COUNTY COUNCIL

March 5, 2024

9:00 a.m. Council Chambers

A G E N D A

1. MINUTES
    a. Council Minutes – February 20, 2024 (enclosed)

2. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

3. BUSINESS ARISING/OLD BUSINESS
    a. Outside (Extra) Meeting Schedule and Changes
        i. Fire Appreciation Evening – March 8, 2024 – Warner
        ii. RMA 2024 Spring Convention – March 17-20, 2024 – Edmonton
        iii. RiskPro Communities – April 8-10, 2024 – Enoch
    b. Action Tracking (enclosed)

4. REPORTS
    a. Chief Administrative Officer's Report (enclosed)
    b. Public Works Superintendent's Report (enclosed)
    c. Financial Report (enclosed)
    d. Divisional Reports
        i. D. Cody
        ii. R. Ford
        iii. P. Jensen
        iv. S. Rodgers
        v. J. Heggie
        vi. M. Rockenbach
        vii. R. Taylor

5. DELEGATIONS
    a. STARS Air Ambulance – 10:15 a.m. Glenda Farnden (enclosed)

6. CORRESPONDENCE
    a. Family & Community Support Services – December Board Minutes (enclosed)
    b. RMA Oil and Gas Outstanding Taxes – Member Briefing (enclosed)
    c. Minister of Municipal Affairs ACP Grant – Letter (enclosed)
    d. Chief Mountain Regional Solid Waste – Organizational Minutes (enclosed)
    e. Chief Mountain Regional Solid Waste – December Minutes (enclosed)
    f. Chief Mountain Regional Solid Waste – January Minutes (enclosed)

7. NEW BUSINESS
    a. County Recreation (enclosed)

    At the retreat it was asked to do an evaluation of County recreation. Attached is a list of what is located throughout the various areas of the County. How would Council like to proceed with this information?

b. RMA Resolutions (enclosed)

Enclosed are the resolutions for the upcoming RMA convention. Does Council wish to discuss the resolutions before heading to Edmonton?

c. Alberta Provincial Budget 2024

The Provincial Budget was released on February 29th. If relevant documents are released, they will be provided to Council for discussion.

8. BYLAWS AND POLICIES

a. Employee Safety Committee (enclosed)

With the changes to the way we are operating the Joint Health and Safety Committee reviewed our current policy and moved to forward the enclosed changes to Council. Does Council wish to approve these changes?

b. Cemeteries (enclosed)

Enclosed is a summary about the cemeteries located within the County of Warner, including details on closed and abandoned cemeteries, the responsibilities of owners of a cemetery, and the possible options. Also enclosed is a proposed draft policy for consideration. How would Council like to proceed?

9. LATE BUSINESS

10. CLOSED SESSION

11. ADJOURNMENT

COUNTY COUNCIL

February 20, 2024

A County Council meeting was held in Council chambers on February 20, 2024. In attendance were R. Taylor, P. Jensen, S. Rodgers, M. Rockenbach, D. Cody, R. Ford, J. Heggie, Chief Administrative Officer S. Hathaway, Public Works Superintendent L. Liebelt, and Municipal Clerk N. Stevens.

Reeve R. Taylor called the meeting to order at 8:57 a.m.

MINUTES
(24-02-01)
M. Rockenbach moved to approve the minutes of the Counil meeting held on January 16, 2024, as presented.
Carried.

AGENDA
(24-02-02)
J. Heggie moved to approve the agenda as presented.
Carried.

ACTION TRACKING
(24-02-03)
S. Rodgers moved to accept the action tracking as information.
Carried.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT
(24-02-04)
D. Cody moved to accept the Administrator's report as information.
Carried.

PUBLIC WORKS SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
(24-02-05)
M. Rockenbach moved to accept the Public Works Superintendent's report as information.
Carried.

(24-02-06)
R. Ford moved to proceed with the destruction of records as presented.
Carried.

(24-02-07)
J. Heggie moved to approve the proposed capital expense of the skid steer replacement.
Carried.

DIVISIONAL REPORTS
(24-02-08)
P. Jensen moved to accept the divisional reports as information.
Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE
(24-02-09)
S. Rodgers moved to accept the correspondence as information.
Carried.

RECESS
R. Taylor called for a recess at 10:02 a.m.
R. Taylor called the meeting back to order at 10:11 a.m.

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS RMA RESOLUTION
(24-02-10)
R. Ford moved to accept the resolution in principle and to bring it forward as an emergent resolution at the RMA 2024 Spring Convention.
Carried.

REPRESENTATION ON DROUGHT COMMITTEE
(24-02-11)
S. Rodgers moved that R. Taylor attend the Provincial Drought Committee meetings.
Carried.

REDA FUNDING
(24-02-12)
D. Cody moved to accept this item as information.
Carried.

ASB MEETINGS
(24-02-13)
S. Rodgers moved to add the Agricultural Fieldman report to the second Council meeting of each month, with ASB meetings to take place semi-annually on Council meeting days.
Carried.

ASB CAPITAL
(24-02-14)
J. Heggie moved to approve the ASB 2024-2026 capital replacement plan.
Carried.

PARKS CAPITAL
(24-02-15)

D. Cody moved to approve the 2024 parks capital plan.

Carried.

POLICY A-14 NO TILL DRILLS
(24-02-16)

R. Ford moved to approve policy A-14 No Till Drills as presented.

Carried.

POLICY A-17 GRAIN BAGS AND TWINE AG PLASTICS RECYCLING
(24-02-17)

M. Rockenbach moved to approve policy A-17 Grain Bags and Twine Ag Plastics Recycling as presented.

Carried.

BYLAW 989-24 LAND USE BYLAW AMENDMENT – AG to GCR
(24-02-18)

R. Ford moved to give first reading to bylaw 989-24 Land Use Bylaw Amendment – AG to GCR.

Carried.

S. Leusink entered the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

BANK RECONCILIATION
(24-02-19)

S. Rodgers moved to accept the Bank Reconciliation dated January 31, 2024, as information.

Carried.

CHEQUE REGISTER
(24-02-20)

M. Rockenbach moved to accept the January 2024 cheque listing for $500,679.66 as information.

Carried.

S. Leusink and L. Liebelt left the meeting at 10:58 a.m.

CLOSED SESSION
(24-02-21)

M. Rockenbach moved for Council to go into a closed session at 10:59 a.m., under section 16 Disclosure harmful to business interests of a third party of the FOIP Act, with all participating in the meeting in attendance.

Carried.

(24-02-22)

S. Rodgers moved to return to regular session at 11:15 a.m.

Carried.

(24-02-23)

P. Jensen moved that the County of Warner will back the municipal group dealing with AlphaBow Energy.

Carried.

ADJOURNMENT
(24-02-24)

P. Jensen moved to adjourn at 11:16 a.m.

Carried.

_____
Reeve

_____
Chief Administrative Officer

# Action Tracking

| |
|---|
| Completed. |
| In progress. |

| Motion | | Status |
|---|---|---|
| 23-11-07 | R. Ford moved to set up a meeting with the Alberta Minister of Health. | Waiting for word from the scheduling co-ordinator; have followed up multiple times. |
| 23-12-27 | S. Rodgers moved to schedule the Fire Services Appreciation evening for March 8th, 2024. | Ready for March 8. |
| 24-01-13 | R. Ford moved that the County puts up two Trucks Entering signs and one Stop sign, with the residents responsible for the cost of the Stop sign. | Completed. |
| 24-02-06 | R. Ford moved to proceed with the destruction of records as presented. | Completed. |
| 24-02-07 | J. Heggie moved to approve the proposed capital expense of the skid steer replacement. | Implemented moving forward |
| 24-02-10 | R. Ford moved to accept the resolution in principle and to bring it forward as an emergent resolution at the RMA 2024 Spring Convention. | Sent to RMA for Consideration |
| 24-02-13 | S. Rodgers moved to add the Agricultural Fieldman report to the second Council meeting of each month, with ASB meetings to take place semi-annually on Council meeting days. | Implemented moving forward. |
| 24-02-14 | J. Heggie moved to approve the ASB 2024-2026 capital replacement plan. | Implemented moving forward. |
| 24-02-15 | D. Cody moved to approve the 2024 parks capital plan. | Implemented moving forward. |
| 24-02-16 | R. Ford moved to approve policy A-14 No Till Drills as presented. | Completed. |
| 24-02-17 | M. Rockenbach moved to approve policy A-17 Grain Bags and Twine Ag Plastics Recycling as presented. | Completed. |
| 24-02-18 | R. Ford moved to give first reading to bylaw 989-24 Land Use Bylaw Amendment – AG to GCR. | In progress, will be brough forward April 2, 2024. |
| 24-02-23 | P. Jensen moved that the County of Warner will back the municipal group dealing with AlphaBow Energy. | In progress. |

# Chief Administrative Officer's Report

March 5, 2024

1. Attended the Joint Health and Safety meeting where several items were discussed regarding changes to the way we do things. The Audit Action report was also completed for action items to be completed.

2. Participated in the Milk River Healthcare update meeting. Both Doctors are working in Milk River and there are two part time Nurse Practitioners working in Milk River. There are still issues with lab services and the clinic was flooded out.

3. Continue to work with other municipalities and Brownlee to determine the direction to take with Alphabow Energy.

4. Completed interviews for Tyler's position with Tyler and Steven. Doing work on qualifications and references to see if an offer is made.

5. Continuing to work through financials with Steven. Documentation went off to the auditors and they will be here March 11th and 12th for their review and will be presenting to Council during the April 16th Council meeting.

6. The Provincial Budget was released on the 29th. Now waiting for requisitions amounts to get budget things going.

Respectfully Submitted
Shawn Hathaway
Administrator

2/29/2024

**PUBLIC WORKS SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – March 5, 2024**

- Finished Hauling Gravel to New Dayton, we have plan to start hauling in the Raymond Districts.
- Red Roof Farms Signs have been installed, we received a thank you email from them.
- Yard Clean up for Craig Walsh, and Wade Conway.
- Attended The Alberta Care Spring Conference, Breakout sessions for the EPR Program.
- Working on obtaining pricing for New Dayton District Shop and working on Public Works Shop details.
- Joint Health and Safety Meeting – Action plan and other items are being cleaned up and organized. Kristin has completed her Auditor online course and is now doing her qualification audit this month.
- TDG & WHMIS Training has been taking place over the last month.
- Shop has been busy getting equipment ready for Spring start-up.
- Received Reclamation Certificate for the Nett North Pit.
- Working with Engineers on 5-year pit reports and updating activity plans for Gravel pits.

- **Discussion Items**

**Respectfully Submitted**
Larry Liebelt.
Public Works Superintendent

# COUNTY OF WARNER

## Consolidated Stmt of Financial Activities

For the Twelve Months Ending December 31, 2023

| | Approved Budget | MTDA | YTDA | Budget Variance | Budget Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Revenues** | | | | | |
| Net Taxes available for use (Sch.1) | 8,054,815 | (502,280) | 8,096,888 | (42,073) | 100.52% |
| Sales & User Charges | 652,000 | 114,959 | 796,977 | (144,977) | 122.24% |
| Federal Government Transfers | 8,400 | | | 8,400 | 0.00% |
| Provincial Government Transfers | 2,341,675 | (17,776) | 2,643,422 | (301,747) | 112.89% |
| Local Government Transfers | 4,500 | 1,000 | 9,300 | (4,800) | 206.67% |
| Penalties & Costs on Taxes | 106,500 | 71,280 | 191,339 | (84,839) | 179.66% |
| Return on Investments | 100,000 | 32,675 | 255,108 | (155,108) | 255.11% |
| Licenses & Permits | 10,000 | 50 | 11,315 | (1,315) | 113.15% |
| Rentals | 72,350 | 3,690 | 83,788 | (11,438) | 115.81% |
| Proceeds on Dispoasal of FA | 5,000 | 253,684 | 264,871 | (259,871) | 5297.41% |
| Other | 20,500 | - | 7,776 | 12,724 | 37.93% |
| **Total** | **11,375,740** | **(42,719)** | **12,360,783** | **(985,043)** | **108.66%** |
| **Expenditures** | | | | | |
| Legislative | 322,500 | 32,805 | 304,238 | 18,262 | 94.34% |
| Administration | 1,318,020 | 127,256 | 1,292,499 | 25,521 | 98.06% |
| Protective Services | 815,615 | 59,804 | 682,787 | 132,828 | 83.71% |
| Roads,Streets,Walks & Lighting | 6,297,510 | (375,303) | 7,496,680 | (1,199,170) | 119.04% |
| Water Distribution | 171,095 | 23,188 | 208,130 | (37,035) | 121.65% |
| Wastewater Treatment & Disp. | | | | | |
| Waste Management | 191,282 | 25,443 | 192,242 | (960) | 100.50% |
| Land Use Planning,Zoning & Dev. | 35,704 | - | 35,704 | - | 100.00% |
| Economic & Agricultural Dev. | 1,658,449 | 44,034 | 1,643,487 | 14,962 | 99.10% |
| Family & Community Support | 34,320 | - | 34,320 | - | 100.00% |
| Recreation & Parks | 335,530 | 272,724 | 357,366 | (21,836) | 106.51% |
| Culture | 43,215 | - | 43,215 | (0) | 100.00% |
| Other | | | | | |
| **Total** | **11,223,240** | **209,950** | **12,290,668** | **(1,067,428)** | **109.51%** |
| **Excess of Revenues over Expenditures** | **152,500** | **(252,669)** | **70,115** | **82,385** | **45.98%** |

# CRITICAL CARE, ANYWHERE

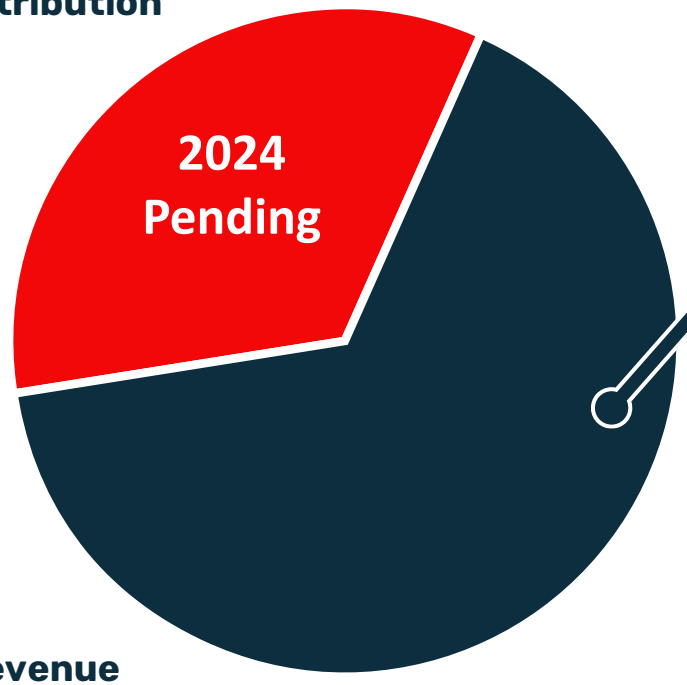
STARS®



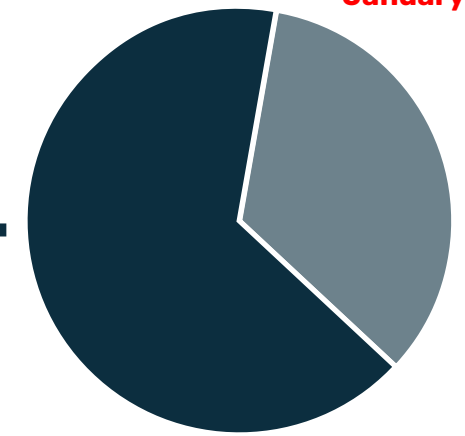
## STARS ALBERTA REVENUE
## FISCAL 2023

**AB Government contribution**
$15.0 million

2023 = **50%** of Operational costs




**NET fundraising revenue**
$27.8 million



2023 NET lottery proceeds:
$9.8 million
35% of total fundraising
*** STARS LOTTERY Public Launch January 18, 2024**

Fundraising revenue:
$18.0 million
65% of total fundraising
*** Includes $2M+ Annual Municipal Support**

**FUELED BY GENEROSITY.** Achieving success together.

# AN ESSENTIAL SERVICE FOR ALL

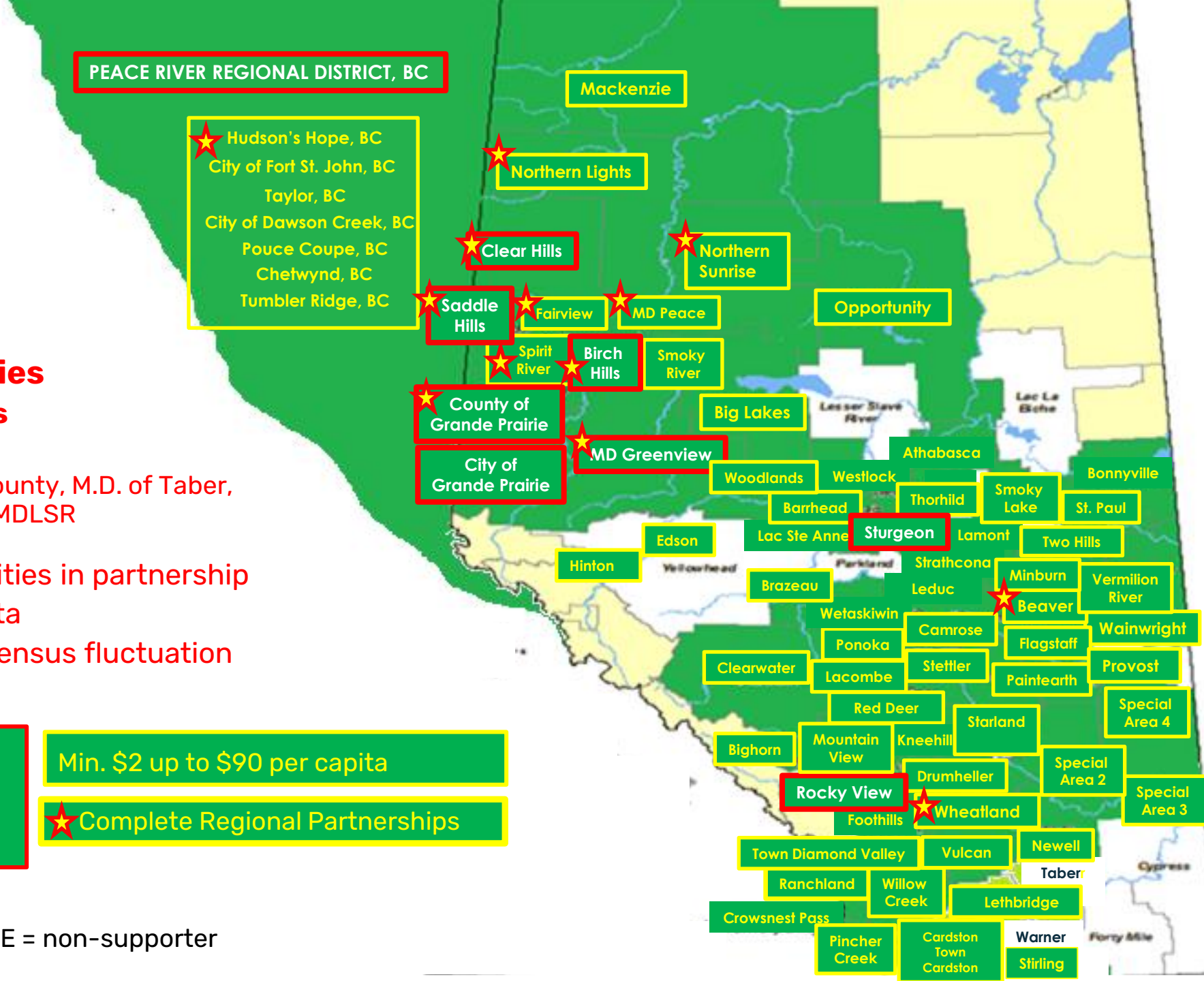
- **New! 5 rural municipalities**
- **New! 7 urban municipalities**
- **Requests Pending:**
  Lac La Biche County, Parkland County, M.D. of Taber, Town of Taber, Cypress County, MDLSR

- Over 90% Alberta's Municipalities in partnership
- Range: $2 up to $90 per capita
- Annual fixed rates alleviate census fluctuation

**(9) MUNICIPAL LEADERS**
- Standing Motion
- Fixed rates; Up to $210K annual
- Included in Protective Services

Min. $2 up to $90 per capita

★ Complete Regional Partnerships




*GREEN = municipal supporters *WHITE = non-supporter

| 5-Year MISSION OVERVIEW ROTARY WING IN ALBERTA | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | STARS (x3 AB bases) | | | HERO | | | HALO | | | |
| Apr.1-Mar.31 | IFT | Scene | Total | IFT | Scene | Total | IFT | Scene | Total | Total Rotary Missions Per Year |
| FY 18/19 | 769 | 652 | 1421 | 3 | 55 | 58 | 5 | 37 | 42 | 1521 |
| FY 19/20 | 768 | 554 | 1322 | 3 | 57 | 60 | 10 | 29 | 39 | 1421 |
| FY 20/21 | 797 | 639 | 1436 | 0 | 35 | 35 | 9 | 20 | 29 | 1500 |
| FY 21/22 | 943 | 722 | 1665 | 1 | 54 | 55 | 1 | 18 | 19 | 1739 |
| FY 22/23 | 972 | 682 | 1654 | 0 | 51 | 51 | 2 | 22 | 24 | 1729 |
| 5-Year Total AB | 4249 | 3249 | 7498 | 7 | 252 | 259 | 27 | 126 | 153 | 7910 |

* MISSIONS indicate when the helicopter flies. Not all missions result in patient contact.

| WITHIN COUNTY OF WARNER @ February 29, 2024 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Near Milk River** | | | 1 | | | | 1 |
| **Raymond Hospital** (critical inter-facility transfers) | 1 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 10 |
| **Near Raymond** | | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| **Near Stirling** | 2 | | | | | | 2 |
| **TOTAL** | 3 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 14 |
| **Lethbridge Hospital** (critical inter-facility transfers) | 58 | 67 | 67 | 75 | 77 | 8 | 352 |



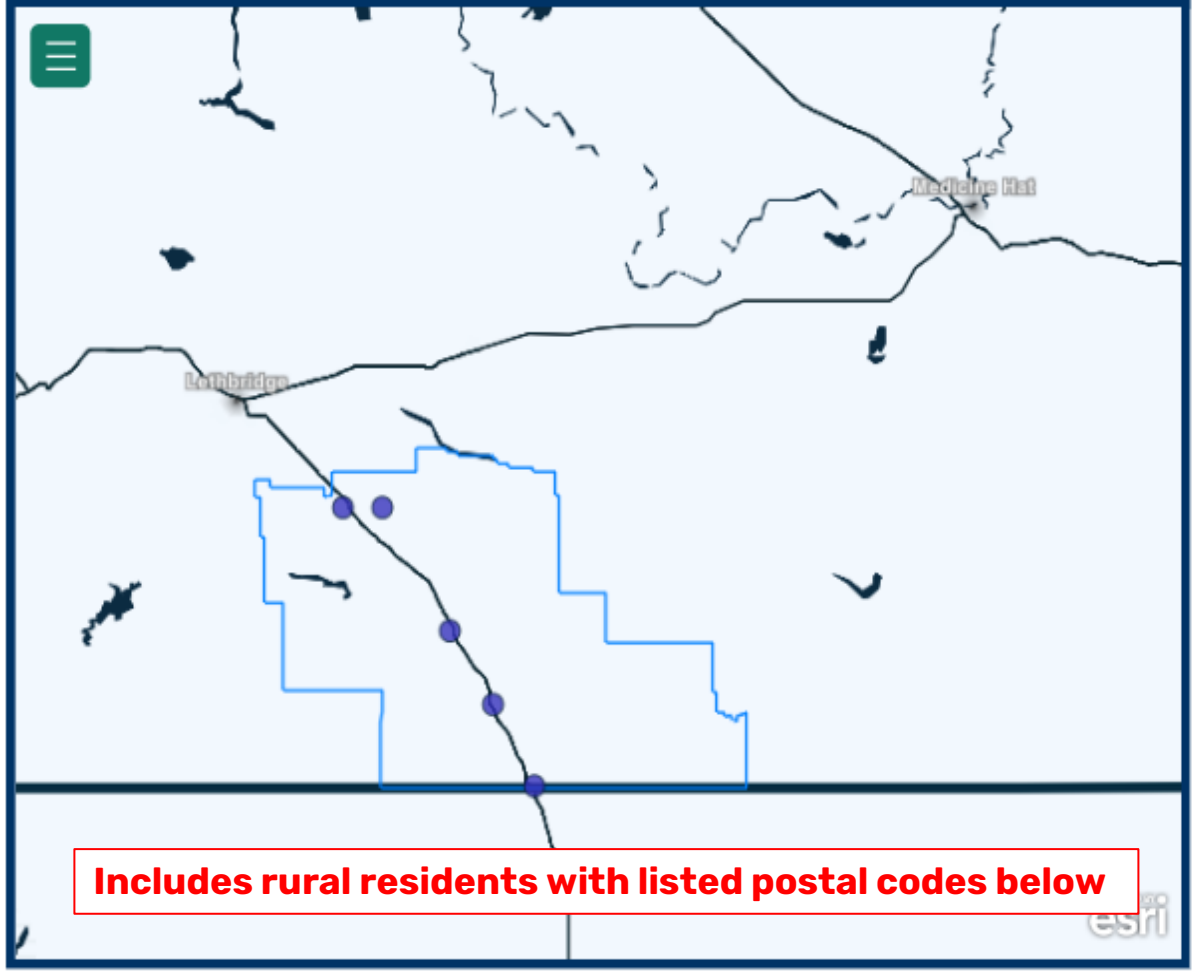



* Lethbridge Hospital averages 70+ missions per year

STARS

# Within County of Warner Boundaries - Patients Flown by STARS (2010-Present)

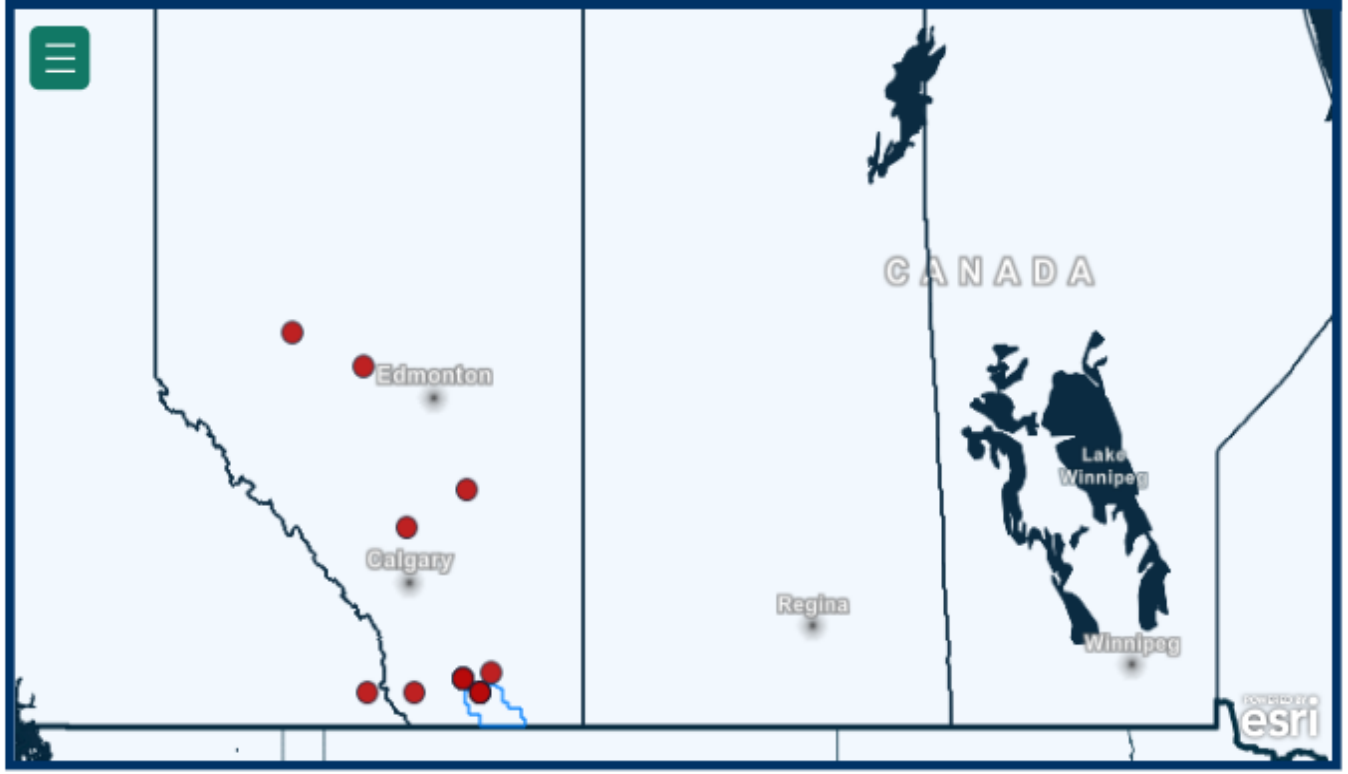
## County of Warner Residents Flown by STARS



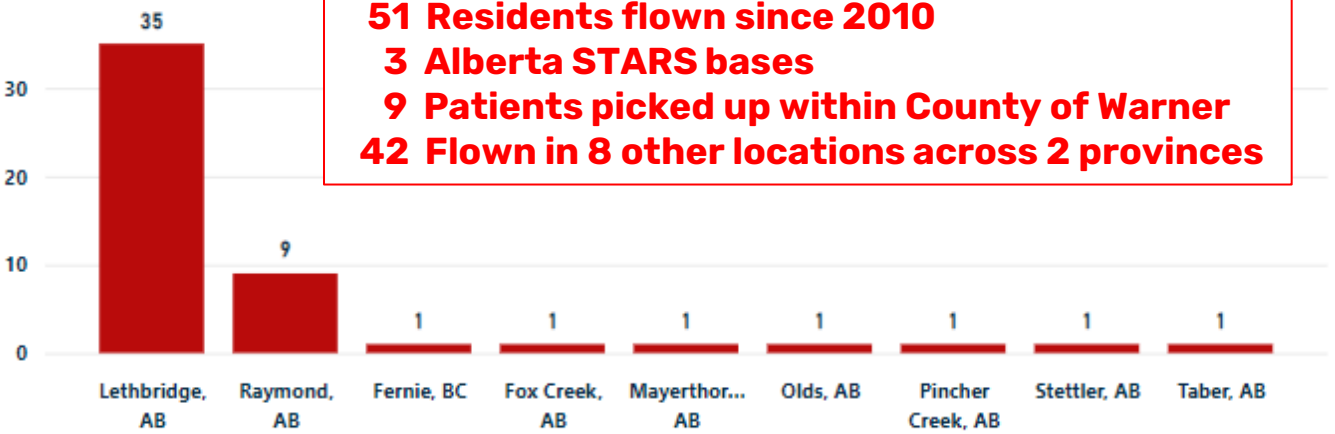

**Includes rural residents with listed postal codes below**

| Resident Community | 5 Yrs Ago | 4 Yrs Ago | 3 Yrs Ago | 2 Yrs Ago | Last Year | 5 Year Total | Total Since 2010 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Raymond | 0 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 10 | 28 |
| Milk River | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 9 |
| Warner | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 8 |
| Coutts | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Stirling | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| Total | 0 | 4 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 16 | 51 |

## Locations where County of Warner Residents Travelled and Needed STARS




Count by Pickup Location




**51 Residents flown since 2010**
**3 Alberta STARS bases**
**9 Patients picked up within County of Warner**
**42 Flown in 8 other locations across 2 provinces**

# EMERGENCY LINK CENTRE (ELC)

- Integrated with all dispatch centres and resources
- Precise mapping coordinates
- Dispatches HALO and HERO response
- 36,000 emergency requests/year

## STARS Transport Physicians

- Medical and procedural guidance
- Every critical call / All modes of transport
- Ground ambulance, rotary wing, fixed wing
- Schedule logistical arrangements with receiving Drs. and Hospitals



# Generational Investment H145 Fleet (10)

- **Campaign Completed**
- **All bases H145 Operational**
- **Night Vision Goggles** (NVG)

  1st Civilian Organization in Canada (2002)






## Handheld i-stat Lab

Vital test results < 2 minutes

- ✓ Hemoglobin
- ✓ Blood Gases
- ✓ Electrolytes

# H145 INTENSIVE CARE UNIT (ICU)



## (2) Units Universal Blood

10 Years!  1st HEMS in North America

Increased to 4 Units

New Blood Plan – A Canadian First

The difference between life & death.



## Video Laryngoscope

A game changer in intubation

Video screen view of trachea

Difficult airway management

Trauma / Burns / Crushed on impact



## Handheld Ultrasound

(test results for rapid diagnosis)

Collapsed lungs

Trauma-related internal bleeding

Heart abnormalities

Fetal Compromise

*Expedite treatment plans

## TIME – TOOLS - TALENT

# Mandatory Simulation Lab In-Field Training

- Up to 200 hours per year
- Replicate complex/distinct cases

# In-Field Training

- Ready for the unthinkable
- Inclement weather
- Patient vulnerability
- High-consequence situations



# **International Air Medical Transport Conference** (AMTC)

- Rigorous competition
- Triage multiple patients
- Inconceivable critical situations
- Graded: decision-making
- Timing and patient outcomes

**STARS - TOP 3 - 21 Years!**



# Thank you,
# County of Warner

***BENEFITS FOR YOUR RESIDENTS***

- **Charitable model - No cost to the patient**
- **Virtual care for medical professionals**
- **Enhance rural healthcare**
- **Ensure a robust health & safety network**

***OUR REQUEST***

$2.00 per capita

2024, 2025

(in conjunction with council term)



**A life is saved every day.  Partnership makes it possible.**

STARS



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

New leadership at STARS

Road crew worker saved by STARS

Unprecedented response to Manitoba highway tragedy

Carla Minogue
STARS Very Important Patient

STARS®

# HORIZONS

We provide critical care, **anywhere.**

# New leadership at STARS focused on ensuring stability and critical care, anywhere










**In September, STARS saw a leadership transition which introduced the third-ever president and CEO. While a leadership change can often be a major shift for organizations, Katherine Emberly's initial priority is to ensure the crucial work continues of protecting the health and safety of communities across the Prairies.**

In her first few months on the job, Katherine has been busy meeting with community members, government officials, business leaders and STARS allies to listen to their ideas and deepen our partnerships. At the same time, she's been diving into understanding more about STARS' medical care and clinical operations, shadowing our highly trained staff. These conversations and activities enable STARS leadership and allies to make sound decisions for the future of critical care.

"STARS is a people and community focused organization. Our first priority is to build relationships," said Katherine. "We want to get out and continue to build our reputation in the community, say 'thank you' to the people that support us and ensure that we've got their support and partnership moving forward."

Right now, Katherine is working with the leadership team on critical projects for the stability and long-term success of STARS. As part of that goal, she is aiming to ensure we continue to be an organization of choice for our many donors and partners. Having stable and reliable funding allows our team to focus on the important work of providing critical care, anywhere.

"No matter where you sit in the organization and no matter what your job, there's an overarching acknowledgement that it takes all of us," said Katherine. "I am so honoured to come into this organization that has such a clear and impactful purpose."

Katherine's additional long-term goals for STARS include continuing to lead industry transformation, forging stronger connections with corporate partners and supporting the growth in innovation and technology.

Beyond her work leading STARS' critical care mission, Katherine serves on the boards of Alberta Blue Cross, Calgary Economic Development and Axis Connects. Through her passion for equity, inclusion, and diversity, Katherine continually finds ways to give all contributors a voice and ensure that doors are open for everyone who works alongside STARS. As a mother of two teen girls, Katherine is excited to use her leadership position to be an example to women and girls across Canada.

# Groundbreaking blood protocol launches in Manitoba




THE TECHNOLOGY

**"This program has saved the lives of countless individuals."**

— **Nichole Bandura**
LABORATORY SUPERVISOR FOR HEMATOLOGY/
TRANSFUSION MEDICINE, MANITOBA SHARED HEALTH

**The field of critical care changes rapidly, so STARS must stay on the leading edge of new advances in technology and medicine that can lead to better outcomes for our patients. One of the most effective tools that STARS provides onboard is blood for critical patients. This summer, an innovative protocol that ensures patients have access to life-saving blood products while being cared for by STARS, was introduced in Manitoba.**

The Massive Hemorrhage Protocol (MHP) was initiated in Manitoba on June 30, 2023. It provides access to two new products that can help stop bleeding — one to reverse anticoagulation and the other to help blood clots form.

The protocol was first introduced in Saskatchewan in 2022 and is being used regularly to care for patients in that province.

"I think it's the first of its kind in Manitoba," noted Jennifer Fosty, a STARS flight nurse who helped lead the implementation of the protocol in partnership with Manitoba Shared Health.

STARS crews have brought blood along on missions since 2013. Initially, STARS stocked two units of type O negative blood. O negative is known as the 'universal blood type,' as it's safe to be given to anyone — particularly helpful in a traumatic situation when a patient urgently needs blood and their blood type is unknown. Based on need, STARS increased onboard blood supply to four units in 2019.

The blood is carried in temperature-controlled coolers, and if it's not used within 72 hours it's placed back in the blood supply to avoid any wastage. STARS then receives fresh blood for the crew to use on the next patient who needs it.

STARS works closely with Manitoba Shared Health's Blood Bank at Winnipeg's Health Sciences Centre to ensure the MHP products are always on hand. The Blood Bank supplies STARS with MHP packages several times per week.

"If any products are used on a patient during transport, the Blood Bank is notified and quickly replenishes stock in order to have another MHP package in our hands, so that we're ready for the next patient who may need it," added Fosty.

It is another example of how STARS is a trusted partner in the delivery of critical care.

"STARS and the Blood Bank operate cohesively to ensure trauma patients are treated in a timely manner," explained Nichole Bandura, laboratory supervisor for Hematology/Transfusion Medicine with Manitoba Shared Health. "STARS effectively communicates with the Blood Bank so both parties are prepared for the needs of incoming trauma patients. The rapid response of both STARS and the Blood Bank ensures the best care is provided to the patient."

The partnership between STARS and the Blood Bank, driven by a spirit of innovation and a passion for finding new ways to save lives, has made a real difference for patients.

"It is so important for critical patients to have access to blood products during pre-hospital transport," said STARS' Fosty. "The Massive Hemorrhage Protocol will definitely improve patient outcomes."

"Having an organized plan of action and effective communications skills makes STARS and the Blood Bank a successful team," added Manitoba Shared Health's Bandura. "This program has saved the lives of countless individuals, ensuring the healthcare needs are met for Manitobans in some of the most traumatic situations."

## **Stan Grad** 1944 — 2023



One of STARS' supporters and advocates, Stan Grad, passed away at the age of 78. Stan was a passionate ally and philanthropist who wholeheartedly supported STARS' lifesaving mission. His fervent passion and dedication are key reasons for STARS becoming what it is today.

**"I just want to say thank you to the sponsors and the donors and the partners for supporting STARS and supporting people like me."**

**— Carla Minogue,** STARS VERY IMPORTANT PATIENT

# Road crew worker saved by STARS

**City road crews are essential to navigable communities, but working right next to oncoming traffic comes with serious risks, as Carla Minogue knows all too well.**

In May 2004, she was working as the designated traffic flagger for a road crew repairing a section of the Trans-Canada Highway in a rural community.

"I was holding the sign that said slow or stopping people if they needed to be stopped," said Carla. "It was the end of the day, and I was picking up cones and putting them into the truck ahead of me and a car came out of the lane that was still open on the highway and hit me from behind. It then rear-ended the truck that was parked in front of me. I was somewhere in the mess of vehicles, and nobody really knew what to expect when they came to see me."

As her crew members rushed to remove her from the wreckage, a call was placed to 911 who alerted STARS Emergency Link Centre that an air medical crew was needed.

"I remember being on the highway, on the pavement and hearing that STARS was coming and we were just waiting for the helicopter to arrive," said Carla.

"Highway landings are a common procedure for STARS crews, but you have to be careful because no landing is the same. There are a multitude of hazards whether its weather, visibility, wires, trees, or the condition of the landing area," said Greg Curtis, the STARS pilot who flew the helicopter on Carla's mission. "Doing it successfully is only possible through following our strong standard operating procedures and with flight crew being in constant communication with first responders on the ground. I'm glad we were able to be there for Carla."

Carla's injuries were life-threatening, with extensive injuries throughout her body.

"I broke two areas of my back, T five and six, which was a pretty serious break, and I had to have surgery. I have rods beside my spine now, holding it upright. I had a cracked pelvis and a broken foot and some damage to my knee, broken ribs, crazy bruises everywhere and probably a concussion of some sort from the impact. The impact was really strong, so strong that it blew my tied-up steel-toed boots right off my feet. They were found in the ditch later."

When severe spinal injuries occur, the smoother transit that a STARS' helicopter provides is critical for the recovery of the patient, as a bumpy transit on the road can worsen the injury. In Carla's situation, the highway was shut down by local first responders so that STARS could land directly at the site of the incident, load Carla into the helicopter, and take her to a trauma centre.

By the time the helicopter arrived, paramedics on the ground had stabilized Carla's spine for transit, and the STARS crew was able to provide a smooth transit and essential critical care enroute to a major hospital. This collaborative approach prevented further injury and ensured that with the assistance of her medical team, once she recovered, she could walk on her own again.

Specific to spinal injury, the STARS Critical Care Medical Control Protocols have been developed to guide air medical crews on how to manage and transport potential spinal-injured patients. This includes how to immobilize and protect a potentially unstable spinal cord injury from any further damage during transport. The protocol has been developed and guided by nationally-accepted evidence.

"STARS uses evidence, accepted international guidelines, and a committee of physicians and researchers to develop evidence-based, best practice protocols for the treatment of spinal injuries," said Justin Mazzolini, STARS' Critical Care Medical Control Protocols lead. "Often patients with spinal injuries have associated traumatic injuries, so in addition to caring for the spinal injury, multiple treatments and protocols may be employed by air medical crews to stabilize blood pressure, ensure adequate oxygenation and ventilation and rapidly transport patients to tertiary care."

Despite her successful recovery, Carla continues to deal with the lingering impact of her injuries. However, she is grateful for the impact that STARS has had on her life.

"I remember thinking, oh no, this must be really bad," said Carla. "But at the same time, having some reassurance knowing that I was going to be in the best hands, in the best care. I was very close to being paralyzed," said Carla. "I'm very grateful to STARS for taking such good care of me to keep me walking."

"I got to meet Carla 19 years after her accident," said Greg Curtis. "Getting to connect with her was one of the most meaningful visits of my entire career. It really was a treat to meet her."

Since her accident, Carla and her family have become even more involved with STARS, including volunteering their time to raise funds for STARS' critical care mission and spreading awareness of STARS' essential work.

"I just want to say thank you to the sponsors and the donors and the partners for supporting STARS and supporting people like me," said Carla. "Because without you, lots of us may not be here or maybe looking and feeling a lot differently than we are today, so thank you."

MUNICIPAL HAIL INSURANCE

Municipal Hail Insurance understands the value and importance of planning for unforeseeable events in the future. Because of Municipal Hail Insurance's support for STARS, we can reach the next patient with an unforeseeable critical care emergency within Western Canada for generations to come. Since 2016, Municipal Hail Insurance has helped STARS to use any transportation and tools necessary to reach patients and deliver the care that can save lives.

# Working together to save lives

## STARS joins partners in unprecedented response to Manitoba highway tragedy

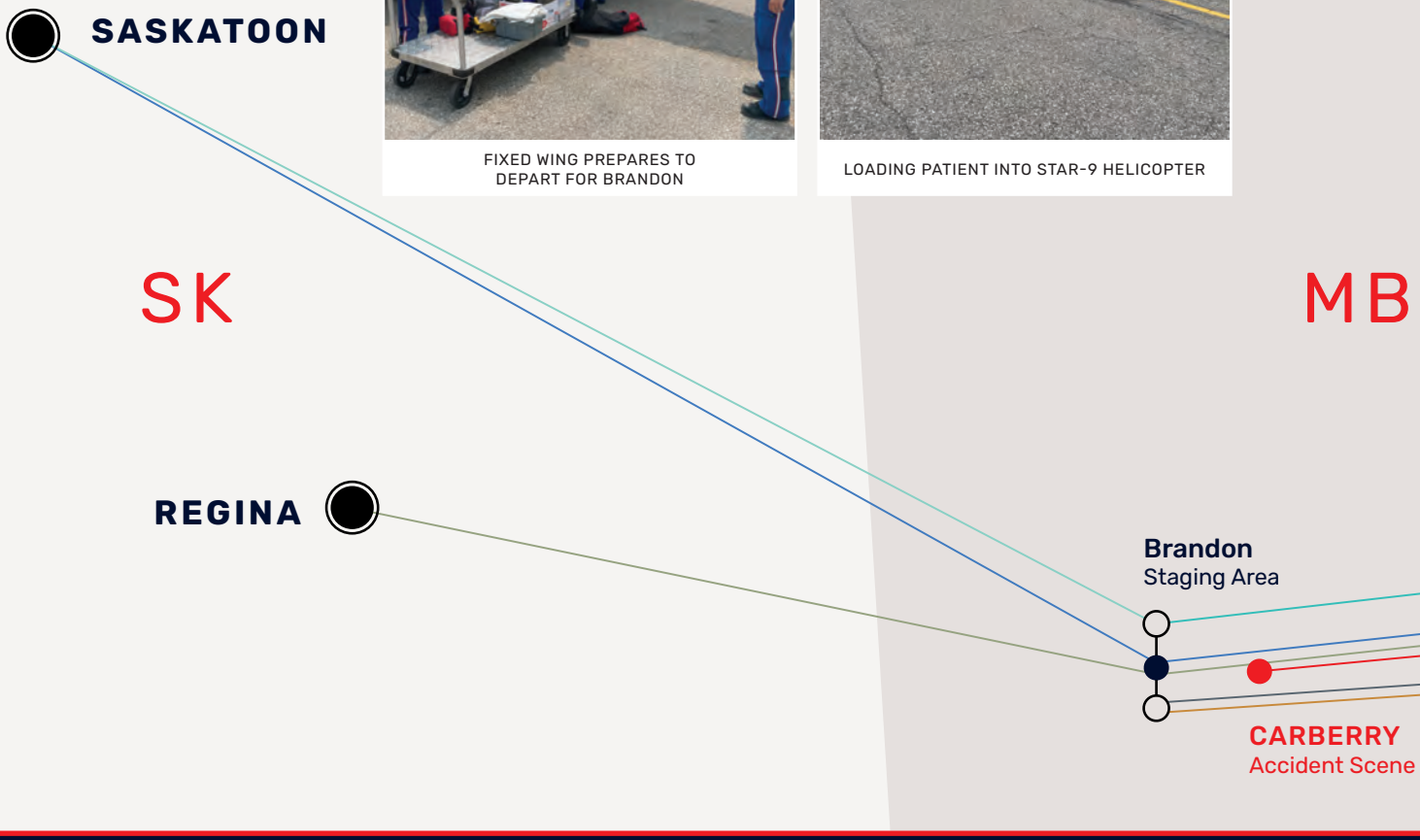
THE CARE | THE PEOPLE | **THE RESPONSE** | THE TECHNOLOGY




FIXED WING PREPARES TO DEPART FOR BRANDON




LOADING PATIENT INTO STAR-9 HELICOPTER



**The morning of June 15 began like most others at the STARS Winnipeg base. The day crew started their shift at 7 a.m. and went through their daily checks to ensure they and their aircraft were ready for the next mission. Like many other days at the base, several off-duty crew members were also on hand taking part in the ongoing training that STARS regularly undertakes to keep their skills as sharp as possible.**

Shortly before noon, however, a series of events would unfold that ensured that what started out as an average day would turn out to be one of the largest coordinated responses in STARS' history.

At approximately 11:35 a.m., a semi-truck collided with a passenger bus on a busy stretch of the Trans-Canada Highway near Carberry, Manitoba, roughly 170 kilometres west of Winnipeg. Given the amount of traffic that regularly travels through the area, local RCMP and first responders were notified almost immediately and were the first to arrive on scene.

Minutes after the collision occurred, a 911 operator alerted Manitoba's centralized dispatch centre — the Medical Transportation Coordination Centre (MTCC) — of the event. The MTCC immediately called STARS, alerting them of a potentially major event. This resulted in an automatic launch of STAR-7, the on-duty aircraft and flight crew in Winnipeg. They were in the air less than 12 minutes after the collision took place.

At the same time, numerous ground ambulances from the southwest region were also enroute to the scene.

Dr. Doug Martin, STARS medical director for Manitoba and a transport physician, was working that morning and was quickly pressed into action to help deploy and direct the aircraft and medical crew that would be required to transport a large number of patients.

Continued...



PATIENT TRANSPORT FROM STAGING AREA AT BRANDON AIRPORT




LOADING PATIENT INTO FIXED WING FOR TRANSPORT TO WINNIPEG



PATIENT HANDOFF FROM GROUND AMBULANCE TO STARS CREW



Dr. Martin was one of four transport physicians on duty with STARS that morning. There was also a lead on-call transport physician and a second on-call transport physician overseeing STARS medical crew on the fixed-wing aircraft.

A fourth doctor, a senior resident in emergency medicine completing his very last month of training, was also with STARS that morning on an elective rotation.

"We very quickly determined that I was going to stay back and help coordinate the transport," explained Dr. Martin. The lead on-call transport physician and the senior resident doctor at the STARS base would deploy to the scene by air, while the second on-duty transport physician would handle any medical transport calls coming from elsewhere in the province.

Dr. Martin then jumped in his car and drove to the nearby Virtual Emergency Care and Transport Resource Service (VECTRS) operations centre. VECTRS is Manitoba Shared Health's centralized and coordinated source for clinical guidance and patient transport support. At VECTRS, Dr. Martin joined Dr. Rob Grierson, Shared Health's chief medical officer for Emergency Response Services, to help coordinate the inter-facility transport response to the accident.

Initial triage reports indicated that 10 patients were in either serious or critical condition. From Carberry, the nearest regional hospitals were in Brandon or Portage la Prairie. Most patients, however, were in a condition that required them to be taken to Manitoba's major trauma centre — Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg. It became clear very quickly that more aircraft and more medical crews were needed to transport those patients.

With STAR-7 already dispatched from Winnipeg, Dr. Martin contacted the STARS Emergency Link Centre to connect with the STARS team in Regina, the next closest base. STAR-9 was then dispatched out of Regina and lifted off toward Manitoba shortly thereafter.

Meanwhile, back at the STARS Winnipeg base, efforts were underway to deploy additional medical crew via fixed wing aircraft. Grant Therrien, STARS provincial director, Manitoba operations, was leading these efforts.

"The STAR-7 crew had just been dispatched and our on-duty fixed wing medical crew were at the ready," explained Therrien. "We also had a clinical simulation happening at the base that day, so we had a number of additional air medical crew available. Dr. Martin phoned me and explained the situation and asked if we could not only send the on-duty crew, but if we could put together an additional team to travel on a second fixed wing aircraft."

**"It was truly all hands-on deck, whoever could help, was assigned to help."**

— **Grant Therrien**, STARS Provincial Director, Manitoba operations

Therrien's response to the request was simple and clear.

"Absolutely, we will."

With the on-duty fixed wing crew on their way in the first aircraft, Therrien then summoned all the off-duty medical crew members who were at the base and told them to get their flight suits on and start packing up additional supplies. Their clinical simulation day was about to become a major, real-life mission.

Therrien, who also serves as a STARS flight paramedic, assembled an additional five medical crew members — including himself — to travel on the second fixed wing aircraft. When they arrived at the hangar to load the second aircraft they learned that, because of the space taken up by the onboard stretcher, there were only enough seats for four medical attendants. Without hesitation, one of the STARS flight paramedics volunteered to be strapped to the stretcher for the flight to ensure that they could all be there to help in whatever way they could.

At the scene of the incident, STAR-7 had arrived from Winnipeg and the crew immediately began providing critical care to one of the patients. Dr. O'Leary, the physician who was also onboard STAR-7, began checking in with all other ground ambulance crews and first responders to assist with their patients.

"It was truly all hands-on deck," said Therrien. In addition to the STARS crew, there were first responders on the scene from local EMS services across southwestern Manitoba, area fire departments, and the RCMP. "Whoever could help was assigned to help."

"I want to acknowledge all of the first responders, including volunteer responders, ground EMS, and RCMP that were the first to arrive on scene," added Therrien. "They arrived at a chaotic, devastating scene, and they did incredible work both prior to our arrival and in working together to care for as many people as possible."

Before long, STAR-7 departed with the first patient from the scene to Health Sciences Centre. With the two fixed wing aircraft enroute from Winnipeg and STAR-9 on the way from Regina, ground ambulances began transporting patients to the nearest major hospital. Most patients were transported to the Brandon Regional Health Centre, with two other patients taken by ambulance to the hospital in Portage la Prairie.

In addition, two patients were transported by ground directly to the Brandon Airport, which would become the staging area for patient transport. There they were met by the two fixed wing aircraft which had arrived in Brandon and were waiting to transport them immediately back to Winnipeg.

The Brandon Regional Health Centre, western Manitoba's major health centre, had received five critically injured patients in the span of 30 minutes. To assist with this influx of critical patients, several STARS crew members who were not yet transporting patients travelled to the hospital in Brandon.



**Grant Therrien**
STARS Provincial Director, Manitoba Operations

Grant is also an active STARS flight paramedic and was stationed at the Brandon Airport as on-site transport coordinator.



**Dr. Doug Martin**
STARS Medical Director, Manitoba

One of the transport physicians on duty, Dr. Martin was stationed at the VECTRS centre, working with Shared Health to coordinate the critical care transports.

They worked alongside the Brandon medical teams in stabilizing these critical patients in preparation for onward transport to Winnipeg. They also provided a clear line of communication to both Therrien, who was coordinating the staging area at the Brandon Airport, and to the team at the VECTRS centre in Winnipeg who could then relay information to the trauma teams who were receiving patients at Health Sciences Centre.

Coordinating the transport of the remaining patients from Brandon was the next task for Drs. Martin and Grierson and their team back at the VECTRS centre. It is common for neighbouring jurisdictions to provide additional support in a major incident such as this. In addition to STAR-9 from Regina already responding, more help was required. With all the critical care transport assets in Manitoba in use, a decision was made to request additional help from Saskatchewan from which two Lifeguard fixed wing air ambulance aircraft and crews were dispatched — including an additional STARS transport physician from Saskatoon - to the Brandon Airport.

As the aircraft from Saskatchewan began to arrive in Brandon, they were subsequently loaded with patients who had been stabilized at the Brandon hospital and departed again to transport them to Winnipeg.

Dr. Martin shared that the final transport tied to the accident came later that afternoon when STARS was dispatched for an inter-facility transfer from the hospital in Portage la Prairie. “A patient who had been initially transported by ground from the scene to Portage la Prairie had now worsened and required critical transport to Health Sciences Centre.”

And so, the crew of STAR-7, who were the first aircraft dispatched to the accident scene more than five hours earlier, launched once more to transport the last patient to the trauma centre in Winnipeg. As they returned to base early that evening, the magnitude of the day’s events was clear.

The tragic incident at Carberry was one of the largest scene responses in the history of Manitoba. As we honour and remember the lives that were lost, we recognize the efforts of so many who did everything they could to save as many lives as possible.

When all was said and done, a total of six aircraft and 20 STARS crew members travelled either to the scene or to Brandon to care for and transport critically injured patients that day. STARS was one of the many organizations who were involved in the enormous, multi-agency response to this tragedy.

STARS salutes the invaluable efforts of Manitoba Shared Health, the RCMP, Carberry North Cypress-Langford Fire & Rescue, Prairie Mountain EMS, Brandon Emergency Services, the Brandon Regional Health Centre, Manitoba VECTRS, the Manitoba Medical Transportation Coordination Centre, Vanguard Air, Saskatchewan Air Ambulance, and Winnipeg EMS.

We also recognize the 20 STARS crew members who were involved in our response, including seven flight paramedics, five flight nurses, four transport physicians and the four pilots who flew STAR-7 and STAR-9. These crew members have been thoroughly supported in the aftermath of this tragedy, given the difficulty of the scene and the value that STARS places on the mental health and wellbeing of our team.

“This was certainly one of the most difficult days we have experienced, not only as a medical and first responder community, but for the province as a whole,” stated Dr. Martin.

“It was one of the most challenging missions any of us will ever face, but it’s what we train for,” adds Therrien. “I’m proud that we were able to work together to save so many lives that day.”

# Following her passion for medicine, ER doctor joins STARS




THE CARE | **THE PEOPLE** | THE RESPONSE | THE TECHNOLOGY

**"I wanted to be able to assist people in an emergency, to help them with that crisis in their life. I thought of it as very fulfilling."**

— **Dr. Darla Palmer,** STARS TRANSPORT PHYSICIAN




## "Becoming a mom shifts so many things and changes the dynamics of your job."

— **Dr. Darla Palmer,** STARS TRANSPORT PHYSICIAN

**There's something about a calling, a passion for a profession you just can't ignore. Dr. Darla Palmer couldn't deny the ambition to serve. It lived inside of her from the time she was a young girl, living in the community of Souris in rural Manitoba.**

"When I was 13 years old, I lost my house in a fire," recounted Dr. Palmer. "That certainly drew my attention to the importance of having fire services in rural communities."

The loss of the only home she knew and the compassionate care she received from first responders that day left an indelible mark. She wanted to help people in the same way she was supported.

"I wanted to be able to assist people in an emergency, to help them with that crisis in their life. I thought of it as very fulfilling."

As soon as she was able to immerse herself in emergency services, Dr. Palmer seized the opportunity.

"When I was 17, I joined the fire department as a junior member. When I turned 18, I was able to start going on calls," Dr. Palmer said.

She also grew up with a role model, her stepfather, who served as an emergency medical technician (EMT).

"I watched him being on call and hearing the pager go off around the clock. It certainly inspired me," Dr. Palmer recalled. "I always remember being aware that what he was doing was so vital and important. I wanted to be a part of that."

Dr. Palmer joined the Canadian Armed Forces and served for years before she was nudged towards her true calling.

"I started in artillery and after working there for several years, I was encouraged by some of the military leadership who saw my potential to apply for a medic position. I became involved in the civilian side and was licensed as an EMT," she said.

It was a gratifying part of her life journey, but she wanted to do even more. She continued working as an EMT while pursuing medical school.

"Eventually I decided to apply for medicine. There was something about it I was just drawn to."

Dr. Palmer currently works in the emergency department at the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg and has recently completed her residency in emergency medicine.

"I'll begin working with STARS after I graduate in November," Dr. Palmer said. "I will be assisting with the logistics of transporting critically ill and injured patients in the province, in addition to providing consultant advice to other medical professionals."

She will be on-call to oversee missions and, at times, travel on board the flights.

"There will be situations where I will fly with the air medical crew to provide direct hands-on patient care."

She is looking forward to the challenge, which she attests is a full circle moment.

"STARS is a way of bridging critical care and timely care to patients that live in rural areas," she affirmed. "I think all people are deserving of timely health care, regardless of their place of residence."

Dr. Palmer is also embracing the responsibility of being a parent. She is a new mother and is balancing her career with her 13-month-old son at home. Motherhood has brought a renewed purpose to her work, merging her personal and professional life.

It reinforced the parallels of selflessness, devoting her life to her patients and her new family.

"My career has taken on a whole different meaning. Certain calls and patient cases just hit differently," she said. "Becoming a mom shifts so many things and changes the dynamics of your job."

She admires what STARS represents and is humbled to be a part of the crew that saves lives.

"Just the thought of being able to provide comprehensive, timely, critical care to patients, regardless of their location, just drives me to provide the best patient care possible."

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# Barons-Eureka-Warner Family & Community Support Services (FCSS)
# Minutes of Board Meeting – Wednesday, December 6, 2023
# Lethbridge County Office (#100, 905 – 4th Ave. South, Lethbridge)
# In-person and Online

**Attendance (in-person)**

**Board Members:**

Degenstein, Dave – Town of Milk River, Chair
Chapman, Bill - Town of Coaldale, Vice-Chair
Bekkering, Garth – Town of Taber
Caldwell, Heather – Town of Coalhurst
Coad, Ray – Town of Vauxhall
Doell, Daniel – Village of Barons
Feist, Teresa - Town of Picture Butte
Foster, Missy – Village of Barnwell
Harris, Merrill – M.D. of Taber
Heggie, Jack – County of Warner
Hickey, Lorne – Lethbridge County
Jensen, Kelly – Town of Raymond
Kirby, Martin – Village of Warner
Nilsson, Larry – Village of Stirling

**Attendance (on-line):**

Payne, Megan – Village of Coutts
Jensen, Melissa – Town of Nobleford

**Staff (in-person):**

Morrison, Zakk - Executive Director
Florence-Greene, Evelyn – Accounting Assistant
Hashizume, Linda – Executive Assistant

**Call to Order**

D. Degenstein called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**Approval of Agenda**

L. Nilsson moved the Board approved the agenda as presented.
**Carried Unanimously**

**Minutes**

T. Fiest moved the minutes of the November 1, 2023, FCSS Board meeting be approved as presented.
**Carried Unanimously**

**Business Arising from Minutes**

Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA) Conference

K. Jensen, D. Doell, R. Coad and L. Hickey discussed the FCSSAA Conference they attend.

Z. Morrison shared that Michelle McKenzie was re-elected to the position of FCSSAA South Region representative.

G. Bekkering moved to receive the Business Arising from the minutes as presented for information.
**Carried Unanimously**

## Correspondence

The following correspondence was presented for information:

- Food Security Guidelines for Food Banks and Community Organizations
- FCSSAA Board Meeting Highlights October 12, 2023
- FCSSAA November News
- FCSSAA Annual Report 2023
- 2023-10-27 – Town of Raymond – Kelly Jensen appointed to FCSS Board
- 2023-10-27 – Town of Coaldale – Bill Chapman appointed to FCSS Board
- 2023-10-30 – Village of Coutts – Megan Payne appointed to FCSS Board
- 2023-10-30 – Town of Milk River – Dave Degenstein appointed to FCSS Board
- 2023-10-31 – Town of Nobleford – Melissa Jensen appointed to FCSS Board
- 2023-10-31 – Village of Warner – Martin Kirby appointed to FCSS Board
- 2023-10-26 – Town of Taber – Garth Bekkering appointed to FCSS Board
- 2023-11-15 – Town of Picture Butte – Teresa Feist appointed to FCSS Board

M. Harris moved to receive the correspondence as presented for information.
**Carried Unanimously**

## Reports

Executive Director

Z. Morrison reviewed the Executive Director's report.

The following was highlighted:

- Monthly Message. **#OvercomingHolidayBlues.** For many, the holiday season is filled with fun, friends and family, and happiness. But, for others, the holiday season can be a reminder of challenging times, the loss of a loved one, or feelings of loneliness. Visit: https://fcss.ca/monthly-message/overcomingholidayblues/

M. Foster entered the Board meeting at 4:20

L. Hickey moved the Board to approve the Executive Director's Report as presented.
**Carried Unanimously**

Financial Report

Z. Morrison reviewed the Financial Report.

The Board discussed the Financial Report and monthly accounts.

J. Heggie moved the Board approve the October 2023 Financial Report including:

- Financial statement for October 31, 2023;
- Monthly accounts for October 1-31, 2023;
- Mastercard statement for October 12 to November 13, 2023.

Carried Unanimously

## New Business

Interim Budget 2024

Z. Morrison presented the proposed interim budget for 2024.

The Board discussed the interim budget.

### Barons-Eureka-Warner FCSS
### Proposed Interim Budget 2024

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **REVENUE** | | |
| Provincial FCSS funding | | 1,493,196 |
| Municipal Requisitions | | 440,328 |
| Interest Income | | 25,000 |
| Revenue Other | | 70,656 |
| Family Resource Network (Children's Services) | | 588,500 |
| Farm Family Outreach (Canadian Red Cross) | | 5,949 |
| Youth Services (ESDC) | | 30,389 |
| Project Grant Funding | | 2,735 |
| | **TOTAL** | 2,656,753 |
| **EXPENDITURES** | | |
| Counselling Services | | 693,111 |
| Family Services | | 721,197 |
| Program Support | | 280,879 |
| Senior Services | | 226,072 |
| Youth Services | | 107,921 |
| Youth Services (ESDC) | | 30,389 |
| Family Resource Network (Children's Services) | | 588,500 |
| Farm Family Outreach (Canadian Red Cross) | | 5,949 |
| Project Grant Funding | | 2,735 |
| | **TOTAL** | 2,656,753 |

L. Hickey moved the Board approve the interim budget as presented.
**Carried Unanimously**

Municipal Requisitions
The Board discussed the 2024 Municipal Requisition rate.

G. Bekkering moved the Board approve 0% increase in the Municipal Requisition for 2024.
**Carried Unanimously**

All-Councils meeting 2024
The All-Councils meeting was discussed.

T. Fiest moved the Board approve FCSS to host the All-Council Meeting on a two-year cycle rotation.
**Carried**

Plaque Presentation

M. Harris was presented with a plaque by the FCSS Board recognizing his 6 years as Board Chair for FCSS.

The Board thanked M. Harris for his years of service.

**Round Table:**

M. Harris mentioned that he and B. Chapman attended the RMA provincial convention.

H. Caldwell mentioned that the Town of Coalhurst is hosting Santa's Gone Looney event.

R. Coad appreciates the support he has received.

B. Chapman attended the RMA convention with M. Harris, The FCSS Women in Farming Conference was of great interest to the Mayors and Reeves.

B. Chapman tasked Z. Morrison to look into the vandalism of the DO Crew's Little Pantry.

Z. Morrison responded that the door to the pantry has been replaced with a modified door with 4 separate panes of acrylic.

Z. Morrison thanked both M. Harris and B. Chapman for their support and leadership.

D. Degenstein asked that childcare be offered for Board Members with small children during Board Meetings.

Z. Morrison responded when notice is given prior to the Board meeting, FCSS could accommodate the childcare request.

**Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next regular Board meeting will be February 7, 2024, at the Coaldale Hub (2107-13th Street) in-person and online (via Teams) starting at 4:00 p.m.

**Adjournment**

M. Harris moved the meeting adjourn at 5:14 p.m.
**Carried Unanimously**

Chairperson

Executive Director

February 2024

# UNPAID OIL & GAS TAX SURVEY

## Member Briefing

In early 2024, the RMA requested that all members complete a survey providing an update on their unpaid oil and gas tax burden as of December 31, 2023. The survey builds on previous member input on this issue from 2019-2023.

This briefing provides an overview of survey results, and what these trends mean for rural municipalities using the most up to date data provided by all RMA members. The data collected is accurate as of December 31, 2023.

### Survey Response Rate

Sixty-four member municipalities responded to the survey. This **93% response rate** speaks to the importance of this issue across the province and the accuracy of the final data collected.

### Survey Results

- Rural municipalities are currently facing an overall unpaid oil and gas property tax burden of **$251.5 million**.
- Rural municipalities are still owed **$42.9 million** in oil and gas property taxes from the 2023 tax year alone.
- The average RMA member who completed the survey is facing an unpaid tax burden of **$3,934,766** from the oil and gas industry.
- Seven municipalities have unpaid tax burdens **above $10** million from the oil and gas industry.
- Two municipalities have no unpaid tax burden from the oil and gas industry, and an additional seven municipalities have an unpaid tax burden **below $100,000**.
- Municipalities have written off over **$187 million in unpaid taxes** since 2015**.** This means that municipalities consider these taxes uncollectible, and they will never recover this lost revenue. This is a significant increase from last year, with an additiona**l $50 million of taxes written off in 2023.**
- **Approximately 30% of respondents reported that the ministerial order from 2023 made positive** impacts on collecting unpaid taxes from companies, either in the form of a repayment agreement or through enhanced communication.

### Key Analysis

- The problem **is not improving:** Despite the availability of new enforcement and recovery mechanisms,, the current amount of unpaid taxes owing from the oil and gas industry is still very similar to previous years' amounts.
- The problem is **province-wide**: Every RMA district is facing at least $23 million in unpaid taxes.
- The problem is **driven by a hands-off regulator:** As the oil and gas industry remains stable and new well drilling rates continue to increase, the Alberta Energy Regulator has allowed a small number of poorly-managed companies to continue operating, harming the industry's reputation and creating a risk of mass bankruptcies if property tax payment requirements are enforced.

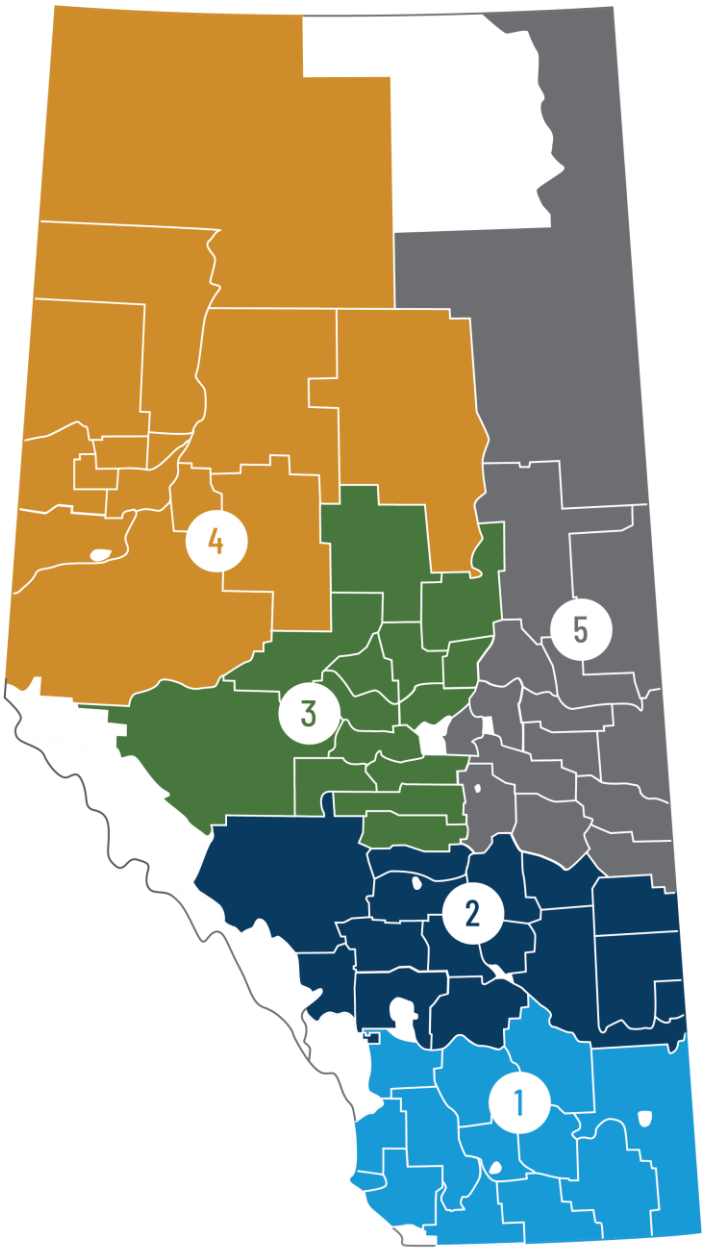


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- The problem is **solvable**: 55% of unpaid taxes are owed by companies that continue to operate and simply choose not to pay taxes. The AER can make phased changes to directives which ensure only companies who pay their taxes are able to operate.

## Unpaid Oil and Gas Property Taxes by District

Unlike some issues, which only impact municipalities in some regions of the province, unpaid taxes from the oil and gas industry have provincewide consequences, as shown below:




**Cumulative Unpaid Taxes**

District 1: $23,264,307
District 2: $55,650,014
District 3: $26,333,404
District 4: $61,008,455
District 5: $85,568,902

**Unpaid Taxes in 2023**

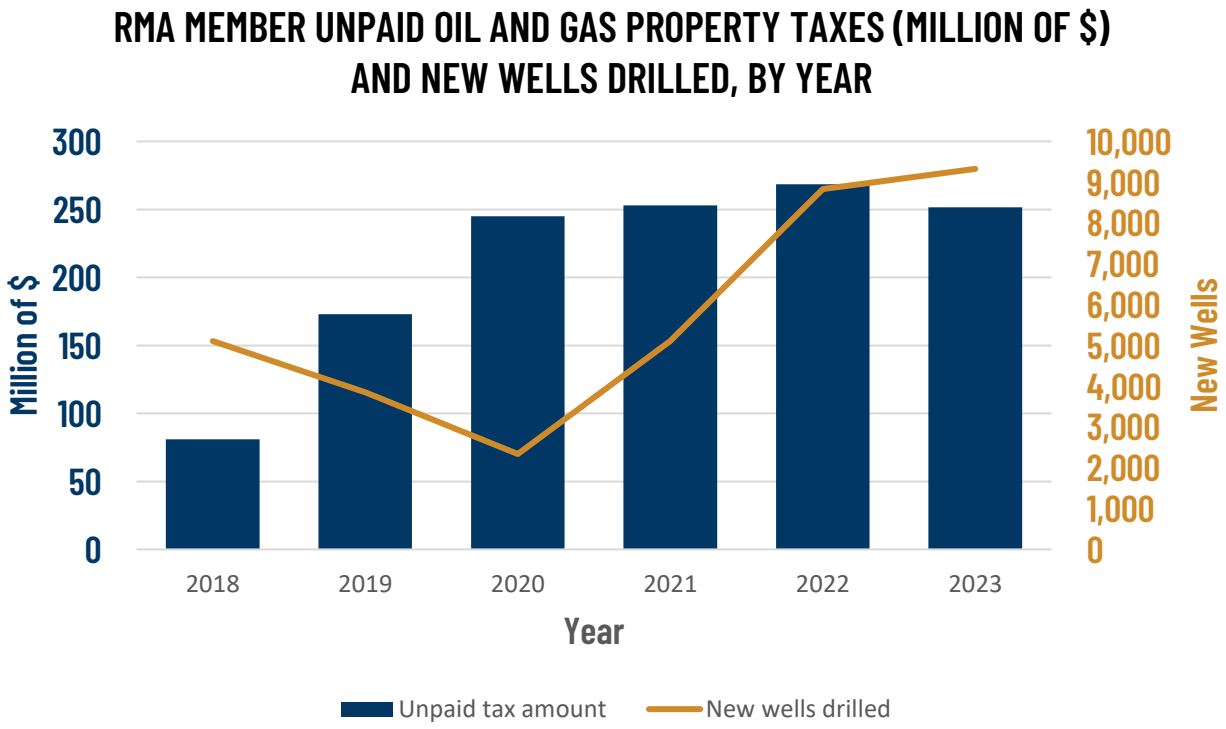
District 1: $3,376,960
District 2: $8,693,998
District 3: $4,580,642
District 4: $11,197,408
District 5: $15,021,424

## Unpaid Oil and Gas Property Taxes by the Numbers

While the overall amount of $251.5 million in outstanding oil and gas property taxes is alarming on its own, digging into the survey data is even more compelling. The data below tells some other important stories about this ongoing crisis for rural municipalities and the lack of success on the part of industry and the Government of Alberta to address it.

### As the industry experiences stability, the tax payment problem persists

In 2023, municipalities incurred $43 million of new unpaid taxes from oil and gas companies. Despite the industry's stable growth in recent years , unpaid taxes continue to persist. The chart below compares trends in industry growth (represented by new wells drilled each year) and cumulative unpaid tax amounts.



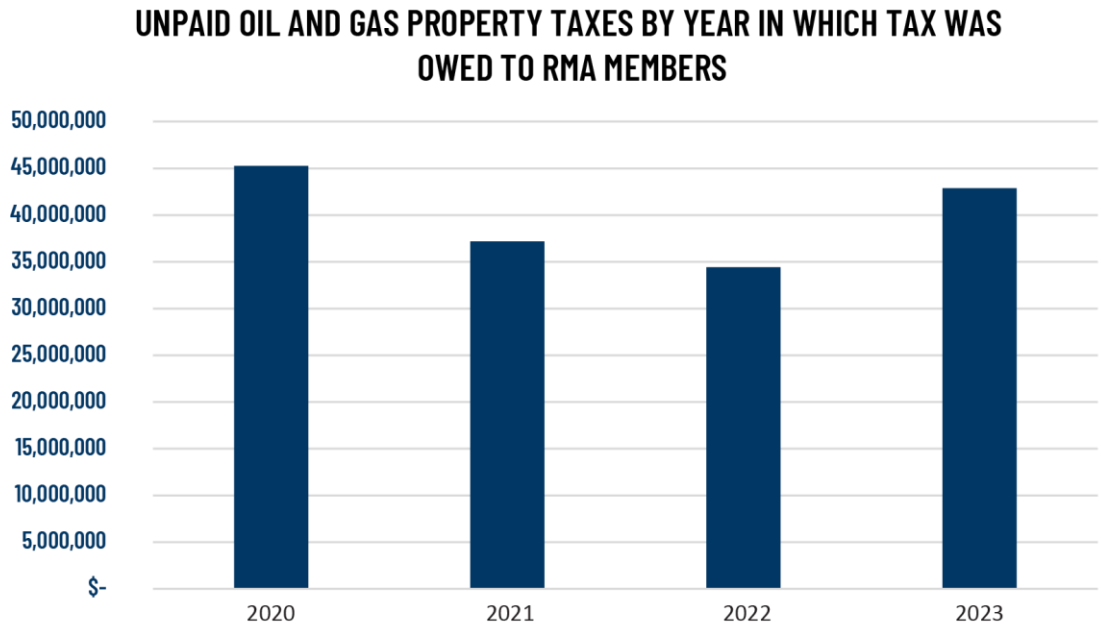

From 2018 to 2020, the rate of unpaid taxes tended to grow at an inverse rate to the number of new wells drilled in the province; as unpaid taxes increased, new wells decreased. This suggested that perhaps the unpaid tax issue was linked to the industry's general struggles. However, this connection has disappeared. Although the number of new wells drilled did not increase dramatically this year, there was still a 5% increase in new oil and gas wells drilled as unpaid tax amounts remain stubbornly high. This suggests that non-payment is not linked to broad industry performance, but is the fault of a small number of poorly managed companies that are not in a position to grow, but rather are content with generating profits from the wells they do own while avoiding all possible costs, including property taxes.

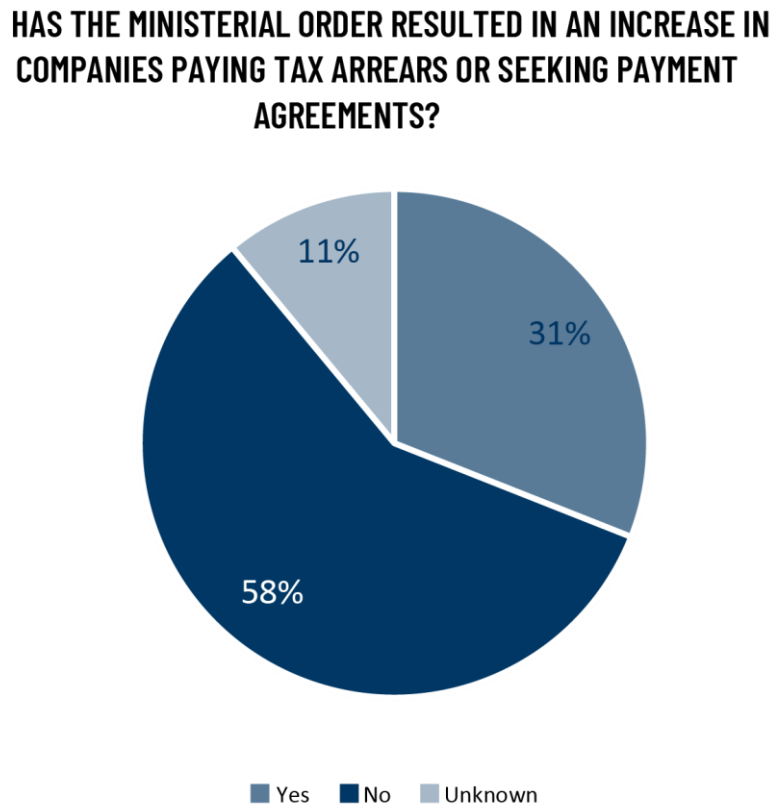


## Have the "Solutions" Been Effective?

In March 2023, the Minister of Energy issued a ministerial order to the Alberta Energy Regulator with requirements to restrict any oil and gas company with collective, province wide property tax arrears above $20,000 from receiving a new well licence or being involved with a licence transfer. This order was put into place by the AER on May 1, 2023.

This order was intended to reduce the amount of unpaid taxes in 2023 by preventing companies from acquiring or selling licenses without meeting their property tax obligations. The survey indicated that since the order was put in place, approximately 30% of municipalities reported increased industry effort in paying tax arrears. However, the amount of new unpaid taxes that municipalities incurred in 2023 ($43 million) suggests that the ministerial order has done little to reduce newly incurred unpaid taxes. There is clearly a much larger issue with AER directives which enables companies to operate despite owing municipal taxes or having high liability issues, which rate them as effectively bankrupt.



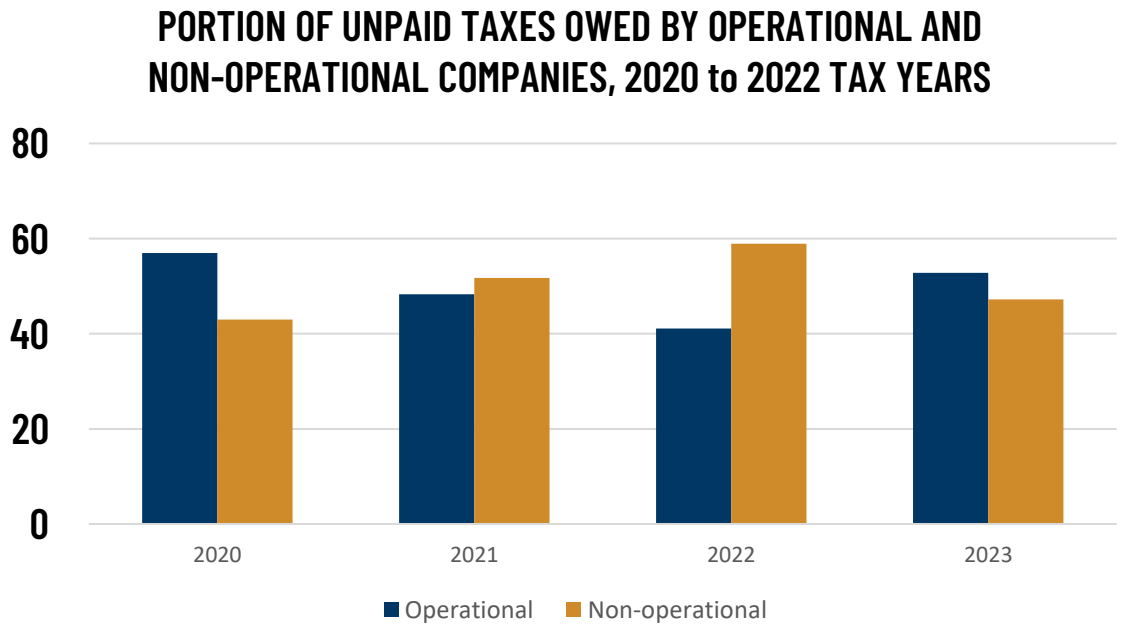



Municipal Affairs also amended the *Municipal Government Act* to clarify that municipalities have a secured status (a special lien) to recover unpaid taxes during bankruptcy or insolvency hearings. This tool was initiated in 2021 and RMA developed a tool kit to help municipalities use the special lien power effectively. RMA's survey showed that in 2023, just over 10% of members were able to utilize special lien status to recover unpaid taxes.

While both the ministerial order and special lien tools were steps in the right direction, neither target the companies that are primarily responsible for the ongoing growth in unpaid taxes. While the ministerial order targets companies interested in growing and the special lien targets companies that have entered bankruptcy or insolvency, neither impacts the "zombie" companies that remain profitable but have no ability or interest in expanding. Their focus is primarily on funnelling profits out of the province and avoiding as many costs as possible, including property tax payments.

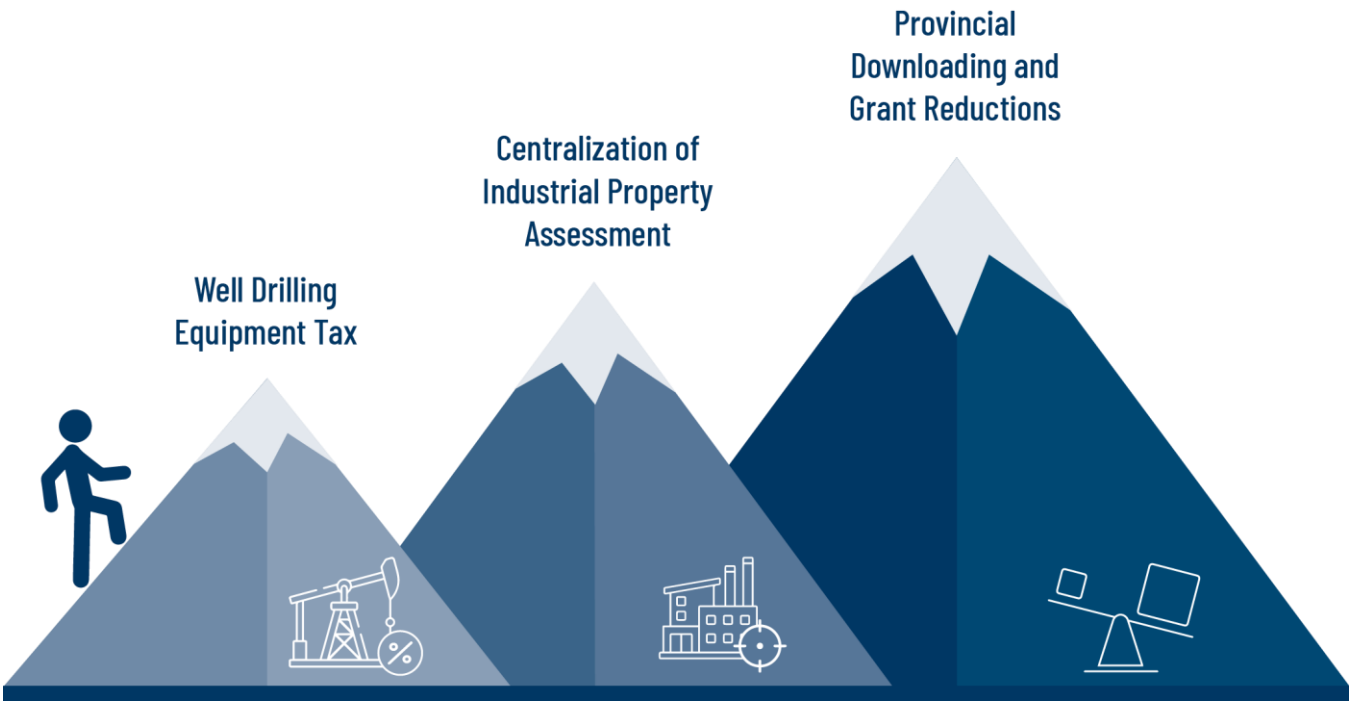
## Operational companies continue to ignore their tax obligations.

The survey asked members to indicate the portion of unpaid taxes owed by companies that continue to operate and those that are non-operational, usually due to insolvency. These results show an interesting trend:




In previous years, the portion of taxes owed by non-operational companies increased significantly in 2021 and 2022. This year, that trend has reversed, as the portion of tax arrears from operational companies has increased. This suggests that municipalities may be having more success in recovering taxes during bankruptcy or insolvency proceedings, and that the AER's prohibition on transferring or acquiring new licenses has not been effective in addressing non-payment by operating companies. With $43 million of new unpaid taxes owed to municipalities in 2023, and a larger portion the responsibility of companies that continue to profit from extracting a resource that belongs to all Albertans, it is clear that this issue continues to grow and companies are aware of the loopholes available to them.

# Cumulative Effects of Unpaid Taxes on Municipal Revenue




While the survey results are alarming in isolation, they become even more concerning when considered in combination with other recent provincial policy changes that have downloaded more responsibilities onto municipalities.

The RMA sees industry and municipalities as partners in driving economic development, and without access to a fair and consistent revenue source, rural municipalities will, quite simply, be unable to continue to build and maintain the infrastructure that the industry relies on. Some examples of other policy decisions include the following:

## Well-Drilling Equipment Tax

Following the 2020 assessment model review, the Government of Alberta implemented several measures intended to provide relief to industry as an alternative to implementing massive changes to the assessment model that would seriously harm municipal viability. Among these measures was the elimination of the Well-Drilling Equipment Tax (WDET). The WDET was intended to provide support to rural municipalities to offset sudden costs associated with new drilling and the increased use of municipal infrastructure by drilling rigs and other industrial equipment. Eliminating it was intended to stimulate new drilling activity during a time of low commodity prices.

Rural municipalities have been unable to collect WDET since 2020, resulting in an annual loss of over $20 million. As commodity prices and drilling have increased dramatically since 2020, rural municipal infrastructure is being impacted like never before and municipalities have no revenue source available to offset new costs. RMA has continually advocated for WDET to be put back into place by the province, however it has been made clear that

this is unlikely. Infrastructure deficits continue to grow and the combined losses from WDET and unpaid taxes make it difficult for municipalities to continue to support the oil and gas industry.

## Centralization of Industrial Property Assessment

Over the past several years, the Government of Alberta has gradually transitioned responsibility for assessing designated industrial properties (pipelines, wells, etc.) from individual municipalities to the provincial assessor's office. While this transition was intended to improve the consistency of assessment across the province, the process has taken much longer than expected and the Government of Alberta has been challenged in building the expertise, capacity, and processes needed to properly assess the massive amount of designated industrial properties spread across rural Alberta.

This lack of capacity has resulted in a lower quality of assessment in municipalities that have been centralized (some municipalities have not yet been transitioned to the centralized model and still conduct assessment using municipal or contracted staff). For example, centralized assessors are highly reliant on industry self-reporting, and due to work constraints for provincial staff, access a much lower portion of properties to visually confirm or audit self-reporting. While quantifying the exact impacts of centralization is extremely difficult as the technical assessment data is not publicly available, there is no doubt that in many cases, centralization has resulted in a reduction in the assessed value of properties due to self-reporting and an increasing reliance on standardized rather than site-specific assessments. In other words, while municipal assessors historically inspect a large portion of individual properties, the proportion inspected under a centralized system is much less, leading to lower assessments, lower taxes paid by industrial property owners, and lost tax revenue for municipalities.

## Provincial Downloading and Grant Reductions

While the examples above are directly related to property assessment and taxation, provincial policy decisions in other areas have resulted in downloads and reduced access to revenues for rural municipalities, making unpaid taxes even more of a risk. Examples include reduced Local Government Fiscal Framework (LGFF) funding, increased municipal costs under the Police Funding Model, elimination of grants in place of taxes for seniors housing facilities, the introduction of provincial/municipal cost-sharing under the Disaster Recovery Program, and others. For example, the first year of LGFF funding is reduced 38% compared to the historical average amount available under its predecessor program, the Municipal Sustainability Initiative. Municipalities will need to make up the shortfall from new LGFF funding or face difficult choices between reducing services levels or increasing municipal taxes.

Each RMA member has, on average, $4 million in unpaid taxes. This is not a small amount for rural communities and could be used to enhance the communities which support the oil and gas industry. **As municipalities are asked to do more with less, unpaid oil and gas taxes from delinquent companies become more detrimental to community sustainability.**



## Band-Aids Don't Fix Zombies

This issue persists because none of the changes made recently has addressed the root cause of the issue: "zombie" companies that have been allowed to continue to operate despite being in poor financial condition and carrying significant unfunded environmental liabilities. RMA describes these as zombie companies because while they lack the ability to grow, their failure would introduce major public risks linked to environmental liabilities. On paper, the AER could solve this issue with a simple amendment to Directive 067 that makes property tax payment compliance a condition of operating. In actuality, doing so would push many zombie companies into insolvency and result in the abandonment of thousands of wells. As a regulator, the AER is responsible for a mountain of unpaid taxes which have been created by companies they have allowed to continue to operate despite posing an extremely high liability risk using the AER's own metrics.

### We Need a Regulator, Not a Cheerleader!

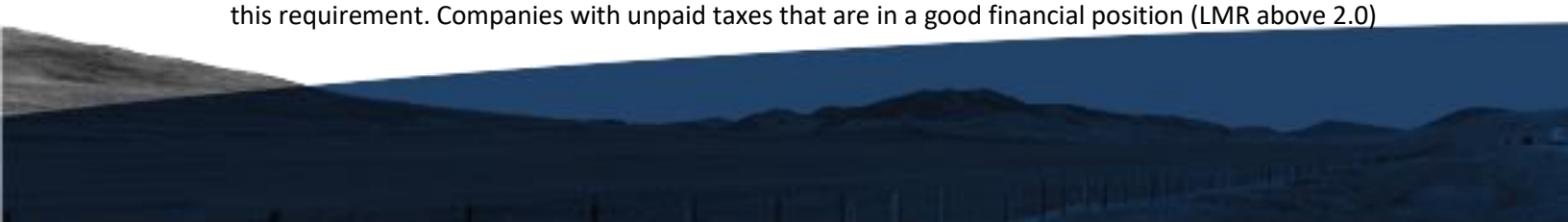
The AER's hands-off regulatory approach has allowed hundreds of companies to operate despite indicators suggesting that they pose a high risk of failing and lack the financial resources to cover their reclamation responsibilities. The AER monitors liability through their Liability Management Rating (LMR) system. The purpose of the LMR is to monitor a company's risk in relation to their ability to fund their abandonment, remediation and reclamation obligations. It is currently calculated as the ratio of a company's deemed assets to its deemed liabilities. When a licensee's LMR dips below 1.0, it has more liabilities than assets. It is only then that the licensee is required to post a security deposit with the AER to help mitigate the risks posed by the company. In reality, when a company's LMR falls below 1.0, many are unable to pay security deposits, property taxes, or surface leases. Their singular priority is often reducing costs as much as possible and funneling profits to executives and shareholders while they are still operational. Even an LMR below 2.0 suggests that a company is operating at a high risk of not being able to meet their reclamation obligations. Unfortunately, company-specific LMR ratings are not publicly available, so it is impossible for RMA or rural municipalities to determine the LMR of companies ignoring their property tax obligations.

Despite this, it is highly likely that many of the approximately 400 companies which, as of January 2024, have a LMR below 2.0, have property tax arrears and would simply enter into bankruptcy if they were required by the AER to immediately meet their property tax obligation. If these 400 "zombie" companies were to fail, thousands of wells would be abandoned and placed in the Orphan Well Association (OWA). The abandonment of so many wells at once would place significant strain on the OWA and create risks around liability management for the abandoned wells. Although the AER has maintained that their regulatory strategy aligns with the protecting the public interest, their hands-off approach to regulating poorly managed companies has created a situation in which enforcing property tax payment requirements could have major environmental and fiscal risks for municipalities and the broader public. Essentially, the AER has created a" no-win" situation (unless you own a zombie oil and gas company).

### So What Now?

The AER has created a scenario in which the public interest risks of simply enforcing payment of taxes on a go-forward basis would be significant. RMA proposes the following approach to balance industry accountability for property tax payments with mitigation of abandonment risks:

1. The AER should immediately modify Directive 067 to make license eligibility dependent on being in good standing on municipal property taxes.
2. Alberta Energy should develop and require the AER to implement a phased approach to enforcement of this requirement. Companies with unpaid taxes that are in a good financial position (LMR above 2.0)



should be required to pay arrears immediately. Companies in a poor financial position must submit payment plans which the AER can enforce, that meet specific deadlines that align with their LMR and other fiscal indicators. The exact requirements and deadlines should be determined by Alberta Energy.

3. The Minister of Energy should amend the Ministerial Order to allow companies with unpaid taxes to sell assets to other companies. If unpaid taxes are tied to the assets being sold, taxes must be re-paid in full as a condition of sale. If unpaid taxes are not tied to the assets being sold, the sale proceeds must be used to re-pay unpaid taxes tied to other assets.
4. Directors and board of governors that have had governance, financial, or operational responsibilities of former companies that have been delinquent for the payment of taxes to municipalities and surface rights payments not be permitted to make application, license, or be approved to operate oil and gas facilities and pipelines in Alberta.



ALBERTA
MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS
*Office of the Minister*
*MLA, Calgary-Hays*

AR113641

February 12, 2024

His Worship Jim Depew
Mayor
Town of Raymond
PO Box 629
Raymond AB T0K 2S0

Dear Mayor Depew:

Through the Alberta Community Partnership (ACP) program, the Government of Alberta encourages strengthened relationships between municipalities and cooperative approaches to service delivery. By working in partnership with our neighbours, we create opportunities that support economic development and job creation. Together, we help build vibrant, resilient communities for the benefit of every Albertan.

I am pleased to inform you that the Town of Raymond has been approved for a grant of $200,000 under the Intermunicipal Collaboration component of the 2023/24 ACP in support of your Investigation of Enhancement of Regional Solid Waste Collection through Design and Efficiencies project. This approval does not signify broader provincial support for any recommendation or outcome that might result from your project.

The conditional grant agreement will be sent shortly to your Chief Administrative Officer to obtain the appropriate signatures.

The Government of Alberta looks forward to celebrating your ACP-funded project with you and your municipal partnership. I encourage you to send invitations for these milestone events to my office. We ask that you advise Municipal Affairs a minimum of 15 working days prior to the proposed event. If you would like to discuss possible activities or events to recognize your ACP achievements, please contact a grant advisor, toll-free by dialing 310-0000, then 780-422-7125, or at acp.grants@gov.ab.ca.

.../2

Classification: Public

I congratulate the partnership on initiating this project, and I wish you every success in your efforts.

Sincerely,

Ric McIver
Minister

cc: Honourable Joseph Schow, MLA, Cardston-Siksika
Honourable Grant Hunter, MLA, Taber-Warner
Chelsae Petrovic, MLA, Livingstone-Macleod
Mayor Maggie Kronen, Town of Cardston
Mayor Byrne Cook, Town of Magrath
Mayor Larry Liebelt, Town of Milk River
Mayor Scott MacCumber, ,Village of Coutts
Mayor Linda Allred, Village of Glenwood
Mayor Dwight L. Davis, Village of Hill Spring
Mayor Trevor Lewington, Village of Stirling
Mayor Tyler Lindsay, Village of Warner
Reeve Randy Bullock, Cardston County
Reeve Randall Taylor, County of Warner
Kurtis Pratt, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Raymond
Jeff Shaw, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Cardston
James Suffredine, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Magrath
Kelly Lloyd, Chief Administrative Officer, Town of Milk River and Village of Warner
Lori Rolfe, Chief Administrative Officer, Village of Coutts
Cynthia Vizzutti, Chief Administrative Officer, Village of Glenwood
Greg Robinson, Chief Administrative Officer, Village of Hill Spring
Scott Donselaar, Chief Administrative Officer, Village of Stirling
Murray Millward, Chief Administrative Officer, Cardston County
Shawn Hathaway, Chief Administrative Officer, County of Warner

Classification: Public

**MINUTES OF THE CHIEF MOUNTAIN REGIONAL SOLID WASTE SERVICES COMMISSION ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING HELD DECEMBER 13, 2023, AT THE TOWN OF MAGRATH.**

Authority Members Present:

Larry Liebelt – Town of Milk River
Byrne Cook – Town of Magrath
Wayne Harris – Cardston County
Tanya Smith – Village of Coutts (zoom)
Allan Burton – Town of Cardston (Zoom)
Tyler Lindsay – Village of Warner
Randy Taylor – County of Warner
Bryce Coppieters – Town of Raymond
Mike Nish – Village of Glenwood

Others Present:

Marian Carlson – SEO
Suzanne Pierson – Secretary/Treasurer
Lee Beazer – Operator

Meeting commenced at 5:03 p.m.

Byrne Cook in the Chair.

**Chairman**

Byrne Cook asked for nominations for Chairman.
Bryce Coppieters nominated Gary Bikman.
Byrne Cook called for nominations a second and third time.
Randy Taylor called for nominations to cease.
Gary Bikman is declared Chairman.

**Vice-Chairman**

Byrne Cook asked for nominations for Vice-Chairman.
Bryce Coppieters moved to nominate Byrne Cook.
Byrne Cook asked for nominations a second and third time.
Randy Taylor called for nominations to cease.
Byrne Cook is declared Vice-Chairman.

**Signing Authorities**

23-15 Bryce Coppieters moved that the signing authorities be as follows: Gary Bikman, Allan Burton, Byrne Cook, Wayne Harris, Marian Carlson, Suzanne Pierson, and Lee Beazer; (Lee Beazer and Suzanne Pierson cannot sign the same cheque(s)) signing for the following accounts: Chief Mountain Regional (Depreciation), Chief Mountain Regional Solid (Current Operating), Chief Mountain Regional Closure Account, and Chief Mountain Regional Reserve Account. Carried

The SEO advised the need to access online banking for printing bank statements and transferring funds as per the budget.

23-16 Randy Taylor moved to allow access to online banking for the SEO and Secretary/Treasurer to print bank statements and transfer funds between accounts according to the budget. Carried

**Committees**

23-17 Wayne Harris moved that the committees be as follows: Finance Committee are Bryce Coppieters, Tyler Lindsay, and Byrne Cook; Joint Health and Safety Committee are Larry Liebelt, Mike Nish, and Brian Wickhorst; Policy Committee are Allan Burton, Tanya Smith, Randy Taylor, and Wayne Harris; HR Committee are Wayne Harris, Tyler Lindsay, Bryce Coppieters, and Randy Taylor. Carried

**Per Diem**

23-18 Randy Taylor moved that the per diem rates stay at $200 for meetings less than four hours and $260 for meetings over four hours and to follow the CRA-approved rate for mileage, same as 2023. Carried

The Board discussed whether to keep the regularly scheduled board meetings.

23-19 Bryce Coppieters moved to maintain the regularly scheduled board meetings on the second Wednesday of each month in Magrath at 5:00 p.m. Carried

Wayne Harris advised that the Commission By-Law allows an alternate to be assigned to the Commission board. The SEO will send a letter to the municipalities regarding an option of having an alternate assigned and request that the alternate be submitted in writing to the Commission.

Allan Burton was excused at 5:17 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Larry Liebelt moved the adjournment of the organizational meeting.

Adjournment at 5:17 p.m.



Chairman

**MINUTES OF THE CHIEF MOUNTAIN REGIONAL SOLID WASTE SERVICES COMMISSION MEETING HELD DECEMBER 13, 2023, AT THE TOWN OF MAGRATH.**

Members Present:

Brian Wickhorst – Village of Glenwood
Byrne Cook – Town of Magrath
Bryce Coppieters – Town of Raymond
Tyler Lindsay – Village of Warner
Mike Nish – Village of Hill Spring
Tanya Smith – Village of Coutts (Zoom)
Wayne Harris – Cardston County
Randy Taylor – County of Warner
Larry Liebelt – Town of Milk River

Others Present:

Marian Carlson – SEO
Suzanne Pierson – Secretary/Treasurer
Lee Beazer – Operator

Commenced at 5:17 pm

Byrne Cook in the Chair.

**AGENDA**

Randy Taylor moved that the agenda be adopted as presented. Carried

Brian Wickhorst arrived at 5:19 p.m.

**MINUTES**

Bryce Coppieters moved that the minutes of the November 8, 2023, regular board meeting be adopted as presented. Carried

**NEW BUSINESS**

The SEO presented the 2024 Budget with the 5-year reserve schedule for the board to review. The presented budget represents a 3% increase in requisition rates. A portion of the budget increase will provide funds to be placed in a reserve account for purchasing new equipment.

The board discussed the Landfill Tipping Fee for 2024 and the rates for the City of Lethbridge.

23 -20 Larry Liebelt moved to have the Landfill Tipping Fee for the 2024 year set at $115/tonne. Carried

23-21 Randy Taylor moved to approve the 2024 Budget with the requisition rate set at 31.24/capita. Carried

Wayne Harris brought to the board's attention concerns at the Glenwood Transfer Station regarding customers coming from the Blood Tribe and not helping pay the Operator's wage. The Blood Tribe does pay a requisition fee for waste disposal.

The SEO reported that she participated in a webinar on November 15, 2023, hosted by the Circular Materials Working Group, to further discuss the Extended Producer Responsibility. Some important information from the webinar was that if municipalities don't register, no funding from the producer will come to the municipality. The regulation requires recycling curbside pick-up beginning October 2026 if the municipality currently has curbside pick-up. All municipalities can have Circular Materials contracted with a 3rd party for curbside pick-up.

Wayne Harris was excused at 6:26 p.m.

Tyler Lindsay moved to approve the SEO's report. Carried

The Operator reported that 881.82 tonnes of waste were delivered to the Landfill in November 2023, making the year-to-date total 9,437.279 tonnes.

The Operator advised that Wilde Brothers Engineering has been contacted regarding completing the year-end report for Alberta Environment.

The Operator reported that water samples have been taken and gas sampling has been completed.

The Operator advised that J.I.M. Equipment is near completion on the drainage ditch to deal with the spring run-off.

Brian Wickhorst moved to approve the Operator's report. Carried

**Financial Statement**

The Financial Statement for October 31, 2023, was reviewed.

Bryce Coppieters moved to accept the October 31, 2023, Financial Statement. Carried

**Approval of Bills**

Bills for November 2023 were reviewed.

Larry Liebelt moved to approve the bills for November 2023. Carried

The Year-to-date Budget was presented as of November 30, 2023.

Mike Nish moved to approve the Year-to-Date Budget as of November 30, 2023. Carried

The Operator reported that the 2012 semi-truck and trailer were present during an accident on Saturday, December 8, 2023. A resident passed the semi-truck on a solid line and went over the guard rail near the Lee Creek bridge near Cardston. The semi did not make contact with the vehicle. The other driver was taken to Lethbridge by ambulance but will fully recover.

The SEO presented a Christmas card from RMA Insurance.

Byrne Cook advised that he has information from SAEWA regarding a waste incineration plan moving forward. He will forward the information to the SEO.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

A letter from the Town of Magrath regarding their organizational meeting and the representative to the Commission. Filed

Randy Taylor moved the correspondence filed for information. Carried

**ADJOURNMENT**

Tanya Smith moved the meeting adjourned.

Adjournment at 6:41 p.m.

The Next Commission board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 10, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. in the Town of Magrath.

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Chairman

**MINUTES OF THE CHIEF MOUNTAIN REGIONAL SOLID WASTE SERVICES COMMISSION MEETING HELD JANUARY 10, 2024, VIA ZOOM.**

Members Present:

Brian Wickhorst – Village of Glenwood
Byrne Cook – Town of Magrath
Bryce Coppieters – Town of Raymond
Tyler Lindsay – Village of Warner
Gary Bikman – Village of Stirling
Tanya Smith – Village of Coutts
Wayne Harris – Cardston County
Randy Taylor – County of Warner
Peggy Losey – Town of Milk River
Allan Burton – Town of Cardston

Others Present:

Marian Carlson – SEO
Suzanne Pierson – Secretary/Treasurer
Lee Beazer – Operator

Commenced at 5:00 pm

Gary Bikman in the Chair.

**AGENDA**

Bryce Coppieters moved that the agenda be adopted as presented. Carried

**MINUTES**

Brian Wickhorst moved that the minutes of the December 13, 2023, organizational board meeting be adopted as presented. Carried

Wayne Harris moved that the minutes of the December 13, 2023, regular board meeting be adopted as presented. Carried

**BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

The SEO reported that a letter was sent to the participating municipalities advising that an alternate may be assigned to the Commission board.

Allan Burton and Bryne Cook arrived at 5:04 p.m.

**NEW BUSINESS**

The SEO reported that the audit RFP will go out on Monday, and the application deadline is February 15, 2024. The finance committee will review the applications and bring a recommendation to the March board meeting.

The SEO has been trying to meet with Kurtis Pratt, Town of Raymond, regarding the pilot project, but with the holidays, they have not been able to meet.

The SEO advised that the Waste Diversion reports from 2023 will be analyzed, and a summary will be given at the next board meeting.

The SEO reported that some municipalities have registered with the Circular Materials Working Group. The SEO will contact the rest of the municipalities to see if they have registered.

Tanya Smith arrived at 5:08 p.m.

Allan Burton moved to approve the SEO's report. Carried

The Operator reported that 552.002 tonnes of waste were delivered to the Landfill in December 2023, making the year-to-date total 9,989.281 tonnes.

The Operator advised that Wilde Brothers Engineering has been given the information to complete the year-end report.

The Operator reported that Chris Law will be starting on the wind fence in Raymond this week.

Bryce Coppieters moved to approve the Operator's report. Carried

**Financial Statement**

The Financial Statement for November 30, 2023, was reviewed.

Randy Taylor moved to accept the November 31, 2023, Financial Statement. Carried

**Approval of Bills**

Bills for December 2023 were reviewed.

Byrne Cook moved to approve the bills for December 2023. Carried

The SEO will get a quote from Kim Welby to run the Strategic Planning Session. The board discussed meeting on a weekday in March or April. The SEO will find out when Kim is available and bring tentative dates for the session for the board to decide on.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

The Alberta CARE Spring Seminar is on February 28-March 1, 2024, in Canmore, Alberta. Filed

An engagement letter from Avail to perform the 2023 Audit. Filed

**ADJOURNMENT**

Tanya Smith moved the meeting adjourned.

Adjournment at 5:21 p.m.

The Next Commission board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 14, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. in the Town of Magrath.

Chairman

**County of Warner Campgrounds**

Ridge Park Campground – The County has the lease on this land and has a contractor that operates the facility. Operator is responsible for all operating costs through the season and pays the County 15% of revenues collected. Besides the camping there is day use at this facility that allows access to the boat launch beach and park.

Chin Park Campground – The County has the lease on this campground. We hire a camp host for $1500 per month while the park is open. County receives all the income but is also responsible for all the expenses. Besides the camping there is day use at this facility that allows access to the boat launch beach and park.

East Bay Random Camping – The County has a lease on this site and ensures that the area is looked after. There is no charge for using this area but limited cost to look after it as well.

**Rural Recreation in County of Warner**

Weir Bridge Day Use Area – Developed by the County as a place for canoers o be able to stop have a lunch use the outhouse and then be on their way again.

Heningers Reservoir Day Use Area – was run by the ACA but the area has been run down lately. The water has died there and does not support the fish as it once did. There is potential here if the water can be cleaned up.

Tyrrell Lake Day Use Area – This was once a well used spot but has basically been shut down. There is still an area to park and launch a boat, but the water has turned in this lake as well and doesn't get used the way it used to.

**Recreation in County of Warner Owned or Leased by Other**

Gold Springs Campground – The County has the lease on this area but it has been turned over to a society to run. The County does very little at this location but it is a very well used spot for camping, fishing, and day use by locals.

Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park – UNESCO World Heritage Site and Provincial Park. There is day use, a visitor information centre and a campground located on site. The County has little to do with the area as far as operations go. Another local group has rodeo grounds at the site where there is an annual rodeo that brings people from all around.

Temple Hill Motocross Track – run by the Lethbridge Motorcycle Club. The County has nothing to do with this facility. They send us a letter when they are having big races other than that they operate independently.

New Dayton Community Centre – The County provides funding to them every year and they run things as they see fit. There is the old school, park, campground, and baseball diamond on the property. All of the outside items (park, campground, and ball diamonds are in need of repair or replacement).

Masinasin Community Hall – We provide this group funding once a year. The hall has seen an increase in use with the addition of a golf simulator. There is also a ball diamond and outside basketball court here that are in need of repair.

West Ridge Stewardship Initiative – This project was the development of the ponds, edible garden, and walking trails. It was done through a partnership between the ACA and the County of Warner. The area is well-used and future work is planned for the area.

New Dayton Gun Club – Operated by an independent group. The gun club is a well used facility by ratepayers. The County has little to do with the facility.

Warner Airstrip – Owned by the Village of Warner. They have been hosting car events at the site.

Milk River Airstrip – Owned by the Town of Milk River. Used primarily for the hospital.

**Urban Municipalities**

Town of Raymond – Outdoor Swimming Pool, beach volleyball, baseball diamonds, disc golf course, golf course, ice arena, tennis courts, basketball courts, stampede grounds, Victoria Sports Park, campground, community centre.

Village of Stirling – Outdoor swimming pool, community centre, playground, baseball diamond, campground.

Village of Warner – Ice arena with athletic centre, curling rink, Devil's Coulee Dinosaur Museum, playgound, baseball diamond, campground.

Town of Milk River – Golf course, curling rink, outdoor swimming pool, civic centre, baseball diamonds, playground, campground.

Village of Coutts – Spray park and playground, tennis courts, pickle ball courts, basketball courts, rodeo grounds, baseball diamonds, community centre, campground.

Submitted Resolutions 2024 Spring

# RMA Spring 2024 Submitted Resolutions

1) Call to Order
2) Resolution Session

**1-24S** **Declining Fire Department Services Across Rural Alberta** *(Smoky Lake County)*

**2-24S** **Water Apportionment Performance** *(MD of Taber)*

**3-24S** **Continued Support for Regional Economic Development Alliances** *(County of Paintearth)*

**4-24S** **Maintaining Non-Partisan Municipal Elections** *(Northern Sunrise County)*

**5-24S** **Legislation Consultation with Municipalities** *(Big Lakes County)*

**6-24S** **Interim Funding for Lost Oil and Gas Revenue** *(Clearwater County)*

**7-24S** **Establishing a Provincial Level of Service for Emergency Social Services** *(County of Grande Prairie)*

**8-24S** **Support for the Export of Live Horses for Slaughter** *(Wetaskiwin County)*

**9-24S** **Funding of FCM Committee Members** *(Mountain View County)*

3) Vote on Emergent Resolutions
4) Closing of Resolution Session

# Submitted Resolutions 2024 Spring

Resolution 1-24S
**Declining Fire Department Services Across Rural Alberta**
Smoky Lake County

*Endorsed by District 5*

WHEREAS the state of declining fire department services across rural Alberta is detrimental to all Albertans living or visiting outside of large urban centers; and

WHEREAS provincial Fire Services Training Program funding increases are necessary for rural firefighter training; and

WHEREAS the Canada Revenue Agency's (CRA) current volunteer firefighter tax credit of $3,000 is inadequate and the CRA's definition of "volunteer firefighter" is obsolete; and

WHEREAS businesses that employ volunteer firefighters do not currently receive a tax credit for doing so; and

WHEREAS the Fire Underwriter's Survey assigns "Front Line" status to firefighting apparatus and equipment used in both urban and rural communities for 15 years; and

WHEREAS the Government of Canada's former Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) for fire/emergency training and equipment is no longer available;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Rural Municipalities of Alberta advocate to the Government of Alberta to collaborate with the Government of Canada and Fire Underwriters Survey to assist municipalities to retain fire services by recruiting firefighters and addressing the declining fire department services across rural Alberta.**

**Member Background**

The Government of Alberta (GOA) reinstated the Fire Services Training Program grant (FSTP) in 2022, providing a maximum grant of $10,000 per application. The grant is to financially assist municipalities to ensure fire services are adequately trained to address the community's risks and levels of service. Increasing the overall program funding of $500,000 is necessary to provide all municipalities opportunities to receive this funding and not rely on their municipal operational budget.

Rural municipalities are struggling to recruit and retain volunteer paid on-call firefighters. The tax credit would show firefighters respect for all those making sacrifices to keep us safe, this incentive will assist with their finically burdens by the return of money earned.

The tax credit is a way to support the important work the fire departments do and help retain members to allow the municipalities to maintain their current levels of service.

The Fire Underwriter's Survey insurance determines the fire protection rating based on the number of firefighters, age and capabilities of the apparatus. The Fire Underwriter's Survey insurance currently recognizes fire apparatus to only have a 15-year cycle and recommends to replace the fire apparatus every 15 years not to jeopardize the fire protection rating. If the municipalities do not comply when the level of maturity is reach of the life cycle, the fire protection rating decreases therefore increasing property insurance rates.

The Government of Canada cut the Joint Emergency Preparedness Program (JEPP) in 2013. The JEPP was used to fund major capital purchases for the fire department. A modernized JEPP would reduce deferred equipment purchases due

to fiscal pressures. This grant imperative as the longer these purchases are deferred the higher the risk and purchase prices.

**RMA Background**

RMA has no active resolutions directly related to this issue.

Resolution 2-24S
**Water Apportionment Performance**
MD of Taber

*Endorsed by District 1*

WHEREAS Schedule A of the 1969 Master Agreement on Apportionment (the Agreement) governs the apportionment of water on the South Saskatchewan River between Alberta and Saskatchewan; and

WHEREAS the Agreement requires that Alberta shall permit a quantity equal to one half of the natural flow of the River to flow into Saskatchewan during each calendar year; and

WHEREAS the Agreement allows Alberta to divert or store or consume a minimum of 2,100,000 acre feet out of the flow of the South Saskatchewan River even though its share for the year is less than that volume, provided that the actual flow of the River at the common boundary of the provinces is not less than 1,500 cubic feet per second at any time; and

WHEREAS Alberta has permitted more than 50% of the natural flow of the South Saskatchewan River to flow to Saskatchewan every year since 1969; and

WHEREAS the rate of flow on the South Saskatchewan River in Alberta is regulated by infrastructure including diversions, dams and reservoirs owned and operated by the Government of Alberta; and

WHEREAS drought conditions prevalent within the South Saskatchewan River basin in 2023 which are likely to persist in 2024 have resulted in water shortages within the basin; and

WHEREAS in times of severe drought it is vital to optimize water retention and storage;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta advocate that the Government of Alberta continue to collaborate with stakeholders to ensure that, to the extent physically practical, Alberta retains its share of the natural flow of the South Saskatchewan River in 2024 and in future years when Alberta is able to divert, store, or consume its full share of the natural flow.**

**Member Background**

The Master Agreement on Apportionment was made October 30, 1969 between the governments of Canada, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba to govern the apportionment of water between provinces in rivers which flow across provincial boundaries. Simplistically, but with at least one notable exception, it requires that 50% of the natural flow of interprovincial rivers flow from an upstream province to the province downstream each calendar year. Natural flow is the flow calculated to occur if there were no human interference with the flow of rivers such as diversions and storage or release of water.

For apportionment purposes, the flow rate and volume of the South Saskatchewan River is measured at the confluence with the Red Deer River, just east of the provincial boundary. Schedule A of the agreement allows Alberta to consume, divert, or store 2.1 million acre feet of water each year regardless of the flow to Saskatchewan, provided that the flow rate is never less than 1500 cubic feet per second (cfs). This would allow Alberta to take more than 50% of the natural flow if the natural flow volume if less than 4.2 million acre feet, although in even the driest years the volume is usually higher than that. In the past it has typically been assumed that Alberta must pass at least 50% of the natural flow while always maintaining a minimum flow of 1500 cfs, which is incorrect. The minimum flow rate only applies if Alberta wishes to take over 50% of the flow in an extremely low-flow year.

Alberta has always passed at least 50% of the natural flow to Saskatchewan, and most years at least 75% of the natural flow is passed because Alberta takes all the water it needs and there is still a large surplus remaining. However, in extreme drought years Alberta needs more water, but still passes over 50%. Prior to 2023 the two years with the lowest percentage of flow passed were 1988 and 2001, when 58% of the natural flow was passed, and the surplus 8% was equal to over 300,000 acre feet of water each year. Final results are not yet available for 2023, but based on projections late in the year it is expected to be similar to 1988 and 2001.

Flows on the main tributaries of the South Saskatchewan River are regulated and affected by Government of Alberta-owned infrastructure such as the Waterton, St. Mary, Oldman, and Dickson dams and several irrigation diversions, as well as by private infrastructure owned by TransAlta, the Eastern and United irrigation districts, municipalities, and others.

With a more concerted effort to maximize Alberta's share of the water, particularly at large government-owned reservoirs and diversions, Alberta should be able to retain a greater portion of its share of the water in drought years to reduce the impact of drought.

**RMA Background**

5-21S: Preservation of Water Quality and Access to Water by Albertans

> THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request the Government of Alberta to take proactive measures to ensure that the headwaters that supply Alberta's water basins are managed to maintain water recharge capabilities, to sustain high water quality and to provide access to sufficient water supplies for all Albertans.
>
> Click here to view the full resolution.

Resolution 3-24S
**Continued Support for Regional Economic Development Alliances**
County of Paintearth

*Endorsed by District 2*

WHEREAS pursuant to the *Municipal Government Act*, the purposes of a municipality are to "provide good government, foster the economic development of the municipality, to provide services, facilities or other things that, […] are necessary or desirable for all or part of a municipality; and, to develop and maintain safe and viable communities"; and

WHEREAS for over 20 years, the Government of Alberta has embraced a partnership with Alberta's municipalities to plan and undertake regional economic development initiatives of mutual interest; and

WHEREAS the success of this partnership made Alberta a leader in the delivery of regional economic development; and

WHEREAS Regional Economic Development Alliances (REDAs) have been in operation for over 20 years as a supplementary asset to municipal economic development service delivery; and

WHEREAS REDAs are especially important to offset cost-constraints and limited budget capacity for both small urban and rural communities; and

WHEREAS through a focused strategy, an innovative solution can be implemented to budget long-term, consistent funding for REDAs to support their continued role in supporting overall provincial economic growth;

**THEREFORE, BE IT BE RESOLVED that Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) request that a memorandum of understanding be held, in committee, between the Government of Alberta (GOA), Alberta's municipalities, RMA, ABmunis, and existing Regional Economic Development Alliances (REDAs) to redevelop a clear purpose and program structure for the REDAs, inclusive of a stable, long-term, collaborative approach to funding the same; and**

**FURTHER IT BE RESOLVED that the GOA provide continuous, stable funding to existing REDAs to support a combined budget of $125,000/year in operational funding and $100,000/year in project funding, until a memorandum of re-organization is complete and enacted.**

**Member Background**

Alberta's municipalities, in partnership with the Government of Alberta (GOA), have a significant opportunity to re-strategize resources funding provincial economic initiatives by redeveloping a clear purpose for Regional Economic Development Alliances (REDAs). The GOA's announcement to defund the current REDA program structure on January 19, 2024, for a second time in five years, foretells that the current structure requires a new focus to maximize its strategic value in current market conditions. The intent of this resolution is to evolve the REDAs into a trusted economic development resource, having them stabilize Alberta's advantage for long-term, approachable market readiness and world class customer service as they connect people to grow. To outline this transformational opportunity, first, the value of the REDAs will be outlined.

REDAs inherently hold a powerful role by serving as an ethically neutral information hub; wherein, the capacity of the REDAs strategically supports two diverse regulatory bodies' (both the GOA and Alberta's municipalities) terms and conditions (i.e. minimum wage or mill-rates) while maintaining a trusted third-party cooperative position to build venture networks, connecting local assets to a global economy. Their position expands growth opportunity by removing red tape and policy bias limitations in the response time required to capture market investment. Further to their ability to expand capital innovation, REDAs are the ambassadors of "Made in Alberta" as they support a complex web of interactive relationships including: Government of Canada, GOA, lobbying associations, municipalities, post-secondary institutions and local school districts, chambers of commerce, industry, local producers/entrepreneurs, transportation networks, REDA counterparts, local economic societies, lending providers, grant providers, investment cooperatives, economic advisors, external markets, independent educators and market consultants service supports, site selectors, assessment firms, developers, etc.

For over 20 years, this network has supported Alberta's economic investments, thereby building confidence in complex market networks and supportive information exchange to capture investment and growth on a minimal program budget. Rather than suffer a slow loss of this rich asset, REDAs are a resource that require new investment of focus and assignment of resources to support Alberta's economy. Further to the qualitative value of relationships provided, REDAs also offer a significant resource cost-benefit ratio, being a low-risk investment for the benefits provided.

For example, if each municipality were to employ an Economic Development Officer ("EDO") (at a median annual wage of $109,262.39/year) to meet the intent of section 3(2.a) of the *Municipal Government Act*, the total employee resource cost (one resource per 332 municipalities) for the province would be $36,275,113.48/year. Comparatively, if the REDAs received an innovative restructuring where 13 regional zones are established, each resourced with a Senior EDO (at a median resource cost of $160,863.04/year ), a Junior EDO (at a median resource cost of $108,010.96/year ) and an Administrative/Financial Clerk (at a median resource cost of $63,929.33/year ) the total employee resource cost (13 zones with three resources each, 39 total resources) would be $4,326,443.20/year.

REDAs are a high-value quality resource, capable of meeting real market inquiry by providing sound investment information. By resourcing this tool with sufficient and qualified staff there is more value-added in an organized group of regions showcasing Alberta as an asset rich whole-sum community, from which no opportunity leaves. For example, should a market inquiry not fit one REDA, but another REDA does have the market indicators for investment, the inquiry is not lost. Rather, it is diverted with a tactical approach to retain maximum provincial growth. In other words, cooperative investment attracts further investment.

In a memorandum of understanding, held by the GOA, Alberta's municipalities, RMA, ABmunis, and existing REDAs, the opportunity to evolve the REDAs into a modernized economic tool could be met with enthusiasm. By supporting an ideological change in how Alberta connects with the world, the announcement of a restructure demonstrates Alberta's innovative approach to market readiness through market diplomacy. Through collaborative planning, a committee comprised of the aforementioned partners can refocus the organizational nature of the REDA for world class customer service, while developing a long-term stable approach to funding. During the interim, it is requested to stabilize existing funding, having $125,000/year for operational costs and $100,000/year for project costs (to participate in project-based opportunities) provided annually to the existing organizations. REDAs are encouraged to

increase membership baselines. The provision of interim stabilizing funding will maintain existing relationships within the REDA networks and will allow the connections at this level to flow without continuity disruption.

To ensure clarity, REDAs are a whole-sum community baseline of total provincial economic investment, providing market customer service of economic development opportunity. This baseline is to be built upon by incentives generated by both the GOA and Alberta's municipalities, having the same encouraged to support economic attraction through sound policy, red tape reduction and readiness to self-invest in economic positioning. This collaborative position supports autonomy for each participant while stabilizing policy influence on broad market behaviors. Communication within a stabilized REDA structure would also encourage short-economic chains of value-added market investment both locally and regionally, encouraging market actors to support localized economies (i.e. local GDP values for developing attractive indicators to encourage positive market behavior). Mindful resourcing also does not create market competition, but rather stabilization. As the customer service base resource, REDAs are encouraged to connect current and future economic services to market inquiry when nearing capacity to ensure robust market capture and cooperative relationship stewardship.

Alberta has the opportunity to evolve REDAs to produce a world class customer service response to market education, attraction and retention of economic development. "Welcome to Alberta, how may I help you grow?"

**RMA Background**

RMA has no active resolutions directly related to this issue.

# Submitted Resolutions 2024 Spring

Resolution 4-24S
**Maintaining Non-Partisan Municipal Elections**
Northern Sunrise County

*Endorsed by District 4*

WHEREAS municipal elections in Alberta have been predominantly free from political party influence; and

WHEREAS this non-partisan structure has afforded local elected officials the autonomy to debate and vote on municipal issues based on the best interests of their community; and

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta is considering formalizing political parties at the municipal level; and

WHEREAS formalizing political parties at the municipal level would restrict individual elected officials from independently pursuing the best interests of the municipality but instead bind them by the ideology of the political party they represent; and

WHEREAS the current *Local Authorities Elections Act* does not explicitly restrict political party influence in local elections.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) advocate to the Government of Alberta to refrain from formalizing partisan politics in local government elections;**

**FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the RMA advocate for the Government of Alberta to amend the *Local Authorities Elections Act* (LAEA) to prohibit partisanship from infiltrating local elections or politics in any way including political party endorsements of local candidates, donations directly or indirectly from political parties to local candidates, or by way of any other influence.**

**Member Background**

Local government elected officials are closer to the people they represent than those of any other form of government. These representatives also live in their community, which is not always the case for those elected provincially or federally. Local representatives interact with their citizens often, are accountable to their citizens and are easily accessible.

On any community issue they face, these local elected officials bring their experience and what they believe is best for the overall community and express this through their debate and vote. This is critical in local government and plays a big part in why local government is the most accountable and efficient form of government.

Partisanship in local politics would be a disappointment. No longer could our local elected officials vote on what they believe is best for the community, but instead, they would be beholden to vote based on the ideology of the political party they represent. In the few cases where elected officials in non-local governments dare vote on what they feel is in the best interests of their constituents rather than by their parties' ideologies, they have been alienated by the party. This has the effect of leaving their constituents frustrated with the feeling their voice has been further eroded.

For our municipalities to remain efficient, effective and accountable, it is critical that we leave no room for partisan politics.

**RMA Background**

RMA has no active resolutions directly related to this issue.

# Submitted Resolutions 2024 Spring

Resolution 5-24S
**Legislation Consultation with Municipalities**
Big Lakes County

*Endorsed by District 4*

WHEREAS past decisions of the Government of Alberta (GOA) have negatively affected municipal financial planning and budgeting when prior consultation has not occurred; and

WHEREAS it is critical for the GOA to sufficiently inform municipalities of any legislation, regulation or administrative action that could decrease revenues or increase expenditures; and

WHEREAS all orders of government serve the same taxpayer; and

WHEREAS several provinces and territories have passed legislation requiring consultation with municipalities in advance of any policy change that may have a fiscal impact on municipalities; and

WHEREAS prior consultation is a procedural matter and would not in any way bind the GOA to act upon recommendations put forward by the Rural Municipalities of Alberta and ABMunis; and

WHEREAS meaningful municipal consultation would enhance the decision-making process and prevent unintended consequences of legislative changes;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta advocate to the Government of Alberta to amend the *Municipal Government Act* to include the following statement:**

> **Requirement to notify**
>
> **(1) The Minister shall notify the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) and Alberta Municipalities (ABMunis) at least one year prior to the effective date of any legislation, regulation or administrative action undertaken by or on behalf of the Government of Alberta that would have the effect of decreasing the revenue received by the membership of RMA and ABMunis or increasing the required expenditures of the membership of RMA and ABMunis.**
>
> **(2) Subsection (1) does not apply with respect to any legislation, regulation or administrative action applying to the Province generally and not specifically to municipalities.**

**Member Background**

This resolution will allow municipalities to work with the Government of Alberta (GOA) and be partners in achieving solutions that, while supporting the needs of the province, do not create negative financial extremes and hardships for municipalities.

This formal collaborative arrangement will enhance due process, which benefits both parties and, most importantly, the citizens of Alberta, which we both serve.

This resolution asks that a new section in the *Municipal Government Act* titled "Requirement to Notify Municipalities" be added that requires the GOA to provide one year's notice to any action that will have the effect of decreasing municipal revenue or increasing our required expenses.

By voting for this resolution, we will achieve the meaningful consultation process necessary to achieve good governance and better provide essential municipal services to all Albertans.

The following provinces and territories all provide consultation in their legislation:

- Nova Scotia: Consultation Required Before Amendment

"The Minister is required to consult the executive of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities respecting any proposed amendment to the MGA" (S.518).

- Prince Edward Island: Consultation

"The Minister shall consult with the Federation of Prince Edward Island Municipalities respecting any substantive amendment that the Minister proposes to this Actor the regulations under this Act." (2016,c.44,s.9.)

- Ontario: Consultation

"The Province of Ontario endorses the principle of ongoing consultation between the Province and municipalities in relation to matters of mutual interest and, consistent with this principle, the Province shall consult with municipalities in accordance with a memorandum of understanding entered into between the Province and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario" (2005, c. 8, s. 1).

- British Columbia: Principles for governmental relations

"The minister responsible must provide the representatives of the municipal association with sufficient information respecting the proposed change and allow the representatives sufficient time to consider the proposed change and provide their comments to that minister" (S.276 of B.C Community Charter).

"The relationship between local governments and the Provincial government in relation to this Act is based on the following principles: (c) notice and consultation is needed for Provincial government actions that directly affect local government interests" (Part 1 Section 3 Local Government Act).

- Yukon: Changes to this Act

"The Government of the Yukon must consult with the Association of Yukon Communities on any direct amendments that a Minister proposes to this Act" (S.Y. 1998, c.19, s.11).

Works Cited:

- http://www.fpeim.ca/pdf/mun%20act%20submission.pdf
- https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/municipal%20government.pdf

- http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/consol21/consol21/96323_01#section3
- https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/01m25#BK3
- http://www.gov.yk.ca/legislation/acts/municipal.pdf

**RMA Background**

RMA has no active resolutions directly related to this issue.

Resolution 6-24S
**Interim Funding for Lost Oil and Gas Revenue**
Clearwater County

*Endorsed by District 2*

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta initiated a three-year property tax holiday on new wells and pipelines, eliminated the Well Drilling Equipment Tax (WDET) and implemented a 35% assessment reduction for shallow gas wells and pipelines and additional depreciation adjustments for lower-producing wells; and

WHEREAS these incentives were introduced as temporary measures to support oil and gas industry needs, boost the industry's competitiveness, and incentivize investment; and

WHEREAS municipalities experienced three years of reduced revenue because of these temporary measures resulting in decreased service levels, increased tax rates for residential, non-residential, and agricultural properties and increased risks to sustainable revenue-sharing agreements between rural and urban municipalities; and

WHEREAS municipalities have absorbed provincial downloads associated with policing, affordable housing, and other provincial services, in addition to losses in oil and gas revenue, based on the need to help the oil and gas industry and the province address fiscal challenges; and

WHEREAS the *Municipal Government Act* allows for municipal councils to pass a bylaw imposing a WDET to be assessed on the equipment used to drill a well for which a license is required under the *Oil and Gas Conservation Act*; and

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta has communicated there are no plans to reinstate the WDET and that the assessment reduction and additional depreciation adjustments are to continue until regulated assessment models for wells are updated; and

WHEREAS the Government of Alberta requires municipalities to budget up to five years in advance; and

WHEREAS unpredictable industry property tax incentives make long-term municipal budgeting extremely difficult;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta advocate for the Government of Alberta to reinstate the Well Drilling Equipment Tax and eliminate the thirty-five percent (35%) assessment reduction and additional depreciation adjustments for lower-producing wells.**

**Member Background**

In 2020, the Government of Alberta implemented property tax incentives for the oil and gas industry to promote investment and economic activity in the energy sector. As a result of these incentives, municipalities have faced significant financial shortfalls due to reduced oil and gas tax revenues. This has caused concern about their continued financial viability and service level sustainability.

Municipalities understood that these incentives were temporary measures until the Assessment Model Review was completed and new assessment models for regulated property were developed.

While it is appreciated that the property tax holiday on new wells and pipelines is over, the loss of revenue from the continued elimination of the WDET and~~,~~ the continuation of the assessment reduction and additional depreciation

adjustments for mature oil and gas assets for an indefinite period will cause further assessment base loss resulting in continued reduction of oil and gas revenues.

Municipalities rely on oil and gas property tax revenues to fund infrastructure that the oil and gas industry utilizes daily. To offset this revenue loss, municipalities may have no choice but to increase tax rates, reduce service levels and incur debt, which shifts the tax burden from the oil and gas industry on to all other businesses and residents who are already facing an affordability crisis.

The Government of Alberta recently announced reinitiation of an assessment model review which is currently at phase one (proposed engagement plan) with no timeline in place for completion. While the review is underway, municipalities are still at risk of further revenue loss with the temporary measures in place. Meanwhile, according to the Alberta Energy Regulator, oil production and new wells placed on production has been steadily increasing since 2021 (https://www.aer.ca/providing-information/data-and-reports/statistical-reports/st98/crude-oil/production). There is also a significant increase in natural gas production and new wells placed on production since 2021 (https://www.aer.ca/providing-information/data-and-reports/statistical-reports/st98/natural-gas/production).

Municipalities recognize the oil and gas industry is critical to Alberta as they are a valuable member of the community and a major source of economic activity, jobs, and tax revenue. Municipalities also recognize they have supported the industry and the province in addressing their fiscal challenges over the last three years by absorbing the impact of reduced assessment values and the elimination of the WDET. Now that the Assessment Model Review has been restarted with engagement scheduled for early 2024, and that oil and gas production is increasing, it would be beneficial to municipalities to have opportunity, at least until the review is completed and assessment models are updated, to raise revenue to offset new costs associated with oil and gas industry growth.

**RMA Background**

4-22: Well Drilling Equipment Tax Regulation

> THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta request the Government of Alberta reintroduce a Well Drilling Equipment Tax Regulation or otherwise provide funding to restore municipal revenue streams that assist with recovering costs for maintenance of public infrastructure from active industry participants.
>
> Click here to view the full resolution.

Resolution 7-24S
**Establishing a Provincial Level of Service for Emergency Social Services**
County of Grande Prairie

*Endorsed by District 4*

WHEREAS there is currently no provincial level of service for emergency social services support when municipalities host individuals from outside of their jurisdiction during emergencies or disasters; and

WHEREAS host municipalities each set a level of service for emergency social services resulting in significant inconsistency among host municipalities; and

WHEREAS there have been inconsistent answers from the Government of Alberta regarding what emergency social services costs are eligible for cost recovery, resulting in host municipalities absorbing expenses that have later been deemed ineligible for cost recovery; and

WHEREAS there were a record number of community evacuations in Alberta in 2023 and the frequency, severity, and duration of emergency evacuations is increasing.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta advocate that the Government of Alberta create a provincial level of service for emergency social services as a framework for municipalities to use when providing support to individuals from outside of their jurisdiction during emergencies or disasters;**

**FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED that the proposed provincial level of service for emergency social services include schedules that indicate services that are considered basic survival needs, and which services are discretionary; with identification of what costs are eligible for cost recovery;**

**FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED that the proposed provincial level of service for emergency social services acknowledge that the host municipality is providing a fee for service and that they will directly invoice the home jurisdiction, or the Government of Alberta and will not be required to apply for Disaster Recovery Program funding to recover their costs.**

**Member Background**

When a host municipality agrees to accept evacuees from another municipality, reserve, Metis settlement, or from outside of the province, they are doing so in good faith and trying to help others in their time of need. Unfortunately, the result is a significant disruption of services provided to its own residents. Even worse, local taxpayers are often saddled with a portion of the costs that have been determined ineligible under a Disaster Recovery Program (DRP). This should not be happening when the host community is not the one experiencing the emergency.

During an emergency when a host municipality is asked to accept evacuees on short notice, there is verbal reassurance that all costs will be covered, but there is not enough time to prepare a written agreement. Consequently, the details are subject to individual interpretation. Even when trying to clarify expectations and

eligibility for cost recovery through the Government of Alberta, answers will vary from one day to the next as staff changes occur and new staff are unaware of previous decisions.

Host municipalities are also asked to apply for DRP funding to recover their costs, even though they were not the community that had the emergency. This process extends the time to recover costs well beyond their fiscal year-end, forcing them to carry those costs forward sometimes for years. In many cases, a very large portion of costs have gone unrecovered.

The rules established for DRPs are often referred to by provincial staff to answer level of service questions. There are several problems with this approach because there are several assumptions made in the DRP rules that do not apply to the host community. DRP rules are intended as a cost-sharing arrangement between the federal and provincial governments and the affected municipality. An example of this is regular staff time not being covered, only overtime. For the host municipality that forces them to subsidize the emergency costs of another municipality.

Many of the problems faced by host municipalities can be prevented if the Government of Alberta creates a level of service for emergency social services for hosting an external community. This level of service should list the services that are required to meet an evacuee's "basic survival needs", services that are discretionary and require approval of the Director of Emergency Management, and what services are eligible for cost recovery.

This level of service must be created without using the lens of the DRP rules.

**RMA Background**

RMA has no active resolutions directly related to this issue.

# Submitted Resolutions 2024 Spring

Resolution 8-24S
**Support for the Export of Live Horses for Slaughter**
Wetaskiwin County

*Endorsed by District 5*

WHEREAS Bill S-270 is introducing an Act for the prohibition of exporting live horses for slaughter and Bill C-355 is introducing the Prohibition of the Export of Horses by Air for Slaughter Act; and

WHEREAS the Government of Canada is proposing new legislation and changes to three Acts that will dramatically impact the industry of raising draft horses by imposing fines of $50,000 and up to six months imprisonment for a summary conviction or $250,000 and up to two years imprisonment for an indictment for transporting horses by air for slaughter; and

WHEREAS the Government of Canada is regularly seeking new trade partners and opportunities; and

WHEREAS restrictions on export of live horses for slaughter will shut down an existing market with products already leaving Canada; and

WHEREAS the Government of Canada has not conducted or completed a scientific study as to the impact of transporting draft horses overseas by air on draft horses; and

WHEREAS there are approximately 12,000 to 13,000 draft mares, studs, and foals in Canada that are currently being raised for this market; and

WHEREAS numerous western Canadian slaughter facilities for horses have ceased operations and are not purchasing animals to be processed at their facility; and

WHEREAS producers do not have a local market to distribute their product, but have an already established market globally;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta collaborate with the Government of Alberta and Alberta's Agricultural Service Boards to oppose federal legislation restricting the export of live horses for slaughter.**

**Member Background**

In June 2023, singer-songwriter Jann Arden and Senator Pierre Dalphond introduced the *Horse Protection Act* to the Senate; proposing to ban the export of live horses for slaughter overseas. The ban will come into effect the day the Bill is adopted.

In February 2022 the Canadian Food Inspection Agency suspended its Safe Food for Canadians License for Bouvry Exports in Fort Macleod, Alberta. This facility processed several types of meat including horse, beef, elk and bison and was an avenue for producers to get their product to market. When Bouvry's ceased operations, producers had to find other ways to get their product to market. Shipping live horses overseas was one way of accomplishing that.

Canada has seen an increase in the number of animals sent overseas in 2023. There are approximately 12,000 to 13,000 mares, studs and foals (mainly draft type) that are raised for this market with an approximate value of $6,000 to $8,000 per mare, $5,000 to $7,000 per stud and $2,000 to $3,000 per

foal. Losing this export option will result in many animals either being set loose to the wild and becoming feral or being euthanized. It will have an impact on other businesses such as farriers, truckers, vets and hay producers.

As a result of this legislation, the Government of Canada will quash an already established market while meeting with other nations around the world to open new markets and trade agreements.

- Bill S-270: https://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/44-1/bill/S-270/first-reading
- Bill C-355: https://www.parl.ca/DocumentViewer/en/44-1/bill/C-355/first-reading

**RMA Background**

RMA has no active resolutions directly related to this issue.

# Submitted Resolutions 2024 Spring

Resolution 9-24S
**Funding of FCM Committee Members**
Mountain View County

*Endorsed by District 2*

WHEREAS Alberta's rural municipalities have the opportunity, through their municipalities and Rural Municipalities of Alberta districts, to endorse elected officials to be nominated to participate on Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) committees; and

WHEREAS any elected official that participates on an FCM committee represents the entirety of rural Alberta, thereby benefitting the entire RMA membership; and

WHEREAS currently, the per diem and expenses incurred by elected officials that participate on FCM committees are either funded by their own municipality or by their RMA District;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) fund all expenses for any elected official of an RMA member municipality that participates on an FCM committee or board, who has been endorsed by their municipality and district, at the same rate as the RMA Board of Director per diem and expenses policy.**

**Member Background**

There is currently an inconsistency across RMA districts related to funding of travel, accommodations and remuneration expenses associated with FCM committee work.

Representation on FCM committees by any elected official is to the benefit of the entire RMA membership and therefore should be reflected in reimbursement of per diems and expenses.

It was determined that representation of an elected official on FCM committees may require attendance of up to four meetings per year as well as require some travel to Ontario specifically, resulting in a cost of approximately $8,000 to $10,000 per annum per attendee.

**RMA Background**

RMA has no active resolutions directly related to this issue.

| SECTION: HUMAN RESOURCES | SUBJECT: EMPLOYEE SAFETY COMMITTEE |
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Resolution No.: 00-00-00

## ~~Employee~~ Joint Health & Safety Committee Policy

It is the policy of the County of Warner No. 5 to create an ~~Employee~~ Joint Health & Safety Committee who will assist in maintaining and establishing a safe and healthy work environment by promoting controls and guidelines that will make the County work sites free from health and safety hazards.

### Guidelines

1. The ~~Employee~~ Joint Health & Safety Committee will consist of the following members:
    a. Safety ~~Officer(s)~~ Representatives
    ~~b. Assistant Health and Safety Auditor~~
    c. Public Works Employee
    d. Agricultural Service Board Employee
    e. Administration Office Employee
    f. One Council Representative
    g. Managers (as necessary)
    h. Public Works Seasonal Employee
    i. Agricultural Service Board Seasonal Employee

2. The duties and responsibilities of members of the ~~Employee~~ Joint Health & Safety Committee include the following:
    a. Meet together as a Committee, monthly or as called by the ~~Safety Officer~~ Safety Representatives, to review Safety Policies and Manuals.
    b. Recommend improvements and changes regarding employee health and safety to Management as required.
    c. Assist in arranging general employee safety meetings which are to be held at least two times per year.
    d. ~~Committee members~~ Safety Representatives are responsible to collect each Department's tool box meeting notes and forms which are to be reviewed by the ~~Employee~~ Joint Health & Safety Committee.

~~3. An Assistant Health and Safety Auditor is required and their responsibilities include the following:~~
    ~~a. Assist the Safety Officer in completing the annual safety audit of the County.~~
    ~~b. Assist the Safety Officer in reviewing the audit tool relating to the Health and Safety Manuals as well as recommend any required changes to the format.~~
    ~~c. Reports to the Safety Officer for only those duties outlined in this policy.~~
    ~~d. Any other duties that may be approved by the Management team.~~

**Abandoned and Inactive Cemeteries**

There are a total of 29 cemeteries located within the County of Warner boundaries. Most are owned by Hutterian Brethren Churches, several other churches, societies, and urban municipalities.

The owner of a cemetery has several responsibilities under the *Cemeteries Act* and *General Regulation 249/1998*. These responsibilities include but are not limited to:

1. Maintaining a plan of the cemetery (s. 24).
2. Maintaining the grounds of the cemetery, including all interment space, structures and markers, so as to ensure the safety of the public and preserve the dignity of the cemetery (s. 26(1)).
3. Ensure that the cemetery and any required fences, walks and entrances to the cemetery are kept in a good state of repair (s. 27(a)).
4. May permit any fence or railing or other work for protection or ornamentation erected on or around a grave lot to be removed if the fence or railing or other work is in such a state of disrepair as to be unsightly or dangerous (29(1)(b)), with some stipulations.
5. Maintain the records of interment (s. 35(a)).
6. Maintain a register with respect to each grave lot (s. 37(1)).

Currently there are 4 cemeteries that the County is concerned with as described below.

1. Wrentham Cemetery
   NW 31-6-16 W4
   This cemetery is registered, and the land is owned by the County.
   The land title is from 1954 with a name change in 1992.
   Currently taken care of by the Wrentham Community Society and governed by Bylaw 960-20, the Wrentham Cemetery Bylaw. Burials are taking place here.
2. Prairie Round Cemetery – Lucky Strike
   SW 22-3-12 W4
   This cemetery is registered, and the land is owned by the County.
   The land title is from 1955 with a name change in 1993. This is when the transfer of ownership occurred from the County of Forty Mile to the County of Warner.
   Previously taken care of by the Lucky Strike Community Association, which has folded. The contact has been updated to the County Administration Office. The County received some complaints from a family member about disrepair. The County has since gone out to mow the grass, spray the weeds, dig out stray Caragana, replace the cemetery sign, remove cracked concrete slabs, fill gopher and badger holes, and cut back the Caragana border to encourage new growth.
   According to our records and some online resources, there are 61 individual gravesites. The first dated internment was in 1913 and the last in 1969. Almost no records were handed over to the County from previous owners and societies. We have a list of 61 names that should be buried there, and an undated plot map with 61 named and numbered plots which functions as the full plot plan for the cemetery.
3. New Dayton Community Cemetery
   SE 33-5-18 W4
   This cemetery is registered, and the land is owned by the County.
   The land title is from 1965.
   The Province listed the contact as Illa Skeith, who passed away in 2021. She used to be part of the New Dayton Recreation Association. The County has gone out to mow the grass and updated the contact to the County Administration Office.

According to our records and some online resources, there are 35 individual gravesites. The first internment was in 1913 and the last in 2005. Almost no records were handed over to the County from previous owners and societies. We have a list of 35 names that should be buried there, and a hand sketched plot map from 1995 with 32 gravesites identified and 19 named but none were assigned to specific numbered lots. We have an undated plot plan for the cemetery.

4. Pioneer Burial Site – Masinasin Cemetery
   It is acknowledged by Service Alberta but not registered. This means no burials may take place. The land is owned by Isaac Lewis Mills (Farmer) and the land title is from 1915. For the purposes of cemeteries legislation the cemetery is essentially abandoned since the registered owner is deceased. Our tax system attributes this piece of land to the Presbyterian Church without noting when or why this is different compared to the land title. According to local history books, the Masinasin church used to be nearby which was owned by the United Church of Canada (a union of the Presbyterian and Methodist churches in 1925), which was sold and moved across from the Masinasin school in 1936. The owner on the land title is the original farmer that donated the land as a cemetery and Service Alberta does not have a current contact.
   The County has gone out to mow.
   As we are not the owner, we would not be expected to have any paperwork regarding this cemetery nor to uphold the role and responsibilities of an owner. Based on existing lists there are likely to be 14 gravesites. Burial dates range between 1909 and 1931.

Options

1. Continue basic maintenance of Prairie Round Cemetery, New Dayton Community Cemetery, and Masinasin Cemetery through mowing and dealing with issues as they come up.
2. Cease maintenance of the Masinasin Cemetery and contact the Presbyterian/United Church to see if they will take care of it. The County is not obligated to take care of the site by Provincial legislation. Council directive in 2009 was that Council does not wish to control any cemeteries not on County deeded land.
3. Take steps to try and become the official owner of the Masinasin Cemetery. This would require a court order.
4. Put in extra work for the Prairie Round Cemetery, New Dayton Community Cemetery, and possibly Masinasin Cemetery by adding updated headstones where possible, benches for people paying their respects, and plaques to describe the history of the cemeteries and area. New Dayton Community Cemetery gravesites could be assigned lot numbers, cracked slabs removed, and headstones aligned as best as possible with the assigned lots. Afterwards continue basic maintenance for all sites.
5. Disinter the remains in the inactive cemeteries and reinter them in the Wrentham Cemetery or Milk River Cemetery so the gravesites can be better taken care of. There is no precedent for fully relocating and closing a cemetery within Alberta in this manner yet. Where remains have been relocated en masse, there has been some risk to the remains if they stayed in place. There are also some significant considerations such as the eligibility of applying for a Disinter and Reinter permit not including cemetery owners. Due to the age of many of these graves it may be highly resource intensive to track down executors, personal representatives, or administrators of the deceased person's estate or the descendants of those persons. The Public Trustee could be approached to act as personal representative, but it is not certain this is a possible avenue. Many graves were not properly aligned with others, so the disinterment process itself could be difficult. Part of the public may see this as a respectful and kind process while some may consider this disrespectful of the deceased's wishes and history.

| SECTION: MAINTENANCE | SUBJECT: ABANDONED AND INACTIVE CEMETERIES |
|---|---|

Resolution No.: 00-00-00

**Abandoned and Inactive Cemeteries Policy**

It is the policy of the County of Warner No. 5 to set rules and regulations for the maintenance of abandoned and inactive cemeteries within the County while following the *Cemeteries Act*, *General Regulation AR 249/1998*, and other relevant acts and regulations, as amended. It is the intent that abandoned and inactive cemeteries are maintained to ensure the safety of the public.

**Guidelines**

1. **Locations**
    a. New Dayton Community Cemetery: SE 33-5-18 W4
    b. Pioneer Burial Site – Masinasin Cemetery: SW 23-2-13 W4
    c. Prairie Round Cemetery – Lucky Strike: SW 22-3-12 W4
    d. A list of all cemeteries within municipal boundaries will be maintained and notification of potential abandoned cemeteries will be investigated to determine if the location requires addition to this policy.

2. **Regulations**
    a. The New Dayton Community Cemetery is registered with the Province of Alberta and owned by the County. The cemetery is designated as inactive, and no further lots will be sold for the purpose of burying dead human bodies and human cremated remains.
    b. The Masinasin Cemetery is recorded but not registered with the Province of Alberta. Therefore, it may not be used for the purpose of burying dead human bodies and human remains. The land is not owned by the County and is considered abandoned.
    c. The Prairie Round Cemetery is registered with the Province of Alberta and owned by the County. The cemetery is designated as inactive, and no further lots will be sold for the purpose of burying dead human bodies and human cremated remains.
    d. The County may delegate its authority over one or multiple abandoned or inactive cemeteries to a Committee, Society, or other group, with respect to the control and maintenance of the cemetery. Delegation of authority does not include the authority to sell or reserve lots.

3. **Existing Sales and Reservations**
    a. Existing contracts for sold lots will be honoured.
    b. Existing contracts for sold lots may not be transferred.
    c. Application for interment should be made 36 hours prior to the time established for burial from May to October inclusive, and 48 hours during the months of November to April inclusive, not including weekends, unless other arrangements are agreed upon.

4. **Monuments**
    a. It is the lot owner's responsibility to maintain the monument in a manner acceptable to the County.
    b. The County assumes no liability or responsibility for loss or damage to any monuments through acts of vandalism, erosion, or damage caused by outside vendors.

c. The County will repair and replace existing monument foundations if necessary due to maintenance and safety concerns as determined by County staff at no charge to the lot owner.
d. New monument placement:
    i. The owner of each lot will erect thereon a monument, headstone or marker subject to the approval by the County and the guidelines in this policy, within 12 months of the burial.
    ii. New monuments may be placed to replace markers on old grave sites subject to the approval by the County and the guidelines in this policy.
    iii. No person will place upon any monuments the name of a dealer, supplier or manufacturer.
    iv. Vertical monuments, tombstones or markers placed above the level of the ground will be allowed.
    v. All memorials will be made of granite, marble, limestone or bronze unless otherwise approved in writing by the County.
    vi. The outside back of any monument on any adult grave, whether it is upright or flat, must be placed exactly sixteen (16) inches from the boundary at the head of the lot. On a child's (under the age of 12 years) the outside back of any monument must be placed exactly twelve (12) inches from the boundary at the head of the lot.
    vii. All foundations for erecting memorials will be made of concrete and have to extend no less than six (6) inches around the complete base of the memorial and must be level with the surface of the ground.
    viii. No monument work except markers will be delivered to a cemetery until the foundation is completed and until a contractor is ready to proceed with the work of erection.
    ix. All contractors will be approved to perform work in the cemetery by the County.
    x. Contractors, masons, and stone cutters will lay planks on the lots and paths over which heavy materials are to be moved in order to protect them from injury.

5. **Maintenance of Site and Lots**
    a. No wreaths, flowers, vases, spike containers or other removable mementos will be allowed.
    b. The County will approve the placement and removal of flowers, shrubs, weeds and grass growing upon graves.
    c. No person other than the County will remove any growing plants, flowers, slips, or cuttings from anywhere in the cemetery without consent from the County.
    d. No person will place artificial flowers or potted plants in the cemetery unless the artificial flowers or potted plant are totally contained in a vase that is part of a permanent monument, and no part of the floral arrangement or potted plant is in contact with the grass. Arrangements or potted plants that are not totally contained in a permanent vase attached to a monument will be removed.
    e. Flowers, funeral designs or floral pieces will be permitted on the grave the day of the burial for a period of five calendar days. After five calendar days the funeral designs or floral pieces will be removed by the County on the next available business day.
    f. No flowerbeds will be permitted on individual graves in the cemetery.

g. Any fence, railing, cement slab, or other work for protection or ornamentation on or around a grave lot will be removed if determined by the County to be in such a state of disrepair as to be unsightly or dangerous.
h. It is considered that there is no interested person, including any close relative of the deceased, if the County does not have such information on file. If you would like to claim an interest, please contact the County Administration Office.
i. The County currently has no knowledge of any existing contracts or other arrangements with lot owners regarding maintenance of site and lots, or otherwise.

6. **Miscellaneous provisions**
   a. The cemetery will not be used for any purpose excepting those related to care and maintenance of existing gravesites and existing contracts.
   b. No person will disturb the quiet and good order of the cemetery by noise or any other improper conduct.
   c. Any person who willfully damages or destroys or removes any tomb, monument, gravestone or any other structure placed in the cemetery or any railing or other work for the protection or ornamentation of the cemetery or burial lot, or willfully damages or destroys any tree, shrub or place in the cemetery, or any person who in the cemetery discharges firearms or commits a nuisance, will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.
   d. All contractors performing work within the boundaries of the cemetery have to be approved by the County.