

Coffee with Council  
Tuesday, April 21, 2026  
6:00 pm  
Division 3 – Coalfields School

Attendees:

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

Also In Attendance:

Rural Crime Watch Members Blanche Lemire and Shelly Anne Dennis.

Audience:

Five (5) residents from Division No. 3 were in attendance.

Councillor Dave Cox opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Reminded people where the emergency exits and washrooms are.

Council introduced themselves and the staff who were in attendance.

Councillor Dave Cox 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.

Growth Study for Hamlet of Beaver Mines

- Following an update to the Oldman River Reservoir Area Structure Plan, the Oldman River Regional Services Commission will be conducting a Hamlet Growth Study for Beaver Mines.
- MD just finished the one for Lundbreck, which involved resident surveys and an open house.
- Residents will be mailed directly the information to take part in the feedback, as well as on social media and the website.

Community Peace Officer

- Introduction of CPO and explanation of the program.
- The majority of the program is community outreach and education.
- Working with the rural crime watch to get that program up and functioning.

Rural Crime Watch

- Rural Crime Watch has been reorganized and is taking some time to get operational; paperwork and such needed to be refiled for the society.
- New Executives are Anne Stevick, Blanch Lemire, Shelly Anne Dennis and Blanche Lemire
- They request that if you previously joined and haven't received a Rural Crime Watch sign, that you please advise a member of the executive.
- Actively recruiting new members.

- They will be at the MD booths at the Trade Fair at the end of April.
- Currently looking for a representative from Divisions 3.
  - Representatives will be a contact for that division to assist with Rural Crime Watch information.
- ‘Signal’ and ‘RAVE’ Apps were explained.
- Plans include signage at all entrances to the MD.
  - Currently looking at funding opportunities to allow for these signs, posts and installation.

### Snow Piles in Hamlet

A resident thanked Public Works for looking into their concern about snow previously placed in the Hamlet, which was causing icy conditions. The new location is a better spot.

### Utility Rates

A resident had concerns about the base rate and consumption costs for the Hamlet, stating that they were higher than what they pay in Lethbridge. He also noted that there was no incentive to conserve water. He questioned why there was a 25% increase in the last bill.

- Current costs to water users are 75% funded by the entire MD.
- Rate increase is staged over a few years to bring the MD to midline cost compared to other Municipalities.
- Utilities will never be a full cost recovery.

The resident asked whether updated information could be sent to utility users to explain and update the reasons for changes to fees. Administration will have an update available soon, perhaps with the next utility billing cycle.

The resident asked whether reserves can be used to offset some of the cost to users.

- Reserve can't be used to offset operating costs.

The resident asked how many residents were already connected to the system.

- 71% of residents are hooked up to the system; they still have until January 2028.

The resident questioned whether the MD would enter people's homes and force the installation of the water/sewer system after the deadline.

- No, there is a structure in place within the Bylaw to allow for fines for non-compliance.

### Deadstock Bins

A resident thanked Council for the work being done for the Deadstock program, and for the MD stepping up to host a bin for Division 3, which is now at the airport.

- Council overviewed the history of the Waterton Biosphere Deadstock Bin Program and emphasized the importance of continuing this.
- The past bin location for Division 3 had to change due to landowner changes, as that location was no longer ideal.
  - Historically, this location had issues, as it could be seen from the highway, with constant issues of misuse of garbage and was unsightly.
- Division 3 is the only location in Cardston County and the MD of Pincher Creek that doesn't have a bin hosted by a landowner.
- MD tried to find a location within the Division, but no one was willing to place on their property and take on the responsibility.

- Current location at the airport is for this year; Council is hopeful to find a resident in Division 3 for next year.

Residents questioned whether new signage can be placed on the bin; currently, there is none. Signage would include who to call and the rules for using the bin.

- Waterton Biosphere has the signs; the MD needs to call to have them arranged.
- As well as deadstock (cattle), the MD has been in contact with the province regarding concerns about what to do with other dead animals. Currently, the deadstock program is only for cattle.
- It was explained why the program can only accept cattle at the bins, or horses if residents call ahead of time.
- Westcoast Reduction does the pickup for this program, and the MD must fall within their mandate.
- The compost facility in Cardston had some success and was more financially reasonable, but the facility was shut down.
- Biogas in Lethbridge used to be able to take animals of all kinds, but they shut down as well.

Residents noted increased bear and cougar activity and stressed the importance of removing deadstock from the landscape to avoid further conflict.

### Wildlife Fencing on Highway 3

Residents voiced concerns on the province's new wildlife fencing along Highway 3, noting that wildlife is now trapped, and fire/weed concerns on the strip of land between private fences and the provincial fence.

### Access to Beaver Mines Park

A couple of years ago, the new owners of the store stopped access to the park through the parking lot, stating that there is another access off 2nd Avenue. With there being no parking at that entrance, residents attending events often walk blocks to the park. Can the MD build a parking area at that entrance?

- The MD approached adjacent landowners of the park and asked if the parking along the road was an issue, or if they wanted the MD to increase parking at that location.
  - Parking stalls could be built within the park, but this would mean relocating the horseshoe pits.
- Residents didn't want to relocate the horseshoe pits and were fine with parking along the road during the few events during the year.

The resident commented that the MD shouldn't cater to just a couple of residents and should be planning for everyone.

- It was suggested that future park plans be put into the upcoming Hamlet Growth Study to address these issues.
  - The whole park needs revamping.
  - Parking.
  - Upgrades to current structures.
  - Possible trees being planted need locations.

### Weed Concerns

The resident questioned whether there is a plan for the MD to deal with Blue Weed along Pincher Creek. In past years, the MD staff had crews picking them, but they are out of control again.

### Unsightly Premise Issue

A resident raised concerns about the neighbouring property, showing photos of nearly 40 parked cars visible from their window. They brought it to the attention of the MD. CPO followed up with the owner of the cars. He

then went to Development and was granted an outdoor storage permit, allowing for the cars. The resident questioned what could be done. Can they appeal? Giving him a permit didn't change what they see out their window.

- Administration will clarify the appeal deadline and advise the complainant of the process.
- Council explained the process for “Unsightly Premise”, how it is complaint-driven, and the process to follow with the CPO.
  - Once a complaint is made, it goes to CPO to start the file.
  - CPO does an inspection and talks to the landowner.
  - Land Use Bylaw states they can have up to 5 cars on the property of that size but can be exempt if they have an outdoor storage permit through Development.
- This permit did come in front of the planning commission and was discussed at length.
  - Owner isn't crushing the cars.
  - Not up to the MD to determine if the cars are of value or for plans.
  - Permit was to allow for 30 cars; if the permit isn't being followed, that would be on the Development Authority to follow up on.

Other residents note other properties that were unsightly, including permanent structures being built by a creek and a gravel berm built to hide seacans.

- Council explained that, as it is complaint-driven, actual concerns need to be registered with the CPO, which cannot be done anonymously.

Complainant questioned why her concerns weren't followed up on; she was unaware of the outcome.

- CPO reminded her that she did get a call with the updated information and was under the understanding that Development would be following up with a letter regarding the permit and the appeal process.

### Tourism

- Tourism is being pushed to our area by other forms of Government.
  - Council has made it clear to Ministers that we have issues with tourism in our area, we are not set up for it, and it is costing the municipality money for cleanup and damage to our roads.
  - Council is pushing back and asking for controlled tourism to our region.
- MD isn't looking at shutting down tourism but being proactive and planning for the inevitable.
- Currently, this is dealt with through the Land Use Bylaw, rezoning to allow for certain tourism activities.

Residents echoed the Council's view that people want to be in our area to enjoy the natural landscapes and don't want to see it turned into another Canmore.

- Council explained that Council doesn't want to see that kind of increase in tourism either.
- Castle Mountain getting a 4-Season Resort designation doesn't mean a lot will be built in a short time; it's a way for the resort to cut some red tape in getting permits through the province, but they still need the money to build.

### Water Usage

The resident questioned who is monitoring all the new water licenses?

- Council had that exact question in a meeting with the Minister and was assured there is an enforcement department within the Minister's office that will be monitoring for compliance.

## Gravel Pits/Sales

The resident questioned why the MD is no longer selling gravel to residents.

- This decision was not made lightly and followed careful consideration of several key factors affecting the Municipality's long-term operations sustainability, including:
  - Limited availability of gravel:  
Gravel has become increasingly difficult to source, placing pressure on the Municipality's long-term supply needed to maintain roads and infrastructure. Residents involved in these activities should consider alternative sources or plan for future needs.
  - Rising operational costs:  
Crushing costs have increased substantially. Current sale prices do not recover the full cost of crushing operations, even before accounting for royalties, stripping costs, and equipment wear.
  - Discontinuing gravel sales will help preserve municipal resources for essential infrastructure projects that directly benefit residents and the community.
- MD just purchased a ¼ section of land for a gravel pit and aims to have a pit in each division.

## Roads

- Roads are in better condition than in the past.
- Council was receiving a "call log" with concerns that came in from residents; in the past few months, it has been only a couple of lines.

The resident questioned why the call log was now in "closed session" instead of being open to the public.

- As the call log recorded people's names and locations, it's a privacy issue.

The resident asked about any upcoming major road projects, given the aging roads.

- MD is in the process of reviewing a Transportation Master Plan; once Council approves it, it will be a public document.
- Discussion on the history of how some roads came to be, without road plans, handshake deals.
- MD now deals on a case-by-case basis to ensure roads follow road plans.

## Business Licensing:

- Council has seen the Business License Bylaw.
- Administration is still working out logistics on how this system will be put into place.
- MD will begin business licensing to find out what businesses we even have in the MD.
- Mostly for planning and emergency reasons – MD has no idea the number of beds in the area.

## Holiday Train

- Council mentioned that they are looking to collaborate with Cowley for the next Holiday Train, and moving it from Pincher Station to the Village of Cowley, for safety reasons.

Meeting closed at 8:02 pm.