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 Bruce, Holden, Kinsella, Ryley, Tofield, Viking
 Beaver County

The Beaver County Chronicle

A Free Weekly Publication Serving All of Beaver County

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County looks to adopt mediation services policy

Patricia Harcourt

Beaver County Council will consider adopting a Mediation Policy to help neighbours resolve conflicts within the county's jurisdiction.

Council will consider approving Policy #CS-019, with its accompanying administrative procedure.

The policy is needed as Beaver County has entered into an agreement with Strathcona County Community Mediation Society (SCCMS) to provide conflict resolution services to county residents.

Margaret Jones, manager of legislative services, reports that do date a Memorandum of Understanding has been signed, "and a formal contract will be presented."

The policy considered, "outlines the scope of services provided and guides how county residents may access them," stated Jones, in her

report to council.

She added: "The policy will enable Strathcona County Community Mediation Services Society (SCCMS) to accept referrals from Beaver County as well as requests for assistance directly from residents directly.

"SCCMS can discontinue services if the parties do not act respectfully or when the mediation feels unsafe when engaging with one of the parties."

Jones said that county residents will receive communication that this service is being made available to them. They can expect to find this information in the Chronicle, social media and county websites,

Anyone wishing to avail themselves of this service can expect the county to provide space for meetings between the mediator and the residents, if requested by them.

The county will also be responsible for paying mileage to the SCCMS mediator if a meeting is held outside their offices in Strathcona.

The policy's introductory mandate states that: "Beaver County regulates land use and encourages good neighbour relationships through the planning and community standards bylaws. To address conflicts that cannot be resolved independently or by other agencies or organizations, the county will partner with the Strathcona County Community Mediation Service to provide mediation services."

Any county resident wanting this mediation service must contact the county in writing, including a list of requirements in the letter that include, in part, names and contact numbers the nature of the dispute and what efforts have already been

made to resolve the issue.

"The resident will be advised in writing if his/her request will not be referred, responded to, or mediation is being discontinued, and the reason for the decision," states the policy.

Also, SCCMS "will advise the county of any acts of violence and assist with investigations, if warranted. under the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy."

SCCMS will provide the county, upon request, a list of county residents who have received mediation services and the outcome of this, with the information being provided "in confidence."

One a month the general manager of community services will meet with SCCMS "to review the services provided." The CAO and GM of community services will also do this on a semi annual basis.

County considers amendments to rural collaboration framework

Patricia Harcourt

Beaver County will consider additions to the framework for inter-municipal collaboration within the Beaver Region.

Council will also consider recommending a review to the municipalities in the Beaver Region of their Shared Services Agreements.

The idea is for administration "to execute an agreement to each of the following inter-municipal collaboration frameworks to enable an extension of the review process to 2027."

Listed under this review were inter-municipal collaboration frameworks (ICFs) with Strathcona County, Lamont, Minburn, Wainwright, Flagstaff, Camrose

and Leduc.

Council can also ask administration to prepare a proposal for the Beaver Regional Partnership (BRP) for a review of the SSAs in the Beaver Region.

Margaret Jones, Manager of Legislative Services, provided background on this matter at the Dec. 18 county council meeting.

In 2020, the county entered into ICFs with "with each of its urban and rural neighbours," she said, in accordance with the Municipal Government Act (MGA).

"The ICFs outlined the shared services between each pair of municipalities," stated Jones, in her report to council.

"The review (of Strathcona/Beaver ICF) is to be

considered by administration; in other (ICFs) it is to be considered by council or a committee of council."

Changes to ICF legislation is expected for 2025, according to a Municipalities of Alberta notice, said Jones.

"The notice also indicates that the provincial government is recommending that municipalities with ICFs that require a review prior to 2027 attempt to work with each other to delay the review process until the spring of 2-27," explained Jones.

She added: "The county has excellent relationships with the rural municipalities and none have expressed the need for a review at this time."

As for the ICFs with the towns of Tofield and Viking, and the villages of Ryley and Holden, administration suggested that the Beaver Region use the delay to review the process as an opportunity to review the shared service agreements, said the report.

"Many of the shared services agreements are 10 years old and there appears to be a need for some standardization or modernization in the way that expenses are calculated and/or recorded."

For that reason, administration was recommending that this project be proposed for the Beaver Regional Partnership's review, with a recommendation that each council participate, said Jones.



FRAUD & SCAM AWARENESS BREAKFAST Presented by Julie Matthews

Fraud is the fastest growing crime in Canada, and its difficult to stay on top of the latest schemes that are rampant online and in our communities.

Investigative reporter turned peace officer and consumer protection expert, Julie Matthews has dedicated her career to helping individuals avoid scams and fraud. She currently hosts a weekly segment, *Scam Alert*, on CFCW radio.



Bruce Community Hall
January 20, 2025 ~ 9 a.m. - 11 a.m.
(Doors open at 8:30 a.m.)
FREE OF CHARGE!

Pre-registration appreciated, please contact VBFCS at 780.336.4024 to reserve your space.



VIKING SINGLE SESSION WALK - IN

Alberta Recovery Walk-In Addiction and Mental Health Support

Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Viking/Beaver FCSS office (4924 - 53ave). For more information please call: (780) 336-4024

Mental Health Helpline: 1-877-303-2642

Addiction Helpline: 1-866-332-2322

HealthLink: 811 24/7 Support

PROPERTY TAX DEADLINE

Please note that an additional penalty of 6% will be added to any outstanding taxes on January 16, 2025.

Please ensure that all tax payments are made on or before **January 15, 2025.**

Mailed payments must be sent to: Beaver County, Box 140, Ryley, AB, T0B 4A0

(postmark must be on or before January 15, 2025.)

Questions?
Please call: 780-663-3730.




The Great Twine Round-Up

From November 1, 2024, to May 31, 2025, bring all the used plastic baler twine you can round-up to a participating Alberta collection site (Claystone) for a chance to win a cash prize!



www.cleanfarms.ca/great-twine-round-up

Winter Tips for Waste Collection

Winter conditions - particularly snow and ice - can delay our ability to do waste collections in both rural and urban areas.

Here are some helpful tips to make it easier for our waste collection crews:

- Avoid pushing snow into alleyways to ensure our equipment can pass through.
- Keep areas around bins clear of snow.
- Remove hazards in alleyways and driveways including low-hanging tree branches.
- Keep driveways cleared of snow.
- Have your bin in an easily-accessible area.
- Be patient, especially after large snowfalls.
- If you are noticing delays in waste pickup, visit our Facebook page at facebook.com/claystonewasteltd for updates

Thank you for helping us help you!





OPEN RFQ

Beaver County is currently accepting submissions for the following:

- **RFQ2025-02INFR: 2022-2025 Tandem Snowplow Sand Truck**
 - Closes: January 20, 2025 @ 10 a.m. Local time

Please find complete information for all requests on our website > Business > RFPs, Tenders, Leases & Sales



IMPORTANT DATES

January 15

- 9:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. - Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting
- 1 - 4:30 p.m. - Regular Council Meeting

February 5

- 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. - Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting

February 19

- 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. - Regular Council Meeting

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY

Book Club

Location: Ross Creek Community Hall, 531041 Rge Rd 191
Rural book club that meets the first Tuesday of each month. Meetings run from 7PM - 8PM, all ages welcome!

Tofield AA - Thursdays, 8 - 9 PM

Basement of Bardo Lutheran Church, 4737 57 Ave, Tofield.

Viking AA - Wednesdays, 8 PM, Zoom option also available.

Golden Valley Lutheran Church, 5327 56 Ave, Viking.

<https://area78aa.org/meetings/147-3>

Submit your event/s, meetings and/or gatherings to the events calendar on the website! Just head to the website, under the Explore menu click on County Region Events Calendar. We have partnered with Go East to share local events on our website!

DEVELOPMENT PERMITS

None at this time.



Beaver County is pleased to offer **Mediation Services** in partnership with the Strathcona County Community Mediation Society (SCCMS). This free service assists residents in resolving disputes related to fencing, noise, parking, pets, trees, and more.

How It Works:

- Contact SCCMS Directly: Reach out to SCCMS for guidance and support.
- Confidential Referral: Authorize the County to provide a confidential referral to SCCMS on your behalf.

An SCCMS mediator will offer tips for addressing the conflict or, with your permission, liaise between parties to facilitate a resolution.

SCCMS Contact info:

- Phone: 780-464-8445 or 587-598-8445
- Email: communitymediation@sccm.ca



Find more information on our website under the Services menu.

Did you know...
you can choose your electricity and natural gas provider?



310-4822



Use our easy **Cost Comparison Tool** to find out which energy retailer is best for you

utilitiesconsumer advocate Alberta

Music Jam / Open Mic

SATURDAY

JANUARY 18, 1 PM

HOLDEN COMMUNITY HALL
4919 - 49 Ave. HOLDEN, AB

Admission - \$ 5 per person
Musicians/Participants - No Charge
Come Dance to the Music!



FOR MORE INFO:
Dave 780-720-5839

or beaverhillplayers17@gmail.com

Musicians and spectators welcome!

BEAVER COUNTY EAST

Stay & Play!

BRUCE: Community Hall Gym

11:00 a.m. - Noon

January 17th & 31st
2025

For more information, please call VBFCSS at
780-336-4024



Mailing list

Get news, meeting highlights, the road construction schedule, the Chronicle, and more - direct to your inbox!

Website

Information on County programs and services can be found on our website, along with the latest news.

Social media

Find us on Facebook, X (Twitter), Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn.



BRCF provides funding to BeaverHill Bird Observatory Society



Battle River Community Foundation Board Member Sharleen Chevrax presents a cheque to Beaverhill Bird Observatory Society Board Chair Geoff Holroyd and Remi, a Burrowing Owl.

The Battle River Community Foundation awarded a \$5,000 grant to the Beaverhill Bird Observatory Society. Accepting the donation was Geoff Holroyd, Board Chair, and Remi, a Burrowing Owl.

According to Holroyd, "This Battle River Community Foundation grant will allow the Beaverhill Bird Observatory to take our BirdSmart Education Program into rural schools along with a live owl and raptor."

The BirdSmart Education Program, according to the Beaverhill Bird Observatory website, runs primarily in the winter months, with biologists giving presentations focusing on bird conservation, diversity, climate change

and research.

School presentations, in person and online, are given to Grades 12 to Pre-K and are linked to the Alberta school curriculum, integrating bird information into the sciences, social sciences and/or language arts.

The program is also available to other groups such as after-school groups, seniors' homes, birthday parties, and more.

The Beaverhill Bird Observatory was established in 1984 and is the second oldest migration monitoring observatory in Canada.

The grant for the Beaverhill Bird Observatory Society is funded from income earned from the Grattidge Family Fund.

FSCD staff cuts worry parents

Brett McKay
Local Journalism
Initiative Reporter

Parents of children with disabilities are concerned that staff cuts within a provincial support program will make it harder for families to access the services they need.

Earlier this month, 12 caseworkers in Alberta's Family Supports for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) program were informed their contracts will not be renewed when they expire.

FSCD is responsible for providing eligible families with various services, such as counselling, aides for behavioural or developmental support, and help with medical expenses.

The recent staff reductions, combined with the loss of seven FSCD caseworker positions in September, impacts families in several ways, says Keltie Marshall, co-founder Hold My Hand Alberta, a volunteer organization that helps parents of kids with disabilities.

"Reducing staff during a period of rapid population growth, alongside a stagnant budget for this department, means exorbitant waits of up to three years. It means we

are preventing disabled children and their families from accessing necessary therapies and services to help them thrive," Marshall said.

"We cannot be silent when this is happening alongside another large provincial budget surplus."

Ashley Stevenson, press secretary to the Minister of Seniors, Community, and Social Services, said funding for FSCD has been maintained at \$233.8 million for the 2024-25 budget, and there has been no reduction in department employees.

"The department regularly reviews its recruitment needs on an ongoing basis to ensure staffing levels are stable and consistent across the province. As part of this process, the 12 temporary FSCD contractors that you mentioned were notified earlier this month that their contracts will not be extended once they expire," Stevenson said.

"The end of these contracts for temporary employees will not affect the ability of families to access services in their agreements."

Marshall said it is already a struggle for families have their child assessed and get on the waiting list for FSCD,

and education supports have been "reduced to unsafe levels, let alone levels where children can have their needs met and become their best selves."

"Each thing we have to fight for and justify over and over is another brick in a parent's backpack. It feels like our kids are always cut first and it is time for our community to come alongside us and start asking why," Marshall said.

Notice of the 48th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of the Beaver Heritage & Agricultural Society

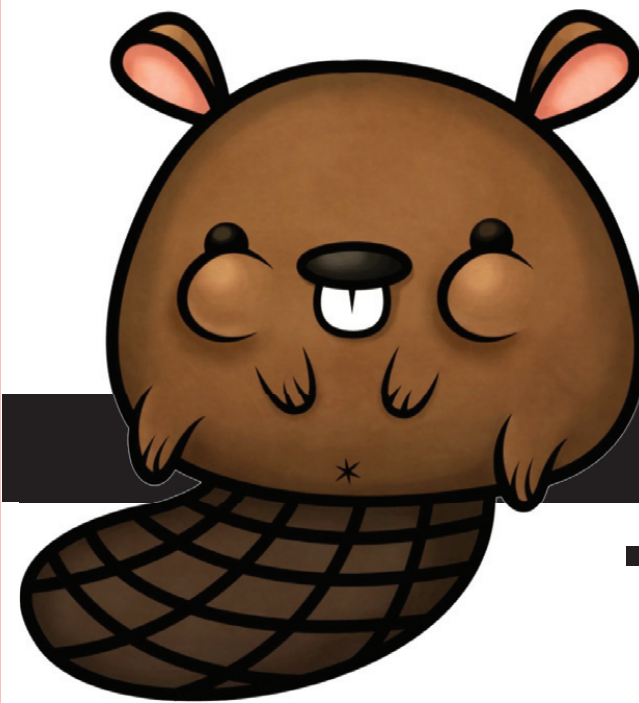
(Operators of the Ryley Swimming Pool)

Will be held on

Monday, January 13th, @ 7:00 pm

Village of Ryley Office

Everyone welcome!



FAT BEAVER INDUSTRIES

Colleen West

Viking, Alberta

1-403-929-0960

- **Watkins Products**
- **Farm Fresh Eggs**
- **Blankets**
- **Prayer and Counselling**
- **Crocheted Baby and Granny Healing**