



Council Comments #25

Personnel Matters

In Council Comments #24, we reported the hiring of Tracey Johnstone as our administrator.

Tracey was with us for a few weeks, took two weeks off on medical leave and then resigned. This occurred very shortly after we had taken over the administration of Interlake Water Utility and commencement of a search for an assistant administrator: one person not being able to handle administration of both Cochin and Interlake.

Since then we have (as it is said) lucked out.

Amber Loepky: We have hired Amber as our administrator. She is a JPII grad and lives in North Battleford. She comes to us having completed her Municipal Administrative education and just has to have the necessary hours to be fully qualified. The “necessary hours” includes supervision by a qualified municipal administrator and our former Interim Administrator, Linda Sandwick, has agreed to take on that role. Amber has been in the office for the last few weeks.

Kosha Desai: We have hired Kosha as the Village’s assistant administrator. Kosha has an MBA in Finance. It is Kosha’s intention to start the municipal administrator’s training course. She too is a resident of North Battleford. April 24 is her scheduled start date.

Council looks forward to working with Linda, Amber and Kosha.

Larry Bojarski: After over 10 years with the village, the greatest bulk of which has been as village foreman, Larry has decided to retire, once and for all, and pass on the foreman’s duties to someone else. He says he wants to take time for himself and wife. He is toying with the idea of becoming involved with the Cochin Days Committee. On behalf of all members of council, past and present, we extend our collective thanks to Larry for his dedication, experience and sage advice.

Jeff Sherman: The Village has hired Jeff Sherman as the village foreman. He started his duties on April 16 and will work with Larry until the end of April and then be on his own. Jeff is a graduate of the North Battleford Comprehensive High School and has obtained his Fourth Class Power Engineering Part A and Fifth Class Power Engineering from Lakeland College in Lloydminster. Jeff has years of experience with the operation of heavy equipment including maintenance of rural roads, snowplowing and related maintenance, and oil field servicing including six years as owner and operator of Sandwith Oil and Acres from his home location: Glenbush. Jeff will take the water certification course in September. Council is pleased that it has been able to find another qualified person to continue the work of village foreman.

Summer Employees: The decision of when we bring on our summer help will be delayed until we see what the weather is going to do.

Road Closures:

We rebuilt the Hunt's Cove hill road and the north Bigway access road in the fall of 2017. We expect that with the spring thaw and/or spring and summer rains we may have to close one or both of these roads from time-to-time to insure that they do not get torn up by vehicles when they are soft. In view of this, Council requests that "Road Closed" signs be obeyed if and when you encounter them. In addition, even if there are no Road Closed signs, if the road appears soft or after a rain, please refrain from driving on the roads until they have time to dry. Finally, please refrain from using your four wheel drive in order to prove that you have the best hill vehicle in the Village. If you are unable to safely negotiate these roads in two wheel drive, please stay off of them.



SaskPower Tree Trimming:

SaskPower has been out to the Village and has trimmed a number of trees and left the refuse from those trimmings behind. If anyone would like to scavenge any or all of this refuse please feel free to do so: first come, first served.

Crime issues:

The village remained somewhat unscathed over the winter but the melting of snow has brought out the despicable thieves and break and enter incidents have been reported on Hunt's Cove. In addition, the village's storage compound was compromised and some recreational units were broken into and an outboard motor stolen off a boat.

Council is investigating the cost of improving the lighting in the compound and around the village office and has already improved the outdoor lighting at the village shop.

All municipal governments are searching for a remedy for the rural crime epidemic and have identified the need for further and better police presence but have hit a financing wall in that regard. Our council continues to consult with neighboring municipalities and here renews our suggestion that keeping porch and yard lights on all winter and boarding up easily accessible windows and doors are matters residents should consider. Remember, booze and electronics are the prime target of these low lifes.

Lighthouse Café:

The renovations to the village hall are well on their way to being completed: thanks to Cochin Community Players for their contribution in excess of \$100,000. Construction of the addition, which will include new handicapped accessible toilets, will commence right after the spring thaw. In addition, the café is within days of being ready to reopen. Council has already received expressions of interest from various individuals. Council is working with its legal advisor to prepare a draft lease for review by potential tenants. Advertising will commence shortly. Council would like to see the café “up and running” by early May.

Letter of Concern and Lakeshore Bylaws:

Council has received a well written and thoughtful letter of concern from a ratepayer setting out a number of concerns about the condition of the lakes and creek and, in the writer’s view, the uncontrolled use of shoreline, large residences blocking others’ view of the lakes, proliferation of boat lifts and docks and residents creating their own private swimming areas, among other issues. Council is aware of these concerns that are shared by other ratepayers and will be consulting with village residents – both summer and winter – in an attempt to design bylaws that will be in the best interests of the greatest possible number of persons.

Once the annexation process is complete (hopefully by this summer) Council will embark on the process of drafting bylaws relating to the shoreline. Council will be consulting with ratepayers and sees the process to be somewhat lengthy. It will be a challenge to reconcile the conflicting opinions of ratepayers – some of which are diametrically opposed.

Zoning Bylaw:

Work continues on updating the Village’s zoning bylaw and once Council has a draft ready for consideration, the same will be made available to all ratepayers for comment. This will not be a “take it or leave it” draft but rather the basis for discussion with ratepayers and will be done on an informal basis to be followed by amendments as necessary followed by the public notification as required by Community Planning.

April 22, 2018