

# RATEPAYERS MEETING AGENDA – TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 2025

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#### INTRODUCTION / WELCOME

Welcome and thank you for coming to the 2025 Ratepayers Meeting.

We're here tonight to be transparent, answer your questions and share the progress and challenges over the past year. The agenda is a mixture of how we are doing & where we are headed.

We have a lot of information to pack into a limited amount of time together this evening. As Council, we have decided to allow you to ask questions at the end of each section – as it pertains to that section only. We will have an overall question period at the end. If we don't have an answer, we will tell you. If we need to do some work on it first, we will tell you. We are committed to open and fair communications for all.

Let's create a welcoming, positive space tonight – treat everyone with kindness and speak respectfully throughout this evening.

#### **CULTURAL CHANGE – WHAT IT MEANS & WHY IT MATTERS**

Alongside, the infrastructure planning and other updates we will be discussing tonight, we also want to acknowledge a deeper shift that's happening within the Village – and that's cultural change.

# What Do We Mean By Cultural Change?

We're talking about the way things are done – how decisions are made, how communication happens & how we as a municipal government work with residents, staff and each other. Small municipalities like ours have often operated in a way that relies on informal understandings and 'handshake' agreements. While that worked for many years, in today's environment – with growing complexities, regulations and expectations – that approach simply isn't sufficient anymore.

Cultural change means moving toward a workplace & Council environment that is:

- → Professional & respectful
- → Accountable & transparent
- → Structured & consistent
- → Open to collaboration & communication
- > Focused on long-term planning, not short-term fixes, and
- → Clear on roles, responsibilities & expectations

#### This Council's Commitment to Structure

Part of this cultural change is Council's commitment to creating structure for all facets.

### This includes:

- → Clearer processes & policies
- → Consistent standards for how all things are done
- → Proper documentation for both Council & staff
- → Defined expectations for Council, staff & boards of Council
- → Reducing reliance on informal or "handshake" agreements

Structure doesn't mean rigidity – it means stability, fairness & the ability to grow responsibly. This is about setting a higher standard with succession planning – for ourselves, for future leaders and for the equality of all residents.

# Why It's Important

- → **Builds trust**: Residents deserve to feel confident that their concerns are heard, their taxes are well-managed & their community is being led with integrity
- → **Supports better decision making**: A respectful & well-functioning culture allows for honest discussions, thoughtful planning & fewer "reactive" decisions
- → **Empower staff**: Staff can work more effectively when they're supported, have clear direction and aren't stretched beyond reasonable limits
- → **Sets the tone for growth**: As we bring in new bylaws, policies or developments, the internal culture needs to match fair, consistent and forward-thinking

We recognize these changes don't happen overnight. But this shift is necessary to:

- → Learn from past experiences
- → Build better systems & communication tools
- → Hold ourselves to a higher standard at all levels;
- → Shift to new clearly defined service levels understood by all staff, Council & ratepayers; and
- → Create consistency from one Council to another

# **Looking Ahead**

We're not just working to improve bylaws or services – we're also focused on how we lead, listen and serve the community

This cultural shift is about creating a Village that runs well today and is prepared for tomorrow – for residents, staff, Council and future leaders.

# STAFFING/HR

As many of you know, I am Melissa Pollock, & I stepped into the role of Chief Administrative Officer following the sudden & tragic passing of our previous CAO in March 2024. It was a tremendous loss for both the organization & the community & stepping into this position under such difficult circumstances – especially having only been with the Village for just under a year – has come with its share of challenges.

That said, I want to sincerely thank Council- past & present - & the residents for your continued support & patience during the transition. It's been a steep learning curve, but your encouragement has made a big difference.

To give you a bit of context on my professional background: I completed my Local Government Authority Certification with the U of R in 2020. I had 8 years of experience in municipal government prior to starting at the Village. However, after stepping into the CAO role following Krista's passing, I didn't have a certified CAO available to verify the hours I had logged. As a result, I've been operating under a Conditional Permit.

The nest step in the process is an office inspection, which will help determine whether I qualify for full certification. This inspection will also serve as a valuable audit – an opportunity to assess how we're doing, what's working well & where we can continue to improve.

#### STRENGTHENING GOVERNMENT

Coming into this role with fresh eyes has allowed me to ask important questions, identify gaps & look at things from a different angle. That perspective has helped guide meaningful change & has also reinforced one thing above all:

Public trust and confidence in local government matters & it's at the heart of everything we do—how we communicate, how we make decisions, how we spend tax dollars, & how we serve the people who live here.

One of my first priorities as CAO was to gain a clear picture of where things stood—operationally, administratively, & historically. Early on, we identified gaps in documentation, inconsistencies in record keeping & a lack of accessible information that made it difficult to understand past decisions & processes. This is a common challenge in municipal government – much of the organizational knowledge & history tends to reside in the heads of past staff. When these individuals leave, so does the knowledge, often resulting in confusion, delays & the need to "reinvent the wheel".

To prevent this from happening in the future, we must prioritize comprehensive & consistent documentation of all policies, procedures & decision-making rationales. Our goal is to build a strong foundation of knowledge – one that ensures the smooth onboarding of new staff, so that work can continue seamlessly with clarity & confidence regardless of who is in the role.

A large part of the work over the past year & a half has been focused on learning, reorganizing & streamlining the office. A significant amount of time was spent sorting through historical files, improving workflows, & establishing better structure to support both transparency & day-to-day efficiency. This includes creating internal procedures & adopting a more streamlined, consistent approach to service delivery.

# POLICY UPDATES – STRENGTHENING HR FOR A STRONGER MUNICIPALITY

We've been undertaking a review, update & creation of several policies, which is an important step in creating a well-run, professional & accountable municipal workplace.

Human Resource policies require a revamp to match current legislation & regulations. And, while these policies may seem internal, they have a direct impact on the quality-of-service ratepayers receive. Clear, current HR policies help us:

- → Attract & retain qualified, professional staff
- → Ensure fairness & consistency in hiring, training & performance
- → Create a respectful, safe & productive work environment
- → Reduce risk & improve compliance with employment legislation
- → Support service delivery through an efficient & supported team

Updated HR policies set clear expectations for staff & management, provide guidance for dealing with workplace matters, & makes sure everyone is working toward the same standards & goals.

One important update is the implementation of a Performance Management Policy, which links staff performance directly to eligibility for salary increases.

#### This means that:

- → Increases are based on merit, not just time served
- → Clear goals & expectations are set & monitored
- → Staff are recognized & rewarded for high-quality work
- → Performance concerns are addressed early & constructively

From a ratepayer's perspective, this is an important accountability measure. It ensures your tax dollars are being used to support staff who are meeting – and exceeding – the expectations of their roles. It also motivates continuous improvement.

While these updates happen behind the scenes, they directly impact the effectiveness & efficiency of your local government – and that benefits everyone in the community.

Policy updates aren't just focused on internal HR matters – they also include governance & administrative policies that reflect Council's direction on certain issues like:

- → Community donations
- → Routine approvals or expenditures

By clearly outlining what can be approved administratively & what requires Council approval, we can:

- → Free up Council meeting time for more strategic decisions
- → Speed up turnaround times for community requests
- → Increase transparency & consistency in how decisions are made
- → Ensure staff are empowered to act within defined, Council-approved boundaries

# **ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**

On the administration side, we've made steady progress as well. Last May, we welcomed Cate as our Assistant CAO, and she's brought incredible organization, energy, & dedication to the role. Her support has been vital in helping us modernize internal systems & bring structure to daily operations.

This transitional period has brought significant changes for everyone, including Karen, our part-time administrative assistant, and the longest-serving member of the Village Office. Her historical knowledge has been helpful in navigating some of the shifts, and we appreciate her continued presence during all of this.

#### **PUBLIC WORKS STAFF**

There have been several significant changes in our Public Works Department. We've realigned roles to better match individual skill sets, which has improved both day-to-day operations & staff satisfaction. One of the most impactful changes happened in April with the hiring of our new Operations Coordinator, lan, who brings fresh perspective, strong leadership & unwavering dedication. The progress made in addressing our backlog of work has been remarkable. A huge thank-you to lan for the energy and structure he's brought to the team.

Our current Public Works team consists of:

- → Our Operator & labourers, Joel Neudeck, our longest serving Public Works employee, with 11 years and Damon who has been with the Village for 3 years.
- → John, our relief operator. With only one primary operator on staff, this was a precautionary measure to ensure we had backup coverage in case of illness, vacation, or emergencies. It's important we maintain consistent snow & road maintenance & this hire added a layer of operational security to our team.
- → And this summer, Henry & Jacob, our two returning summer students

These students are in their second year with the Village. After evaluating their strong performance last year, the decision was made to bring them back—saving time & cost on training & building on the knowledge they already have. Student retention is a smart & cost-effective strategy for supporting operations, and they've both continued to demonstrate reliability and initiative.

This summer, we only hired two summer students instead of three, as we did not receive funding from the Canada Summer Jobs program which usually supplements these wages. Based on our progress, I believe that moving forward, a model of two returning students each summer—combined with our full-time staff—will be sufficient to meet the Village's operational demands.

We are also down two seasonal weeders this year. These roles were historically focused on a small portion of the Village & after evaluating the cost versus impact, we determined that continuing with those positions was not the best use of taxpayer dollars. Despite the reduction in staffing, the current team has done an excellent job keeping up with workload and priorities & I'm incredibly proud of the work they're doing.

#### **ACKNOWLEDGING THE WORKLOAD & ASKING FOR PATIENCE**

Our Administration & Public Works staff are working extremely hard & are currently buried under long lists of projects, requests & day-to-day tasks – the list is long & it keeps growing.

We know everyone wants to see things done now & we get it – we all want to see immediate results. There's a strong desire to "catch up" on things & it's natural to feel frustrated when it feels like progress is slow.

But the reality is, it takes times to do things properly. We are building processes, updating systems & trying to get things right – not just fast.

With a committed team in place, updated systems, and better structure across departments, we are moving forward—step by step—and laying the foundation for long-term efficiency & service delivery.

It's not perfect & it won't all happen overnight – but we are heading in the right direction.

#### **APPRECIATION**

While we continue to operate with a small - but mighty crew - I want to acknowledge their dedication & adaptability.

The past year & a half has been a time of growth, transition & progress within the Village—particularly within our staffing & internal operations. Every team member has played a role in keeping things running.

From stepping into new roles, to implementing new systems & taking on big challenges—we've done it together & that teamwork is what has allowed us to move forward with confidence.

The commitment shown by the staff does not go unnoticed & I want to thank each & every one of them for their work, dedication, resilience & adaptability.

I also want to extend my deep appreciation to past & present Council for the guidance & direction they've provided to administration. Your leadership has made it possible for us to make meaningful, lasting improvements.

And of course, to the residents—thank you for the continued trust in your municipal team. Your support, patience & engagement have helped guide us through this time of change.

We still have work to do—but the foundation we've built together gives us the momentum to continue improving. I'm proud of what we've accomplished so far, and I'm excited for what lies ahead.

#### **FINANCES**

#### **PROPERTY TAXES**

Property taxes are the Village's largest source of income – they help fund essential services & infrastructure we all rely on like roads, snow removal, garbage collection & facilities. Your property taxes help keep the Village running everyday!

There was no increase to the municipal property tax rates this year. While the tax rate remained unchanged, some properties may have seen a slight change in their property tax bills due to updated property assessments.

The municipal levy for 2025 was \$1,269,313, which is only a modest increase of \$19,000 compared to 2024.

As in previous years, the 10% early payment discount was maintained for those who paid by July 31st. Approximately 70% of ratepayers took advantage of this discount.

The total value of discounts applied this year was \$106,502, which brings the net amount of property taxes to be collected to \$1,162,811.

If you have any questions about your tax notice or assessment, you can always contact the office. Together with Regina Beach, we organized a SAMA presentation in May. This provided very valuable information on how they evaluate your assessment. If you want to learn more about how your assessment works, the material from this presentation can be found on our website.

#### **BUDGET OVERVIEW**

# **Process & Budgeting Improvements**

We'd like to share some of the behind-the-scenes work that's been taking place to improve how we manage finances and reporting to the community.

Over the past several months, there has been a major overhaul of our budgeting process and internal accounting systems. This was done with the goals of improving transparency, accuracy, and long-term planning.

#### Key updates include:

- → A complete rebuild of the accounting system in the background to ensure expenses and revenues are properly allocated to the correct departments.
- → Departments have also been restructured and split out where necessary to allow for more precise tracking and reporting.
- → This work lays the foundation for better record keeping and more accurate financial oversight moving forward.

Looking ahead, we have set a goal to begin the budgeting process in October/early November, with the aim of having an approved budget in place at the beginning of each calendar year. This will allow for more strategic planning and execution of priorities.

In addition, work is underway to implement a reporting system that will allow us to provide more precise monthly financial reports. This will give everyone—staff, Council, and ratepayers—a clearer and more timely picture of spending, revenues, and budget adherence throughout the year.

While much of this work has been behind the scenes, it represents a significant step forward in how we manage and report on the community's finances.

Our goal, as always, is to ensure that your tax dollars are used responsibly and transparently, while maintaining the level of service and infrastructure our community expects and deserves. This year's budget reflects a balance between essential service delivery, infrastructure upkeep, and long-term planning. Capital costs will be covered under each category.

Planning has already started for 2026 & beyond. We're exploring ways to build in funding for larger infrastructure repairs, and other high-priority needs without placing an undue burden on taxpayers. Where possible, we will also be looking for grant opportunities to help stretch our dollars further.

In short, our budget strategy is about sustainability — maintaining what we have, preparing for future needs, and making smart, cost-effective decisions with the resources available.

In the spirit of transparency, the complete 2024 audited financial statements are also available on our website for anyone to view at any time. We encourage residents to take a look if they're interested in seeing a detailed breakdown of the community's financial position.

#### **ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANNING**

We're in the early stages of updating our Asset Management Plan – a critical tool that helps guide long-term infrastructure decisions, budgeting & planning – and ensures that the Village can invest wisely & maintain services sustainably.

This plan is a very important municipal tool & is about thinking ahead – not just fixing what's broken today but being proactive & planning what needs to happen before problems arise.

A few years back, the Village developed an Asset Management Plan. This plan gives us a snapshot of all our infrastructure – what we own, its condition & when it will likely need repair or replacement.

The creation of this plan was a substantial amount of work & a great first step & now we are working on updating the plan.

Like many small municipalities across the province, our Village is currently facing what's known as an infrastructure deficit. Simply put, this means that the cost of repairing, upgrading & replacing our aging infrastructure is greater than the funding we currently have available. Maintaining & renewing infrastructure is one of the most important roles of local government & we are committed to addressing the deficit in a sustainable, forward-thinking way.

While our infrastructure deficit is not at a critical level, it does mean we have ongoing work to do to keep up with aging assets & growing service demands. If not addressed over time, this gap can lead to more costly repairs, reduced service quality, & higher long-term expenses.

Moving forward, we are committed to:

- → Tracking & assessing our infrastructure needs
- → Prioritizing maintenance & infrastructure needs
- → Seeking provincial and federal funding opportunities
- → Planning responsibly to reduce the gap over time
- → Aligning the Asset Management Plan with our budget & grant application process

This work may not be flashy, but it's foundational to how we grow & manage our community for years to come.

#### **IMPROVING TRANSPARENCY & VALUE**

As part of our ongoing efforts to ensure transparency, fairness & value for money, we have begun issuing Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for contractor services & are currently working on an Expenditure Bylaw outlining clear rules as to when to request an RFP, quotes, tenders, etc.

This process ensures we:

- → Get competitive pricing
- → Work with qualified & reliable contractors
- → Maintain fairness & openness in our procurement
- → Deliver better value for ratepayer dollars

By formalizing how we engage contractors, we're strengthening our financial accountability & helping ensure every dollar is well spent.

#### **RESERVE ACCOUNTS**

We currently have four reserve accounts set up. Reserve accounts are dedicated savings set aside to pay for future projects and costs. We plan to maintain reserve accounts to ensure we are financially prepared for future capital expenditures & unexpected emergencies. Reserves provide financial stability, support long-term planning & ensure that funds are available for specific future needs without placing sudden pressure on taxpayers.

In April we created a Municipal Reserve Funds policy to establish principles & procedures for the creation, management & use of reserves.

Currently we have four reserves accounts as shown on the slide. The Operating reserve is for operational contingencies or unforeseen events.

- → Recreation with \$3,242
- → Operating with \$417,000 this is set aside for operational contingencies or unforeseen events
- → Infrastructure with \$440,950
- → Water with \$163,500

#### GENERAL GOVERNMENT UPDATES

#### IMPROVING HOW WE COMMUNICATE

We've made some important strides in improving how we communicate with residents, and we're committed to continuing that progress.

One of the biggest changes was the launch of our new website in August 2024. We developed a new one in-house, and designed with users in mind. Our goal was to make it easier for residents to find the information they need quickly—whether that's council meeting minutes, bylaws, or community notices. We also introduced some online fillable forms, making it easier to submit requests & communicate with us — we hope to one day be able to have development applications & other forms online as well.

The website is a living document, which means it can be updated at any time & we're committed to keeping it as current & accurate as possible. We welcome feedback if there are ways to make it even more helpful.

In addition to the website, we've also upgraded to a new phone system & implemented the Voyent Alert! system—a tool designed to help keep residents informed of important updates and emergency situations. This system allows us to send out notifications via text, phone call, email, or app notification, depending on your preferences. It's a quick & reliable way to make sure you never miss critical information. We strongly encourage all residents to sign up if you haven't already. It's free, easy to use, and can make a real difference in keeping you informed, especially in emergency situations. If you need help getting set up, you can visit us in the office & we'd be happy to help you out.

We recognize that effective communication is key to building trust and is an ongoing priority. We will continue to explore new & better ways to get information out to the community as efficiently & effectively as possible.

# **BYLAW UPDATES**

Like many municipalities, we've found that several of our bylaws are outdated. Rather than making patchwork updates, we are undertaking a comprehensive review & overhaul of ALL bylaws & policies to ensure they:

- → Align with current legislation
- → Are enforceable & practical for staff
- → Are clearly written & easy to understand

To avoid falling behind again in the future, we'll be implementing an internal bylaw & policy review calendar, which will track review timelines. During reviews, we will be checking for any legislative changes & relevance – ensuring each document stays up to date.

Some of the immediate bylaw priorities include:

- → A revamped Zoning Bylaw this is a major, but essential task to ensure our land use regulations are modern & aligned with how our Village is growing. This bylaw contains inconsistencies, conflicting sections & some grey areas that make interpretation & enforcement difficult.
  - Key goals of the update are to ensure zoning aligns with the Official Community Plan & future land use planning, introduce plain language so the bylaw is easy to read & understand for everyone. We are also exploring regulations on short-term rentals.
     This update will also come with revised & simplified application forms that support the bylaw.
- → A revamped Traffic Bylaw this bylaw is a little outdated & needs to be updated. This overhaul is another big job, but it's necessary to ensure that our traffic rules are safe & logical.
  - o We've been:
    - Reviewing all signage: stop signs, yield signs, speed limits & no parking zones
    - Assessing the placement & effectiveness of speed bumps & looking at other traffic calming measures
    - Incorporating feedback from residents & collecting data
  - Community input is also shaping the process:
    - We've heard feedback from residents about:
      - Locations where stop signs would improve safety
      - Speed bumps that don't make sense (or where additional ones may be helpful)
      - Specific problem areas like the bend onto Highwood from Tower Road, which has been flagged for safety concerns: We are actively exploring ways to make that bend safer – including the potential installation of a traffic mirror – and we're applying for a grant from SGI to help fund some of these improvements
    - We've been using our traffic sign to collect speed & volume data on roads to help us:
      - Identify where speeding is a real issue
      - Justify changes
      - Support grant applications
- → Fire Control Bylaw & how we determine fire bans this bylaw from 1989 is quite outdated & requires an overhaul. Fire risks are changing & rules for safe burning, fire pit regulations & how fire bans are declared. We have initiated collaboration with Regina Beach to align our bylaws & share best practices. When two communities share a fire department & sit side-by-side, it only makes sense to align fire control bylaws & fire ban decisions.
- → Waterworks Bylaw this bylaw is the foundation for how we manage, protect & deliver safe reliable water to our community. We've been reviewing as some parts are outdated, unclear or no longer reflect how we should be operating today.

It's important to note that updating a bylaw isn't just a quick revision – it's a detailed process. We must ensure legislative compliance, administrative feasibility, enforceability & proper internal procedures. We are building this framework now to support success in the long term.

A number of bylaws have already been completed over the last 2 years including:

- → Animal Control
- → Outdoor Water Usage
- → Records Retention
- → Council Procedures bylaw which clearly defines Council's role with a notable change of Council now meeting once per month on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday, allowing staff more time to focus on operational priorities & reducing meeting-related workloads. This change to the Council meeting schedule will also lead to a reduction in Council remuneration costs, while freeing up budget room for Council training & workshops an investment that strengthens leadership & benefits the whole community. Council meetings are also now being offered electronically for any residents wanting to stay in the loop but prefer not to attend in person.
- → Administration Bylaw which clearly defines the CAO's roles & responsibilities
- → Public Notice Bylaw this outlines how Council communicates important decisions to the public such as zoning changes, land sales, and more. It ensures you are informed & have the opportunity to provide input on matters that may affect you & your property.
- → Currently working on an Expenditures & Purchasing Bylaw Public Notice that this bylaw draft was being discussed went out to the public in July. This bylaw will set the rules & processes for how the Village spends public money covering everything from minor purchases to large contracts & emergency expenditures. It also defines when Requests for Proposals, quotes or tenders are required, & enforces that all spending must be within the Council-approved budget, preventing unauthorized or over-budget expenditures.

# WHAT CAN YOU DO AS A RATEPAYER

- → Watch for public notices on draft bylaws being discussed
- → Attend or engage in public consultations when notice is given
- → Feedback to the office helps us shape our bylaws we're here to listen

#### THE GIFT OF FEEDBACK

#### What is Feedback?

Feedback is a gift – a thoughtful expression of insight, experience or perspective, offered to help improve a process or service. Whether it's a thank you, a concern or a suggestion, feedback helps shape better decisions & stronger outcomes.

## **Why Feedback Matters**

- → Builds trust open communication fosters transparency & accountability
- → Improves services real-world experiences highlight what's working and what's not
- → Empowers people residents feel heard & valued
- → Shapes Policy feedback can directly influence the direction of bylaws, services & policies

## **Your Voice Helps Shape Our Future**

Feedback isn't just welcome – it's essential. Whether you're a resident, ratepayer, staff member or visitor, these insights can help build a better, fairer, & more responsive local government.

If you have something to share? Drop us an email, phone call or stop by the office – we're listening!

#### **ALWAYS IMPROVING**

Local government is never "finished". There's always work to be done & improvements that can be made – whether it's updating bylaws, refining internal policies, or finding new ways to serve the community more efficiently.

We're committed to consistently reviewing how we operate, listening to feedback & making changes where they're needed.

### **Intermunicipal Utilities Committee (IMUC)**

Some of the work that the Village is required to do, we do in cooperation with other communicates through IMUC.

IMUC stands for Intermunicipal Utilities Committee. It's a partnership between neighbouring municipalities that share the cost & use of services & infrastructure.

Instead of having to build our own expensive facilities, we joined forces with Regina Beach, Lumsden Beach, RM Lumsden No. 189 & Kinookimaw, and then share the costs and access.

The IMUC Committee meets 4 times annually.

#### **How Does Buena Vista Benefit?**

Through IMUC, we pay a fair share to help with operational and capital needs of the services and facilities in Regina Beach. In return, our residents get full access to those services, just like the residents of Regina Beach. Being a smaller municipality it makes fiscal sense to share expensive assets.

### **How Payment Works: Based on Units**

Payment is based on units. When we talk about "units", we're referring to a fair way to divide up the cost of shared services between the participating municipalities (Regina Beach, Buena Vista,). Each unit is a measure of use – and the more units a municipality has, the more it pays.

What is a Unit?

# A "unit" represents:

- Year-round residential household = 2 units
- One seasonal residence = 1 unit
- Empty lots = 0 units
- Business = 1 unit

Administrative costs to Regina Beach is also paid at a 10% rate of the gross operating costs. Operations & maintenance is the responsibility of Regina Beach, and we pay in order to be granted access to use.

The budget for IMUC feeds into the respective budget of each of the participating municipalities.

Now that we've covered what IMUC is & how our municipality contributes based on units, we'll walk you through the specific facilities that are included in the agreement – the ones we help fund and, in return, have access to. We share access to the Regina Beach Fire Department, Waste Management Site, Lagoon, Library, Primary Health & Emergency Measures Organization (EMO).

Each of these facilities plays a key role in delivering important services to our community, even though they're physically located in Regina Beach.

We would like to extend a thank you to Regina Beach for the continued access & use of their facilities, made possible through our shared IMUC agreements. We hope to only continue to strengthen our relationship with all the IMUC partners.

# **6** FIRE DEPARTMENT

# 瞴 New Pumper Truck Purchase

- → The current pumper truck is due for replacement
- → Regina Beach led a call for bids based on agreed-upon specifications
- → The selected bid came in at \$875,000
- → The truck will take 18-24 months to build and deliver

# How It's Being Funded

- → All IMUC partners have been contributing over time to a reserve fund
- → There is still a shortfall of approximately \$200,000
- → This shortfall will need to be shared among the participating municipalities

# 🙎 Strong Volunteer Fire Team

- → The department is fortunate to have a dedicated group of 19 volunteer firefighters
- → Our contributions support not only equipment, but also the volunteers who provide this critical service to our communities

# FIRE DEPARTMENT - 2025 Budget

BV's Portion \$53,650 Total: \$214,270

# **WASTE MANAGEMENT SITE**

# **Key Background Points**

- → In 2023, Village Council gave notice of intent to terminate the waste management site agreement due to a substantial cost increase without adequate budget justification.
- → Council instructed administration to explore alternatives, including establishing our own transfer station.
- → In July 2024, Village & Town Administrators & Mayors met to renegotiate terms
- → A new agreement was reached. A fixed annual payment of \$35,000 was proposed by the Village & accepted by the Town. The new payment model provides cost predictability for the Village, helps maintain cooperation, & resident access.

# **Looking Ahead**

→ The waste management site remains operational until at least 2027, but may face shutdown or decommissioning due to evolving government regulations. There is potential to open another cell & the other option is a transfer station.

# WASTE MANAGEMENT SITE - 2025 Budget

BV's Portion \$35,000 Total: \$175,556



### Our Financial Contribution

- → Buena Vista contributed to the capital cost of the new lagoon that was built in approximately 2018 to allow growth
- → As part of the agreement, we are currently making monthly loan payments to Regina Beach for that capital cost total amount is \$950,269.02 with monthly payments over 20 years
- → This shared approach allowed us to access the lagoon without having to build our own at a cost of over \$4,000,000

# LAGOON -2025 Budget

BV's Portion \$27,720 Total: \$114,055

# **LIBRARY**

- → Regina Beach rents space in the Last Mountain Lake Cultural Centre for the library 133 Donovel Cresent
- → Many children & adult programs offered
- → The library is more than just books it's a place where community connects, learns & grows. Volunteers play a vital role in keeping the library running smoothly & they are always looking for volunteers to lend a hand. If interested, stop by the library or contact them at 306-729-2062 or reginabeach@southeastlibrary.ca

# LIBRARY - 2025 Budget

BV's Portion \$8,015 Total: \$28,117

# PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

- → Located at 410 Centre Street Regina Beach
- → Current available services:
  - Nurse Practitioner (or Doctor when available): Wednesdays 9:30 a.m. 3:00 p.m.
  - Lab Services: Wednesdays 7:30 a.m. 11:00 a.m. [no appointment necessary]
  - O Nurse Practitioner: Thursdays 9:30 a.m. 3:00 p.m.
    - To schedule an appointment call 1-855-766-6399.
       Same day appointment calls will be accepted starting at 9:00 a.m.
- → A Primary Health Care Committee made up of dedicated community volunteers have been instrumental in getting these services out here & have been actively working to advocate for improved health services.
- → Recently the committee launched a community survey to better understand what services are needed most. If you haven't filled it out yet, there's still time! The survey is available on our website or by scanning the QR.



### **Why Your Input Matters**

→ Without your feedback, the committee has no data to support its advocacy efforts. Your voice is essential in helping identify the health services our community truly needs. All healthcare services are provided by the Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA), & strong community input strengthens the case for improvements.

#### **Top Health Priorities Identified So Far:**

- → Mental Health services
- → COPD Services
- → Diabetes Support

#### Save the Date

October 30 – Flu & Covid Vaccination Clinic

Stay tuned for more details on time & location

# PRIMARY HEALTH - 2025 Budget

BV's Portion \$4,690 Total: \$16,450

# **EMERGENCY MEASURES ORGANIZATION (EMO)**

- → Responsible for planning, coordinating & overseeing emergency preparedness & response efforts for Regina Beach & Buena Vista.
- → In the event of a crisis, the EMO ensures that the response is well-coordinated, efficient & focused on public safety.
- → A new EMO Coordinator has stepped up & a new plan is being worked on

# EMERGENCY MEASURES ORGANIZATION (EMO) - 2025Budget

BV's Portion \$405.12 Total: \$810.24

#### N PARKS & RECREATION

- → The Town terminated the Recreation IMUC agreement in 2024. This means that the Village is no longer contributing financially to that service.
- → Village residents can still participate in any of the great programming offered by the Town's Recreation department.
- → Visit the Town's website for information on programs

# **A JOINT USE COMMITTEE**

- → The gymnasium & kitchen area of the school is known as the South Shore Recreation Centre. The Joint Use Committee was formed for the purpose of this facility
- → Buena Vista has been a part of Joint Use since 1990 when the school was built. This ensures that Buena Vista residents can have access to the "community" pricing when renting the facility
- → All rentals for the facility are handled by the Town Office
- → Buena Vista pays 25% of the expenses plus a fee for the Town of Regina Beach for handling the administration of the facility
- → Buena Vista's portion in the 2025 Budget is \$1,160

#### **PROTECTIVE SERVICES**

#### ## FIRST RESPONDERS

- → The first responders are their own entity & not part of IMUC
- → Communities do contribute annually based on "units"
- → Buena Vista pays \$2,200
- Reminder: 🕍 In an emergency call 911. That includes fire and medical emergencies.
- ✓ 911 Operators will dispatch first responders and/or the fire department
- Make sure your address is clearly visible from the street
- P At night, turn on your lights so emergency crews can find you quickly

## **RCMP**

RCMP officers serving our area are here for a reason – they're contracted & paid with your tax dollars, to help keep our community safe.

We paid \$39,130 within this year's budget for their service. If you witness something that requires their attention, don't hesitate to call them. They're here to serve & support us.

#### **BYLAW ENFORCEMENT**

As you know, bylaws are in place to help maintain safety, order & the quality of life we all value. Our enforcement officer continues to respond to complaints the office receives & conducts regular patrols to ensure compliance during his contracted times with the Village. Enforcement isn't just about penalties – it's about maintaining standards & fairness for everyone. We all benefit when bylaws are respected & consistently applied.

Council establishes bylaws to reflect the values & priorities of our community – whether it's safety, property standards or use of public space. These are not just recommendations; once passed, they are in force & must be followed by everyone. Staff are expected to uphold these bylaws in both their conduct & decision-making. Consistent compliance sets the standard & reinforces fairness for all residents.

Our Bylaw Office is contracted to come 3 hours per week from May 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup> and 3 hours per week every 2<sup>nd</sup> week from October 1<sup>st</sup> to April 30<sup>th</sup>.

We do rely on residents to report bylaw infractions. This is vital, as our enforcement resources are limited & we can't monitor everything at all times. Your reports help us respond more effectively & keep our community safe, clean & respectful for everyone. If you notice a bylaw being violated, please report it directly to the office. Timely reporting helps enforcement respond effectively.

In addition to public reporting, our own staff & public works crew have been keeping a closer eye on community compliance. While out in the field, they're now actively observing & reporting any bylaw concerns they come across. This additional oversight has helped us address issues more proactively.

It's also important to know when to involve the RCMP. If you witness a crime in progress, dangerous driving, trespassing, vandalism or any situation that could pose an immediate risk to safety, call the RCMP. These types of things fall outside of municipal enforcement & as mentioned above we contract & pay for the RCMP's service – so don't hesitate to use that resource.

# **Community Engagement & Education**

To support awareness, Administration has launched a monthly Bylaw Buzz in the newsletter. This initiative aims to educate residents about local bylaws & provide ongoing reminders to help keep our community informed & in compliance. We are also working on ideas to make reporting easier. One initiative under consideration is placing QR-coded signs around the Village, which would allow residents to quickly take a photo of the issue, scan the code & send it directly to the office – making the process simple & efficient. This could become a useful tool especially on the walking path where many unauthorized motorized vehicles tend to use – and is one of harder spots to watch.

Most bylaw issues aren't caused by bad intentions – they're often the result of a lack of awareness. That's why education is key & in many cases, it's the only step that's needed to resolve a problem. When people are made aware of the rules & how their actions affect the community, they're usually quick to correct them. Education is the first step & often the most effective one.

Some of the most common infractions we've been dealing with include:

- → Overgrown Yards: We've taken action on a few properties with overgrown yards & where necessary, have initiated remedial action. While we understand these situations don't always progress as quickly as we'd like, we must follow a process set by legislation. Any remedial work completed by the Village is invoiced to the property owner. If the invoice remains unpaid, the cost is added to their property taxes.
- → Storage or Parking on Village Easements: These areas must remain clear to allow staff access for maintenance & infrastructure work. When they're blocked by vehicles, trailers or other items, it can delay critical work & create unnecessary complications. We ask that all residents please keep easements clear, particularly near fire hydrants & curbstops.
- → Motorized Vehicles on Walking Path: We continue to face challenges with motorized vehicles on the walking path (the old railbed). Motorized vehicles are prohibited on Crown Land, which is what the path is. We are actively exploring ways to deter this activity, including the possibility of physical barriers to help restrict unauthorized access. This issue remains a priority in bylaw enforcement as we work toward keeping public spaces safe for all residents.
- → Motorized Vehicles in Parks: We have noticed an increased presence of dirt bikes in the ball diamond area, and quads in Dobson Parks. Motorized vehicles are also prohibited in any park. These areas are for people, not power sports. Please be respectful of the rules & keep the Village safe.
- → Minors & Wreckless Driving: Minors driving golf carts, ebikes, dirt bikes & ATVs has become a growing concern. We've had several reports & staff witnessing of motorized vehicles being operated recklessly by individuals who are too young to legally drive them. This is not only a safety issue but also a potential liability. These types of vehicles must be operated responsibly & in accordance with local bylaws and, most importantly, provincial traffic laws. Parents & guardians are urged to ensure that youth are not operating these vehicles unsupervised or illegally.

We thank everyone for doing their part. By continuing to report issues, respecting bylaws & knowing which authority to contact, we can all contribute to a safer, well-managed community.



#### **PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

The Public Works department has gone though significant changes, including the hiring of a new Operations Coordinator in April. Overall, it's been a year of changes & catching up for the Public Works department & we appreciate everyone's patience as the crew works through maintenance priorities across the community. One area deeply affected by the infrastructure deficit is our Public Works Department. Over time, there's been a build up of deferred purchases – from essential tools & safety equipment to larger items.

Our crew has been doing the best they can with what they have, but to truly expect efficiency, safety & high-quality work, we need to equip our staff with the tools required to do the job. That means:

- → Replenishing worn tools & purchasing more efficient tools
- → Investing in reliable, up-to-date equipment
- → Creating a proper system for maintenance, storage & inventory

The department has been updating our Occupational Health & Safety practices & started internal audits of the Public Works shop & water treatment plant. Areas that need improvement to bring operations to an acceptable safety & compliance standard have been identified. Earlier this summer, we received a visit from OHS. While a few contraventions were noted, they have since been addressed. The efforts already underway were acknowledged & recognized. Overall, the visit was a positive opportunity to assess where we stand & identify areas for continued improvement.

Our summer students have been trained to safely operate Powered Mobile Equipment (PME), including riding lawnmowers & weed trimmers. They've also been learning about hazard identification & completing field-level risk assessments before starting their tasks. This training ensures that safety remains a top priority while maintaining our community spaces.

Safety & accountability are a top priority as we continue rebuilding systems & improving internal processes.

# The Cost of Non-Compliance with Occupational Health & Safety (OHS)

Ensuring compliance with OHS regulations is not only about following the law – it's about protecting our workers & safeguarding the interests of our community. When proper training or appropriate equipment is not utilized, risk increases significantly. These incidents can have serious consequences, both for the individuals involved & for the municipality as a whole.

In the event of a workplace accident caused by non-compliance, the Village may face penalties, increased insurance premiums & liability claims. These financial burdens ultimately fall back on the ratepayers, as public funds may be required to cover fines, legal fees or injury compensation. Additionally, preventable accidents can lead to operational delays & a loss of public trust.

By investing in proper training, ensuring all equipment is safe & suitable for the job, & conducting thorough hazard assessments, we not only protect our staff – we also protect the financial & operational wellbeing of the community.

Compliance is a shared responsibility & a long-term investment in safety, efficiency & fiscal responsibility.

#### STARTING FROM THE GROUND UP

Before we even consider any major surface improvements (like road paving), we need to look underground – at our drainage systems, water lines, etc.

We don't want to be in a position where we invest in paving, only to have to dig it all up months later to fix a water main or drainage issue. The goal is to plan smarter & build better, from the bottom up.

#### **DRAINGE - A TOP PRIORITY**

One of the biggest priorities is drainage. Proper drainage is essential to:

- → Prevent flooding & pooling
- → Protect roads & infrastructure
- → Preserve property
- → Reduce long-term maintenance costs

This is why we've already begun some work this summer in problem areas where drainage issues were real concern. The recent purchase of the tilt attachment has allowed our staff to build more efficient & effective drainage ditches. This investment will help us make better use of our own resources & reduce long-term costs.

# Making the Most of a Rainy Summer

While the wet weather this summer hasn't always been convenient, it has given Public Works a clearer picture of where the real problem areas are. Rain has helped them identify where water is pooling, draining improperly, or causing damage – giving us the data we need to plan targeted improvements.

Poor drainage causes significant issues over time, so it's critical we address it first – before paving, building or expanding anything.

#### **HIGHWAY DITCH MOWING – FIRE PREVENTION & COST SAVINGS**

Highway ditch maintenance plays an important role in community safety, especially during dry seasons when overgrown grass & brush can become a fire hazard.

After speaking with the Ministry of Highways, we've confirmed that they will not do any additional mowing of the highway ditches beyond their regular schedule.

That means it's up to us as a municipality to maintain those areas to help reduce fire risk & keep our surroundings safe.

### A Different Approach This Year

In past years, we've hired a contractor to mow the ditches – but this year, we changed our approach:

- → We used our own Bobcat & mower attachment
- → The work was completed by our temporary casual relief employee
- → This shift resulted in substantial cost savings

To give you an idea:

- → One mowing by a contractor typically costs over \$1,000
- → By doing the work in-house, we're able to get three to four mows done for the same cost

This is just one example of how we're looking for practical, cost-effective ways to manage essential services while being mindful of the budget.

#### **ROADS**

- → Joel is our only certified grader operator at the moment, which is why we bring in John as a relief operator when needed. John is a retired operator with 30 years of experience working for the City of Regina. Additionally, Ian has recently begun working toward obtaining his grader certification to support our operations.
- → Dust control was applied in May & despite a significant downpour shortly afterward before all the roads were even completed the treatment has held up surprisingly well throughout the summer. This kind of moisture so soon after application is usually less than ideal, but we were fortunate the product performed better than expected, & the results have been mostly positive. Public Works has recently completed some light grading, which not only helps reduce potholes, but can also help reactivate the dust control. Summer rainfall has also contributed, as even a small amount of moisture can help restore the product's effectiveness. This year some extra dust control product was purchased to allow for touchups in high-traffic or problem areas, such as Highwood, where dust has become more noticeable. Having this extra supply on hand allow us to treat specific spots without incurring the additional cost of bringing the supplier back for another application. This approach provides some cost savings. It's important to note that a single full application costs approximately \$22,000 so making it last & using resources strategically helps keep it more budget friendly & reduces the need for additional large expenditures throughout the season.
- → Some roads require a proper crown to ensure effective drainage & prevent water from pooling or causing damage. Improving grading practices is a priority & this work will be incorporated as time & resources allow. With proper planning, care will be taken to ensure that any crowning that is done, is completed correctly & does not create new drainage issues.
- → Crack sealing is scheduled to take place in September as part of ongoing road maintenance. This preventative measure is important because it helps extend the life of our paved roads by sealing cracks that allow water to seep in. When moisture penetrates the surface, it can lead to potholes, frost heaves & further deterioration all of which are more costly to repair. By addressing these cracks early, we help protect our infrastructure & reduce long-term maintenance costs.
- → Planning is underway to address repairs of some existing pavement sections, such as around 10<sup>th</sup> Street, that will be submitted for considerations in the 2026 budget.

# TREE TRIMMING - A MAJOR FOCUS THIS YEAR / CATCHING UP & MOVING FORWARD

Tree trimming is a major focus this year. It's no secret that this work is overdue. This year, we are making it a priority to bring the tree maintenance in the Village back to an acceptable standard.

### Why it Matters

This isn't just about appearance – it's about:

- → Safety for drivers & pedestrians
- → Protecting property
- → Maintaining our infrastructure
- → Poor tree maintenance can lead to bigger, more costly issues in the future
- → Will help support ongoing maintenance like mowing in certain areas
- → Maintains life of trees which are important to our ecosystem

#### What's Been Done So Far?

- → Earlier this summer, Public Works tackled key intersections that posed visibility hazards, giving them a quick trim to help with safety
- → Completed tree trimming along the easement between Edgewood & the highway ditch to make regular grass cutting easier for our maintenance crew
- → Schwann Ave & Shady Lane have been completely trimmed back. These sections were done first as it had years of overgrowth immensely narrowing the roads.
- → Planning has begun to systematically go street by street & complete the whole Village with Elm trees on the list for September after the pruning ban
- → Identified problematic trees that we don't have the resources to cut & have hired a contractor to help with those ones

#### What's Next

- → Our goal is to complete trimming on all streets
- → Continue to identify hazardous or dying trees that pose risks
- → This will not be a quick fix because this work hasn't been consistently kept up over the years, it's become a much larger job than it should be, however, our crew will be tackling it head on as they can

# **Looking Ahead**

This is part of a broader effort to get back on top of regular maintenance tasks & build more consistent systems moving forward. Once we catch up, our goal is to shift to routine, scheduled maintenance going forward.

#### **2025 PUBLIC WORKS CAPITAL BUDGET**

- → A new ride-on lawnmower was purchased, which is helping our staff maintain parks & green spaces more effectively. Our old mower gave it all it had (and then some), but it was time for a fresh start. This has helped us maintain more greenspace in less time. The old mower is still chugging along & we will use it until it is no longer usable or until more than just regular maintenance is required.
- → One critical drainage issue in the Village, is at the post office & behind the Village office. This area sits in a low spot, causing it to collect a significant amount of runoff, especially during heavy rains & spring melt. Poor drainage in this area has led to property damage behind the office & safety concerns for residents picking up their mail, especially during spring freeze-thaw cycles. Standing water is also beginning to deteriorate the concrete around the post office. To preserve the integrity of the infrastructure & improve safety for residents, drainage work is scheduled for this fall.
- → The landfill road has continued to hold up well since the rebuild work completed last summer. The final step to completing this capital project will be the application of road gravel, which will be completed once the material is delivered & time permits.
- → Council had also approved an additional capital purchase of a tilt attachment for our mini excavator. This addition will significantly improve our ability to maintain & shape drainage ditches more effectively & with greater precision, supporting long-term infrastructure care.

Equipment upgrades are helping the department meet service levels more effectively. Additional needs are being reviewed to support both summer & winter operations.

#### Public Works will continue to focus on:

- → Roads & drainage maintenance
- → Tree trimming & green space care
- → Internal safety compliance & training
- → Equipment upgrades & servicing
- → Transparent service planning

# **A Very Important Note for Residents**

To help keep things organized & fair for everyone:

→ All requests, questions or concerns related to Public Works should be directed to the office

We ask that residents do not contact or direct Public Works staff directly in the field or by phone.

With all the work that needs to be done, our crew has to follow a structured & prioritized work plan. When residents bypass the proper channels, it can lead to confusion, miscommunication, or delays.

By bringing all concerns to the office ensures:

- → Requests are properly documented
- → Administration & Council get a better understanding of what community concerns are & areas we can improve on, which also helps to shape the budget
- → Issues can be fairly prioritized alongside other community needs
- → Everyone receives equal & consistent service

# **S** WASTE & RECYCLING COLLECTION

Just a reminder that waste collection continues to take place every Monday from May to October and every second week from January to April and November to December. Recycling continues to be every second Friday throughout the year.

Please ensure that all carts are placed out by 7:00 am and then moved back onto your property by the end of the collection day.

Keeping carts off the roadside is especially important in winter. Carts left out can create obstacles for snow removal & pose a safety risk by blocking traffic or narrowing access.

Your cooperation helps ensure efficient service & keeps our roads safe & accessible for everyone.

# **PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT**

It's been a busy & encouraging year for building & development in our community.

To date, we have issued 19 building permits, covering a range of residential improvements & projects. The office is also working diligently to encourage the completion of aged permits. These developments show a strong investment in our Village & reflect residents' ongoing commitment to improving their properties.

A quick breakdown of what's been approved:

- → 2 new home builds all replacing existing structures
- → 3 demolition permits
- → 1 RTM home replacing an older cabin
- → 5 Garage permits
- → 7 deck permits
- → 1 permit for a pool shed & deck

It's great to see this level of activity & reinvestment within our community.

The Village recognizes the importance of proper drainage within the community, and to address this, future new & amended bylaws will include measures to ensure that adequate drainage is maintained & that any impacts on neighbouring during the permitting process.

We appreciate everyone's cooperation in following proper permitting processes, which help ensure that all development is safe, compliant & well-documented for the future, and ensures no extra cost or delays on the developers part.

#### SUBDIVISION PROPOSALS - ON HOLD UNTIL WATER CAPACITY & PLANNING ARE IN PLACE

In order to grow as a community, we must first ensure smart growth. We have had a few subdivision proposals that have been brought forward by developers or landowners. However, these proposals are on hold until we can confirm that our water supply & infrastructure can support additional development.

#### Why are They On Hold?

- → Water capacity is a key limiting factor we cannot approve new subdivisions until we are certain that we can provide safe, reliable water service to any new lots or homes
- → We are being proactive & responsible we want to avoid burdening our systems or creating issues for existing residents
- → We need to establish clear agreements with developers. These agreements are crucial to ensure:
  - There is a clear understanding of responsibilities what the developer must build or provide, & what the Village is responsible for
  - That all development is feasible for our Public Works staff to maintain & manage long-term

- That costs, timelines & standards are clearly laid out before any work begins
- That the Village can handle the development in a sustainable & manageable way without putting undue pressure on our systems, staff or budget

# **Planning for Responsible Growth**

This pause & planning process isn't about saying 'no' to development – it's about ensuring that any growth we allow is done properly & benefits the whole community.

We're committed to learning & growing from past experience. By taking the time to formalize agreement we're making sure that:

- → Developers know the process & expectations
- → Village systems can support new lots & homes
- → Our staff & resources aren't stretched beyond capacity & can handle new demands
- → The quality of life for all residents is protected

This approach doesn't mean we're against development – it means we're doing it the right way. This is part of our broader commitment to responsible planning & ensuring we can grow sustainably while continuing to provide reliable service to existing residents.

As part of any subdivisions proposal, public meetings will be held before any final approvals are given – residents will be able to raise any concerns when we get to that point

# **RECREATION & CULTURE**

### **GOPHERS IN HERITAGE PARK/BALL DIAMOND**

We know gophers have continued to be an ongoing issue in Heritage Park & the surrounding subdivision (Edgewood). This is a fairly typical problem across Saskatchewan, but that doesn't make it any less frustrating – especially when gophers start making their way into residents' yards.

The Village has limited options when it comes to managing the gopher population. The Village has been actively looking into how to manage the problem, however, there are only so many options available. Any approach we take must consider the safety of children, pets & other wildlife, & must also follow provincial regulations.

We've reached out to provincial authorities & have done quite a bit of research to explore solutions that are both effective & affordable. One promising option we're planning to try this fall is the use of raptor stands. These structures attract natural predators like hawks & owls, which can help keep the gopher population under control in a safe & environmentally friendly way.

We appreciate residents' patience & understanding as we continue to explore & apply safe, responsible & cost-effective methods to deal with this issue.

# **SOUTH SHORE BALL ASSOCIATION**

We want to take a moment to recognize & thank the youth Ball Association for their hard work & commitment to another great ball season. Their efforts create valuable opportunities for our local youth to stay active, learn teamwork & have fun

This past year, we've focused on strengthening the relationship between the Village & the Association. As part of that effort, we've put agreements in place to help ensure clarity, consistency & compliance. These agreements outline roles & responsibilities of both parties, which will help improve communication & ensure smooth operations going forward.

We look forward to continuing this positive partnership & supporting the success of youth sports in our community.

The Village has submitted a grant application for some revitalization for the ball diamonds & concession. The planned improvements could include:

- → Refurbishing the playing surface & surrounding fencing to improve standards & aesthetics
- → Upgrading the concession building
- → General park improvements to enhance the appearance & usability of the space

These upgrades would ensure continued use by youth ball teams, allow us to house more events & create a more welcoming hub for families & visitors.

Youth ball has seen continued interest & these upgrades are vital to keeping it active & growing. Some aspects are in need of repair or upgrades – fence, picnic table area, etc.

We could explore hosting some fundraising events at the site to both draw people in & help raise funds to offset any portion of the project not covered by the grant. We hope to work with the Ball Association to have some improvements completed over the next couple years.

#### **GARBAGE BINS**

You may have noticed the new garbage bins recently placed at Dobson Park, the beaches & the ball diamonds. These bins were built in-house by our summer students & Damon, taking advantage of time during extreme heat or rainy days when outdoor work was limited.

The idea came from a conversation about needing more garbage bins to help with keeping the community clean. It was suggested that instead of purchasing expensive industrial bins – which can cost up to \$3,000 each – we look at building our own. After some planning & budgeting, we moved forward with the project.

As part of the capital budget, we allocated \$3,500 to make these. So far, six bins have been built, at a cost of approximately \$300 per bin. So with that, we are planning to construct a few more during the fall/winter.

This approach has not only saved the Village a significant amount of money, but also resulted in sturdy, long-lasting bins that suit the needs of our public spaces. A big thank you to the students & Damon for the creativity, teamwork & initiative in making this happen.

#### **PARKS & RECREATION BOARD**

The Parks & Rec Board plays an important role in supporting community spaces, and events. Currently, the bylaw that governs the Board is being reviewed & updated as aspects of it do not meet current legislation & regulations. This board is Council-run & forms an official part of the Village, so it's important that the structure, responsibilities & processes are:

- → Clearly defined
- → Aligned with current municipal legislation & regulations

#### **Board Member Nominations**

We are now accepting nominations for new members for the Paks & Recreation Board. If you're passionate about the community & want to help shape events, programs or recreational spaces, we encourage you to consider putting your name forward. Pick up a nomination form tonight or contact the office for one.

If you or someone you know is passionate about the community & wants to help shape events, programs, or recreational spaces, we encourage you to consider putting your name forward.

#### Thank You to the Current Board

We do want to extend a sincere thank you to the current Board members for all of the time, effort & pride they put into their work. Some of the members being dedicated for 20 years or more.

From green spaces to organizing community events, this group of volunteers continue to show incredible dedication to making the Village a better place. Their passion for the community is evident & we're grateful for the work they've done – and continue to do.

# WATER (UTILITIES)



## WATER TREATMENT PLANT UPDATE

First, on the staffing side, Joel is our certified ticketed operator. Damon has recently written & passed his certification exam. Once he accumulates the required number of hours in the plant, he'll be able to apply for his full certification as well. Ian also plans to pursue his certification once things are caught up & time allows. It's great to see the team growing in both knowledge & capacity.

As for the plant itself, we continue to work through some challenges that have existed since its construction. One of the main issues has been with the activated alumina – this is the material used to remove arsenic from our water. When the pant was built, the Village was told this material would last about seven years; however, we've been seeing it last only around two years. Given that each replacement costs roughly \$30,000-\$70,000, this is not sustainable over the long term.

Staff has been actively working to identify the root cause of this inefficiency. We now have an agreement in place with a company that's helping us test & find a longer-lasting solution. This work is ongoing, however, we are optimistic about the progress being made. A change of this material is required & is scheduled to take place in September – with what we hope will also bring some answers & a solution.

Despite these challenges, we've made strong operational strides. In fact, Water Security Agency has commended the team for excellent documentation & ongoing improvements in how the plant is managed. Significant improvements overall.

We'll continue to prioritize safe, reliable drinking water for our residents & keep working toward long-term solutions for the plant's efficiency.

Annually, the Village is required to submit a Drinking Water Quality & Compliance Notice to Consumers. This information can always be viewed on our website.

#### **Water System Maintenance**

Beyond the plant, staff is taking a proactive approach to maintaining & improving the broader water infrastructure. These efforts are critical not only for day-to-day operations but also to ensure our distribution system remains effective, reliable & prepared for emergencies.

Key ongoing efforts include:

- → Locating & mapping all curb stops: These shut-off valves control water service to individual properties. Accurate mapping helps prevent delays & unnecessary digging during emergencies. If you happen to know the location of your curbstop, please let our office know. You're also welcome to pick up a marker flag from the office to place beside it. This will assist the crew in locating more efficiently. Seasonal properties have been mapped during the turn on season in the spring.
- → Exercising & refining the mapping of all main water valves: Regularly opening & closing these valves ensures they remain functional. Without this maintenance, valves can seize or break leading to service disruptions & costly repairs. The goal is to improve the accuracy & detail of our main valve maps to ensure quick access & control in the event of a water break emergency. Having precise valve locations mapped is essential for isolating problems swiftly & minimizing service disruptions.
- → Fire hydrant maintenance, training & pressure testing: This fall, alongside our regular system flushing, staff will be conducting hydrant maintenance training & flow testing to ensure all hydrants are in working condition & meet pressure standards for fire protection.

These are big jobs, but they're worth their weight in gold when it comes to system reliability, emergency preparedness & long-term cost savings.

# WATERWORKS FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Annually, the Village is also required to submit a Waterworks Financial Overview to the ministry. This helps ensure that municipalities are properly planning, funding & maintaining their water systems. The general principle is that municipal waterworks should be financially self-sustaining, meaning that the users should cover the full cost of providing water services. The province of Saskatchewan recommends that the people who use the water should pay for it – just like electricity, gas or phone services. This means your water bill should cover the cost of operating, maintaining & upgrading the water system.

Running a water system involves:

- → Treating & testing water to keep it safe
- → Fixing & replacing old pipes
- → Paying staff & electricity
- → Saving for future repairs & upgrades

These are real, ongoing costs – and if they aren't covered by users, the shortfall comes from general taxes or debt. If a community isn't covering costs through user fees, the Ministry may expect a transition plan to move toward full-cost recovery.

# Why is This Fair?

- → You pay for what you use heavy users pay more, low users pay less
- → Encourages conservation & careful water use
- → Keeps water systems sustainable

# What Happens if We Don't Cover the Costs?

- → Delayed repairs & upgrades
- → Risk of water advisories or system failures
- → Higher emergency costs later
- → Potential tax increases to make up the shortfall

## What We're Doing?

We will be reviewing our water rates in the next few months to ensure sure they:

- → Cover the actual costs of the system
- → Are fair & reasonable
- → Help us build reserves for future or emergency needs

The 2024 Waterworks Financial Overview will be completed & sent to the Ministry before September 1<sup>st</sup>. You will also be able to view it on our website by this deadline.

In 2022, waterworks revenues covered 67% of the expenditures and debt payment & in 2023, waterworks revenues covered 83%. We're not at 100% cost recovery yet – but we seem to be getting closer. We've come a long way. In 2022 we were far from covering costs. By 2023, we were covering most of them. And thanks to strong financial tracking & transparency, we now have a much clearer path forward.

The goal is simple: A fair, sustainable & reliable water system – paid for by the people who use it & built to last.

#### WATER SUPPLY UPDATE & FUTURE PLANNING

As part of our ongoing commitment to maintaining a safe, reliable & sustainable water system, we have included funding in this year's budget to complete a comprehensive water study.

### Why a Water Study?

We're currently approaching the capacity limits of our existing water supply system. This means our current infrastructure – particularly the well & water storage facilities – may soon be unable to meet the growing needs of our community. We're taking the steps needed to address this head-on with a clear, forward-thinking approach.

The water study will help us:

- → Assess current & future water demand
- → Explore the addition of a second well
- → Evaluate the need for additional water storage
- → Consider possible treatment plant upgrades
- → Provide a solid foundation for long-term infrastructure planning

# **Funding the Works**

We understand the importance of minimizing the financial impact on ratepayers, which is why Administration has been actively seeking grant funding to help offset these costs.

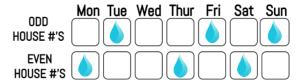
Most recently, the Canada Community-Building Fund grant has been applied for. If successful, this funding will help us move forward more quickly & affordably with the infrastructure improvements we need.

We're committed to keeping the community informed as we move through the study, explore funding & begin the planning for upgrades that will serve residents for years to come.

#### **▲ WATERING RESTRICTIONS**

- → The current Outdoor Water Use Bylaw has been in place since 2023, & a similar bylaw in place before that
- → These measures are not only about capacity they're also about environmental responsibility & encouraging everyone to use water more thoughtfully, especially during high-demand periods
- → While many of our residents take great pride in their beautiful, well-maintained properties which we truly appreciate we want to remind everyone that it possible to maintain a healthy & attractive yard without excessive watering
- → Mindful water use helps us conserve supply, protect the environment & maintain essential services like fire protection The high demand in summer months puts extra stress on our water treatment plant & compromises our ability to maintain adequate supply for essential services
- → The education phase has ended & we are actively monitoring water usage. Fines will be issued for non-compliance
  - Our staff is observing water usage while in the field & our monthly meter readings
    provide clear insight into potential non-compliance. When high water usage is detected,
    we conduct a data log that tracks water consumption by the hour. This helps identify
    whether high usage occurs outside of approved watering days or times. If so, fines will
    be applied accordingly

→ Water is a limited & precious resource – we all have a role in protecting it & we are pleased to see that most residents are improving their water habits & we thank everyone who is doing their part to help protect the community's water supply



# **EDGEWOOD SEWER HOLDING TANK**

- → The Edgewood subdivision is the only place in Buena Vista that is connected to a shared septic/holding tank system. This arrangement has created ongoing challenges in ensuring that the households using the system are covering the full cost of its operation & maintenance
- → For many years, the cost of maintaining this system has been supplemented by the rest of the Village, which is not equitable. We are now actively working to correct this & ensure that only the users of the system are paying for it.
- → The Village conducts daily tracking of what is going into the holding tank & we've consistently found that the volume going in is greater than what is being billed to users. This discrepancy highlights the need for closer oversight & fair cost recovery
- → Rates have already been increased to better reflect the actual cost & we continue to closely monitor the system's usage & expenses.
- → While further increases are not ideal, they may be necessary to ensure the system remains financially sustainable. As with water services, sewer costs must be covered by those who use it, with the infrastructure fee being able to go directly to covering operating & maintenance costs & allow for contributions to a reserve fund in case of emergencies or repairs
- → This past spring, we experienced a failure in the pavement around one of the man holes. During the runoff, water entered directly into the sewer system, ultimately ending up in the holding tank. We will be sure to factor this in when looking at the rates. We are actively looking into permanent fixes to prevent stormwater & surface runoff from entering the sewer system in the future.
- → Additionally, we'd like to remind everyone that sump pumps are not to be connected to or discharged into the sewer system. Sending that extra volume into the holding tank puts additional strain on the system & increases costs for everyone.
- → Being mindful of water use makes a big difference. Simple habits like spreading out laundry loads, fixing leaks promptly & avoiding unnecessary water use can go a long way in keeping your costs manageable.

# SHORELINE - LEGAL CASE

We want to provide an update & some context around the legal case involving the Village boundaries, particularly as it affects lakeshore property owners. This has been a long-standing issue & there's understandably a lot of concern & confusion around it.

The case is not about the Village trying to take anyone's land – and we want to be absolutely clear about that.

The purpose of the original process was to clarify the exact legal boundaries of the Village, which is essential for several reasons:

- → To ensure proper land use planning & service delivery
- → To understand what areas the Village is responsible for
- → To support accurate & enforceable bylaws & regulations effectively particularly around the shoreline, where land use can have significant community & environmental impacts
- → To help us manage & regulate shoreline areas more effectively under our jurisdiction
- → To protect both the Village & property owners by creating legal clarity

Knowing where our boundaries actually are is fundamental to responsible municipal planning. It's not about ownership – it's about clarity & governance.

# **History of Case**

- → The legal case was initiated in approximately 2015 when a change of ownership occurred. There was tremendous uncertainty & differing opinions as to who exactly owned what. It did not appear that a survey had ever been done.
- → The Village obtained a survey, however, it was determined that an application to the Court of King's Bench should be made in order to clarify the boundaries that were in dispute.
- → After several years of delays, the case went to court in 2024 where the judge determined that it was not possible for the Village under the relevant provincial legislation seek the clarification in the Courts, because she determined that this was Crown land & the Crown itself chose not to involve itself in the dispute. As a result, the judge did not go on to determine the question of the boundaries on the merits. This basically means that the status quo, along with the lack of certainty regarding the boundaries, is maintained.
- → Following that ruling, with the assistance of legal advise, Council at the time made the decision to appeal the ruling. Long term, the Village will benefit from certainty not only as to the disputed boundaries that are at issue in this case, but as to its right to seek these determinations in the courts more generally even in relation to Crown land & even when the Crown itself is not involved.
- → As part of that decision, Council was able to have the fees for the appeal capped at \$20,000 +taxes. To date \$16,301.31 has been spent on the appeal.
- → To date approximately, \$145,000 has been spent on the case

# **Where Things Stand Today**

We recognize that some property owners feel this process has created tension or the perception that the Village is overreaching. That was not – and is not – the intention. The goal has always been to bring clarity to jurisdictional boundaries, so that we can properly ensure we can plan appropriately for the Village as a whole.

Current Council is now in the position of managing a situation that originated years ago & working to navigate it as responsibly & transparently as possible. We are doing our best to ensure that any further decisions:

- → Are well-informed
- → Reflect the best interests of the whole community, and
- → Are approached with care & fairness

The appeal has been filed with the Court & our legal counsel expects that the appeal will be scheduled for October.

Given that this matter remains before the courts, the Village is unable to comment further on the merits.

#### **CLOSING REMARKS**

We recognize that tonight's meeting has included a lot of information – and in some cases, some hard truths about what needs to be fixed, updated or addressed in our Village.

Our intention is to be honest & transparent about where things stand today & what needs to happen to move forward responsibly. Times have changed & we need to adapt our processes to be more formal, clear & consistent to serve our community well now, & into the future. We're here, we're paying attention & we're working to learn & build a stronger foundation for the future – together.

Council & Administration are committed to doing things the right way: with clarity, consistency & accountability. That takes times & often a lot of catching up — but we believe it's worth doing properly.

Thank you to all our residents for your continued positivity & for helping make Buena Vista a place we're all proud to call home!