

Council Report October 17, 2016

Councillor Cheri Funke

September 14, 2016 – GNP Board Meeting

We spoke at length about the need for us to go thru all of GNP's Policies and Bylaws in the next few months; we are currently in the process of building a policy regarding remote attendance and board member application policies.

A new 'walking program' for seniors is being developed using the New Horizon Seniors Grant.

An organizational meeting of the Santa's Anonymous Committee is being held on the 20th of September, the program will be using the Old Town Office site again this year.

The Central Alberta Pregnancy Care Center out of Olds is now coming out once a week on Mondays to see clients from Sundre.

The office has not received any more comments or questions concerning the cancelation of the Snakehill Slam.

September 16, 2016 – Seniors Center Grand Opening

This event was well attended, many dignitaries were in attendance to make speeches and many seniors were there to hear the congratulations on the opening of this wonderful building.

September 20, 2016 – Santa's Anonymous Organizational Meeting

Met with GNP Staff and Volunteer Public Members to being organizing another year of the Santa's Anonymous Program, the committee is full of very passionate people. We drafted a new donations letter that will be going out to all the business' in Town and the surrounding area to give them more information on the program and how they can be involved. We have given them the use of our Old Town office site again this year and it will be the main 'workshop' site, volunteers are always welcome and the building will be open approximately October 19 to begin accepting donations and volunteers will be there sorting the donations then.

October 4-7, 2016 – AUMA Conference

October 4 – Building your Leadership Skills for the 2017 Election.

- Gord Hume started out this sessions talking about leadership and what makes a good leader. There are a few statements that he made throughout his presentation that stood out for me were;
 - 'Council doesn't run City Hall, they just make the Policies', the relationship between Council and Staff is key. There are 2 aspects that are the most

important, a clear understanding of Council and Administrations roles and TRUST.

- Good qualities in an elected officials are;
 - Smart
 - Firm
 - Public Good comes first
 - Honest
 - Listens
 - Strong
 - Speaks the Truth
- 'Do we roll out the Red Carpet or Red Tape' when dealing with the public, developers, and our regional partners.
- 'Refer-Defer game is the definition of a weak Council'
- Maria deBruijn spoke about understanding citizen engagement. She had three main focuses throughout her presentation;
 - Citizen engagement and representative democracy
 - Citizen engagement as an elected official
 - Citizen engagement as a municipal leader, including under the MGA

She spoke about the spectrum of citizen engagement; Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate, and Empower. It all depends on us as elected officials how much public involvement we have in our decision making process and it also depends on the subject of the decisions. A lot of emphasis was placed on Making the Most of Citizen Engagement;

- Know WHAT you want to accomplish
- Know WHO you want involved
- Go WHERE the people are
- Manage your RISK
- Be your own HERO
- Whatever you do – DO IT WELL

As with everything we do on Council there is legislation in the MGA on how public engagement should be done, but I do believe we have a duty as Elected Officials to go out and engage our citizens.

- Doug Downs spoke about Holding a News Conference in 2016. He spoke generally about why stories become 'news', when to hold News Conferences, types of journalists, and how to prepare for the news conference.

The most interesting and information portion that I found in this presentation was when he outlined when to hold a news conference, which is

- To provide an update on an already newsworthy event, topic or happening (including crisis)
- To create a news worthy event
- To focus media attention
- To avoid accusations of favoritism
- To explain a complex matter.

We got involved with a mock press conference and we got to see first-hand that no matter how hard you try to prepare for a news conference, the media is going to put their spin on it, the best approach is to be as knowledgeable as you can of the facts of the situation and try your hardest to stay on topic no matter what questions you are asked.

- Doug Griffiths spoke to us about the importance of Intermunicipal Collaboration. He spoke at great length about the fact that the challenges that municipalities are facing are growing, specifically;
 - Super – Urbanization
 - Shrinking Communities
 - Youth leaving
 - Seniors leaving
 - Economies are shrinking – businesses are closing
 - Infrastructure crumbling
 - Provincial and Municipal Government revenues are falling or unstable
 - Growing expectations, but fewer resources
 - Capacity for change and to meet growth potential is limited and shrinking

Unfortunately we can relate to a lot of these points but there are a lot of communities out there that are in the same situation as us.

Dealing with the issues can be broken down into a simple consultation process; Communication, Consultation, and Engagement. The communication and consultation process is the easy part, making sure that the public are informed and of the issues that we have and the issues that they can bring to us, but the most important to me is the engagement, and there are 3 levels of engagement;

- Level 1 – Identify the problem
- Level 2 – Identify the problem and the potential solutions
- Level 3 – Identify the problem; own the solutions and their implementation.

I truly believe it is our job as elected officials to strive for level 3, we know our existing problems and new ones are always coming up but it our job to come to a solution for these problems and then own it.

October 5, 2016 – The Future of Municipal Water Services

- This was a presentation from the Sustainability and Environment Committee of AUMA, the 2 experts spoke of how they believe that municipal water services should be designed and operated, not exactly what I was hoping to get out of this session, it was more focused on what the future holds for municipalities by way of regulations and new innovations, such as; plumbing in your home that recycling gray water into non-potable water (meaning water from the bathroom sink is stored in a tank and used to when flushing your toilet) than what to do with issues that we are facing now, such as; infrastructure funding.
 - **What's Coming with Municipal Legislation and Regulation**

This session was an in-depth discussion on the MGA review it was very thorough and covered each point but honestly a repeat of what you can find doing your own research on the AUMA website. There was a discussion on understanding the difference between legislation and regulation meaning an Act is a law passed by Legislation and a Regulation is passed by the Cabinet and based on an Act that has already been passed, a regulation makes the Act easier to follow and one Act can have many regulations. The regulations are consistent with the purpose and intent of the Act.

The priorities that are the focus of the MGA review fall under 3 categories and they are;

 - Governance Regulations
 - Code of Conduct
 - Public Participation
 - Annexation Principles
 - Financial Reporting
 - Planning Regulations
 - Intermunicipal Collaboration Frameworks
 - Offsite Levies
 - SDAB Forms
 - SDAB Training
 - Assessment and Taxation Regulations
 - Assessment Subclasses
- We met with the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Danielle Larivee to discuss our Water and Waste Water Infrastructure and Flood Mitigation/Preparedness. I felt the meeting went well they took a lot of notes, they told us that our next logical step is to set up a meeting with the Minister of Transportation/Infrastructure Brian Mason to discuss our problems and we requested that she advocate on our behalf to assist in setting up that meeting. We provided them with photos and illustrated to them the impact of past flooding has had on our community, we also requested that the Minister assist us with the getting a new committal to the river from the Minister of Environment in reference to the letter from 1986 about the maintenance of the existing diking system (my feeling is that we probably won't). I also asked the question about grant funding for tangible assets for flood preparedness like they had following the 2013 flooding but was

informed that was more of a one-time grant issuance and it did not look like there would be more of that in the immediate future.

October 6, 2016

Dialogue with the Ministers

- A panel of Ministers, Minister of Municipal Affairs, Minister of Transportation/Infrastructure, and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs/Justice and Attorney General. The highlights were;
 - The Mayor of Drumheller stressed to Minister Mason the importance of getting new flood mapping and how it is an integral part in the development of communities and their growth.
 - Minister Mason also mentioned that their government is increasing infrastructure funding by 15%, an increase of \$305 million to go towards transportation, and there will also be an increase to the SIP grant funding.
 - A question was posed to Minister Mason concerning if it was possible that if a municipality applied but was denied for infrastructure grants from the provincial government would the 'rubber stamp' the project and allow them to apply for federal funding and the answer was yes.

October 7, 2016

Tribute to Wildfire Emergency Management and Recovery

- A presentation was made by the Fire Chief Darby Allen; he gave a time line of how fast things escalated with the wildfire in a short amount of time. The slide show that followed was heart wrenching, to me this strengthens my belief that Emergency Preparedness should be a large focus and for us not to be reactionary as we have been in the past.

October 12, 2016 – GNP Board Meeting

- Before the board meeting started I had a discussion with some of the members concerning Councillor Thompsons comments on whether or not they believe a Councillor sitting as a Town Rep on their board should be a voting member or not, it is the Chairs belief that I am on that board to bring back information to Council and keep them informed on what is going on at GNP and the decisions that the board has made, this includes budget, and since some of the budget money comes directly from the residents they believe it is my job to have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the budget and at the same time voting is important because their expectation is that I agree with the budget that is being submitted and will advocate at the Council level.

- Some of the programs such as Healthy Families have started to get busy again after the usual slow summer.
- It has been a struggle with timing of funding from the MVC because the money comes to the County from the province then the County sends the funds to the Town and then on to GNP, the request is that we take a look at the FCSS agreement between the Town and County and change either the way they fund, by the County writing 1 single check (as the Town does for GNP currently) or changing the payment timing from the end of the quarter to the beginning of the quarter.

October 13, 2016 – DARC Committee

- The vacancy rate has gone up, and the forecast is that it will increase more.
- The Chamber has decided that they are going to fix the relationship between our Town Council and the County Council.
- The Chamber will also be pushing Town Council to rewrite the LUB as soon as possible.
- The High River Chamber is going to be coming and doing a presentation on the changes they have done to their downtown.
 - They are thinking about inviting High River Council to a Council Workshop in the Spring
- A policy for Public Art was brought to the Committee; this policy is established to direct the integration of public art into public places. There are a few corrections to be made then the policy will be passed onto Administration.
- The Committee discussed how the Historic Riverside Summer Event that we have been discussing for a few weeks cannot be spearheaded by the Town; it would have to be taken on by the Committee members and community groups.