

## **Council Comments #27**

### **On a Sad Note**

Former Cochin Mayor, David McDonald, passed away in North Battleford on Monday, June 18, 2018. David, and his parents before him, had been long term cottage owners on Hunt's Cove. The property is now used by his daughter, Margaret, and her husband, Peter Wiesner, a member of Council of the Village.

### **Our hats go off to:**

Sharon and Howard Kirby of Days Beach who, for the second year in a row, have provided all of the labour and paid all of the costs associated with replanting the flower box along the west side of the Village Office. In addition, they "cleaned up" the scrub brush that was along the wall,

Many thanks Sharon and Howard.

### **Our staffing revolving door:**

In Council Comments #26, we advised that we had hired a new assistant administrator. That person has now left our employ. However, good news. We have now hired Jennifer Fisher of Meota to take on that position. For three years she was the acting administrator for the Village of Meota and provided administrative services for that village's water utility: a most valuable asset considering that the Resort Village of Cochin is doing the same for Interlake Water Utility. She commenced work on June 19, 2018. Welcome Jennifer.

In the interim, Sharon Spence of Aquadeo, filled in as an assistant in our Village office. We cannot thank Sharon enough for "bailing us out" when Amber, our administrator, was left alone to run the office.

### **2018 Taxes**

Council has been able to maintain the mill rate that was set for 2017. Regrettably, the Village would then be left with insufficient funds to operate. To overcome this dilemma, Council has decided to raise the base rate from \$700 to \$800 the net result being that everyone's taxes will increase by \$100 plus or minus any changes resulting from reassessment.

### **Dogs running loose:**

Residents are reminded that our bylaws provide that all dogs must be kept on a leash or in an escape proof yard when they are out-of-doors. "Don't worry, he won't hurt you" or "He's too little to cause any harm" or "He's just friendly" won't cut it. Please remember that even little yappy dogs can raise a negative reaction in other dogs: both big and small and cause fear in children.

### **Garbage Collection:**

This is a Believe It Or Not topic. It seems that non-Cochin household garbage is being brought into the Village from "who knows where" to be picked up by our staff. Tsk, tsk, tsk to the few who think this is cool. Please put out-of-Cochin garbage into your garbage at your winter home.

### **Leaf and branch and bush collection:**

For at least one year prior to this year, the Village has picked up bags of leaves and, possibly tree and bush cuttings. We have found that the labour costs associated with this service are becoming prohibitive and interfering with staff availability for other duties. Hire more staff or stop the service?

Our choice was dictated by cost. The Village will only make one more pickup of leaves this year and only those which are in clear plastic bags and that will be after the long weekend in September. The Village will no longer be picking up tree and bush cuttings. Residents will be responsible to dispose of such items themselves. The Village landfill (on the west side of Hwy 4, north of the park and south of the Aquadeo turnoff) will be open Saturdays, Sundays and statutory holidays from 10 am to 4 pm. There is no charge for delivering these items to the landfill but all bags will have to be emptied and the plastic kept by the resident.

Continuing into 2019 and thereafter, the Village will make two pickups of leaves bagged in clear plastic bags. Those pickups will be after the May long weekend and after the September long weekend.

The Village will not pick up leaves in black plastic bags.

#### **Café/Restaurant:**

The facility is now in full compliance with all fire, public health and building code requirements and Council is in the final stages of negotiating a lease with a potential tenant. Both parties have a June 29 weekend opening date in mind.

#### **Annual General Meeting:**

The Annual General Meeting of Ratepayers will be held in the Village Hall commencing at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, July 1, 2018. Non-ratepayers are invited to attend.

#### **Council Comments:**

Council Comments are a regular, informal publication of Council. They appear on both the Village's Facebook page and home page. If anyone (ratepayers and others) wishes to have Council Comments sent to them by email, please contact the Village office and fill out a request form.

#### **Cochin Days:**

This annual event is scheduled for Friday, August 10, Saturday, August 11 and Sunday, August 12.

Kudos to the small group of volunteer organizers that organize this event each year.

The organizing committee is in dire need of short term volunteers in many capacities. If you have an hour or two or three that you can commit to help out, please call the Village office (306-386-2333) and leave your name and contact information and someone will be in touch.

We are specifically looking for 10 volunteers who would be willing to cook up some sausages on the Sunday morning for delivery to the pancake breakfast.

#### **2017 Tax Prepayment Discount:**

In 2017 the Resort Village of Cochin granted a 15% discount on all 2017 municipal taxes paid to the village before September 1, 2017. The cost to the village for this accommodation was \$60,000 and was included in the 2017 budget as an expenditure which became part of the means used to calculate the base rate and the mill rate. No penalties were assessed on payments made in September, October, November and December.

This was the practice that had been followed for many years prior to 2017.

#### **2018 Tax Prepayment Discount:**

In 2018 the Resort Village of Cochin will grant a 10% discount on all 2018 municipal taxes paid on or before July 31, 2018. The cost of this accommodation is \$45,000 and is included in the 2018 budget as an expenditure which becomes part of the calculation of the base rate

and mill rate. 2018 will be the last year in which a discount will be offered regardless of when the taxes are paid.

The 2018 municipal and school taxes are due and payable in 2018 and if so paid in 2018 no penalty will be assessed.

### **2019 Taxes**

Beginning in 2019 and continuing thereafter, property taxes are due and payable on or before the last day of the month next following the month in which the current year's tax notices are mailed. In 2019 it is expected that the tax notices will be mailed in June. Accordingly, the taxes will be due and payable on or before July 31, 2019. If the tax notices are mailed in April 2019 the due date for payment will be May 31, 2019. If they are mailed in July 2019 the taxes will be due and payable on or before August 30, 2019 and so on and so on.

Beginning in 2019 and continuing thereafter, any portion of property taxes not paid on or before the due date will be assessed a 1.5% per month penalty. Therefore, if the tax notices are sent out in June, the due date for payment is July 31. If not paid on or before July 31 there will be a 1.5% penalty added on August 1. If the taxes are not paid in August there will be an additional 1.5% penalty added in September and so on and so on.

These changes were prompted by two considerations:

1. To grant a 15% discount for payment in August equates to an annual (12 month) interest rate of 45%. (15% divided by 4 times 12). A 10% discount for payment in July equates to an annual interest rate of 24%. Although it is helpful for the village to have the cash flow in the summer months, such a model is not fiscally responsible. If the village "runs short" of cash in the summer months it makes more sense to take out a short term loan at the Credit Union at a competitive interest rate.
2. Some ratepayers have the financial resources to make the prepayment in full in order to take advantage of the discount and others do not. The model of granting discounts for early payment results in a shifting of some tax liability from some to everyone, regardless of means.

June 19, 2018