The town of Morinville hasn’t even decided all the details of the $30.5 million RCMP detachment building project, but it’s already facing a pressing need for a new RCMP detachment.

On Jan. 15 RCMP K Division representatives Insp. Shane Ramteemal of the Operations Strategy Branch and Ian Skjolden of RCMP Asset Management, brought town officials into the process of developing a detachment with their “Building a Municipal RCMP Detachment” presentation, with Acting Staff Sgt. Chris Palfy outlining the tight constraints which now exist at the Morinville detachment.

The good news is that while the town pays for the project upfront, the RCMP lease reimburses the cost of the project including the financing costs. The bad news is that the reimbursement involves a pro-rated amount based on the full contingent of employees working in the building — both police officers and civilian support staff. The percentage of RCMP staff vs non-RCMP occupants in the building determines the percentage of the cost which will be reimbursed by the RCMP lease, so the town may be responsible for anywhere from about 40 to 60% of the building cost. In addition, the municipality is fully responsible for the cost of supplying the land and furnishings (operations and maintenance items — heating system, etc. — is included in the cost recovery formula).

Ramteemal told council the project will cost more than they may expect. No rough-dollar amounts were included in the exchange between council and the RCMP officials.

Ramteemal also gave the town a heads-up on the sizing of the facility, noting that RCMP detachments are built to a size related to the current and projected number of sworn officers, noting that RCMP detachments in districts, branches and divisions are built to a size related to the current and projected number of sworn officers.

Ramteemal said enforcement agencies hampered by existing constraints, noted it will fit however noted that it would fit on the Morinville site, Skjolden suggested that a cursory view of the detachment site and connected it to the main building through a hallway as a temporary space solution. Regarding the potential for the RCMP to use the building as a temporary home, Ramteemal explained some unique aspects of the construction resulting from security and specialized equipment, noting that some contracts work with a ‘sanitized’ set of plans which don’t identify the purpose of various rooms and that temporary locks are in place during the construction, with the final security measures installed when the RCMP take possession of the building.

Regarding the potential for developing a multi-occupancy building, Ramteemal explained some tenants cannot be included in an RCMP detachment building — such as a day care or school — and if the use is intended to include other Emergency Services, such as the fire department, a separate access to the building must exist.

There are numerous other conditions for the project and its site — including being near a highway access.

The presentation was made at the Council Committee of the Whole session where no action can be directed, so any decision regarding Morinville initiating the process will come at a later date. The issue failed to appear on the Jan. 22 regular council agenda.
Jonas Marshall, Kindergarten student of Ecole Notre Dame Elementary School in Morinville enjoyed showing his classmates his skating skills during their field trip to the Ray McDonald Sports Center on Jan. 15th. Marshall was one of a few students who play hockey and are quite quick on their feet and spent most of their time racing back and forth along the lengths of the ice surface.

Juno Award winner Al Simmons is a creative genius whose highly original performances of profound wackiness and of off-the-wall inventions have taken the arts of music and comedy to unparalleled heights of hilarity.

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Juno Award winner Al Simmons is a creative genius whose highly original performances of profound wackiness and of off-the-wall inventions have taken the arts of music and comedy to unparalleled heights of hilarity.
Soldiers with 2 PPCLI (red) face off against 1 Royal Canadian Horse Artillery (white) during a ball hockey game on Jan. 17 at the Edmonton Garrison Fitness Centre. The game was part of Exercise Strong Contender that took place from Jan. 14 to 18, and involved approximately 1,000 military members in 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group. Other competitions included ice hockey, soccer, volleyball and powerlifting.

—photo by Grant Cree
A soldier with 1 Combat Engineer Regiment (red, #32) lunges the ball over the net during a volleyball game against the Lord Strathcona’s Horse (Royal Canadians) on Jan. 17 at the Edmonton Garrison Fitness Centre. The game was part of Exercise Strong Contender that took place from Jan. 14 to 18, and involved approximately 1,000 military members in 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group. Other competitions included ice hockey, ball hockey, soccer, volleyball and powerlifting. --photo by Grant Cree
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3 ACRES WITH HOME AND SHOP BY MORINVILLE

This is a great opportunity! Rare find of 3.9 acres, immediately west of Morinville. The land is less than 1/4 mile of gravel. Almost 1400 sq ft 2 bedroom, 2 bath home with large concept great room & full finished basement. It features vaulted ceilings, windows, skylights, & brick fireplace. Large 3 season sunroom to the east and a 30’x50’ shop to the west.

This home features a large master bedroom with walk in closet and 4 piece bath. There is a walkout bsmt & 32’x26’ heated garage on .28 acres in the walkout bsmt & 32’x26’ heated garage on .28 acres.

$230,000. Call Glenn to view.

$599,900 Call Glenn to view

BUNGALOW NEAR ST ALBERT

Typical bungalow in Thorhill with many upgrades in the past few years. Includes both furnaces (one is only 2 years old), 2 basements, strapped, wood cabinets, sunken LR, huge fenced in yard with shed, concrete patio & storage shed. The double attached garage is partially insulated & finished & has a newer overhead door. Nothing left to do here except bring your furniture.

$289,900. Call Glenn to view.

3 BEDROOM BUNGALOW IN THORHILL ONLY $35,000

Nestled in a quiet and peaceful area in Thorhill, this 3 bedroom bungalow in Thorhill with main floor carpeting or newer floors. Many upgrades in the past. The last 10 years includes both furnaces, both basements, strapped, wood cabinets, sunken LR, huge fenced in yard with shed, concrete patio & storage shed.

$248,800. Call Heather to view.

5 ACRES WITH 2 BEDROOM TWIN PLEASURE LOT BY REDWATER

3.1 acres bordering the Town of Redwater. The owner formerly operated a welding/manufacturing/millwright business here. The land includes 1800 sq ft house, workshop, 3 phase power, 14x14' overhead, in-floor heat, 10 hp at 7000 & throughout in monorail. There is also a 30’x50’ shop with office space, 30’/50” attached garage & stack link enclosed. Double attached garage & separate shop. Concrete patio & landscaping with some of mature trees. The property is in a great location and has mature trees. It is in a great location and has mature trees.

$229,900. Call Heather for more information.

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$229,900. Call Heather for more information.
Audiences in Morinville and the Sturgeon County area have the opportunity to learn about the discrimination experienced by black settlers in Alberta and Saskatchewan in the early 1900s when the documentary, ‘We are the Roots: Black Settlers and Their Experiences of Discrimination on the Cana-dian Prairies’, screens at the Morinville Community Cultural Centre on Feb 25th. Morinville Public Library and the Town of Morinville are teaming up to bring this award-winning project to town.

The film was first shown last year in Edmonton in February during Black History Month and it went on to win several high-profile awards, including the Elizabeth B. Mason Project Award and the Oral History profile awards, including the Elizabeth B. Mason Project Award and the Oral History

The history project was the brainchild of Deborah Dobbins, president of Edmonton’s Shiloh Centre for Multicultural Roots (SCMR). She teamed up with Drs. Jenna Bailey and David Este. Bailey, who grew up here in Sturgeon County, is an adjunct history professor and senior research fellow at the University of Lethbridge’s Centre for Oral History and Tradition (COHT). Este is a professor in the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Calgary.

“It is with deep appreciation and gratitude that we receive these awards,” says Dobbins. “SCMR is humbled by these honours that acknowledge our human-rights struggle is an important part of history that needs to be brought to light.”

In making the film, Bailey and Este interviewed 19 second- and third-generation individuals from the families of the original settlers who left the United States to come to Western Canada between 1905 and 1912. Between 1,000 and 1,500 African Americans came to Canada, largely settling in the small rural Alberta communities of Amber Valley, Campsie, Wildwood and Breton, and Maidstone in Saskatchewan.

“it’s a fascinating history,” says Bailey. “I learned a lot about discrimination in Alberta. What comes through in their stories is resilience. One woman said, ‘It’s just a part of who we are; it’s part of our daily lives.’”

Since December 2017 Sturgeon Refinery has produced over 10 million barrels of diesel from synthetic crude, maintained an industry leading safety record, and celebrated a multi-award winning Shiloh Centre for Multicultural Roots Oral History Project as well as the Coyote Films Pioneer Oral History Project which was also awarded the Governor General’s History Award for Excellence in Community Programming in 2015. In addition to her work as a community oral historian, Bailey is a scholar in British women’s history and is the author of the best-selling non-fiction book ‘Can Any Mother Help Me?’ published by Faber and Faber. She is currently working on her next book about Ivy Benson’s Ali Girl Band.
The Government of Alberta is making sure highway construction crews stay safe, while helping the flow of traffic through construction zones.

Contractors are now required to cover speed reduction signage in a construction zone when no workers are present and if there are no safety concerns.

The government is also limiting the distance of highway lane closures, making sure signs leading to construction zones are consistent and creating longer transition zones for slowing down.

“One of the major complaints we hear every year is that reduced speed limits are enforced when it’s obvious no work is occurring at the construction site. These changes will make sure our construction workers are safe as they build our roadways, while also helping commuters spend less time in traffic and more time doing the things they love,” states Brian Mason, Minister of Transportation.

Safety remains the highest priority for road construction projects. Speed reductions will continue to be enforced when and where necessary to protect highway workers and the travelling public. Speed fines will continue to be doubled when highway workers are present.

Construction zone requirements include:

- More consistent use of road construction signage.
- Limiting the distance of lane closures in construction zones, in most cases to a maximum of three kilometres.
- Speed zone reductions reflect potential safety hazards and range from 50 km/hr to 100km/hr, even when workers are not present.
- More gradual speed reductions through construction zones.
- Longer distances for speed transition zones in advance of construction zones.
- More frequent use of electronic speed displays and rumble strips to slow traffic at the actual construction site.

Nominate your choice for Alberta’s highest honour

Albertans are invited to nominate remarkable citizens, community leaders and innovators for membership in the Alberta Order of Excellence.

Up to 10 people will be inducted into the Order this year in recognition of remarkable contributions to their community, the province and the nation.

Nominations must be received by Feb. 15 to be considered for investiture this year. Nominations received after that date, and nominations not selected in 2019, may be held and considered for up to three years.

Nominees must be Canadian citizens residing in Alberta and, if selected, must be able to attend the investiture ceremony in October. People cannot nominate themselves, their spouse or a member of their immediate family.

Information about the Order, including nomination guidelines, nomination forms and biographies of previous inductees, is available on the Alberta Order of Excellence website at lieutenantgovernor.ab.ca/aoe.

Information and nomination forms are also available by calling 780-449-0517.

Who needs to skate when you have friends who’d rather pile up on top of each other?! Ecole Notre Dame Elementary School Kindergarten students (L-R): Michael Schaub, Carson Aldous, Nixon Sturgess, and Lucas Watson enjoyed a brief ice wrestle during their class field trip to the Ray McDonald Sports Center in Morinville on Jan. 15th.

Happy New Year!

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Happy New Year!

Open Monday - Saturday!
Embracing Your Child’s Early Learning Experience.

At Sturgeon Public School Division, we work hand-in-hand with parents/guardians to bring out the individual strengths and unique personalities of each little learner, while starting them on the path to a bright and promising future.

PRESCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN OPEN HOUSES

Join us at one of our Open Houses – learn more about our “Preschool Programs, and check out what our Kindergarten Programs have to offer.

MORINVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL - January 24
6:00pm - Preschool Programs
6:45pm - Kindergarten - English and French Immersion
Childcare available - email Judy at judy.santerre@sturgeon.ab.ca

NAMAO SCHOOL - February 5
6:00pm - Preschool Programs
6:45pm Kindergarten
Childcare available - email Natasha at natasha.paquette@sturgeon.ab.ca

OCHRE PARK SCHOOL - February 5
6:30pm - Kindergarten

LANDING TRAIL SCHOOL - February 11
5:30pm - Kindergarten

CAMILLA SCHOOL - February 28
6:30pm - Kindergarten

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS
Interested in our Preschool or Kindergarten Enrichment Program? Please ensure that you complete and bring with you to the Open House, the Initial In-Take Form that can be found on our website at www.sturgeon.ab.ca, simply click the Open House ad on the homepage.

PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS include HEADSTART for children who require support for speech-language and/or fine motor skills and/or social skills.
ENRICHMENT for children who are assessed as being “cognitively advanced”. Children must be screened and qualify for these programs under Alberta Education guidelines.

MINIMUM AGE REQUIREMENTS
Children must meet the minimum age requirements by September 1, 2019 to be eligible for the 2019/2020 school year.

• PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS minimum age: 2 years, 8 months – those with significant needs;
  3 years, 8 months – those with mild to moderate needs
• KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM minimum age: 4 years, 6 months
Four Winds Public School

Welcoming students in grades 5 to 9 for the 2019/2020 school year

Four Winds Public School – 545 Grandin Drive, Morinville, AB

Information Night

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24, 2019

Drop by our information table, and discover why registering for Four Winds is a step toward an inspiring educational journey.

6:00 PM Information Session
Morinville Public School
10020 101 Ave, Morinville, AB

FOUR WINDS PUBLIC SCHOOL
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- Where students, grades 5 to 9 discover their passion and reach their full potential.
- Where the school’s philosophy is as innovative and flexible as its environment.
- Where students leave grade 9 well prepared for the future.

sturgeon.ab.ca
Heartland sees government support, alignment as key to ensuring industrial investment

The Alberta Industrial Heartland Association (AIHA) 2019 annual Stakeholder Event attracted a sold out crowd of 1,000 stakeholder and industry representatives from across Alberta and around the world.

AIHA executive director Mark Plamondon said, “A crucial element to ensuring these investments are made here in Alberta is government support and alignment. Alberta’s Industrial Heartland is a key economic driver of the province’s economy, with potential for $30 billion in new investment by 2030.”

The crowd packed Edmonton’s Shaw Conference Centre to hear the Jan. 17 line-up of presenters. Premier Rachel Notley, updates on emerging high-profile projects in Alberta’s Industrial Heartland, discussions on the economic impact of the current political landscape, and an entertaining keynote presentation by Rick Mercer from CBC’s award-winning show, The Rick Mercer Report.

Notley spoke to companies who are looking to invest billions of dollars in facilities in Alberta’s Industrial Heartland.

AIHA chair Fort Saskatchewan mayor Gale Katchur opened the conference with a welcome, then Plamondon presented AIHA’s year in review.

Government of Alberta Chief Economist Catherine Rothrock gave an economic update; industry updates were presented by Inter Pipeline, Sheritt International, North West Redwater Partnership and Enhance Energy.

Feature speaker Mark Eramo, IHS Markit, gave The State of the Petrochemicals Industry talk.

The Feature Panel, consisting of Mark Plamondon, Malcolm Bruce, Dan Seele, talked with Competitiveness in a Changing Economic Landscape.

Keynote Speaker Rick Mercer wrapped up the day.

The AIHA is a co-operative effort of Lamont County, Strathcona County, Sturgeon County, and the Cities of Edmonton, and Fort Saskatchewan. It is dedicated to co-ordinating, advocating, and promoting sustainable industrial development in the Heartland region.

Morinville expected to unanimously award another contract to a town councillor

It is expected the town of Morinville council will unanimously approve administration’s recommendation that a business with a declared pecuniary interest by council. Stephen Daley be awarded a contract for up to $10,000 in town advertising effective Feb. 1, 2019.

Under the town’s Fiscal Principles, Practices and Policies (8/2008) administration is to have obtained competitive written quotes, however there is no reference to agreements and documentation going to council on Jan. 22 regarding such quotes. The policy states: “Written competitive quotations are to be obtained for goods and services between $2,500.00 and $20,000.00.”

However, the policy also has a section which allows the requirement for competitive quotes to be bypassed, simply by having a contract approved by council. The town’s fiscal principles policy has no direct reference to contracts to councillors.

While the documentation going to council contains numerous statements of detail on how administration will not make the contract public, there is no detail on the number of written quotes it sought and how businesses were made aware the town was requesting quotes. No specs were posted on the town’s website regarding the contract quote request. Daley’s business interest has been awarded a contract many times, with the terms kept secret, and minimal or no questions from the remaining councilors who approve the action unanimously. The town has spent over $100,000 in contracts awarded to the councillor in the years he has served in the position.

Coun. Scott Richardson had funding for an alley going behind his business removed from the town’s 2019 operating budget and voted on separately after declaring a pecuniary interest. He voted on the rest of the budget (without the alley) and the remaining members of council made the decision on the alley funding without his presence. Those six council members who approve the action unanimously. The town has spent over $100,000 in contracts awarded to the councillor in the years he has served in the position.

The freeholder said: “Written competitive quotations are to be obtained for goods and services between $2,500.00 and $20,000.00.”

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This week in Morinville photo enforcement will be conducted in the following areas:

- Cardiff Rd
- Grandin Dr
- Morinville Dr
- Sunnydale Road
- East Boundary Rd
- 96 St
- 100 St
- 104 St
- 107 St
- 100 Ave
- 101 Ave
- All School zones
- All Playground zones
- All other areas where speeding is a concern

NOTICE

A soldier with 3 PPCLI (red, #12) smashes the ball over the net during a volleyball game against 1 PPCLI on Jan. 17 at the Edmonton Garrison Fitness Centre. The game was part of Exercise Strong Contender that took place from Jan. 14 to 18, and involved approximately 1,000 military members in 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group. Other competitions included ice hockey, ball hockey, volleyball and powerlifting. – photo by Grant Cree

Count to rule on councillor expense payments for first half of last year

Sturgeon County has an unusual motion to consider on Jan. 22. The agenda shows a motion from coun. Patrick Tighe “that Council direct Administration to process expense claims submitted by Councillor Patrick D. Tighe for May and June 2018 and by Councillor (Wayne) Bokenfohr for the period January – June 2018.”

As background it states, “This is due to challenges with electronic hardware and software during the 2018 year.”

There is no detail on the dollar value involved or the reason stated in the agenda package for the issue not being resolved before the new calendar year.

Town spends majority of time in closed session

The town of Morinville continues to conduct its business in closed door sessions out of the eyes of the public.

Minutes from the first regular meeting of 2019 shows that council conducted business in public session for a total of 38 minutes.

In contrast, council spent 2 hours and 17 minutes in closed session.

The 38 minute figure includes an 11 minute recess and three minutes of public business after returning from closed session at the end of the Jan. 9 meeting when council passed five resolutions. All five passed unanimously.

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PLEASE SLOW DOWN!!

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Seniors need volunteer drivers and funded alternate transportation programs

Don’t let the myth of increased insurance premiums deter you from becoming a volunteer driver and participating in programs such as taking local seniors to appointments or events.

That was one message Dr. Bonnie Dobbs, University of Alberta Department of Family Medicine professor and director of the Medically At-Risk Driver Centre (MARD), gave Town of Gibbons council when she asked for their support in advocating for funding of alternate transportation for seniors (ATS).

“Dispelling that myth is very important to get volunteer drivers,” said Dobbs Jan. 9. She urged potential volunteers who are told otherwise by their insurance companies to ask them to check the documents provided by the Insurance Bureau of Canada.

“There’s a maximum number of kms a volunteer driver can do without an insurance increase,” Dobbs said. “Most people don’t exceed it.” She noted that while volunteer drivers can not be paid, they can be compensated for fuel and other costs and possibly receive an honorarium for mileage.

That knowledge is important because volunteer drivers are a crucial resource for seniors. While more than 85 percent of seniors aged 65 possess drivers licenses by age 80 only 45 percent of seniors have licenses.

Of those senior drivers, many have medical impairments.

“We have many older adults with medical conditions and functionality who still drive,” said Dobbs. “People who can’t see to read a newspaper still drive. One third of individuals with early dementia are behind the wheel.”

Dobbs reported that having a license does not mean seniors can get to appointments and services. Four percent of senior drivers and 17 percent of senior non-drivers sometimes or often miss medical appointments.

“Who has less ability to access essential services such as going to grocery or drug stores, that increases to six percent for drivers and 27 percent for non-drivers,” Dobbs said.

Even more seniors sometimes or often miss out on recreation, leisure and religious activities, with seven percent of drivers and 34 percent of non-drivers unable to attend these activities.

“We have seniors in Edmonton and Calgary who are as socially isolated as seniors in rural Alberta,” said Dobbs. She explained that part of the problem is many are physically or financially unable to use public transit or taxi services.

Coun. Darren McCann asked if aging in place is a feasible option for seniors.

“Seniors to appointments or events. ATS programs are looking at different ways to make things work more smoothly, including hiring specialist clinics book blocks of appointments geographically,” she said.

The Seniors Grant which the Sturgeon Region Rural Municipalities Association (SRMRA) received in April is another way the province is supporting development of ATS.

“It has been an extraordinary grant to work with,” said Dobbs.

She noted surveys show most seniors are willing to pay more than they can afford, but there are ways to make ATS service available to those who can not afford it. ATS programs require funding beyond the fees charged to passengers, and that is a challenge. She briefly discussed with council options such as fully tax claimable donations, having the option of donating when renewing driver’s licenses, municipal contributions, and requesting cannabis tax revenue from governments.

Among the work done by the Sturgeon group was the determination that advocacy through the Rural Municipalities Association and the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association is needed. Following Dobbs’ presentation council unanimously passed motion calling for their support in advocating for funding of alternate transportation for seniors in the province, only 25 percent of organizations in the province have ATS.

“There’s a maximum number of kms a volunteer driver can do without an insurance increase,” Dobbs said. “Most people don’t exceed it.” She noted that while volunteer drivers can not be paid, they can be compensated for fuel and other costs and possibly receive an honorarium for mileage.

That knowledge is important because volunteer drivers are a crucial resource for seniors. While more than 85 percent of seniors aged 65 possess drivers licenses by age 80 only 45 percent of seniors have licenses.

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Gibbons council continues to alternate between morning and evening meetings

Gibbons council will continue to hold its regular meetings in a morning/evening rotation as it did in 2018.

In a four-three split vote, council passed Lorraine Berry’s motion to continue to hold council meetings on the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month. The council held its first meeting at 10:00 a.m. and the second meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Dan Deck, Berry and councillors Jay Mil- lante and Norm Sandahl voted in favor of the motion while councillors Darren McCann, Amber Harris and Jean Woodger voted in opposition.

Berry favored having evening and daytime meet- ings because it makes council meetings open to the public. Most people would have to take time off work to attend a daytime meeting but can more easily attend evening meetings. She said that, while the number of people attending meetings is not huge, council needs to be perceived as open.

Deck supported having half the meetings in the evening and half in the daytime because it makes council meetings open to the public. Manufacturing council’s work, including commission and foundation meetings, is done during the day, because it is when most department heads and councillors’ work is done. In a meeting at 7:00 p.m. everyone has put in a full day and is tired, and the evening meetings are not required because issues of importance are taken to open house events for the public.

McCann said it is fiscally responsible to hold only daytime meetings that occur during staff’s normal working hours. “I don’t feel it’s necessary to have one evening meeting per month,” McCann said. “We’ve had numerous open houses with no one or less than a handful of people attending.” He surveyed some residents and was told councillors were elected to make decisions, so residents do not need to attend the meetings.

Harris said it is evident by the lack of public attend- ance at meetings that evening meetings are not required. “I would be more inclined to be in favor of it if it wasn’t done to encourage more full time working people to run for council,” she said. That said, she point- ed out that the majority of council’s work, including commission and foundation meetings, is done during the day, because it is when most department heads and councillors’ work is done.

During the organizational meeting council passed a motion that evening meetings are not required because issues of importance are taken to open house events for the public.

Woodger felt holding all council meetings in the daytime is “the only way.” She said that by 7:00 p.m. everyone has put in a full day and is tired, and the evening meetings are not required because issues of importance are taken to open house events for the public.

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Working the other way, it is important for the town’s leadership team to listen to and understand council’s desires and decisions in order to efficiently carry out their work.

“For the citizens, we need to have the brain power in the room,” said O’Malley.

The date and times of council meetings are usually set during the annual organi- zational meeting. Sandahl was absent from the October 2018 organizational meeting at which council had no votes resulting in no motion being passed either for all daytime meetings or for morning and evening meetings. Under the Municipal Government Act a tie vote is a lost motion.

During the organizational meeting council resolved to set the time and dates of its meetings at the next regular meeting with all of council in attendance. That occurred Jan. 9.

A soldier with 2 PPCLI (left) kicks the ball during a soccer competition against the Lord Strathcona’s Horse (Royal Canadians) on Jan. 16 at the Edmonton Garrison Fitness Centre. The game was part of Exercise Strong Contender that took place from Jan. 14 to 18, and involved approximately 1,000 military members in 1 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group. Other competitions included ice hockey, ball hockey, volleyball and powerlifting.

--photo by Grant Cree
LALLIER APARIES INC 56401 Rge Rd 11, Sturgeon County AB T0B 0T1, requires four beekeeper technicians (NOC 8431) seasonal April thru September. $15-$20/hr. Job duties: all aspects of beekeeping and hive maintenance. Feeding and tending bees, detect diseases and treat accordingly, harvest honey. Valid drivers license required. No formal education but two years experience required. Call 780-884-4081.

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The Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) in and around Alberta’s Industrial Heartland had significantly higher times of poor air quality in 2018 than in 2017. In 2017, there were only 57 hours of high or very high risk readings. In 2018, the number was 849 (nearly 1,400 percent higher).

Fort Air Partnership (FAP), the organization that monitors the air local residents breathe, reported the 2018 annual total was largely influenced by poor air quality conditions in August caused by wildfire smoke, predominantly coming from British Columbia. FAP released its 2018 regional air quality monitoring results Jan. 7.

In Redwater, the 138 high risk and eight very high risk hours all occurred in August. Mayor Mel Smith said he finds it reassuring that the times of poor air quality were not caused by industry. “If it had been due to industry, we wouldn’t be getting any more plants,” he said.

Gibbon’s had in November and 14 very high risk hours with 119 of the high risk hours and all of the very high risk hours occurring in August. Gibbons had 11 high risk hours attributed to water inversions with the remaining four high risk hours caused by summertime smog and smoke from unknown sources.

“I find it incredibly reassuring that poor air quality is not caused by industry,” said mayor Dan Deck. “I think this is a testamento to how conscientious and forward thinking our industry is in the Heartland. Not only do they want to be successful, they are also responsible stewards of our environment.”

The portable air monitoring station began operating in Bon Accord in April 2018. The 72 high risk and 12 very high risk hours reported in Bon Accord all occurred during the August wildfires.

Despite the significant impact of wildfire smoke on air quality readings in August, FAP still recorded low risk readings the majority of the time in 2018. The Lacombe County station had the most low risk readings at 91 percent of the time, while Fort Saskatchewan had the least amount of low risk readings, at 83 percent of the time.

Gibbons had low risk readings 86 percent of the time. Redwater 89 percent and Bon Accord 90 percent of the time. High and very high risk readings were recorded 1.7 percent of the time in Gibbons and Redwater and 1.4 percent of the time in the town of Bon Accord.

FAP Communications Director Godfrey Huybrechts advised the total number of hours that FAP collected AQHI readings in 2018 increased by 31 percent over 2017 because it had a full year of data from the Redwater station, which began operating in November 2017, plus the nine months of monitoring in Bon Accord.

During 2018 across FAP’s 10 monitoring stations there were 957 occurrences where air quality measurements exceeded Alberta’s Ambient Air Quality Objectives. Ninety-seven percent of these exceedances were due to high concentrations of Respirable Particulate Matter (PM2.5) caused by wildfire smoke. A small number of PM2.5 exceedances were due to wintertime temperature inversions, grass fires or summertime smog. Exceedances recorded for other substances were attributed to summertime smog, local industry or wetlands.

Local residents can check the forecast and daily AQHI at fortacc.org. The website also has a live data feed for a variety of substances FAP measures, and weekly, quarterly and annual statistical results.

The AQHI is calculated by the Government of Alberta using data collected at FAP air monitoring stations. The AQHI describes the level of health risk associated with each of four different levels. These levels are categorized as low, moderate, high and very high. The higher the level, the greater the risk to health. Seven of FAP’s 10 continuous air monitoring stations monitor the substances required to calculate the AQHI.
The use of public utility lots in Cardiff Echoes.

...traces the history of the issue back to the early 1980s, noting, “the developer for Cardiff Echoes went bankrupt and, as a result, land was left unattended and unmanaged. Many residents during this time indicated that there were informal agreements made between landowners and the County allowing landowners to take on land management of public utility lots themselves.”

Administration notes that prior to 1994, Council and Administration resolved land use concerns (i.e. neighbour disputes and encroachments) on an individual basis. “In 1994, a public meeting was held between residents, Administration and Council in Cardiff, to address issues and concerns around specific land use. During this meeting, Policy UTL-LOT-1 (1994) was created.”

However, “nearly 13 years later, disputes continued. On November 27, 2007, a Request for Decision was taken to Council to amend Policy UTL-LOT-1. During the Council meeting, Council members requested that Administration survey Cardiff residents, with the purpose of collecting the views of stakeholders around the use of Public Utility Lots in the area.”

Since then several surveys, consultations with residents, policies, and at least one consultant have been involved in trying to come up with a workable solution.

Administration is submitting five options for approaches to address the situation and recommending Approach #2 to council: “Maintain Private Uses on Public Lands. In this approach, the Country would honour (grandfather) the intent of the existing agreements surrounding PUL 62 with the provision that existing agreements are amended aligning with legal council recommendations.” Public Utility Lot 62 was chosen as the pilot for addressing the situation.

Administration commented that “Legal review of Approach 2 indicated that these agreements would need to be amended with a fixed timeframe. Administration recommends a 1-year timeframe following Council decision for agreements to be finalized with affected landowners adjacent to PUL 62. The amended agreement would be in place for a maximum 10-year period or expire at the time of title transfer, whichever comes first. At the sole discretion of the County, an agreement may be extended to the new property owner. All improvements will need to be removed at the sole cost of the title owner prior to expiration of the agreement.” Other options to approach the issue range from maintaining the status quo (first come, first serve basis for private use); to disposal of surplus land; to returning all land for public use (remove private improvements and restore to grass); and maintaining land for public use (slowly discontinue private use as adjacent private property titles sold or use changed). With five presentations by members of the public booked for the Jan. 22 meeting on the issue of Public Utility Lots, the topic is continuing to be a point of contention even after decades.

**County trying to solve Cardiff public utility lot conflicts**

**Bon Accord home, vehicle searches result in drug seizures**

Morinville RCMP seized a variety of drugs from a home and vehicle in Bon Accord and a 41 year old man was arrested for possession for the purpose of trafficking. On Jan. 8, the General Investigation Section of the Morinville RCMP executed a search warrant on a residence in Bon Accord after receiving information relating to the making and sale of illegal drugs from this home. On Jan. 10th, a second search warrant was executed on a vehicle linked to the same residence, for illegal drugs.

As a result of both search warrants, police seized several substances including but not limited to:

- Approximately 90 grams of suspected Methamphetamine
- Approximately 649 grams of suspected MDMA;
- and approximately 5 litres of suspected GHB and/or its byproducts.

The investigation remains ongoing, according to police on Jan. 15.