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Page 3



Inaugural championship

Page 9



South champs

True North faces scrutiny

JOHN WATSON
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

True North, formerly known as the Wheatland Crisis Society, is facing scrutiny from current and former employees for failures by the operating management team and board of directors to create a hospitable workplace environment.

Additionally, accusations exist suggesting the shelter is allegedly not adhering to mandated protocols designed to create a secure and nurturing environment for individuals fleeing domestic violence.

For reference, individuals who spoke on the condition of anonymity, due to risk of reprisal and employment termination, are current or former employees of True North.

Though all of the unnamed sources currently or formerly share employment history at True North, their positions and titles were also requested to be redacted, out of further concerns for being a means to identify them.

"The leadership has definitely (had) a big impact with staff; very toxic with mistreatment, bullying, and favouritism ... and then there has been a lot of changes in the recent months with wanting to change our mandates," said Source A. "There have been countless times that staff have brought up incidents that have happened within the shelter (where abuse has been directed) towards staff, and leadership will either ignore it, or have you go through the investigation process and will follow through."

One source indicated instances of clients aggressively gesturing for staff to approach them, as well as verbal abuse towards staff being overlooked or ignored by those in management positions.

Since 2021, it was reported that 37 staff have resigned from their positions due to grievances with management, as well as seven staff who have elected to go on stress leave from their positions due to ongoing inhospitable working conditions.

Due to significantly above average staff turnover, one source described service to clients and residents of the shelter to be suffering to an extent noticeable by those seeking and receiving haven in the shelter.



Hawks celebrate play-in win!

The Holy Cross Collegiate Hawks senior boys basketball gave their fans and Harley the mascot a lot to celebrate when they used a last-second three point shot to send their zone play-in game into overtime on March 5 at the school's gym. See Page 2 for more coverage. **Joe Lepage Photo**

STRATHMORE TIMES

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Gaining experience

The Strathmore Spartans high school JV girls basketball team hosted the zone championship March 8-9. The Lady Spartans opened the tournament with a 63-14 win over Brooks, but unfortunately didn't qualify for the championship game.

Joe Lepage Photos

Buzz beater

The Holy Cross Collegiate Hawks senior boys basketball used a three pointer at the buzzer to send their zone play-in game versus Drumheller to overtime on March 5 at the HCC gym. When the dust settled, the Hawks won 71-61, earning a shot at zones this past weekend. While the Hawks ultimately finished the tournament in seventh place, the team did end their season on a positive note by winning their final game.

Joe Lepage Photos



Town approves recreation and culture needs assessment

JOHN WATSON
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Town of Strathmore Council approved a \$60,000 capital budget request during the March 6 regular meeting, to finance a recreation and culture needs assessment.

The needs assessment is being funded from the 2024 fiscal stabilization reserve. Mark Pretzlaff, director of community and protective services presented the request to council.

"Our recreation master plan is five years old and impacted by COVID-19, and so by conducting a recreation and cultural needs assessment, we will have a better scope of our existing facilities, and any potential future developments that may arise," he said.

A needs assessment helps to define the current state of a community, and to identify future needs, and potential priority areas.

This type of assessment is a component of planning for future growth, and acts as a supporting document which helps to define the needs and desires of a community, as well as to help determine how to best and responsibly allocate resources.

The Recreation and Culture Master Plan adopted by council in January 2020 replaced the former Quality of Life Master Plan, which had been in operation since 2010. It served as the primary document to guide the town's decision-making regarding support of local recreational and culture services.

When it was adopted, the 2020 recreation and culture

master plan lead to the assessment of the state of the town at the time, and identification of priorities and recommendations for the provision of recreation, active and creative lifestyle opportunities, culture, and services over a 10-year period.

Despite this, as new opportunities arise and priorities shift, a new needs assessment becomes necessary to update information and adjust the town's plan accordingly.

Coun. Jason Montgomery, following Pretzlaff's presentation, inquired about what "community accessibility" and "social inclusion" would entail in the context of the new master plan.

"As part of the recreation master plan, community accessibility is defined as the ability of all members of the community to access the facilities (and) amenities without being impeded by factors such as cost and exclusivity," said Pretzlaff. "The master plan defines social inclusion as the ability of a facility or amenity to have significant positive impact on the ability of all members of the community to take part in the activities, the ability of the facility to encourage and welcome participation from all segments of the community, including those from a wide variety of ethnicities and cultural backgrounds."

More information regarding the recreation and culture needs assessment is available through the town's website, as well as via the public meeting minutes posted to the Town's YouTube channel.

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Coun. Koester victorious in court over Wheatland County

JOHN WATSON
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Wheatland County Coun. Glenn Koester's challenge against Wheatland County in Alberta Court of King's Bench was successful, as of March 1, with the final decision being filed.

Koester challenged the county, beginning in Dec. 2022 regarding sanctions placed against him over an alleged code of conduct violation which saw him removed from all nine municipal boards he previously sat on.

The code of conduct violation complaint was filed March 1, 2022 by county Reeve Amber Link. Koester, in his affidavit filed July 26, 2022, explained allegations through the complaint related to actions taken by the Wheatland and Adjacent Districts Emergency Medical Services (WADESMA) board of directors, and actions taken by the Wheatland Housing Management Body (WHMB) board of directors.

A full summary of both issues was published in the Feb. 8, 2023 edition of the Strathmore Times.

The citation, which was filed through the Court of King's Bench, which is publicly available, addresses the affidavits submitted by Koester, as well as on his behalf by Coun. Rick Laursen, and town Coun. Denise Peterson.

Additionally, the citation summarizes the affidavit provided by Brian Henderson, chief administrative officer for Wheatland County.

It is stated in the citation, the investigation report created in response to the code of conduct violation complaints "does not contain any 'summary of evidence from witnesses' that is intelligible in any sense. It does not disclose who was interviewed, nor does it say who said what about whom."

With respect to both complaints, it was described the summary of evidence is completely unattributed, and thus it is not possible for a reader of the report to determine the sources and content of what the investigation report describes as fact.

The investigation report regarding the WHMB issue is described in the citation as "clearly flawed in its reasoning."

"No reasonable municipality, fully informed of all the facts would have found Coun. Koester breached the Code in relation to the WHMB Complaint. The process that led to this conclusion was not transparent, intelligible and justified, and in passing the Complained Upholding Resolution in this manner, Wheatland failed to uphold the underlying principles that underpin prosecution under the Code," reads the citation.

Resolutions made by the county against Koester were quashed in their entirety, as it was ruled, given the way

the Complaint Upholding Resolution was drafted, both WADESMA and WHMB complaints were scrambled into one document.

As the sanctions and resolutions by Wheatland County have been quashed, Koester expressed a desire to be reinstated on all boards he was previously removed from.

"I was extremely happy to hear the results of the court's decision. I am overwhelmed by all the support I have received after Getz Collins and Associates posted a brief synopsis on Facebook," said Koester. "I am not sure at this point in time how this will impact me or the county. I can only hope for the best ... with great power, comes great responsibility. Hopefully council will become more honest and transparent."

Koester added he hopes if a similar dispute amidst council arises, it will be handled in public as opposed to in camera, as he maintains a belief the public has a right to know what is happening in the county.



Championship season

In their inaugural season, the Wheatland Wranglers claimed the Rocky Mountain Female Hockey League U11 Tier 2 Blue championship on March 10 at the Strathmore Family Centre. After winning Game 1 on the road, the Wranglers defeated the Camrose Wildcats White 5-2 in Game 2 to claim the league title.

Joe Lepage Photos

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Some people resolved to give up alcohol totally in their lives. They will notice the following benefits: improved hydration levels; skin gets healthier; sleep is better. After a few weeks, the immune system gets stronger. After a few months, weight starts to drop, blood pressure stabilizes and heart risks decrease. And that's just the beginning! Congratulations to all of you who took the no-alcohol plunge!

Did you know that taking good care of your teeth and gums gives you a much higher chance of survive some types of cancer? Regular visits to your dentist are important because they check your mouth cavity for any abnormalities that might signal a cancer. Again, early diagnosis of a cancer can result in better treatment outcomes.

Here's another tip for those traveling this year. To avoid jet-lag, don't drink alcohol on the plane. Do drink a large glass of water every hour during the flight. Eat lightly and avoid fatty foods. Have a great trip!

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True North under fire for employee treatment, potential policy changes

Continued from Page 1

“It is under horrific management. It is affecting the way that we work; it is affecting the work that we do with our clients; there is no support; nobody knows what they are doing; they are hiring people just so they can stop a union but nobody is qualified to do the jobs; they are undertraining, (and) underpaying,” said Source B. “Client work does not get done as successfully as we hope it would be getting done because we are burnt out from the work; we are also burnt out because we are

not getting support from management to do the job, and so it has definitely impacted clients on that level of not being able to give 100 per cent.”

Echoing a similar sentiment, one source said they had concerns that recently hired staff do not have the proper education, background, or training necessary for the job.

“We had staff who had been there, seasoned for many, many years, and those are the people who are being driven out, and I have seen them hire and bring in people who maybe do not have human services education and no experience in those positions, and there is no senior staff there to mentor and train them,” said Source E. “(There is) a real lack of understanding of the complexities of domestic violence, and also the ethics within the human services field.”

A source said on several occasions, letters have been sent to True North’s board of directors, contact has been sought with the Alberta Council of Social Workers, and staff have requested the intervention of a union body in order to receive support for their grievances.

Additionally, they described feelings of “walking on eggshells,” and fear to go in to work over consistent risk of being fired, receiving unjust disciplinary measures, and a lack of consideration for staff concerns.

“You never knew if were going to get in trouble, get fired... (you were) never allowed to speak your mind or advocate for yourself; there were consequences for those actions,” said Source D.

Linda McLean, executive director of True North, said the organization has a “very comprehensive” set of human resources policies which includes a grievance procedure. She did not volunteer any more information regarding what that procedure looks like or entails.

McLean added any and all internal human resources issues remain confidential in order to protect the privacy of staff. No further information was provided.

“I did not even know there was a support structure... I have known (multiple) people who have gone on stress leave because of leadership’s poor management. There is no support in place,” said Source B. “If you want to debrief, you can talk to them about how (something) made you feel, but there is nothing after that. There is no help.”

Regarding staff seeking aid from a union to intervene, the process of unionization was reported to have started in 2023, prior to McLean taking over as the current executive director.

One source clarified that staff are not completely unionized

at this point, due to several members who are union representatives going on stress leave due to treatment from management.

The ongoing goal, they explained, is to see the process of unionization completed within the next six months. The body overseeing the union is Local 4731, based out of Calgary.

McLean confirmed union involvement occurring with True North beginning prior to her assuming her current position, while Carol Manson McLeod still held the title.

An additional concern expressed by a source is with respect to overnight staffing of the emergency shelter, and the operation of the 24-hour crisis line.

The source explained there is intent to change from having regular relief staff manning the shelter overnight to bringing on an overnight security guard instead.

“This is very concerning, as many of our clients come to us with very negative experiences with authority, and particularly men in authority figures. I feel like the clients will not be receiving the proper amount of care and consideration that they deserve,” said Source C. “I do not believe that is very trauma informed to be having male security guards there in uniform, and I worry about fears from our clients.”

Further distress indicated by the source regarding the idea of a security guard in uniform on watch at the shelter overnight would be a lack of crisis intervention and supportive counseling training to speak with and support clients overnight should they need service and be unable to sleep.

According to the sources, the 24-hour crisis line will only offer direct support from True North between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m.

Beyond those times, one source reported instead of having a crisis worker to speak to with True North, calls will be redirected to other distress lines and agencies such as in Calgary or other municipalities.

Additionally, instead of clients being talked through admissions overnight, people fleeing their partners and abusive situations may be put up in hotel rooms, with full assessments delayed until the morning after.

“The next morning, the staff will have to assess the client situation and see if they are a fit for the shelter,” said Source C. “There is a potential that we put a client or a family up in a hotel room and then decide the next day that we are not going to accept them to the shelter ... that is not very trauma informed because we are getting people’s hopes up without being able to fully guarantee that we can offer them safety in our shelter.”

McLean confirmed the 24-hour crisis line will continue to exist and remain operational at all hours. She also denied that neither she, the board of directors, nor any management staff have had conversations regarding the crisis line. No further information was volunteered.

The sources are calling for significant changes to be seen on the True North board of directors, as well as with the management team.

“I do not think that anybody can comfortably work under people who clearly do not want what is best for their staff, or for their clients,” said Source B. “They just wanted to run it like a business instead of the person-centric organization that it is. They acted like we had a say in the new name and the new branding but they did not really care about our opinion in that, and they try so hard to make us look like a business instead of a not-for-profit for people fleeing domestic violence.”

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Thought for the Week

~

Could it be that the person who cheats in one thing usually ends up cheating in many.

SUDOKU

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8			3					2
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Lakewood Winterfest

Lakewood of Strathmore hosted their annual Winterfest in the community of Lakewood, March 9. The event, which was originally to take place at Brave Park, was migrated to the flagship showhomes currently central within the community due to weather conditions. Locals were invited to explore the showhomes and celebrate with Lakewood of Strathmore, including an announcement that all lots within Phase 2A have been purchased to see construction.

John Watson Photos



Chaos host

The Strathmore Chaos girls volleyball team hosted the U13 Girls South Premier 1 (Pool L) on March 9 at the Crowther Memorial Junior High School. The girls pushed Canada West Black to three sets before falling to YYC Eagles Blue. The Chaos will now compete in the U13 Girls South Premier 2 on April 6-7.



Joe Lepage Photos

Hospice Society presents project update to town council

JOHN WATSON
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Wheatland and Area Hospice Society presented an update on the progress of their campaign to Strathmore town council during the regular meeting as a public delegation on March 6.

“With the last eight years of fundraising events and donations, we have raised over \$4.1 million. There has been fantastic support from Strathmore and area residents with events as big as Farming for Hospice, and as small as donations from tip jars at cash registers,” said Joni McNeely, president of the Wheatland and Area Hospice Society. “It is so heartwarming to see such widespread support and we know there is considerable economic demands on individuals and businesses these days. Our community truly cares and has shown through their donations and volunteering that this is an important cause for them.”

Given the Hospice Society’s proximity to reaching their fundraising goal, McNeely said the organization will soon be launching the next phase of the project, which they are calling their Capital Campaign 3.0.

McNeely explained this phase will launch publicly by year end, however, privately, it has already been ongoing amidst significant investors in the community.

“The furniture, fixtures, and equipment portion, deals with the costing out of the specialized lift, a spa tub room, high tech medication room and IT features,” added McNeely. “Our teams are (also) specking beautiful millwork and décor, boring conference tables and chairs, and cozy lounge furniture for

both our patients and their families, and even costing out something as simple as a kitchen table that your dying dad can gather around with his neighbours.”

She added in terms of project management, the Hospice Society team is on schedule, having completed the design development phase and is now moving to obtain specific costing for a final budget.

An additional goal of the Wheatland and Area Hospice Society is to exceed AHS standards within the hospice facility, and offer services, as McNeely described as more on par with other provinces across Canada.

“Nursing will be the biggest expense in our day-to-day operations, and there will be no cutting corners to make a profit,” she said. “There is no ethical equivalency to making money off dying patients in our community. Nursing will be union wages, full time employment.”

McNeely suggested an approximately \$800,000 operating budget for the facility annually, with no standing commitments prior to AHS dissolution.

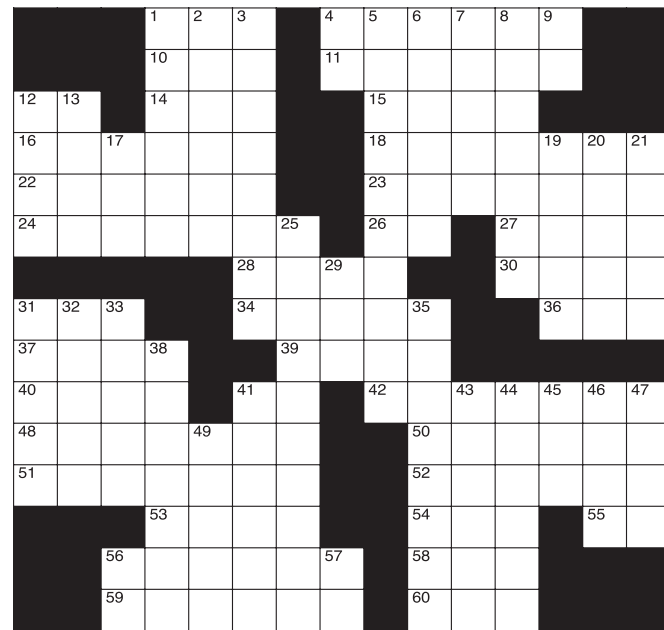
More information regarding the Hospice presentation to council is available publicly through the Town of Strathmore YouTube channel. Council accepted the presentation as information.



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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Small Eurasian deer
- 4. Irish county
- 10. A major division of geological time
- 11. Broadway actor Lane
- 12. Canadian province (abbr.)
- 14. Human gene
- 15. Two
- 16. A famous one is blue
- 18. Utter repeatedly
- 22. Ring-shaped objects
- 23. Spoils
- 24. Occurs
- 26. Commercial
- 27. Near
- 28. Products you may need
- 30. Pledge thrown down as a challenge
- 31. TV network
- 34. Silk or cotton garments
- 36. Soviet Socialist Republics
- 37. Retired American football coach Dean
- 39. Hot dish
- 40. A type of gin
- 41. Atomic #84
- 42. Sawhorse
- 48. About ground
- 50. Medicine man
- 51. Seedless raisin
- 52. Capital of Albania
- 53. Appendage
- 54. OJ trial judge
- 55. By the way (abbr.)
- 56. Bicycle parts
- 58. Barbie's friend
- 59. Moved one's neck to see
- 60. Commercials

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Make up for
- 2. Baltimore ballplayer
- 3. Salary
- 4. Influential world body
- 5. Engravers
- 6. Declared as fact
- 7. One who steals
- 8. Jewelry
- 9. Hospital employee (abbr.)
- 12. Nonsense (slang)
- 13. Town in Galilee
- 17. Value
- 19. A fake name
- 20. Sheep in their second year
- 21. Town in Surrey, England
- 25. Appropriate for a particular time of year
- 29. Creative works
- 31. Recesses
- 32. W. Pacific island group
- 33. Tolkien character
- 35. Ancient symbol co-opted by the Nazi party
- 38. Pioneer
- 41. Scribe
- 43. Painted a bright color
- 44. Lowest members of British nobility
- 45. Actress Thurman
- 46. Type of sugar
- 47. Crest of a hill
- 49. N. American people of British Columbia
- 56. Device
- 57. The Mount Rushmore State

STRATHMORE TIMES

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Town discusses economic development action plan

JOHN WATSON
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Town of Strathmore council discussed an economic development action plan, during the Mar. 6 regular meeting, aiming to establish a baseline for business needs.

The economic development action plan is also designed to facilitate well-informed decision making, and to develop a three-year framework for supporting local businesses, and attracting new investment to the town.

“Strathmore needed an economic development plan. Not just a plan from experts to tell us what to do, but one that serves the local businesses and listens to their needs,” said Angela Groeneveld, economic sustainability and investment officer for the Town of Strathmore. “We needed an action plan to help our community to thrive and grow, and even more passionately, we needed this plan because (we are) recovering from the recent COVID-19 (pandemic).”

Groeneveld suggested the necessity for a plan which recognized the problems local businesses are facing, and the barriers to growth.

The project to develop the plan consisted of two parts, being a business needs assessment, and an economic development action plan.

The business needs assessment saw a business café event hosted to interview local business owners, as well as the compilation of studies and surveys conducted since 2015.

Of the 2,343 active business licenses in Strathmore, 566 are locally owned within the community.

An economic development action plan aims to address the main challenges faced by businesses, and outline how to pursue growth and development opportunities.

“Unlike previous community economic development studies ... (that) revolve around conceptual discussions from experts and consultants, this plan is different. It is a practical plan, it is an impactful resource designed

from implementation for the next 12 months with strategic goals,” said Groeneveld. “The reason why it is this way is because we participated listening to the business owners first, and not the experts. We took what they needed to make into the plan, and this is what is going to make this a successful economic development plan because of the buy in right from the beginning.”

The 12-month plan Groeneveld detailed to council aimed to launch immediately following the council meeting, while the longer-term plan would work with internal departments to execute the rest of council’s priorities.

No financial commitments were required to be made by council as of the presentation beyond the staff time required to complete the reports. A subsequent report will be brought back to council later this month.

The full presentation made to council, as well as the report are publicly available via the public meeting agenda, as well as the Town of Strathmore YouTube channel.

Rural high-speed broadband projects announced

JOHN WATSON
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The governments of Alberta and Canada announced an investment of more than \$112 million into connecting more than 22,500 homes across the province to high-speed internet.

According to a release dated March 5, the same date as the announcement made at Blackfoot Crossing Historical Centre in Siksika Nation, Alberta’s government has committed to achieving full connectivity across the province by 2027.

“Internet is no longer a luxury – it’s a necessity. That is why your government made a historic commitment to connect 98 per cent of Canadians to high-speed internet by 2026,” said Gudie Hutchings, federal minister of economic develop-

ment. “This announcement in Siksika Nation marks a significant milestone for internet connectivity in rural Alberta. This investment will provide reliable high-speed internet access to more than 22,500 underserved homes in 166 rural and remote communities in Alberta.”

The project was announced to consist of 14 projects, which will affect dozens of communities across the province. One of which, being Siksika Nation.

According to the release, the Alberta Broadband Strategy suggested a metric of 489,000 Albertans across 201,000 households lack access to federal target internet speeds.

“Access to reliable internet is not just a convenience; it’s a modern-day necessity that connects us all to essential services, education and each other,” said Ouray Crowfoot, chief of Siksika Nation.

“On Siksika Nation, together with our government partners, we are not just bridging the digital divide; we are building pathways to a healthier, more connected future for all.”

The Canada-Alberta Broadband Partnership Agreement, signed March 9, 2022, marked a commitment of \$780 million to connect approximately 200,000 households across Alberta to federal target internet speeds.

Since the signing of the agreement, the province boasts having awarded \$211 million to 26 projects, covering 33,000 households in 223 communities.

The projects and funding through the Canada-Alberta Broadband Partnership Agreement have been awarded under the Universal Broadband Fund – a \$3.225 billion federal program designed to support high-speed internet projects

across Canada.

“Rural Municipalities of Alberta is pleased that the projects announced today will result in improved connectivity for many rural Albertans. This funding is an excellent example of collaboration between federal and provincial levels of government, allowing for investments into broadband projects,” said Paul McLauchlin, president of Rural Municipalities of Alberta. “We look forward to the continued partnerships between all levels of government to secure broadband funding for those who are underserved.”

More information regarding the project is available online through the Government of Alberta website, as well as via their YouTube channel, where the original press conference has been published.



WHEATLAND COUNTY

Tree Planting & Tree Care Workshop

March 26th, 6:00pm
Wheatland County Admin Building

Presented by Toso Bozic
ISA Certified Arborist

Join us for this free workshop, you will learn about:

- Shelterbelt design
- Site selection & preparation
- Tree & shrub species selection
- Tips for planting success
- Maintenance
- Minimizing environmental damage
- Managing pests & diseases
- County funding programs

To register or for information visit:
<https://2024wctree.eventbrite.com>
or contact agandenv@wheatlandcounty.ca



Community Facilities Funding Grant Program

During the February 20, 2024 Council meeting, Wheatland County Council approved changes to the Recreation Policy 14.4 Community Facilities Funding Grant Program.

The Community Facilities Funding Grant Program offers financial aid to non-profit groups operating community facilities in Wheatland County’s hamlets and residential areas.

Grant applications are currently being accepted until April 8, 2024.

For more information, visit our website and APPLY TODAY!

<https://wheatlandcounty.ca/community-funding-opportunities/>

Address: 242006 Range Rd 243, Wheatland County, AB T1P 2C4
 Phone: 403-934-3321 [@wheatlandcounty](http://www.wheatlandcounty.ca)
 Office Hours: Mon-Fri 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Upcoming Meetings

Council and committee meetings will now be open to the public and via teleconference.

For public hearings it is strongly encouraged that you attend in person.

March 28: Committee of the Whole

April 2: Council Meeting

April 3: Agricultural Service Board

To join the call, dial 403-917-1764 and enter the PIN 47001 when prompted.

Agenda packages can be found on our website.

Wheatland FCSS announces 2024 women's conference

JOHN WATSON
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Wheatland Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) have announced their 2024 women's conference will be taking place April 12 at the Hope Community Covenant Church.

Boasting a theme of "Nurturing Our Roots," the conference will feature keynote speaker, Billi Miller, to speak about her work as an author, and her transition from urban to rural life.

"Over the years, the type of information that was presented changed. We tried to ensure that current information was offered, as well as some historical info for young and old. Though I am fairly new to the planning committee of the Women's Conference, I have read that some previous speakers included comedians, authors, medical professionals, gardening experts and we always try to have companies who offer specific services," said Crystal Gaudet, chief administrative officer for FCSS. "We've also offered a physical aspect with Tai Chi, yoga, and pole walking. Last year we offered music by the Strathmore Performing Arts Festival members."

The women's conference has been an ongoing program since 1993, formed by a coalition of agencies to host an event specifically for women.

Gaudet explained the goal was to reach women who were isolated from information and education on human and health services.

Following its initial success, the con-

ference has taken place every two years since its inception. In the opposite year from the women's conference, FCSS hosts a similar conference for seniors.

In addition to the speakers and presentations, the conference hosts up to 25 vendors from the local community.

Each year the conference is held, FCSS anticipates 100 women to be in attendance. According to Gaudet, the conference generally sees between 50 and 100 people attending.

"The support and feedback from the community has been amazing ... some ticket holders' comments from last year were: 'I am new to Strathmore so today was an amazing conference in every way,' 'The conference was represented very well by a variety of speakers, vendors and concert players,' 'the agencies, organizations and business are so supportive,'" said Gaudet. "We hope to get women together networking, learning and just enjoying a day out overall. We hope the information they receive can help them make healthy decisions and we hope they can share their newfound knowledge with family and friends."

Many of the speakers this year will be discussing local history, gardening, and honouring one's roots.

Tickets for the conference are available at the Wheatland FCSS county office, as well as the Vault Cultural Collective. The program will run from 9 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. A full list of topics and event description is available through the Wheatland FCSS website.



Perfect speech

The Wheatland 4-H District hosted their Communications Competition March 9 at the Strathmore Civic Centre. The students in senior, intermediate and juniors levels presented on various topics, ranging from John Deere, why Fords are my favourite truck, how green are electric cars and infrared thermography.

John Watson Photos



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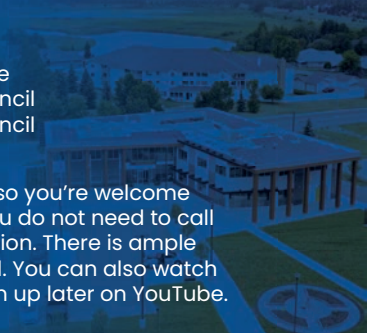
Upcoming Council Meetings

March 13, 2024 | 6 P.M.
 March 20, 2024 | 6 P.M.
 April 3, 2024 | 6 P.M.

Committee of the Whole
 Regular Meeting of Council
 Regular Meeting of Council

Come Say Hi

Hearing from the community is really important to us, so you're welcome at any Council or Committee of the Whole meeting. You do not need to call ahead or register to observe Strathmore Council in action. There is ample public seating and additional standing room if needed. You can also watch livestreamed meetings online as they happen, or catch up later on YouTube.



Hazard Reduction Burning

Block Priority

Priority 1 was given to areas with the most fire risk to the community. Priority 2 and 3 areas are of lower risk and may be easier and safer to complete. There are a total of 33 Blocks.

- Priority 1 RED
- Priority 2 YELLOW
- Priority 3 GREEN

Block Name	Block Priority
1.1 Hillcrest	1
1.2 Wildflower Rd 1	1
1.3 Wildflower Rd 2	1
1.4 Wildflower Rd 3	1
1.5 Westmount	1
1.6 Wheatland Wheeler	1
1.7 Kinsmen 1	1
1.8 Kinsmen 2	1
1.9 Parklane Drive	1
1.10 Edgefield	1
1.11 South Canal	1
1.12 Canadian Tire	1
1.13 Industrial Creek	1
Block Name	Block Priority
2.1 Main Canal	2
2.2 Strathmore Lakes East	2
2.3 Esso East	2
2.4 No Frills	2
2.5 Home Hardware	2
2.6 Historic Barn	2
2.7 Service Rd Ditch	2
2.8 RR 251	2
2.9 Lagoon 1	2
2.10 Lagoon 2	2
2.11 Lagoon 3	2
2.12 Lagoon 4	2
2.13 Lagoon 5	2
Block Name	Block Priority
3.1 Rodeo Grounds	3
3.2 Golf Course NE	3
3.3 Hillcrest Feeder	3
3.4 Dodge	3
3.5 Canal Blvd N	3
3.6 Dog Park	3
3.7 RR 250	3

Alberta weather conditions from spring to fall can often be very dry, contributing to prime fire conditions. With the province recently announcing an early start to wildfire season, it's important for communities to have effective wildfire prevention practices in place.

We've recently finalized Strathmore's Hazard Reduction Burn Plan. This plan aims to assess grassland fuels on the landscape within the community, identify locations of high fire risk based on predicted fire behaviour, and prioritize and prescribe these areas for hazard reduction burning. Through this process, selected regions within town will undergo hazard-reduction burning treatment in March. This process will reduce the risk of wildfire, reduce the number of nuisance fires, and better prepare the community in the event of an approaching wildfire on the landscape.

What is a hazard reduction burn?

A hazard reduction burn is a planned, controlled burn of high hazard vegetation by highly trained firefighters. Typically, Alberta Agriculture and Forestry wildland firefighters use hazard reduction burns in the spring, around communities located near high-hazard areas, such as open grassy areas. Burning will reduce the risk of spring wildfires starting in this area

What's the objective?

- To assess the grassland fuels that exist on the landscape within the Town of Strathmore.
- To identify locations of high fire risk based on predicted fire behaviour during periods of high hazard.
- To prescribe training recommendations for the Strathmore Fire Department when it comes to hand ignition practices.
- To prioritize and prescribe these areas for Hazard Reduction Burning.
- Strategically remove hazardous grass around the Town of Strathmore, reducing the risk of wildfire.

What's the benefit?

- Enhance community protection by safely removing high risk areas of grass.
- Reinforce pre-planned wildfire containment lines around the town.
- Burning of the landscape is a natural process that eliminates old growth and allows new regeneration of grasses. By utilising burning, we allow nutrients to re-enter the soils and grow new life.

What's the timeline?

The hazard reduction burn is scheduled for mid to late March. Ignition will only occur when weather conditions are conducive to burning and when it is safe to do so.

Where are the locations?

Each area identified was ground truthed and inspected for risk, practicality, and safety. The areas identified were selected to reduce the risk of wildfire, reduce the number of nuisance fires, and to better prepare the community in the event of an approaching wildfire on the landscape.

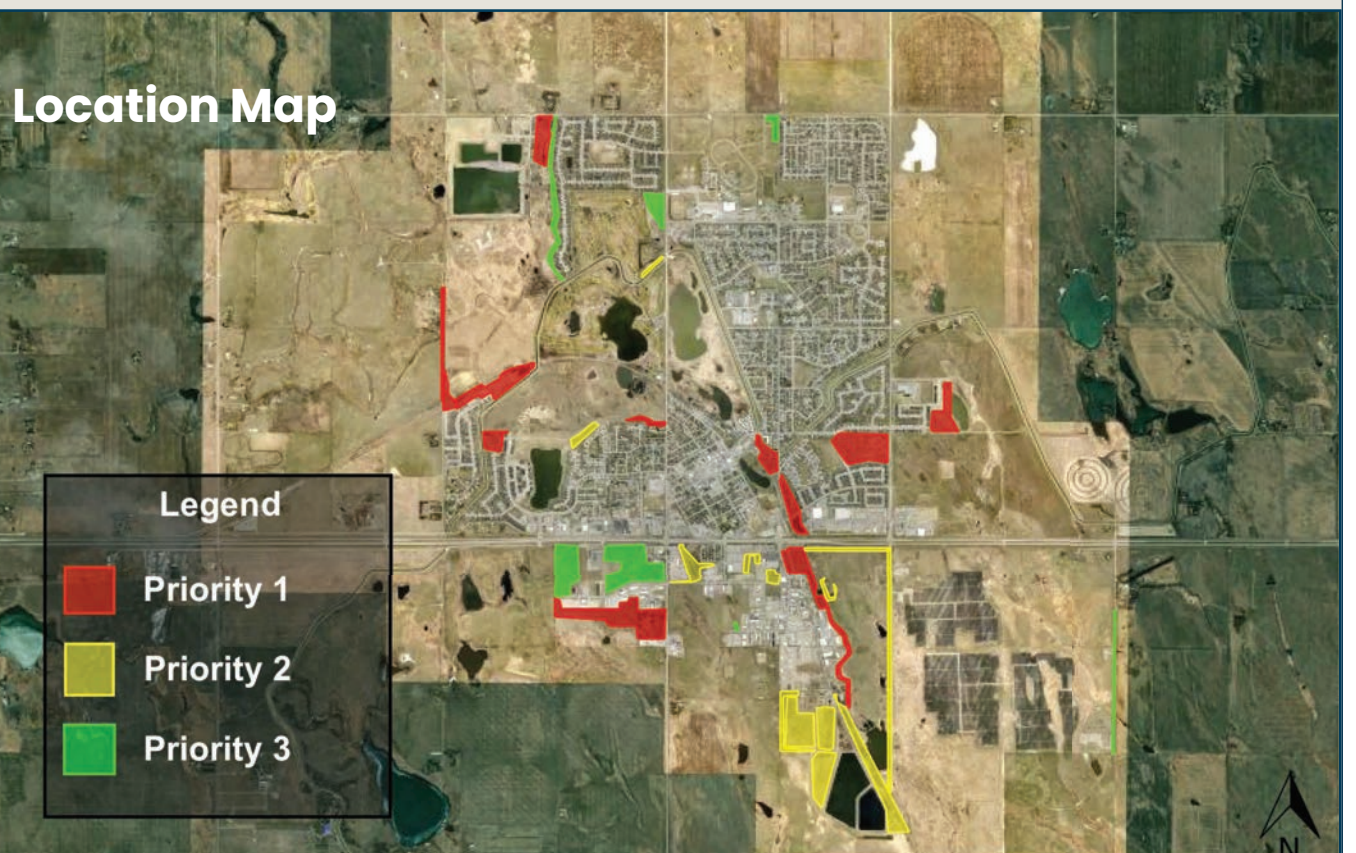
Areas are marked as "blocks" and were given priority based on the risk to the community, level of difficulty, and fuel loading. Priority 1 was given to areas with the most fire risk to the community. Priority 2 and 3 areas are of lower risk and may be easier and safer to complete.

The initial plan involves 33 blocks. Areas on private property will only be burned upon approval of property owners.

All blocks identified in this plan are to be burnt at the Fire Chief's discretion.

If you own land that poses a hazard or could benefit from being included in the hazard reduction burn plan, connect with the fire department at firehall@strathmore.ca or 403-934-3022.

Learn more about the plan at Strathmore.ca/HazardReduction



Location Map

Legend

- Priority 1
- Priority 2
- Priority 3

Building Alberta

CHANTELLE DE JONGE
Chestermere-Strathmore MLA

Alberta Budget 2024, released on Feb. 29, builds the schools, hospitals and roads Alberta's communities need today and can rely on as they grow. With a steady focus on fiscal responsibility and wise spending, our government will continue to meet the needs of Albertans today and tomorrow.

The 2024-27 Capital Plan of \$25 billion dollars, an increase of \$2 billion from last year, honours previous commitments to build and maintain key infrastructure projects and includes additional investments.

I am proud to support Budget 2024 – a responsible plan to support a growing Alberta. This is Alberta's third consecutive balanced budget, beginning with a forecast surplus of \$367 million in 2024-25 and makes significant investments into health care, education, affordable housing, infrastructure, public safety, wildfire response, and more.

With this budget, Alberta's Government has made choices that support Albertans' top priorities and prepare our province to meet the challenges that lie ahead – all while spending \$1.2 billion in the Heritage Savings Trust Fund so Alberta can maintain its economic strength and prosperity for generations to come.

Budget 2024 is a responsible plan that prioritizes the needs of Alberta families and maintains our competitive advantage so businesses and industry continue to thrive, innovate and create jobs.

With that, I am pleased to share some key local investments in the areas of Education, Infrastructure, and Highway and Water Management Projects:

Education

- Full construction funding for a K-9 Catholic School in Chestermere

- Design funding for a K-9 Rocky View School in Chestermere
- Final funding for completion of the Langdon new 7-12 High School

Infrastructure

- Final construction funding for the storm drains and new construction funds for expansion of the lobby space of the Strathmore Courthouse

Highway and Water Management projects

- Funds for miscellaneous bridge work on CPR overpass on Hwy 1, 11 km East of Chestermere at Inverlake Overpass
- Planning funding for Hwy. 1 and Range Road 264 De Havilland interchange
- Planning funding for Hwy.1 and Garden/Conrich Road interchange
- Planning funding for Hwy.1 and Range Road 791 interchange
- Design funding for streetlights at Hwy. 817 and 564
- Funds for repaving between 1 km South of Hwy.1 and 3 km North of the Town of Strathmore
- Upgrade of the Wastewater Treatment Plant PLC SCADA in the Town of Strathmore

Traffic Impact Assessments are underway on Glenmore Trail to determine necessary infrastructure improvements and ensure taxpayers dollars are being respected.

Our constituency has some of the fastest growing cities and towns in Alberta. Since I was elected as your MLA last spring, I have been strongly advocating for more schools and infrastructure projects in our constituency and will continue to do so.

I look forward to hearing your feedback on Alberta Budget 2024. Please feel free to email me at Chestermere.Strathmore@assembly.ab.ca.

(Chantelle de Jonge is the MLA for Chestermere-Strathmore and the Parliamentary Secretary for Affordability and Utilities)



South champs!

The host Wheatland Braves claimed the U13AA South Conference Tournament from March 7-10 at the Strathmore Family Centre. The Braves went undefeated in the round robin portion of the tournament before defeating the Medicine Hat Hounds 5-3 in the semifinal. The Braves knocked off the top team in the league, the 32-1-1 Lethbridge Hurricanes in a thrilling 4-3 win in the championship game. The Braves will now tangle with the Red Deer Wesco in the SCAHL U13 championship series. Game 1 is March 15 in Red Deer, while Game 2 is March 16 (6:30 p.m.) at the Strathmore Family Centre. Game 3, if necessary, is March 17 in Red Deer. **Joe Lepage Photos**

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Switching to a different energy plan could save you hundreds of dollars on your bill annually. The Utilities Consumer Advocate is here to help, with unbiased information you can use to choose the right energy plan for you.



Fun 'spiel

The Wheatland 4-H District held their curling fun day at the Strathmore Curling Club on Feb. 22. It was a chance for members of different 4-H clubs within Wheatland County to meet new people in a fun setting.

Photo Courtesy of Erik Semeniuk



Magical night

The Arts on 817 hosted La Fiammata at the Strathmore United Church on March 9. La Fiammata, featuring the award-winning duo of Linda Ruan and Charissa Vandikas, captivated the audience with their wonderful piano talents. Preceding the main act, students of Carolyn Steeves Piano Studio performed a multitude of piano performances highlighting multi-person piano pieces.

Melissa Piche Photos



Strathmore Storm U11AA vs Brooks, March 9



U12B Ice vs Indus, March 9



U16 Ice vs Edmonton, March 8

Ice MADNESS!

The Strathmore Family Centre was a busy place over the week as many ringette and hockey teams were in the thick of their playoffs or wrapping up their season with some exhibition games.

Joe Lepage Photos



U15 Wheatland Wranglers vs Okotoks, March 6



Strathmore Storm U15C vs Rocky Mountain House, March 9

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COMING EVENT

EDMONTON STAMP CLUB STAMP SHOW. March 23-24, 2024. Saturday 10 - 5 pm; Sunday 10 - 4 pm. Central Lion's Rec Centre, 113 St & 111 Ave. Stamps for sale, Exhibits, free evaluations, etc. Food Bank Donation Box; www.edmontonstampclub.ca.

COMING EVENT



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In accordance with the Municipal Government Act, please take notice of the following proposed bylaw:

BYLAW NO. 2024-001 MUNICIPAL BORROWING BYLAW

A bylaw of the Village of Rockyford, in the province of Alberta, to authorize the Council of the Village of Rockyford to incur indebtedness by the issuance of debenture(s) in the amount of \$400,000.00 for the purpose of servicing the new 2nd Ave. W. subdivision with sewer and water.

1. The borrowing bylaw is available for viewing at the Village office located at 110 Main Street, Rockyford, AB.
2. The borrowing bylaw received first reading at the February 21, 2024 Special Council Meeting.
3. Section 231 of the Municipal Government Act allows the public to submit petitions for a vote on whether the borrowing bylaw should be passed. Petitions against the borrowing bylaw must fulfill the requirements of the Municipal Government Act and be filed with the Chief Administrative Officer at the village office no later than 15 days after the second advertisement runs in the local newspaper. Information regarding petitioning requirements can be found at alberta.ca/petition-information-for-electors.

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The Golden Hills School Division invites applications for the following position:

SUMMER STUDENT- MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT- STRATHMORE AND SURROUNDING AREA

to work in our Facilities/Maintenance Department. This position will commence approximately May 6th, 2024 or when a suitable candidate is found and end around August 23, 2024. Terms of employment can be negotiated. Please refer to our website www.ghsd75.ca under Employment-Non-Teaching Opportunities for further information.

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Help Wanted

Summer Reading Program Coordinators

Three enthusiastic, highly motivated students are required for the TD Summer Reading Program at the Strathmore Municipal Library. Anticipated employment dates are from June 3-Aug 27, 2024. These temporary, full-time positions are conditional upon grant funding.

The Coordinators will work collaboratively to plan and deliver weekly summer reading activities for children ages 5-17 as well as special events that promote literacy, creativity, and connect families to the library and its resources. Coordinators will provide specialized one-on-one reading support to children who need support. They will support children's book selection to encourage development of literacy skills and independent reading throughout the summer. Coordinators will be responsible for all aspects of the project including program promotion, creating and monitoring a budget, soliciting donations, volunteer recruitment and supervision, program delivery, and program reporting, including a final report and evaluation.

Main objectives:

1. Support children's literacy development through the summer months.
2. Provide accessible and affordable quality programming for children in the community.
3. Provide a fun and welcoming introduction to the library and its services for families who currently under-utilize the library.

Qualifications:

- Full-time student between the ages of 18-30 intending to return to full-time studies in the next school year, legally entitled to work in Canada.
- Enthusiastic about great books and intriguing stories.
- Strong organizational and communication skills.
- Ability to plan and implement programs for children of all ages.
- Ability to work collaboratively, supervising volunteers as required.
- Experience in children's programming is an asset, as is experience with music, drama, crafts, and/or storytelling.
- Successful applicants must produce a criminal record check.
- The library is committed to inclusivity, and diverse candidates are encouraged to apply. If accommodations are needed, please contact the Director using the contact information below.

Hours of work: 35 hours per week, daytimes Monday-Friday with occasional weekend shifts.

Wage: \$18.00/hr

Cover letters and resumes may be sent by email to: Rachel Dick Hughes- Director of Library Services
Strathmore Municipal Library
85 Lakeside Blvd, Strathmore, AB T1P 1A1
director@strathmorelibrary.ca

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We thank all candidates for their interest. Only those selected for an interview will be contacted. Applications must be received by **Apr 15, 2024**.

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UNRESERVED AUCTION

STRATHMORE 2-DAY CONSIGNMENT EVENT

PREVIEW DATES: MARCH 23, 25 & 26, 10AM-5PM • 1475 WHEATLAND TRAIL, STRATHMORE, AB.

BIDDING OPENS MARCH 19/20 AND CLOSES MARCH 26 (DAY 1)/27 (DAY 2)



2013 JOHN DEERE 4940 120'



2009 PARKER 938 CART



2015 CASE IH 34' TURBO DISC



2002 CASE IH MX 120 MFWD



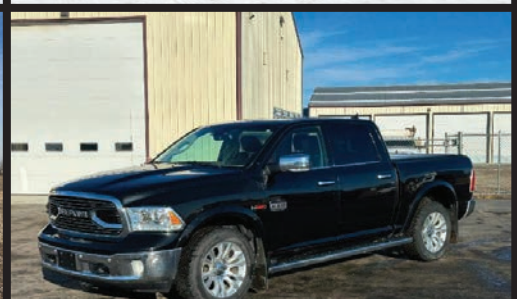
2014 DODGE RAM 5500



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