

MINUTES
MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF PINCHER CREEK NO. 9
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
SEPTEMBER 9, 2026

10150

The Special Meeting of Council of the Municipal District of Pincher Creek No. 9 was held on Wednesday, September 9, 2026, in the Town of Pincher Creek Council Chambers.

Notice of this Special Council Meeting was posted on the MD website and social media.

PRESENT Reeve Rick Lemire, Deputy Reeve Tony Bruder, Councillors Dave Cox, Jim Welsch and John MacGarva.

STAFF Acting Director of Corporate Services Brendan Schlossberger and Executive Assistant Jessica McClelland.

ALSO Town of Pincher Creek: Mayor Wayne Oliver, Councillors Valerie Wynder, Bernice Cyr, Gordon McMullen, Mark Barber, Sahra Nodge, Brian McGillivray, CAO Konrad Dunbar, Director of Corporate Services Wendy Catonio, Director of Community Services Brian Millis, and Executive Assistant Carolina Hunsperger.

Reeve Rick Lemire called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

A. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Councillor Dave Cox

26/373

Moved that the Special Council Agenda for September 9, 2026, be amended to include:

New Business:

a) Policy Update on Joint Budget

Closed Session:

a) Budget Deliberations – ATIA Sec. 29.1

AND THAT the agenda be approved as amended.

Carried

B. DELEGATIONS

a) SASCI – Grant Writer

Brett Wuth and David Simmons from the Southwest Alberta Sustainable Community Initiative (SASCI) attended the meeting to discuss the organization's history and explore funding options for the Grant Specialist position.

Background of the Grant Specialist Position:

- Position established in May of 2018 by a group of community volunteers called the Pincher Creek Community Development Initiative (PCCDI)
- Original funding support came partially from the Joint Council
- Liza Dawber was hired and has been the Grant Specialist to date
- PCCDI merged with SASCI in May of 2019, and SASCI took direct responsibility for supporting the Grant Specialist position

Summary of Support for the Grant Specialist by the Town & MD of Pincher Creek for 2025:

- \$13.2 million since start of program
- \$2.1 million applied for in applications in the last year
- Obtained \$1.12 million in funding for 2025

Various Community groups have been successfully assisted. Including, but not limited to, the Curling Club, which has applied for 13 different applications; Search and Rescue; Group Group Youth; Fishburn Cemetery; Lundbreck Gardeners and Beaver Mines Community Association; Pincher Creek Community Hall; and Cowley Hall.

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Joint Council should be proud; this program has been very successful in assisting organizations. David discussed SASCI financials and said office administrative support has decreased due to funding. SASCI intends to give the Grant Writer a 5% increase and will need to find a way to cover this cost. Moving forward, the benefits program for the grant writer has changed; the Chamber is no longer offering benefits to small businesses. SASCI intends to pay the Grant Writer what they were paying for benefits.

SASCI requests that the Council actively promote the Grant Writer program to the community, since many people are still unaware of it.

Questions:

Late financial submission; information is hard for Council to read and understand.

- Financials are for all of SASCI, not just Grant Specialist, and many organizations' financials flow through SASCI, but they will try harder next year to have the information sooner.
- A suggestion was made to look into grants for private operators in recreation, as this question has been asked of Joint Grant.

Appreciates the work she does for the Joint Grant program – is it a good use of her time?

- Yes, she can point them towards outside community funds – not just Joint Council Grant. Allowing Joint Grant funds to be used for other organizations.

Left at 5:31 pm

b) Southwest Alberta Regional Search and Rescue Society

Members of the Southwest Alberta Regional Search and Rescue Society (SARSAR) attended the meeting to review the organization's history and highlight rescues from 2025-26. The team currently has 30 members (from Pincher Creek, MD, and Crowsnest Pass) with over 2600 hours invested, not including administration and equipment maintenance.

In the past 12 months, there have been 22 call-outs, including helicopter resources and long-line rescue when ground rescue would be impossible. Funds raised allow the purchase of more equipment. Other financial support comes from the Community Foundation, Northback, local groups and businesses, the Council for Town, MD and CNP.

Reviewed financials and budget, with revenue of \$110,000 and expenses of \$92,000. Joint Council funds are unrestricted and can be used where needed. CNP Fire Hall houses SARSAR under a lease arrangement, and CNP then grants them funds to cover expenses.

Questions:

When a call comes for a helicopter, how is it paid?

- A helicopter can come from three areas and provides a pilot; SARSAR provides equipment and rescue personnel.

Is there not a lot of provincial money? Not a lot

- Do you work BC side? Not a lot, but can.

They use Starlink; will you use a Canadian provider?

- Would love to if there was one available.

Does equipment come from Canadian providers?

- As much as they can, most comes from Vancouver, except for specialized equipment.

Left at 5:50 pm

c) Pincher Creek Humane Society (SPCA)

Kelly Lapine, President since 2023, attended to provide an overview of the past year with Pincher Creek Humane Society (SPCA). The organization currently has six paid employees and many volunteers, not including the board, dog walkers, foster homes, and trappers.

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2025 shelter numbers: helped 276 animals.

- Dogs - 89
 - 28 Town, 44 from MD, 9 from Piikani (they rent kennels) and 8 others
- Cats -174
 - 49 from Town, 96 from MD (big barn projects), 5 from Piikani
 - Rehomed 141 cats!

In addition to sheltering animals, the SPCA offers multiple programs to support community members with animal care, feral animals, pet safe-keeping, a pet food bank, animal snuggle programs for seniors' homes, early learning centre rabbit and guinea pig visits, microchipping clinics, and the community dog wash. The Pincher Creek SPCA is a no-kill shelter, which means euthanizing is never done for space, only for medical or major behavioural issues. Most costs are vet costs. Moving forward, they are looking to hire a vet staff member for the shelter to cut costs significantly. Currently, vet costs are about \$100k, and an in-house team would be used at cost, not for profit. A vet student could do vaccines, but not surgery or euthanasia, and would need a dedicated room. Upcoming projects include a dog yard upgrade and a new cat shed to support the feral cat program. An agility run, sponsored by a local family, has raised \$18,000 to date. The donation-based agility run provides a safe space for community members to run agility with their dogs.

Left at 6:15 pm

d) Pincher Creek and District Municipal Library

Kayla Lorenzen, Manager; Sandra Baker, Chair; Tiare Dewart, Treasurer; and Michael Barkwith, Secretary, attended the meeting to discuss the budget request.

They reviewed Municipal Library Governance and the 2026 achievements so far.

- Doubled numbers for Comic Con to over 200 participants
- Revamped regular programs
- Partnered with United Literacy for more programming
- Reorganized children's section
- 10% average increase since 2022 – visits
- 6% average increase since 2022 – cardholders
- 10% increase since 2022 in library materials
- computer and wifi usage decrease – more people have their own computers or tablets
- Not a lot of space for people to use wifi – no space for all-day usage
- Programming and participants
 - 25% increase since 2022 – sessions
 - 20% increase in participants
- Exams and meeting room
 - Exams are down as education changes
 - Meeting space up 66% since 2022

Board stated that Pincher Creek Library is \$8.99 per capita less than similar-sized provincial municipalities. The ask for 2027 is a 7.5% increase, with an additional 5% increase for 2028 to 2030. Currently, the library offers multiple programs alongside its services, including cross-country and snowshoe lending programs, the CRA Volunteer Tax program, and boardroom rentals.

Questions:

Are there any senior-specific programs?

- Yes, assist with who needs it – can go to homes in town for one-on-one assistance and delivery; they need to book a time for tech help in the library.

Increase for more staff hours and programming; would that increase hours open?

- There is only 1 programmer, who works 22 hours.

Does the library use a grant writer? Could you use her more

- Yes, they currently use her.

Do you participate in the Dolly Parton Free Book Program?

- Not available in Pincher Creek.

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Status of expansion?

- Would like to work with the town to access the old gym space to use for programming – still waiting on terms and conditions from the town. A board member asked why they haven't heard from Town MD after presenting 3 options several months ago and wants to know where they are in getting money for expansion. Town reviewed why the Library is in limbo; the ask was \$4 million just from Town – there isn't the money, but they are open to looking at lower-cost expansion and sound buffering in the gym area.

How do you determine a 7.5% increase when there is a 3% cost of living increase?

- Went by municipal raise amounts; it was clarified that those were not municipal raises.

Left at 6:54 pm

e) Kootenai Brown Historical Park

Colleen Cyr, Board President of the Kootenai Brown Historical Park (Pincher Creek and District Historical Society), reviewed updates at the museum and discussed future projects.

She reviewed various events (Alberta Days, Talking Tombstone, Midnight Macabre, Spooky Town, Christmas cookie sale, etc) and explained the new Northwest Mountain Police display. The original group donated the artifacts to the museum this past year. They finished the firehouse and brought in a building from Fergeson land to be repurposed for another display. They currently have a partnership with Heritage Acres and South Canadian Rockies, where they borrowed from each other to showcase both museums. School programs have increased, and some classes are coming from Calgary.

Questions:

How did bus tours go?

- Going well; last year it was 2 times a week, with supper. This year, there was no supper due to time constraints for the tour company and bus drivers' hours of operation.

Reeve attended a presentation for the fire hall and noted that the Community Foundation donated money. Questioned where the funds are in the budget.

- Projects aren't in the budget – they are in the balance sheet. \$15,000 from the Community Foundation; they hadn't spent it all when the balance sheet was created in July 2026.

Town and MD asked for an external review; there are no year-end amounts and no external review. Council explained that incomplete financials make it difficult to make sound financial decisions using tax money. Less financial information was provided than Joint Grant requested. Councils don't get the information requested repeatedly.

- She insisted the information was given to the Town; there is confusion about what was asked vs. what was supplied. States that a letter was sent to her to fill out the Joint Grant application, not what the Town had asked for.

Requested for next year, proper financials specific to an external financial review.

Left at 7:23 pm.

f) Oldman River Antique Equipment and Threshing Club

Mickey Valley, Executive Director, and Dixon Hammond, President, attended the meeting and reviewed the club's current financial situation. A revitalization is a requirement for Heritage Acres to exist for another 40 years. They are trying to rebrand to attract tourists. They hired a social media manager and are seeing increased traffic on social media, which is leading to more visitors coming off the highway. Attendance has increased by 64% over the past year.

In funding, they have secured over \$90k in total grants for steam tractor restoration, creating education programs and hiring a groundskeeper. Heritage Acres is working on various partnerships including tourism, education, agriculture, community investment and local businesses.

2026 operating position:

- Revenue \$314,800

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- Expenses \$303,550

Windmill revenue is down; they are one of the biggest museums in Canada operating on a shoestring budget. The budget needs to be redone to ensure the museum's future. They proposed an ask of \$200,000 to support redevelopment, conditional on securing additional funding to hire the staff they need.

Currently, the Wedding Barn needs \$15k in repairs; they are the most cost-effective barn to rent in the area. Upgrading the barn and renting it year-round would cost \$100k. They would like to hire a venue operator who works on a bonus system. This would allow various events at the museum to generate income. Plans include investing in upgrading campsites and applying for tree grants for 10 hectares of trees. Plans include allowing interconnected businesses (events, accommodations, food, hiking). This would involve upgrading the concession.

Questions:

Why \$200k ask?

- Not for operational expenses; wants to eventually take the \$35k down over the years - \$200k is to help secure more grants (50/50), etc.
- Plans to make admission free for residents
- Want to partner with Town and MD

Left at 8:12 pm

C. Policy Guiding Joint Budget Process

Council discussed forming a committee to set policy for budget line organizations going forward. Some are concerned that groups assume a “line item” guarantees funding, as all grants are discretionary and there are no multi-year commitments. Council would like to review the history of how 6 groups ended up in the budget.

Councillor Tony Bruder 26/374

Moved that the Joint Grant Subcommittee review documents and develop policy and framework for a joint budget process.

Carried

D. CLOSED SESSION

Councillor Jim Welsch 26/375

Moved that Council move into closed session to discuss the following, the time being 8:23 pm.

- a) Budget Deliberations – ATIA Sec. 29.1

Carried

Councillor Dave Cox 26/376

Moved that Council move out of closed session at 9:03 pm.

Carried

Councillor Tony Bruder 26/377

Moved that Council approve the 2026 Joint Budget amount at 50% with the Town of Pincher Creek, the MD portion totalling \$ 233,627.50;

	MD Portion	Total
SASCI – Grant Specialist	\$40,000	\$80,000
Southwest Alberta Regional Search and Rescue Society	\$11,127.50	\$22,255
Pincher Creek Human Society	\$20,000	\$40,000

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Pincher Creek and District Municipal Library Board	\$142,500	\$285,000
Pincher Creek and District Historical Society	\$2,500	\$5,000
Oldman River Antique Equipment and Threshing Club	\$17,500	\$35,000
<i>**with an offer for letter of support and future discussion on funding on a case-by-case basis</i>		

AND THAT the 2027 Joint Council Grant per capita funding be \$20.04, the MD portion totalling \$64,942,

AND THAT the following amounts be awarded for the 2027 Joint Council Grant,

Syncline Trails Association	\$ 380.00
McMan Youth, Family and Community Services Assn	\$ 500.00
Dolphins Swim Club	\$ 1,500.00
5 Pin Bowling	\$ 2,000.00
Mustangs Football	\$ 2,000.00
Windsor Heritage Drop In Center	\$ 2,000.00
Coalfields Community Centre	\$ 2,500.00
Cowboy Show	\$ 2,500.00
Group Group Youth	\$ 2,500.00
Adaptable Outdoors	\$ 3,000.00
Agricultural Society, PC	\$ 4,000.00
Care Bears Society, Pincher Creek	\$ 5,000.00
Legion, Royal Canadian	\$ 5,000.00
Pincher Planters	\$ 5,000.00
SASCI	\$ 5,000.00
Food Centre, Pincher Creek	\$ 7,160.00
Chamber of Commerce, Pincher Creek	\$ 7,500.00
Community Hall, Pincher Creek	\$ 15,000.00
Handi Bus Society	\$ 15,000.00
Allied Arts	\$ 20,000.00
Family Centre	\$ 30,000.00

E. ADJOURNMENT

Councillor John MacGarva 26/378

Moved that Council adjourn the meeting at 9:08 pm.

Carried



REEVE



CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER