

JULY 2016 NEWSLETTER

Council Summer Holidays

July 11 to Aug 26, 2016

Next Council Meeting

Monday, Aug 29, 2016
at 6:00 pm

Next MPC Meeting

Monday, Sept 12, 2016
at 6:00 pm

Thank you Grade 4's

The Town of Sundre would like to THANK the Grade 4 classes that participated in the annual planting of the Town's planters around town.



They did a wonderful job.

Community Services

Official By Election results

Congratulations to **NOLAN BLATCHFORD**, the newly elected Councillor following our June 21st, 2016 By-election.

Nolan Blatchford 104 votes
Tamara Smith 53 Votes

Gas pipeline Leak Surveyors

The Town of Sundre Gas department has contracted out our bi-yearly **gas pipeline leak survey** for the week of June 27 to Bajimax Surveys. **The surveyors will be entering yards** to find any leaks on the gas system. They will have ID and be wearing reflective clothing. Any concerns please contact the Town operations dept at [403 638 4707](tel:4036384707).

ATTENTION: Valued Customers of Sundre

As there is potential for **interruption to our postal delivery services by Canada Post**, we wanted to advise our customers that **you are still responsible for paying your Utility Bill in full and on time**. Utility billings are issued no later than the 10th day of each month and are due by the last day of each month.

Please review our online payment options or contact our office for payment information to avoid any issues that may result from late or nonpayment of your bill.

Watch what goes in the bins.

The Town of Sundre Operations, Emergency Management and Fire Department reminds residents and businesses to be aware of the type of refuse, compost and recycled items that are placed in the various bins for pick up by contractors.

Recently a non-identifiable fluid was found to have leaked from a garbage cart, which was collected by our Contractor. These leaks can easily find their way into our wastewater and storm system piping and enter the river systems in our region. If you see leaks of any kind please contact the Town emergency on-call number @ [403 638 7350](tel:4036387350) or the Fire Department @ 911. Lets all do our part to protect our town and the environment.

Jim Hall, Operations Manager
Deputy Director of Emergency Management

The Town of Sundre Office will be closed Monday, August 01, 2016, for observance of Heritage Day.

Garbage/Compost/ Recycling

July 14 - Garbage
July 21 - Compost
July 28 - Recycling
Aug 4 - Garbage



Background Notes from the Mayor's Desk - June 26, 2016

Is the Town of Sundre viable? A municipality that is non-viable is one that is broke with more debt than residents have any hope of repaying. An article in the June 21st Gazette quoted a Mountain View County Councillor asking whether Sundre is viable. I just happened to be attending the Mountain View County Council meeting the next day so I got the chance to answer the question.

Yes, the Town of Sundre is viable. A viability review is taken on by Alberta Municipal Affairs if a Council requests it. Our Council is not requesting a viability review, and is not considering it in any distant future.

I gave the following examples to Mountain View County Council as evidence that we are certainly a viable municipality:

- Since September of 2014, the Town of Sundre has gone from a 41% debt ratio to a 31% debt ratio because we have been aggressively paying down debenture debt, in anticipation of taking on borrowing debt to pay for the expansion of our wastewater treatment plant, which is at capacity;
- We put over \$1 million dollars in reserves last year (when we had budgeted to put away \$865,000) because we know we have to put money away so we can reduce the cost of borrowing for future projects;
- We probably have more cash reserves, proportionally, than Mountain View County, put away to pay for future water and wastewater upgrades (since we put every surplus \$ away);
- We spent almost \$1 million dollars on two infrastructure projects last summer to replace very old, and leaking, water and wastewater pipes to reduce infiltration problems within their systems, (we "are on" these issues);
- We have budget money set aside every year to repair and replace leaks in underground lines, and our staff continuously monitors, and prioritizes those projects;
- Council just approved a \$50,000 expenditure to gather "big picture data" on where the worst sections of underground lines are, so we can put in place a longer "plan" to prioritize replacement, set multi-year budget targets, while keeping the cost for ratepayers as affordable as possible (this will be required in the new Municipal Government Act [MGA] revisions);
- We spent almost \$1 million last year on the improvements to 10th Street, which involved improvements to water and wastewater lines, as well as laying a conduit for future broadband expansion (we shortened the plan for that project from 3 years to 1 year);
- We are capitalizing on the fact that we are a tourist destination and we are seeing more tourists in Sundre and the West Country than ever before, bringing increased inflows of capital to our community;
- We are growing. The Provincial government estimates our population to be almost 3100, when the last census indicated a population of 2695 (growth and assessment increases help keep taxes down).

My statement to Mountain View County Council was that anyone who would suggest Sundre was not viable was simply misinformed. I had the chance to inform them of the facts. I asked for a show of hands to indicate if there was a majority of Mountain View County Council that believed Sundre was not viable. The question about whether Sundre was viable was not an opinion shared by a majority of County Councillors.

Our community is Sundre *and* District. Our municipalities must work together in the same way our volunteers do. The revisions to the new MGA will require cooperation and collaboration. We will work with Mountain View County to develop joint applications for regional solutions to water and wastewater issues.

We have some big questions to wrestle with. The fact that every municipality in our country is facing infrastructure issues and infrastructure debt is the reason why you continually hear both Provincial and Federal governments talking about funding programs to help municipalities. The only way to deal with the issues of our time is to do more "working together" than we ever have. All levels of government must recognize we all draw tax money from only one taxpayer - and that taxpayer expects all levels of government to work together to find solutions to those issues of our time.

As always, please call me if you wish to talk further about any of these issues (403-559-7352).

Terry Leslie, Mayor
Town of Sundre