

Coffee with Council  
Tuesday November 13, 2025  
6:00 pm  
MD Administration Office

Attendees:

Reeve Rick Lemire, Deputy Reeve Tony Bruder, Councillor Dave Cox, Jim Welsch and John MacGarva, CAO Roland Milligan, Public Works Manager Alan McRae, Development Officer Laura McKinnon, CPO Robyn Potter, and Executive Assistant Jessica McClelland.

Audience:

Approximately 44 residents are in attendance, from various divisions.

Reeve Rick Lemire opened the meeting, welcomed everyone for attending. Reminded people where the emergency exits and washrooms are.

Council introduced themselves and staff that are in attendance.

Reeve Lemire reminded residents that there was no set agenda for the meeting, requested that people keep it civil, and opened the floor to questions.

- MD responses in bullet points.

Draft Traffic Bylaw 1365-25

License of Occupation (LOC)/Road Allowance Rental:

MD clarified the following:

- Overview of what the MD is proposing, this is not being a new process, License of Occupations have been around since early 2000's.
- Road allowances are being fenced into land, MD is not aware of who Crown lands are being used by.
- Renting of the road allowances promotes grazing.
- MD isn't closing the road allowances, this is a process for landowners to continue to use them.

Texas Gates:

Concerns about a Texas gate near Shoderee Ranch have been an ongoing issue between neighbours.

- MD can't comment on what was done historically.
- Files are better kept than historically.
- Suggestion to call the office to discuss a specific concern.

Who's responsible for weeds on the road allowance?

- The person who cultivated it and is using the land should be responsible

Resident requested a change to bylaw to allow a stipulation for current farm land that has been cultivated previously.

Can a road allowance be purchased?

- Yes, there is a process, it needs to be assured that the road would never be developed or needed for access to another property.
- Each application is individually looked at by Council prior to selling of the lands.
- Council has denied the purchase of roads that offer access to public lands, to ensure continued access.
- Council doesn't go looking for land to rent to people, or sell, its up to landowners that want to rent or possibly purchase.

MD should pay landowners for taking care of the land.

- The user of the land has the benefit of grazing that area.
- \$20 a year for that much grazing area is great value.
- Council isn't pro selling all the road allowances because if land changes hands and needs that road allowance for access, it is available.

Who is responsible if there is a fire?

- Person that starts the fire. Or the person who has care and control of the lands (leaseholder or Province).

Does it include historic roads? A registered road plan.

- Yes
- MD has the GIS map available on the website, and people can access the map to see if there is a statutory road plan, historic or otherwise.
- Reeve Lemire reminded us that in October we held an open house, and have been open for comments since that time.
- Advertised in the newspaper, on social media, website.
- People have been welcome to provide comments.
- Council will extend the deadline for comments.
- Bylaws are living documents and can be changed as needed.
- Bylaw is only at first reading, Council is asking for people to give their opinions or thoughts.

Concerns that if the lease holder has the liability, if there is no LOC, landowner doesn't have the liability.

People have cancelled their LOC's to avoid liability.

- No different than hay permits, the person using the land holds the liability.

Retired surveyor. Surveys can be incorrect, given the number of years ago that they were done. They were done with horse and buggy. If you have pins in your land, keep them. Original township grid, road allowances at each area. With new GIS system, you can see a lot more than if you walk the land. Statutory road allowances are in the care and control of the MD, but owned by the Crown. Many roads aren't completely on the proper area, given the amount of years and building of roads that were done.

Is there a pound for loose cattle on road allowances?

- Brand inspector or RCMP can do that, that's livestock act.

Snowdrifting on Road Allowances. How strict are you going to be on a drifting on road allowances that no one is driving on?

- Nothing is going to change with that.
- MD doesn't plow road allowances to begin with.
- CPO reminded them that the MD isn't coming in heavy handed, this is a tool we can follow if education doesn't work.
- Rounding up cattle and removing is the last tool to use, but this allows for process to follow if needed
- We are here to communicate, and not make things worse.

- Nothing is changed, it's just been brought to light.
- Reeve stated that we haven't had a CPO before, her job isn't to create income, there can be tickets attached if needed, but that isn't what the program is for.
- If this bylaw doesn't fit, we can change it, that's why we are asking for opinions.
- If it's not working, we change it.
- LOC's started due to neighbor disputes.
- MD isn't going out looking for them.

Because people can't get along, the rest of the community has to go with this new law?

- This isn't new, this practice has been in place for decades.

Road Allowances/Crown Land:

- People like to hunt, road allowances are crown land, and should be accessible to everyone.
- Lands should be used respectfully.
- It started as crown land; it isn't just to build a road.
- There is some entitlement of crown land, tearing up the land, ruining habitat.
- People with have requested to buy a road allowance, and turn and sell it for the highest price.
- Good stewardship should be encouraged.
- Farm family builds a generational place. Sells, and new guy finds out buildings and wells are in road allowance. What should the MD do? He wants to buy it, but what about future plans for someone who buys other lands and needs access.

Communications:

Has Council ever thought of asking ahead of time for people to send in questions?

- Hasn't been practice before, no reason that can't be in place.
- Anytime anyone has a question, they can call the office or a Councillor, no need to wait for a coffee meeting.

Concern on redline of changes being available online.

- With it being a new document, there aren't changes to show.
- MD held an open house, 10 people came.

Lack of knowledge of meetings.

- What else can the MD do to keep people informed?
- Newspaper, social media and website are all available.
- Electronic sign being built.

Regional Health Advisory Council:

(Reeve Lemire introduced resident on the board)

- Province recently appointed a regional advisory council, with 150 members from 71 communities, which will advise Alberta's four health ministries and the recently refocused health agencies:
- Primary Care Alberta, Acute Care Alberta, Assisted Living Alberta, and Recovery Alberta.
- Each council will explore solutions to local challenges and identify opportunities for the health system to better support community decision-making.
- Pincher Creek has two appointees, Barbara Boyer and Mayor Don Anderburg.
- How will open houses for the health committee be communicated?
  - Newspapers and website.

## Water Concerns:

- Council now received updates weekly from Alberta Agriculture and Irrigation.
- New vertical intakes have been installed at the dam.
- Alberta Environment is cautiously optimistic that the water level is holding.
- Looking at raw water storage
- Hauling water for livestock – MD is looking at ways to assist producers, going to AB environment, for raw water to water cattle.
- Currently looking at costs, feasibility, etc.
  
- MD has 5 dams, all are low, or empty
- Looking at starting user groups for the dams. MD controls dams, looking at perimeters and the integrity of the dam.
- Not about people who pump, its about the releases and people down stream.
- Used to be a landowner that maintained it, some still are, the rest is the MD, we need consistency.
- MD wants input from all users, not just the person opening the dam.
- Group meeting to happen in early new year.

Going forward would it be still for ag?

- Yes, that's why they were built, it will continue that way.
- Amalgamate so that we aren't turning on the tap for two people one day and then opening it for a couple more the next week.
- Looking at better communication to solve issues and coordination between users.

Theriault Dam already has low water. This would be a bad place for a dam and standpipe.

Does MD have more water license than others?

- No, MD doesn't have more water available than others.
- In the 80's so many acre feet were given to MD's
- Allotment is there for irrigation
- People are trying to get irrigation taken out of there
- MD would love to have raw water for ag in each division, it is something being looked at.

Why is MD against water coop?

- MD isn't against, that isn't the MD. That's AB Government.

Current news release on dam on St Mary's River.

- Around a colony, only proposed, not approved yet

Article from 1986 around the controversy of the Oldman Dam, Government was going to sell water into the states. Has MD ever thought of asking the Province to run a pipeline from the North to the South?

- North is struggling for water as well, it isn't just Southern Alberta.
- MD can ask, but it doesn't mean we will get it. Everyone wants their share.

## Beaver Mines:

Requesting access to the park, it was denied as it is private land. Any update?

- MD looked at developing land in the park, the BM residents didn't want it, and locals didn't mind a few cars parked on the road to access the park.

### Community Policing Initiative:

- Rural Crime Watch hasn't been very active.
- MD asking people to assist with the program as we are hearing people are unhappy with how its being administered.
- More volunteers are needed for the success of the program.
- Looking for a director in each division.

### Road Concerns:

- Call log used to be pages in length, now only the odd concern.

Grader should be at RR 20-4 at least two times a week.

- Yes, there are washboards. When it's this dry, you can be there daily without changing that; we need moisture.
- Grading that often is not feasible – there are 1200 km of road, can't redo the same road weekly.

Guys used to pull people out of ditches? Why not?

- Liability
- Plow operators would pull people out if it's imminent danger, at the very least, radio or call a tow truck.
- MD doesn't want to see people stranded – but if vehicles are damaged while towing vehicles, MD is held liable.

### Blue Sign Numbers

- Most is based on legal land description, its not an exact science, but it is close.
- When people call 911, information given can be given incorrect.

### Next Generation 911

- Over 2 years, the MD has had people take a photo and a pin, it is now gone to the province.
- There was a disconnect, you are talking to someone in Red Deer or further.
- With the new program, it will be an app for Emergency Services.
- Data collection is now with the Province.
- MD Council will be in Edmonton next week with the Ministers at RMA, and will ask for an update from the Province.

### Garbage Concerns:

Can we get a garbage bin in Cowley?

- Had one, wasn't being used by MD residents, and was constantly abused.
- It's a huge cost to all MD residents.
- Eco centre was built, MD removed other bins to save money and clean up the area.

Eco Centre – staff is very helpful and it seems to be working well.

### Status of Pincher Creek Airport:

- Committee was formed 5 of 6 years ago, fell to the side, looking at revamping.
- Town wasn't interested in participating
- In 1995 AB Gov had the airport manned 7 days a week with two full-time staff

- MD received a grant to upgrade lights on runway to allow for night flights.
- Currently looking at improving and making it a regional airport.
- Airport is currently priority 5 for plowing, MD started a fund with the Crownest Pass to be able to hire an emergency plowing as needed.
- Actively looking at getting it operational, either renting it as an airport authority, or running it through the MD.
- Many local commercial pilots and people that have knowledge of airports.
- Alberta SouthWest committee has hired an economic development officer for the region, on a two-year contract, one of his tasks is on airports.
- MD of Willow Creek has a very active airport.
- Currently no water or sewer, looking at ways to provide those services.

Draft Community Standards Bylaw 1366-25:

Anything new?

- Currently noise and unsightly premises are just being put into a single document.
- The rest didn't exist in the MD Bylaws, so it is all new.

Question on storage of unregistered vehicles and parts, does that need a permit if someone finds it unsightly?

- Comes down to education, MD isn't going out looking for issues.
- Has to be a reasonable complaint and is more so for the grouped country residential and hamlet areas with hoarding situations.
- Places that have 50 unsightly cars, blowing garbage and parts all over other lands are not just unattractive, if its unsafe, it will be addressed as needed.
- In 20 years, there has never been complaints on ranchers for the area, its hamlets.

Concerns that people aren't throwing things away out of use.

- We are complaint driven to look into things – no one is going out and counting vehicles, if its causing an issue, than it starts with education.
- It is community-driven and driven by Council.

Noise section – does it include ag?

- No.
- Council welcomes comments, this will come back to Council in December.
- Council thanks everyone for coming out. Appreciate taking the time. Call with your questions, Council, administration, all have an open door policy.

Meeting closed at 7:50 pm.