



## **Council Highlights**



### **REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING - February 13, 2018**

#### **2018 County Budget**

- Athabasca County Council has been working with administration over the last several months to review and finalize the 2018 draft budget.
- The Budget & Finance Committee passed a resolution to recommend approval of the balanced 2018 draft budget at the Council meeting. It was approved as presented.
- Up to a 2% increase in property taxes is projected in 2018. However, it won't be until final property assessment figures, the Alberta Education requisition, and the Greater North Foundation requisition are received that a Tax Rate Bylaw can be brought to council for consideration and approval.
- There have been no municipal property tax increases in the last two years. Council carefully considers the financial situation of our region and the work needed in the County before making a decision to increase property taxes.
- The Tax Rate Bylaw is anticipated to be brought to Council in early April.

#### **Canada Post refunds charges**

- A letter received from Canada Post confirms refunds will be given to residents who were affected by the changes to PO box service in 2017.
- In addition, residents who live in other communities but have previously had postal delivery at the Athabasca post office as their primary box will be able to maintain their box free of charge.
- Those who have been charged a rental fee for the 2018 year are invited to contact Canada Post at 1-866-607-6301 to arrange a refund.
- After hearing concerns from residents, Athabasca County contacted Canada Post on numerous occasions in 2017 to ask for these changes and is happy for this outcome.

#### **Boyle Fitness Centre supported**

- Athabasca County Council has agreed to assist the Boyle Fitness Centre over the next two years. The centre was previously operated by a parent school advisory group and shares space in a stand-alone building with the Boyle Youth Centre.
- Peter Golanski, president of a newly formed Boyle Health and Fitness Committee, presented financials for the facility and explained the group is in the process of formalizing its non-profit status to enable it to access different forms of fundraising.
- Council agreed to assist the organization and continue with a \$12,000 contribution for each of the next two years. It is hoped the funding will give the organization time to find a self-sustaining funding model.

#### **Graders bought back**

- Athabasca County Council recently approved the purchase of four new graders to help maintain County roads. To provide optimal service, the Infrastructure Services Department replaces graders once their hours of service for the graders reaches a certain point.
- Two of the graders in service reached the service limit of 8,000 hrs and were traded-in as part of a guaranteed buy-back program. The County received \$160,000 for each of the graders from Finning Canada Ltd.
- Two more graders are expected to reach their service limit shortly and will be replaced in the same manner.

#### **Letter of Support**

- Council received a request from the Athabasca Regional Victim Services Society for a letter of support as part of the process of submitting an application for funding.
- Members of Council thanked members of the society for all they do and agreed to fulfill their request.