 2019. A tax rate will be taken through to the actual average impact on business which is clear. The $4,705 paid in the municipal taxes in 2018 increases by over 30% to $6,147 in 2019.

Mayor Berry Farmer encouraged council to stay the course on its planned increase to the commercial tax rates as the town will have virtually the lowest ratio between residential and commercial tax rates in the province (1:1.1) and nearly the lowest commercial mill rate in the region. He acknowledged there are “stacking factors” impacting taxes and that the municipal assessment decreased while commercial assessment rose, resulting in a lower than expected tax increase for homeowners, and higher than planned increase in commercial taxes.

Coun. Scott Richardson questioned whether the town was able to properly communicate the impact on small business (the Municipal Government Act actually requires to apply a lower commercial property tax rate for small businesses vs large corporations). He was advised that it was discussed but not acted on by council.

Coun. Sarah Hall moved second reading of the tax bylaw last November, but said it is not sustainable. He expressed that some residents have been living in the dark too long, and coun. Nicole Boutheint moved third reading of the tax bylaw knowing that taxes rates were likely to remain the same opinion as Hall adding that businesses can write off taxes.

Jason explained that the sample commercial increase is the average, and commercial property increases being higher and others being lower. For every value that is lower than the 30% increase, there will be an equal value paying more than the 30% increase in business tax.

The town controls the municipal portion of the commercial property taxes — the part that is rising by 30% on average — however, businesses also pay education and Homelnd Housing requisitions on the town’s annual property tax bill. This brings the average total bill up from $7,238 in 2018 to $8,898 in 2019 — an increase of $1,660.

CAO Stephanie Labarone apparently found Jason’s definition of “average” fascinating, turning to the media table and saying “you hear that?” He later stated that he was just checking to see if the media was able to hear the explanation (as he talked over the ongoing council discussion).

Council unanimously passed both the second and third readings April 23 to enact the tax bylaw, with the bills due to go out on May 1 and payment required before June 30.

Fear mongering, hatred ridden — councillors call newspaper coverage of huge tax hike, story page A11

Councillor says increase is just 22%, story page A12.

Residential tax increase drops below planned 5%, story page A2.

Community Futures Tawatinaw Region representative Amanda Robinson of Legal and her two sons, Gabriel (with the lemon head) and Riley, promoted Lemonade Day at the Redwater Community Information Fair April 24. Youngsters from the area can sign up to participate in this year’s entrepreneurial event.

Sturgeon County council held to its planned zero tax rate increase this year and passed a mill rate bylaw with some of the municipal tax rates set slightly lower than last year. The county will collect more in taxes, primarily because the taxable assessment increased.

The total municipal tax levy being collected this year is $50 million. In 2018 total municipal taxes collected were $49.3 million. The country assessment increased by $7.2 billion in 2018 to $7.3 billion this year.

Although second and third readings of the tax bylaw passed unanimously, council held a lengthy discussion before voting, and some councillors noted that zero tax rate increases are not sustainable.

Coun. Susan Evans said she was concerned that a zero tax increase means the county’s level of service remains the same. “We have residents who want it increased,” she said, adding that in early 1980s many municipalities refrained from raising taxes and created infrastructure deficits that took decades to catch up. She noted the county pays inflationary increases (1.5 percent last year) on the goods and services it purchases.

Coun. Wayne Bokenfohr felt it prudent to keep the zero tax increase council planned last November, but said it is not sustainable. He reminded everyone that not too long ago the county had to implement an 8.5 percent tax increase to catch up to where it needed to be.

“That large increase hurt,” said coun. Karen Shaw. She said council needs to take care to not put the county in a position where it again needs to catch up.

Coun. Patrick Tighe favored no tax increase and having administration look at efficiencies, including possible salary rollbacks, within the county organization.

“I disagree with throwing money at things,” Tighe said. “I disagree we need an increase. Electricians took a 25 percent rollback at one point. We’ve never looked at that here.” He felt the county could get more efficient in its operations and through collaborations.

Coun. Dan Derouin agreed, saying the county is under new management with departments spending money wiser and providing higher levels of services. He said there is an economic recession, and the county is not yet receiving tax money from the Sturgeon Refinery.

Coun. Neal Cuneo “wholeheartedly” supported a zero tax rate increase. “We have to find efficiencies, not increase because other municipalities increase,” he said.

Mayor Aluma Huwii agreed it’s important to look for efficiencies, but pointed out that alone is not sufficient to generate funds for transportation and drainage issues.

“We have roads that need fixing,” she said. “We have drainage issues to deal with. People expect higher level of services, and efficiencies won’t cover all of that. Once we’ve proven we can be efficient with taxpayers’ dollars, we should look at an increase.”

This year the residential mill rate decreased marginally, from 3.6645 mills in 2018 to 3.6449 in 2019.

The non-residential and machinery and equipment mill rate also decreased, going from 10.9200 in 2018 to 10.2908 in 2019.

Farmland mill rate stayed the same at 9.4700. Vacant residential mill rate was slightly lower than the previous year, falling from 3.6449 in 2018 to 3.6330 in 2019.

The Homeland Housing Seniors Foundation requisition increased slightly from $633,600 in 2018 to $683,400 in 2019. To collect that, more efficient in its operations and through collaborations.

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Despite a 5% increase in the residential mill rate, town of Morinville homeowners will only pay an extra $74 in 2019 municipal taxes compared to 2018.

On April 23, Corporate and Financial Services director Shantaya Jason switched from using a generic sample assessment contained in earlier documentation for council, to stating the actual average assessed value for “residential” assessment of $334,324 in 2018, which will now be assessed as $328,640 for 2019 tax as a result in a decline in the assessed value of homes.

The new sample shows the 2018 mill rates for residential class rising by 5%. The drop in average residential assessment, however mitigates this increase, taking the $2,331 municipal taxes paid in 2018 to $2,405 in 2019 — an increase of just over 3%.

However in 2018, the municipal taxes covered stormwater services, which are billed monthly as a utility in 2019. This would add $50 to the actual increase on an apples-to-apples comparison, making the comparative increase in homeowners paying for municipal taxes and stormwater service just under 6%.

The town controls the municipal portion of the residential property taxes, but home owners also pay education and Homeland Housing requisitions on the town’s annual property tax bill. This brings the average total residential property tax bill up from $3,214 in 2018 to $3,286 in 2019 — an increase of $72.

Council awards three year contract to existing audit firm without getting competitive quotes

The town of Morinville has awarded a three year contract extension to Metrix Group LLP to provide external audit services, despite one councillor suggesting the town needs to get competitive quotes.

Coun. Lawrence Giffin was the only council member to oppose the awarding of the contract which takes the agreement through 2021. Council was advised the same company had provided the service since 2007 and the town has not sought competitive bids.

Giffin noted the three year contract is over $70,000 so should go through the formal process as per the purchasing policy being approved by council at the same April 23 council meeting.

Other council members disputed that the $70,000 threshold applies because it is less than the threshold on a per-year basis. Administration noted the policy contains exceptions to the requirement to seek competitive quotes, saying audit services is one of the exceptions.

The actual cost of the three year contract was not released by the town of Morinville.

In 2017 Morinville had one of the highest residential tax rates in the Capital Region. No information was presented to council in public session on whether that status changed as a result of the 2018 taxation bylaw if other municipalities increased their tax rate more than Morinville, however council holds numerous closed sessions using generic headings for the items going in camera like “council dialogue” and “CAO dialogue,” so it is possible the ranking was considered.

Tax notices will be mailed to homeowners on May 1, with payment required before June 30.

Morinville homeowners will pay small property tax increase
Accepting Applications for the 2019 Dale MacMillan Memorial Scholarship!

The Dale MacMillan Memorial Scholarship for Community Leadership is funded by the Calahoo-Villeneuve Gravel Extraction Community Enhancement Fund. It publicly recognizes and commemorates the contributions and dedication of Dale MacMillan, who was instrumental in helping achieve a balance between residents and gravel extraction operations in the Calahoo and Villeneuve area.

**Criteria for Selection**
- Must be a resident of Sturgeon County. Students residing temporarily outside of Sturgeon County for schooling are eligible to apply.
- Evidence of enrollment in a recognized post-secondary institution
- Supporting materials of leadership and involvement benefitting their community within Sturgeon County.

Download the application form at [www.sturgeoncounty.ca](http://www.sturgeoncounty.ca) and submit before **May 24, 2019**.

Residents Could Save on Fire Insurance

Sturgeon County Protective Services has been accredited by Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) to provide Superior Tanker Shuttle Service (STSS). The Districts of Bon Accord, Calahoo, Legal, Namao, Redwater and the Fire Service Areas of Gibbons and Morinville have been accredited for the delivery of Superior Tanker Shuttle Services and the appropriate changes have been made to the fire insurance dwelling protection grading index.

**What does this mean for you?**
Residents within the Fire districts and Fire Service Areas named above who own detached dwellings and are within 8 km of an accredited fire hall and 5 km of a recognized water supply may be eligible to receive an improved Fire Insurance Grade.

We recommend that you contact your insurance agent directly and review your current Property Fire Insurance ratings. If your insurance company does not wish to apply the STSS Accreditation, it is recommended that you explore options by obtaining quotes from other companies.

For more information, please visit [www.sturgeoncounty.ca/STSS](http://www.sturgeoncounty.ca/STSS) to review the FAQ or contact Chief Pat Mahoney at 780-939-8400 or by email at pmahoney@sturgeoncounty.ca.

Time for Spring Cleaning

**Household Hazardous Waste Round-Up (HHW)**

Saturday, May 25, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Gibbons Public Works Yard
5127-41 Street

Certain household wastes need special treatment. Things like antifreeze, paint, solvents, batteries and cleaning fluids can be harmful to the environment. That’s why we’re offering county residents an opportunity to do the right thing and bring your household hazardous waste to our place.

Items should be tightly sealed in original or clearly labeled containers. For a full list of items accepted at the Household Hazardous Waste Round-Up, visit [sturgeoncounty.ca](http://sturgeoncounty.ca).

Order Dew Dust Suppression by May 17

Applications are subject to a $100 late fee and will not be accepted after May 17. Visit [sturgeoncounty.ca](http://sturgeoncounty.ca) for more information.
Japanese students enjoy two weeks with Sturgeon families

St. Peter the Apostle in Spruce Grove; Jasper Place and Strathcona High School of Edmonton Public Schools; Louis St. Laurent of Edmonton Catholic Schools; and Salisbury Composite in Sherwood Park.

The five students of SCHS applied for the program offered in combined efforts of the Government of Alberta and Alberta Education, after expressing interest in learning the Japanese culture and in hosting students with their family support, of course. They, along with two other non-hosting students — Skyler Gaalaas and Abbigail Gould will travel to Yokohama in July to engage themselves in the Japanese culture and daily life from July 19th to August 3rd.

During their time in the Edmonton area the group of students have enjoyed a variety of outings at West Edmonton Mall, the Royal Alberta Museum, Legislature Building and Gateway Bowling Lanes. They also hosted a Japanese Cultural evening which the host families attended and a farewell dance for all of the students involved in the program. During the Easter long weekend families were encouraged to travel out of town with their Japanese students.

Host student Kiera Thompson and her family took their two students to Jasper to see the mountains and snow which were a highlight. She said the students commented that they were amazed at the distances in Alberta as they are used to a densely populated region. Caleb Mills and his family brought their students to an Edmonton Oil Kings hockey game and also to his grandparents’ farm but said a highlight was to introduce them to poutine.

While attending school with their host students the Japanese students participated in unfamiliar activities such as floor hockey and basketball; foods class — making hamburgers which are not a staple in Japan; they participated in the drum-line, learned about welding, attended comm-tech class to make t-shirts and swimming.

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The program coordinator for SCHS, Sanjay Prakash participated in the program in 1987 while in grade 11. He said it was very rewarding for him and led him to study Japanese History in University; and participate in JET (Japanese Exchange Teaching) program from 1998-2000 when he taught in Nagasaki, Japan. Upon arriving back to Alberta, he has been teaching at SCHS and enjoys sharing the culture and as the Coordinator of the program, says that sharing the experience of the exchange program with his students has brought his initial experience “full circle”.

Prakash says the school environment has been welcoming and engagement with students not involved in the program has been positive. The Japanese students have been making friends with all students, making it a whole school experience, and with modern social media he expects many of them to maintain their contact long after their departure back to Japan on April 26th.

In Memory of Richard Adamchawske

No Longer in Pain.
Now Resting Quietly in Peace

Born in Toronto, ON on October 21, 1948
Passed Away in St. Albert, AB
April 10, 2019

In passing, he will be remembered by his wife, Patricia, daughters, Terri Ann, and Janice as well as numerous relatives in Ontario.
Harold’s Bus Lines in Rivière Qui Barre may soon move to a larger site half a km from its present location within the hamlet.

During its April 23 meeting Sturgeon County council passed first reading of a rezoning bylaw to create a Direct Control district on seven acres just south of Riviere Qui Barre. A public hearing will be held before council considers second and third reading of the proposed rezoning bylaw.

Council briefly discussed whether noise mitigation would be required, if Harold’s should be directed to locate within a developed industrial park, and what treatment might be needed for wash bay run off.

Councillor Neal Comeau said the bus line is a third generation business which has been operating in the area for nearly 70 years, “They’re already travelling on those roads,” he pointed out. “The bulk of their runs are to schools right in the area, so an industrial park makes no sense.” He added that the Pro North park is full; the Legal industrial park is not developed, so that leaves the Sturgeon Industrial Park over by Fort Saskatchewan. Coun. Wayne Bokenfohr noted the county encourages development along established water and sewer lines, and this proposal does that.

Current Planning and Development Services Planning officer Martyn Bell and Planning technician Hayley Wasylycia reported Harold’s currently operates eight school buses with seven additional buses used as spares and as charter buses. “The owners are proposing to relocate their business operations to a 15.9 hectare (Ha) property approximately 0.5 kilometres south of the existing properties as they have outgrown their current premises,” said Bell.

“The new location would allow the business the opportunity to expand. The applicants are proposing to rezone approximately 2.83 ha (seven acres) for the purpose of operating their business from the property.”

Proposed for the new location are a new shop (80’x80’) for washing and maintaining vehicles, fuelling station, communication tower and single detached dwelling. This would serve as the residence for an employee which would help provide security. All future development would be subject to the development permit process.

A wetland desktop assessment was undertaken by Basin Environmental, and it confirmed the areas to be developed mostly fall outside of the wetlands and their catchment areas. During the development permit process appropriate setbacks from these wetlands will be established. It is anticipated that there would be little difference regarding the traffic routes and volumes generated by the business.

Bell said the county’s Municipal Development Plan (MDP) generally supports the proposal.
Canada Kuwait Petrochemical Corporation (CKPC) is currently selecting engineering, procurement and construction firms for its propane dehydrogenation (PDH) plant and polypropylene (PP) upgrading facility in the Heartland Industrial area of Sturgeon County. Construction is expected to begin in September and be completed in 2023.

“You can expect to see some yellow iron out there moving dirt July first,” said Pembina Pipelines Field Project manager Wayne Carey during the April 26 Redwater Mayor’s Breakfast. CKPC is a joint venture by Pembina Pipeline Corporation and Petrochemical Industries Company K.S.C. (PIC) of Kuwait. The $4.5 billion PDH/PP facility will be constructed south of Redwater and east of Gibbons near Pembina’s Redwater fractionation facilities (RFS). It will consume approximately 23,000 barrels per day of local propane from Pembina’s RFS and other regional fractionation facilities. It has a capacity of 550,000 metric tonnes of PP per year.

Carey said Canada currently imports 100 percent of its PP while it has an increasing supply of of propane. Western Canada produces more than five times the propane it uses. It is all shipped by rail, with much of it being sold to the United States at a discount. Pembina’s RFS facilities fractionate natural gas liquids (NGLs) into world class products. It has the largest NGL rail yard in Canada and loads over 220 rail cars per day. The Redwater site employs 182 full time staff and 100 full time contractors (many of whom work in the rail yard). Starting May 1, Pembina will take over the rail loading operations with 50 new staff members.

Carey said Pembina staff “work hard to help make great communities.” Last year they held a record breaking Redwater United Way campaign. Through its community investment program, Pembina supported the Jessica Martel Foundation in Morinville, the Gibbons playground and curling club, Redwater Centennial Park ball diamond and the Thorhild swimming pool.

Ground work on $4.5 billion plant starting this summer

Pembina Pipelines Field Project manager Wayne Carey updated the crowd at the April 26 Redwater Mayor’s Breakfast on Pembina’s activities and the pending start of construction of the Canada Kuwait Petrochemical Corporation (of which Pembina is a partner) propane dehydrogenation plant and polypropylene upgrading facility.

Tree Maintenance Workshop

Join us for this informative workshop to learn about Tree Maintenance, Pruning and Care.

» When is the right time to prune your trees?
» How much do you need to prune?
» When do you water and how much?

When: Thursday, May 16
Time: 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Where: Cardinal Park
Cost: Free

Please register by May 14, call 780-939-8349 or email agricultureservices@sturgeoncounty.ca.

Please dress appropriately for the weather. If there are severe weather conditions, this workshop may be canceled or postponed.

www.sturgeoncounty.ca

REGISTER FOR SUMMER SCHOOL

Want to fast track your high school courses, improve your grades, or free up next school year’s timetable? Attend a Registration event at one of our Learning Centres.

REGISTER AT MORINVILLE LEARNING CENTRE OR STURGEON LEARNING CENTRE:
- Thursday, May 2, between 5:00pm and 7:00pm, if you are interested in registering for CALM and/or Phys Ed 10
- Wednesday, May 22, between 5:00pm and 7:00pm, to register for all other courses

CAN’T ATTEND ONE OF OUR REGISTRATION EVENTS?
- Registration is also available June 3 to 11, June 21 and July 2, during regular Learning Centre hours

For more information about Summer School visit www.sturgeonlearning.ca
YEAR ROUND LAKEFRONT LIVING AT LONG LAKE

Prime 100’ x 100’ commercial lot in the heart of Long Lake. Perfect opportunity here to build your own business or build an office building to rent out or apply to the Town to change the use of the property to commercial. Legal is a great community just 20 minutes north of St Albert. Scoop up this lot while you can! Great business venture. $79,900 plus GST Call Heather for details.

THORBIILD BUNGALOW W/OVERESIZED HEATED GARAGE

Beautifully upgraded 5 bdrm bungalow with 38x22’ garage. Detached garage. Upgrades in past 4 years include electrical panel, shingles, soffits, fascia, eavestrough system, paint inside & out, some windows & doors, and drywall. Garden area, large fenced yard, lots of shrubs and trees surround the parcel of land with an open clearing facing the southeasterly winds. Lots of hiking trails. $1,295,000. Call Grady to view.

REDUCED! 4 BEDROOM HOME NEAR REDWATER

80 ACRE HORSE FARM NEAR REDWATER

80 acres is a horse lover’s delight! Brand new 2’000 sq ft raised bungalow. 40’x30’ barn & 40’x40’ barn each with 7 stalls & tack room, complete with large storage shed, lots of flowers & shrubs & oversized dlr garage. Great opportunity for a family or for investors. Gardening area, large fenced yard, lots of trees, garden area, flower bed & 17’x21’ greenhouse. The 40’x40’ heated & insulated shop has water & electricity in place. A must see! $1,295,000. Call Heather for more information.

EDMONTON LAND

140’ x 300’ excellent bdrm land very near to the edge of the City of Edmonton. Great building potential & property for future development or business. $1,995,000. Call Glen Moss for more information.

FARM LAND NE& OF WESTLOCK

247 ACRES OF BARE LAND IN NORTH MORAINEVILLE

Your choice of two great building sites, not far from downtown Edm. Both lots are 7.6 miles W of Morinville. Each of these 247 acres have good quality soil large berm & 3’ berm with mature trees & lots of hiking trails. $890,900 plus GST. Call Heather to view.

4 BEDROOM HOME WITH 4 BDRMS & 3 1/2 BATHROOMS

10,000 SQ FT COMMERCIAL LOT NEAR REDWATER

Prime 100’x100’ commercial lot in the heart of Redwater. Perfect opportunity to build your own business or build an office building to rent out or apply to the Town to change the use of the property to commercial. Legal is a great community just 20 minutes north of St Albert. Scoop up this lot while you can! Great business venture. $79,900 plus GST Call Heather for details.

WEIL KEEPS 4 BEDROOM IN NE EDMONTON

4 bed 4 bath home has been extremely well kept & is move in ready. New kitchen with bay window dining area, good sized LR & 2 pce bath, huge master suite, very nice sized attached double garage, & another 4 pc bath. Beautiful landscaping with lots of mature trees. Close to all services. Property is that it has city water. So much potential here. If you own your business this is a great opportunity to quick access to anywhere in Edmonton or Military Base. $550,000. Call Glen to view.

THE FREE PRESS, Morinville/Gibbons, Alberta, 780-939-3309, email: morinville@shaw.ca, www.cowleynewspapers.com, Tuesday, April 30, 2019, Page A7
Angie Yakowchuk played the role of a fierce pirate during a "Teacher's Pet" school field trip for Ecole Notre Dame Elementary School's grade 2 students on April 16th. She and her parrot, Polly, taught the students about boats and buoyancy as they made their way through a variety of workstations to problem solve, decide what objects would sink or float, make a floating boat out of plasticine and even make a wooden paddleboat to take home.

--photo by Amy Hibbard-Hiscock

The town of Morinville approved the concept plan for the new recreation grounds. It includes four future ball diamonds (two senior, two minor); three soccer fields (2 senior, one junior); toboggan hill; performance space on the edge of one soccer field with the toboigian hall serving as outdoor seating; museum; two club houses (one near ball diamonds, one by soccer); LAV III monument (site was changed by council from proposed location); off leash dog park; asphalt walking trails; outdoor ice rink; additional parking in northwest for proximity to ball diamonds; as well as picnic sites, playground, multi-use pat, and community garden.

Coun. Scott Richardson expressed disappointment in the draft presented to council, noting the ball diamonds on the west side but the clubhouse (inc. washrooms) and parking on the east side of the 77 acre site. His succeeded in having another parking lot and clubhouse added to the west side of the plan. The location of the LAV III monument attracted considerable debate with coun. Nicole Boutestein wanting it in the south west corner to fill the absence of components in that area of the property, while coun. Lawrence Griffin felt that would add costs for the service club doing the project. Her motion to change the concept plan site for the LAV III from its draft location near the museum next to the southeast future parking area passed with only Mayor Barry Turner and Giffin opposed to the change.

After approving the revised concept plan, council passed Boutestein's motion to invite the Morinville Rotary Club to its June 18 Committee of the Whole meeting to provide an update on the LAV III project.

Director of Community and Protective Services Dave Schaefer told council the concept plan required approval for site grading and then seeding. The site grading plan requires approval by Sturgeon County because the property is located outside the town's eastern boundary, making Sturgeon the development approval authority.

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He noted the concept plan does not mean that components will be developed exactly where shown, the actual location will be finalized when the decision is being made to develop them.

The town does not have a timeline for developing the components on the concept plan. Its $30.5 million initial development includes a rec centre, recently renamed The Morinville Leisure Centre, which has one sheet of indoor hockey ice, a field house, walking trail, fitness equipment, and play area as well as various rental rooms and some retail and food service spaces. It is due to open in May with the official opening in the fall.

Ball diamonds, soccer fields, club houses, museum, LAV III, off leash dog park, outdoor ice rink, asphalt trails and more included in rec site concept plan

As such, for safe railway operations, the annual vegetation control program will be carried out on CN rail lines in the province of Alberta. A certified applicator will be applying herbicides on and around the railway tracks (mainly the gravelpaved area/ballast). All product requirements for setbacks in the vicinity of dwellings, aquatic environments and municipal water supplies will be met.

At this time, we expect that the program will take place from April 29, 2019 to July 31, 2019.

Visit www.cn.ca/vegetation to see the list of cities as well as the updated schedule.

For more information, you may contact the CN Public Inquiry Line at 1-888-888-5909.

CN is required to clear its rights-of-way from any vegetation that may pose a safety hazard. Vegetation on railway rights-of-way, if left uncontrolled, can contribute to trackside fires and impair proper inspection of track infrastructure.

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As part of Sturgeon County’s Vegetation Management program, herbicide applications are sometimes necessary to control noxious and prohibited noxious weeds on Sturgeon County lands and road allowances. These applications will occur between May 13 and September 30, 2019.

Please note that Sturgeon County does not apply herbicides in areas which are:

- Within 100 metres of a residential dwelling
- Within 30 metres of a body of water (except when in compliance with the Environmental Code of Practice for Pesticides)
- Next to crops sensitive to the chemical being sprayed (i.e. potatoes)
- Within 50 metres of a planted shelterbelt or dугут
- Adjacent to gardens, nurseries or greenhouses

Limited Control Area Agreements

Landowners who wish to restrict herbicide applications from occurring on municipal lands adjacent to their property can enter into a Limited Control Area Agreement with Sturgeon County. These agreements are valid for the year they are issued and must be renewed annually.

Property owners/residents who choose to participate in this program will be responsible for all weed and grass control on municipal lands for which their Limited Control Area Agreement applies.

The deadline to complete a 2019 Limited Control Area Agreement is May 3, 2019.

For more information please contact Agriculture Services at 780-939-8294 or email vulobord@sturgeoncounty.ca

City of Edmonton’s Mosquito Control Program

The City of Edmonton may conduct mosquito control measures within some road allowances in Sturgeon County as part of their 2019 Mosquito Control Program. To determine if your property is eligible and to OPT IN for this service within the road allowance adjacent to your property, please contact Agriculture Services at 780-939-8294 or email vulobord@sturgeoncounty.ca

These agreements are valid for the year they are issued and must be renewed annually. The deadline to OPT IN to the City of Edmonton’s 2019 Mosquito Control Program is May 3, 2019.

For information on the City of Edmonton’s Mosquito Control program, please visit www.edmonton.ca/programs-services/pests/edmontons-mosquito-control-program.aspx or call 780-442-5311.

www.sturgeoncounty.ca
Purchasing policy to give an advantage to local businesses; doesn’t address awarding contracts to councillors

After approving a Purchasing Policy on April 23 that brought together policies and practices contained in a variety of policies dating back a decade, council changed the policy the same evening to give local business an advantage in securing town business.

After going into closed session and returning to open council, according to the town’s communications department, Coun. Stephen Dafoe moved “to amend the policy to add a clause stating that local businesses, when given purchasing priority on contracts, have a policy value of less than $75,000 for goods and services with a variance of 10% to a maximum of $75,000, and contracts under $200,000, with a variance of 10% to a maximum of $100,000.”

Coun. Scott Richardson had championed the need to give priority to local business because they pay taxes to the town, employ people locally, support community groups, however his previous motion contained higher figures and was defeated.

The policy doesn’t define ‘local business’ whether it be paying commercial property taxes in Morinville or simply needs a business license or just a Morinville mail box address, for example.

The door had also been opened for council to finally put policy statements in place regarding the process of awarding contracts to sitting members of council.

Susan Ward, partner, of the law firm Reynolds, Mirth Richards & Farmer LLP, had provided input into the policy and was used as a resource in the review of the document by council at the Committee of the Whole meeting April 16.

Deputy Mayor Lawrence Griffin referred to some public concerns over awarding of town contracts to councillors, while asking Ward if the Purchasing Policy is where the issue should be addressed.

Ward noted that the Municipal Government Act (MGA) deals with the issue “but that is not always the complete answer.” He explained that some municipalities deal with the issue in a policy. It could be in the Purchasing Policy or in a Code of Conduct, he said.

The legal counsel noted that some municipalities have a policy that makes it clear councillors and their families cannot be recipients of business contracts or purchases from the municipality. However, he said these are council’s decisions and municipal policies include also all the full contract items and restrictions to just declaring a pecuniary interest and following the process in the MGA.

The town of Morinville has awarded numerous contracts to coun. Stephen Dafoe over the terms he has been a member of council. Coun. Rebecca Balkano was serving her first term and has received several contracts with the town, although her’s are much smaller than those awarded to Dafoe. She stated last fall that she teaches a program through the town but would not prevent her from continuing to instruct the program.

Neither Dafoe nor Balkano were at the Committee of the Whole meeting. Balkano was absent and Dafoe left the meeting a half hour after it started (during another presentation) then returned 45 minutes later, missing the Purchasing Policy presentation and the input from legal counsel.

The town of Morinville has tried to pressure the media into ignoring its awarding of contracts to sitting members of council.

Coun. Rebecca Balkano, then a subordinate unsuccessful at awarding the three competitive quotes in writing as required. However, later the CAO’s office admitted to The Free Press that the three were not given the same specifications by the town. The explanation was that the policy does not say the three businesses must be based on the same specs.

The policy fails to state that ‘three competitive quotes in writing’ must be based on the same specs.

The door had also been opened for council to finally put policy statements in place regarding the process of awarding contracts to sitting members of council. In 2018, first Morinville CAO Stefanie Labonne, then a subordinate unsuccessful in an attempt to file a complaint with the Alberta Press Council against The Free Press for its public concern over the awarding of town contracts.

During the meeting, Ward noted that the Municipal Government Act (MGA) deals with that issue “but that is not always the complete answer.” He explained that some municipalities deal with the issue in a policy. It could be in the Purchasing Policy or in a Code of Conduct, he said.

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Tax rebate program offers incentive for development of new businesses

There is an incentive in place for new business construction or major expansion of an existing business in Morinville. The ‘Non-Residential Improvement Policy’ will return 50% of the municipal portion of the property taxes in the tax year following construction or major expansion of an existing business. There is an incentive in place for new business construction or major expansion of an existing business in Morinville. There is a 30% increase in business taxes is ‘fear mongering and propaganda’, ‘hatred ridden perspective’

To add insult to injury several town of Morinville councillors took to social media denouncing that the Morinville business community is facing a 30% increase in the municipal property taxes they will have to pay to the town — then approved the 30% increase by 15 days later.

After passing first reading of the taxation bylaw on April 9, which had documentation showing businesses will have an average assessment increase of 15% and be subject to a 15.5% mill rate increase, for a total municipal tax hit of over 30%, councillor Stephen Dafoe joined in a social media stream discussing the property taxes.

Referring to an April 16 Free Press headline on the 30% tax hike facing businesses in Morinville, Dafoe stated “The tax increase is NOT 30% as the headline says.” He referred participants in the discussion to a Dafoe-authored online publication which also understated the impact of the tax bylaw on businesses.

She later stated “the non-resident increase is very gradual and in my opinion, long overdue.”

Residential perspective.

One of the three councillors presented any figures or examples of the dollar impact the bylaw will have on business taxes. All three voted in favor of the bylaw containing the huge business tax hike.

Administrative simplification. In April 9 presentation to council by using exact figures in the April 23 documentation rather than its previous generic assessment value. The average commercial property was assessed at $674,300 in 2018. That assessment rate increased by 15.5% for 2019 and the town’s commercial mill rate increased by 15.5% for 2019 and the town’s commercial mill rate increased by 15.5% for 2019.

DAFOE. returned to the stream stating: “I wish people would consider whether the information is false information or not. It would allow us to spend less time having to explain false info.”

Coun. Sarah Hall joined in, referring to the Free Press she stated, “its all been a singular, hatred ridden perspective.”

None of the three councillors presented any figures or examples of the dollar impact the bylaw will have on business taxes. All three voted in favor of the bylaw containing the huge business tax hike.

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Non residential to commercial property taxes.

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Town documentation shows the two 15% increases do create a 30% tax hike

Morinville will collect an average of 30% more from each business property in Morinville in 2019 than it did in 2018. While political spin has the figure for the average impact on businesses ranging from 5% to 15% to 22%, the calculation is simply math and Morinville taxpayers have three easy routes to the truth of the increase.

1. Go to the town of Morinville website, click on the April 23 regular council meeting agenda. Go to page 17 of the agenda, the second line on the top chart (2019 Municipal Tax) shows the average business property total tax bill of $7,237 in 2018 will rise by $1,660. That's 22%.

2. Google property tax calculators and fill in any assessment amount and any mill rate. Then calculate an increase in property tax based on an operational or amateur — the math is easy. Ask them to do the same on the April 23 regular council meeting agenda. Go to page 17 of the agenda and enter the mill rate and the assessment amount and the calculator will do the math. Or, #3. Google property tax calculators and fill in any assessment amount and any mill rate. Then calculate an increase in property tax based on an operational or amateur — the math is easy. Ask them to do the same.

3. Soft Tissue Work
4. Nutrition

Agriculture & Industry

Town Council says 15% assessment hike with 15% mill rate jump results in just 22% tax increase for Morinville businesses

I told a resident on social media that the business tax increase is NOT 30% as your headline says because the business tax increase is NOT 30%

Last fall, Council approved a budget that included a 4% tax increase across the board. Council also approved moving away from an equally weighted tax to one with a split mill rate ratio of 1.1:1 - moving to 1.1:1 over five years. I need not remind you that even at the full 1.15 split mill rate, businesses in Morinville will still have the lowest differential in Sturgeon County. An equal drop in growth projections made the 4% budgetary increase requirement now a 5% increase.

That, combined with the new split mill rate, is 15% for non-residential properties.

Assessment is independent of that and outside of Council’s control. However, even factoring in changes in the assessment, which can be triggered by owner directed improvements and other market conditions all outside of the Council’s control, the average increase is still NOT 30%.

Below are the specific details, which I got from our Chief Financial Officer this morning (April 26).

On the Residential side, the average increase is 22% or $1,433.73 per year, $119.48 per month. Of that amount, $714.07 is due to assessment impacts.

On the Industrial side, the average increase is 19% or $2,165.67 per year, $180.47 per month. Of that, 7% or $753.13 is due to assessment impacts. The balance is due to the impact of splitting the mill rate combined with the overall budgetary tax increase assessed.

On the Commercial side, the average increase is 19% or $2,165.67 per year, $180.47 per month. Of that, 7% or $753.13 is due to assessment impacts. The balance is due to the impact of splitting the mill rate combined with the overall budgetary tax increase assessed.

So returning to your main question, I told a resident the tax increase is NOT 30% because the tax increase is NOT 30%.

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AUCTIONS

AUCTIONS - Catch all the auction action in the three county market. Sales booked with any of the reputable auctioneers advertising in the Review and Free Press will give you in the eye of our readers. Reach the Counties of Thorhild, Smoky Lake, and Sturgeon. Auctioneers get the best reach for your clients, be sure your sale is included in the Free Press and Review. Phone 780-942-2023. Email: rachelwater@shaw.ca

TIRED ONLINE ONLY. Bankruptcy Auction. Bidding starts Monday, April 22 & starts closing 9:00AM Tuesday, May 7. GT Auction-Fab Creation Metal Works Ltd. 9600-136 Avenue, Grande Prairie, AB. Complete modern metal working facility including Semyx Creative 5x10 waterjet cutting system, ASI Accu-Aut CAD/CAM System; “Sheet metal brake & shear”; 15 service & pickup trucks; “Boltleer & Forklifts”; “Welding equipment, Forged & Machined” Contact: www.foothillsauctions.com. 780-922-8732.


BULL SALE

SIMMENTAL BULLS yeartolds and 2 year olds. Reds, blacks and traditional. Semen tested. Free delivery. Call 780-913-0221 or 780-914-2621

SIMMENTAL BULLS 1 & 2 year olds. Red, full fleshed, polled & horned, streamlined for easy calving, muscled, quiet, all bloodlines. www.simmeronranch.ca. 780-913-7963 Email me for catalogue


PUREBRED YEARLING and 2 year old red & black angus bulls for sale. Call 780-988-9088

BLACK & RED ANGUS bulls for sale. 2 year olds & Yearlings. Performance Info & EPD’s available. Very docile, will semen test & deliver. 780-348-5308

BUILD YOUR BUSINESS. Reach the full three county readership of the Review & Free Press. Electronic ads are like the yellow pages – if someone is looking for you, they can find you. But how do you get them to look for you in the first place? Our total market reach for your name and business at the full three counties of Thorhild, Smoky Lake, and Sturgeon. You can’t afford to overlook the Review and Free Press. 780-939-3309, email morinville@shaw.ca

TROUBLE WALKING? Hip or knee replacement, or cardiology caused disabilities? Make daily activities easier? $2,500 tax credit. $40,000 refund for eligible individuals. Disability Tax Credit. 1-844-453-9377.

COMING EVENTS

BACK YARD BIRDS & BEES & Victoria Trail Agricultural Society will be holding a beginner bee keeping course May 4. Please preregister by email Kali at slo7252@gmail.com

CROP LAND WANTED

LOOKING FOR CROP! Plowland & hay fields for rent or lease. Redwater/Thorhild Road, Plowland. $2000.00 per acre. 780-913-7963

EMPLOYMENT

GENERAL LABOUR - Park Maintenance Ramark Park RV, Long Provincial Road. Cutting grass, weed whisking, pruning, planting trees, landscaping, cutting firewood, general labour. Seasonal work immediately to Sept. 30th. Local labour or provide your own RV and camp in our park. Email Resume lyle@kurtramark.com

TREMEL GREENHOUSES is accepting applications for greenhouse workers for the months of Aug.19-Aug.2021. Primary duties include seeding, thinning and harvesting tree seedlings. $15.00/hr. 40 hrs/week. No experience necessary. Located 15km SW of Smoky Lake. (18214 TWP 584) Email tremel@c2crees.com

WANTED IMMEDIATELY: Orchard & Farm Summer Person May 1 - Aug 30

Berry Ridge Orchard (2 miles west of Gibbons) needs help with:

- saskatoon berry orchard: field work and harvest
- strawberry U Pick maintenance: picking, weeding, sales
- general summer farm labour: gardening, landscaping projects, cleanup & maintenance of yard and farm throughout summer, maintenance of donkey facilities $18/hour, including end-of-season bonus. Mon - Fri. 8am-4:30pm. Must have transportation.

Email with resume (preferred) or phone (leave message please): wade@berriedorridgeorchard.com (please attach resume) 780-916-0244
LEGAL / NOTICES

TOWN OF BON ACCORD
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

REPEAL OF NORTHEAST BON ACCORD AREA STRUCTURE PLAN BYLAW 2004-06

Pursuant to Sections 360, 606, and 692 of the Municipal Government Act, R.S.A. 2000, c. M-26, as amended, the Council of the Town of Bon Accord hereby gives notice of its intention to adopt:

Bylaw No. 2019-04 Repeal of the Northeast Bon Accord Area Structure Plan

The Northeast Bon Accord Area Structure Plan affects the following lands:

- NE 18-56-23-W4
- Pt. NW 18-56-23-W4
- Pt. SE 19-56-23-W4

The proposed bylaw will repeal and cancel the Northeast Bon Accord Area Structure Plan Bylaw 2004-06. The extent of the plan area is shown as the shaded area on Figure 1.

THEREFORE, TAKE NOTICE THAT pursuant to Sections 606 and 692 of the Municipal Government Act, R.S.A. 2000, c. M-26, as amended, a public hearing to consider the proposed Bylaw will be held:

Date: May 7, 2019
Time: 9:00 AM
Place: Council Chambers
5025 50 Avenue
Bon Accord AB T0A 0K0

FURTHER, TAKE NOTICE THAT anyone wishing to make a verbal or written representation may do so at the hearing, or by providing the representation to the Town's Chief Administrative Officer before 12:00 p.m. on Friday, May 3, 2019. It would be beneficial for individuals to provide advance notice to the Town of Bon Accord at (780) 921-3550 to make a presentation at the hearing. AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE THAT a copy of the proposed Bylaw may be inspected at the Town of Bon Accord office during normal business hours.

To obtain more information regarding the proposed bylaw, please contact: Dianne Allen, Manager Economic Development, Town of Bon Accord – Phone (780) 921-3550

Know What’s Below!
Whether you are a professional excavator or a homeowner looking for equipment, visit www.ClickBeforeYouDig.com to place a line locate three working days prior to any planned disturbance.

Town of Bon Accord

Local officials mingle with industry
Gibbons mayor Dan Deck and Sturgeon County councillor Susan Evans had time for a visit at the April 26 Redwater Mayor’s Breakfast. The event included speakers from industry.

Town of Bon Accord

Avril 2019
Wind seeker Leah McDonnell, 10, enjoyed some kite flying with her family on the evening of April 23rd along Grandin Drive in Morinville. —photo by Amy Hibbard-Hiscock

10 students from Yamate School in Yokohama, Japan spent two weeks with students of Sturgeon Composite High School and their families from April 12th to 26th. The two week exchange program brought 150 students from Japan to the Edmonton area. 7 students from SCHS will travel to Japan from July 19th to August 3rd. Story page A4.