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STRATHMORE TIMES

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Prestigious award

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Eyeing a championship

STRATHMORE TIMES

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Town of Strathmore Municipal Notices

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County drops committee seats

MELISSA CRISPIN-PICHE
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Wheatland County council has voted to discontinue appointments to three outside bodies after reviewing whether its representatives were still needed.

The decision covers the Strathmore and District Agricultural Society's Indoor Riding Arena Advisory Committee, the Addictions Resource Coalition and Alberta CARE.

Chief administrative officer Sherry Baers told council the arena advisory committee was no longer operating. Administration would follow up with the affected organizations after council's decision.

Coun. Berle Hebbes said he had reached out to the agricultural society about attending meetings but had not found a need for the county's participation.

"I don't think we need to be involved in the ag society," Hebbes said.

Administration clarified that the specific arena advisory committee to which the county had appointed a representative had been disbanded.

Discussion of the Addictions Resource Coalition focused on whether a council appointment still served a purpose, as the group's activities had narrowed.

During the discussion councillors heard that the coalition's work centred on a barbecue coordinated through Wheatland Family and Community Support Services with limited resources for other activities.

Council members questioned the value of retaining a seat while also discussing the continuing need for addictions support and professional involvement.

Deputy Reeve Scott Klassen said ending the county's direct appointment to Alberta CARE would not eliminate its connection to the organization. He said membership remained available through the Drumheller and District Solid Waste Management Association.

Klassen described Alberta CARE's participation as largely operational, with relatively few elected officials involved.

Council passed the motion, discontinuing all three appointments, then removed the positions from its annual appointment list.

The motion addressed council representation. It did not announce the cancellation of programs or funding.



Minion in the saddle

A rider wears a Minion costume on horseback during Tyrrell Riding Academy's Halloween Gymkhana and Cowboy Challenge, Oct. 24–25. The weekend featured a Saturday gymkhana, a Sunday cowboy challenge, costume classes for riders and their horses, costume prizes and seasonal treats.

Joe Lepage Photo



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KIC·REALTY Dixie Hartell 403.934.1034 Karen Kathol 403.934.1353 Nicole Gordon 403.934.7477

Strathmore
Rural Reimagined

Upcoming Council Meetings

November 4, 2026 | 6 p.m. Regular Meeting of Council
November 18, 2026 | 6 p.m. Regular Meeting of Council
December 2, 2026 | 6 p.m. 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.

Happy Halloween Strathmore!



Heading out for treats? Driving through town? Slow down and keep an eye out for little ghosts and goblins crossing the street!

Join our team.
Career opportunities available.

Are you looking for a new opportunity? The Town of Strathmore is hiring! We have a variety of positions available across different departments.

Check out **Strathmore.ca/Careers** for more information about current opportunities and discover your bright future with the Town of Strathmore.

We want your feedback!
Citizen Satisfaction Survey.

We want to hear from residents about what matters most to them and how well we're meeting their expectations. That's why we conduct a **Citizen Satisfaction Survey**, giving residents an opportunity to share their experiences and provide feedback on Town services, programs and the community as a whole.

The survey is conducted by an independent research company, Framework Analystics Inc., using a random sample of Strathmore households. If you're selected, you'll receive an invitation with information about how to participate. If you are not selected, we still want to hear from you!

Have questions about the survey, how participants are selected or what happens with the results? Visit **Strathmore.ca/CitizenSatisfactionSurvey.**

From weekly to biweekly.
Green Cart/Organics Collection.

The Town of Strathmore provides residential waste collection and disposal services to over 4,500 properties, including household garbage, organic and heavy item garbage, and recycling.

Starting November 1, 2026, green cart/organics pickup will switch to biweekly service for the season (November to April). Reminder that the only holidays that affect garbage collection are Christmas Day and New Year's Day. All other collection days remain unchanged.

For the full collection schedule, route info, and other key dates, visit our website: **Strathmore.ca/WasteCollection**

Scams are becoming harder to recognize.
Scam and Fraud Prevention Session.

The Town of Strathmore FCSS group will be presenting a Scam and Fraud Prevention Session, in partnership with the RCMP, Strathmore Library, and SAIL.

Some need to knows:

- When? October 29, 2026.
- Where? Strathmore Library (85 Lakeside Blvd).
- Lunch Provided.
- Everyone is welcome!

For more information and to register, call: **(403) 934-9090 ext. 3**.

Good food, great food.
Get the Good Food Box.

The Good Food Box is a non-profit organization offering access to quality produce while ensuring variety, freshness and affordability. It is is brought to you by your community, packed by volunteers and delivered to Strathmore through FCSS. This program is accessible for everyone regardless of income level. For more information, visit **Strathmore.ca/GoodFoodBox**

In the arms of the (snow) angel.
Be Someone's Snow Angel.

While the winter season makes for a beautiful snowscape, it also comes with its icy challenges. Navigating icy sidewalks can be daunting, especially forthose who face mobility limitations or health concerns. Shoveling those same sidewalks is an even more daunting challenge. This is where the Strathmore Snow Angels Program come sin. Here's how it works:

- **Identify those in need.** Residents needing snow removal help are marked with a Snow Angel sign, letting you know they could use a helping hand keeping their walkways clear during the winter months.
- **Be a Snow Angel.** Spread you snowy wings and help out your neighbour by clearing their sidewalk, driveways, and paths. You don't need to register, just look for a Snow Angel sign and help out.

Need the Snow Angels help? Call FCSS at 403-934-9090 to request a sign or visit the Strathmore Municipal Building. Visit **Strathmore.ca/SnowAngels** for more information.

New Hours.
Overflowing Recycling Bin?

Overflowing Recycling Bin? We've Got You Covered!

Is your new recycling bin already full? Still waiting for your bin to arrive? No problem!

The Town of Strathmore Recycling Yard is open and ready to help. Mixed recycling bins are available for the same recyclable materials you would normally place in your household recycling cart.

Recycling Yard Hours:

- Wednesday to Sunday | 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Closed Mondays, Tuesdays, and all statutory holidays

Household Special Products, Paint & Take-It-or-Leave-It Area

- Available Saturday and Sunday only | 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Please note: These areas are closed Monday through Friday.

Whether your recycling bin is full, hasn't arrived yet, or you've simply got some extra recycling to drop off, the Town of Strathmore Recycling Yard is here to help keep recyclable materials out of the landfill.

Help Keep Hydrants From Looking Like Snowmen.
Adopt a Hydrant.

Winter's heavy snowfall can quickly turn fire hydrants into snowmen lookalikes, making them difficult for firefighters to locate and access during emergencies. By adopting a hydrant and helping keep it clear of snow, ice, and other obstructions year-round, you can help emergency crews save valuable time when every second counts.

Visit Strathmore.ca/Adopt-A-Hydrant to learn more and sign up. With more than 370 hydrants located throughout town, there are plenty of opportunities to become a proud hydrant adopter and help keep the community safe.

Water Restriction Notice.

Starting **November 4, 2026,** Stage 4 Outdoor Water Restrictions and indoor water conservation measures will be in effect for approximately four weeks while crews connect the new Bearspaw South Feeder Main to Calgary's exisitng water system.

Stage 4 Outdoor Water Restrictions mean no outdoor water use is permitted, including:

- No watering lawns, gardens, flowers, trees, or shrubs using City water.
- No washing down outdoor surfaces, including exterior building surfaces, windows, sidewalks, driveways or walkways, unless required for health and safety reasons.
- No water use for construction purposes such as grading, compaction or dust control.
- No washing vehicles outdoors, unless required for health and safety reasons.
- No outdoor snow or ice making.

Indoor conservtion measures include:

- Runnig dishwashers and washing machines only when full.
- Flushing toilets only when needed.
- Taking shorter showers, aiming for three minutes.

For more information, visit: **https://www.calgary.ca/water/drought/outdoor-water-restrictions.html?redirect=/restrictions#cocis-maincontent**

Questions welcome as Hebbes hosts Division 2 open house

MELISSA CRISPIN-PICHE
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Coun. Berle Hebbes invites Division 2 residents to an open house in Namaka Nov. 14. Whether you have questions about a road, an idea for the community or simply want to meet your councillor, Coun. Hebbes looks forward to hearing from you and discussing your concerns.

The Wheatland County councillor is hosting the gathering Nov. 14 at 4 p.m. at the Namaka Community Hall, offering residents an informal opportunity to ask questions, share concerns and talk about what matters to them.

His goal is straightforward.

"I would like to hear what my people want," said Coun. Hebbes.

Communication has been a priority for Coun. Hebbes, who said he had always planned to hold an open house and also hopes to spend time door knocking during his second summer in office. The gathering will give neighbours a chance to connect with him directly and help shape the discussion around their own priorities.

Taxes and roads are among the subjects he expects could come up, along with the water and wastewater infrastructure that forms a substantial part of his council work. But residents do not need to arrive with a particular topic or a detailed understanding of county business.

They are welcome to come, listen and ask questions.

"Just realistically, whatever people want to chat about," said Coun. Hebbes.

The format will depend partly on attendance. Tables will be available, along with microphones if a larger crowd turns out. With a smaller group, Coun. Hebbes said the conversation could be as simple as sitting around a table together.

The emphasis is on making room for residents to speak and giving them a chance to get answers in a comfortable setting.

While some subjects have limits on what he can discuss publicly, Coun. Hebbes said broader conversations about industrial areas, development and community safety are welcome. Safety, he added, is an issue he takes seriously.

The late-afternoon start is intended to make it convenient for residents to stop in while there is still daylight and spend some time talking before heading home for supper.

For Coun. Hebbes, that willingness to listen extends beyond the open house. He said responding to residents and seeing their concerns firsthand are important parts of representing Division 2.

"You got a concern about your road. I will literally drive there within a day," he said. "I'll answer the phone and I will get in the truck and get there pretty darn quick on almost any issue."

The open house offers a chance to begin those conversations face to face, whether residents have a specific concern to raise or simply want to hear more about work underway in their division.

For Coun. Hebbes, the starting point is getting people together and hearing what they have to say.

Coun. Hebbes said he is eager to receive emails if people can't attend and even phone calls. He can be reached via email (berle.hebbes@wheatalndcounty.ca). Alternatively, his cell number is 403-901-9639 which he promises to return your call if you leave a message.

Boundary changes reshape Wheatland community funding board

MELISSA CRISPIN-PICHE
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Wheatland County council has approved changes to its Community Enhancement Regional Board to correct an imbalance caused by revised electoral boundaries.

The decision places Shirley Armstrong in a Division 6 seat and appoints Scott Kolewaski to Division 5. Shelley McEachern will fill a Division 3 vacancy left by Lisa Bury's resignation.

The board requires two representatives from each of the county's seven divisions and helps determine funding allocations from the Community Enhancement Reserve.

Community services coordinator Dave Rimes told council that boundary changes had left three board members residing in Division 6.

Armstrong had been appointed to represent Division 5 but now lives in Division 6.

Administration recommended giving her a new two-year term representing Division 6, noting that she still had a substantial portion of her existing term remaining and had served longer than fellow member Randal Melcher.

Melcher's term was expiring, although he had offered to serve again. Alison Roppel, the other Division 6 representative, still had a year remaining.

The recommendation prompted questions about how the county handles competing applicants for a board position.

Reeve Shannon Laprise asked whether that situation had arisen before and whether positions were advertised when incumbents wanted to return.

Rimes said the county continued advertising even when existing members wished to remain.

Council approved the appointments following further discussion of Melcher's interest in another term.

Laprise encouraged him to apply again when another opening becomes available.

"I hope that he will put his name forward again," she said.

Rimes said he had already discussed applying next year with Melcher, who had agreed to do so.

Council also renewed appointments for Robyn Harms, Margo Comstock, Marcy Field, Mya Zimmerman, Maxine Bartelen and Kim Sandum.

The newly approved terms run from Nov. 1 to Oct. 31, 2028.

Recorded crime declines in Wheatland while fraud reports nearly double

MELISSA CRISPIN-PICHE
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Wheatland County recorded fewer Criminal Code offences in the first nine months of 2026 than in the same period last year, although fraud moved sharply in the opposite direction.

County-wide RCMP figures included in the Oct. 20 council agenda package show 267 offences from January through September, down from 306 in 2025.

That is a decline of 39 offences, or about 13 per cent. Break-ins fell from 29 to 13, a reduction of more than half. Fraud rose from 14 to 27, nearly doubling.

The figures describe recorded offences, rather than convictions, and do not establish why the numbers changed.

The increase in fraud also does not identify which schemes account for the additional reports. Further detail from RCMP would be needed to establish whether particular scams or other forms of fraud are driving the increase.

The overall decline and the rise in fraud tell different parts of the county's crime picture: fewer offences were recorded in total, while one category accounted for substantially more reports.

The agenda package also contains detachment-level statistics covering different geographic boundaries. Those figures should be distinguished from the county-wide totals when comparing communities or reporting trends.

Wheatland EMS

VEHICLE TENDER NOTICE - SEALED BIDS INVITED

Wheatland EMS is accepting sealed bids for the sale of a:

2018 GMC Yukon SLE

- Approximately 90,000 km
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- Vehicle is sold AS IS, WHERE IS. No warranties or guarantees are expressed or implied.
- Successful bidder must provide payment within five (5) business days of notification.
- Purchaser is responsible for registration, insurance, and vehicle removal.
- The highest or any bid will not necessarily be accepted.
- Wheatland EMS reserves the right to reject any or all bids.

SUBMITTING A BID
A minimum bid of $30,000 is required. Bids submitted below $30,000 will not be considered.
Sealed bids must be clearly marked:
"2018 GMC Yukon SLE Tender"
Bids must include:
- Bidder Name
- Phone Number
- Email Address
- Bid Amount

Each bid must be accompanied by a refundable $500 deposit in the form of a certified cheque, bank draft, or e-transfer. Deposits from unsuccessful bidders will be returned. The successful bidder's deposit will be applied toward the purchase price.

Submit to:
Wheatland EMS
196 Brent Boulevard, Strathmore, Alberta T1P 1E8

Tender Deadline
Thursday, November 26, 2026 at 4:00 PM MST

STRATHMORE TIMES

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RCMP officer charged in Gleichen

MARIO PRUSINA
Times Editor

An RCMP officer has been charged with assault causing bodily harm following an investigation into an alleged use of excessive force at the Gleichen RCMP detachment in October 2025.

The Alberta Serious Incident Response Team (ASIRT) announced Oct. 23 that Const. Marie-Helene Dupere was arrested and charged on Oct. 22, nearly a year after the incident involving a woman in police custody.

According to ASIRT, the investigation centred on an allegation of excessive force that occurred on the night of Oct. 30, 2025, while an officer was placing a woman in cells at the Gleichen detachment. The woman had been arrested for mischief earlier that evening.

ASIRT said evidence gathered during its investigation provided reasonable grounds to believe an offence had been committed. Following a review of the investigation and further review and advice from the Alberta Crown Prosecution Service that a charge be laid, ASIRT executive director Matthew Block determined that the officer should be charged.

Dupere was released on an undertaking and is scheduled to appear before the Alberta Court of Justice at Siksika Nation on Nov. 26.

With the matter now before the courts, ASIRT said no further information would be released.

ASIRT is part of the Police Review Commission, an independent, civilian-led agency responsible for investigating potential criminal offences involving police officers in Alberta, including cases in which an officer's actions may have resulted in serious injury or death.

The charge has not been proven in court.

ARTS ON 817 PRESENTS



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STRATHMORE TIMES

Upcoming Concerts:
February 6, 2027 - Strathmore's Debut Candlelight Concert
May 1, 2027— Luminous Voices with special guests the Rosebud Choir
Tickets can be purchased in person at the Vault, online at thevaultonline.ca/collections/tickets or by etransfer smoretreasurer@gmail.com.
Online purchases must be picked up at the door the night of the concert.
Concerts are held at Strathmore United Church 410-4th St., Strathmore

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donald816@hotmail.com
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Corner of 1 Ave & Wheatland Trail
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Associate Pastor: John Duerksen
Youth Pastor: Ian Scantland
Sundays 10 am
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www.strathmorealliance.com

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403-714-2283 www.rccgstrathmore.com
Pastor: Sunday Adeola
Sunday Worship: 10:30 am
Wednesdays Bible Study: 7 pm
Youth Fridays: 7:30 pm
Last Friday of every Month -
Hour of Dominion: 10 pm

LORD OF ALL (NALC) LUTHERAN
112 Lakeside Blvd. • 403-934-2374
Pastor: Dawn Nelson
Sunday Worship Services – 10:30 am
Join us in Praising our Lord, Jesus Christ!

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403-934-2641
www.sacredhc.ca
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Masses: Saturday 5 pm | Sunday 10 am

STRATHMORE UNITED
Wheatland Trail & 3rd Avenue
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Rev. Maria Szabone Berces
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www.smoreuc.com
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Sunday Worship 10 am
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Wheatland advances $5.5-million bridge borrowing proposal

MELISSA CRISPIN-PICHE
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Wheatland County council has given first reading to a proposal to borrow up to $5.5 million for four bridge projects, following unsuccessful applications for provincial funding.

The Oct. 20 vote moves the borrowing bylaw forward but does not give it final approval.

Administration said two of the projects had not received Strategic Transportation Infrastructure

Program funding in 2025 and two had been unsuccessful in 2026.

The borrowing would partly restore money already taken from county reserves and help cover remaining construction costs.

"The $5.5 million debt covers it repays about 2.7 million in reserves that's already spent on these bridge files to date," Joel Chiasson Manger of Financial Services told council.

A financing illustration in the agenda package estimates annual payments of $351,441 over 30 years, with approximately $5 million in total interest.

The report compares the annual payment with roughly one per cent of property-tax revenue. That comparison does not establish a one per cent tax increase.

Councillors questioned both the amount and timing of the proposed borrowing. Some wanted a fuller picture of county finances before taking on debt, while discussion also raised the possibility of a shorter repayment period.

Administration said the proposed amount would give council room to replenish reserves while completing the bridge work. Staff also explained that the county could ultimately borrow less than the bylaw's maximum.

"Budget time is here. We got to get going," Coun. Glenn Koester said during the discussion.

Administration told council that advertising and a petition period would follow first reading before the bylaw returned for further consideration.

The final borrowing amount and financing terms remain to be settled.

Wheatland reviews council pay and expense rules

MELISSA CRISPIN-PICHE
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Wheatland County council received its compensation and expense policies for information at its annual organizational meeting, making no changes during the discussion.

Administration described the review as a refresher covering remuneration, county property and letters of gratitude.

The compensation policy included in the agenda lists monthly base pay of $3,494.73 for the reeve, $2,927.67 for the deputy reeve and $2,921.63 for councillors.

Those payments cover duties including responding to residents, preparing for meetings, conducting research and meeting with the chief administrative officer.

Eligible meetings and other approved duties can also qualify for per diem payments. The policy lists a full-day rate of $279.39 for up to eight hours and a partial-day rate of $137.70 for up to four hours.

Council members can receive more than one full per diem when eligible meetings or events exceed eight hours in a day. Conference and convention attendance is limited to one per diem a day.

The policy also provides optional county-matched retirement contributions of up to $3,500 annually and an annual training budget of $2,000 per elected official, subject to council approval.

Compensation is adjusted annually in line with the staff cost-of-living adjustment approved by council.

Monthly reports, expense claims and credit card documentation are to be published through county processes, subject to privacy requirements.

No questions were raised before council accepted the policies for information. Council separately received its signing authorities bylaw for information.

Wheatland approves utility-rate increases for six communities

MELISSA CRISPIN-PICHE
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Utility customers in six Wheatland County communities will face higher rates in 2027 after council passed an updated fee bylaw on Oct. 20.

The changes set increases of 4.2 per cent in Carseland, Speargrass, Rosebud, Cluny and Muirfield, and 3.4 per cent in Gleichen.

Administration said the calculations account for inflation and adjustments toward the county's utility-subsidy targets.

Existing fixed debenture fees are excluded from the percentage increases because the underlying loan payments do not rise with inflation.

For illustration, a $100 monthly amount entirely subject to the increase would rise by $4.20 in the five communities receiving the 4.2 per cent adjustment, or $3.40 in Gleichen. Actual changes will depend on the charges making up each customer's bill.

Council's discussion focused partly on why communities at different stages of cost recovery would receive similar increases.

Administration explained that the policy limits annual subsidy adjustments, which can produce similar increases even where the gap between revenue and costs differs.

Councillors also asked for clearer information about actual service costs when rates are reviewed again.

"Getting actual costs so that we can see a comparison for the next time around is a worthwhile process," Coun. Keith Clayton said.

Council subsequently passed all three readings of the fee bylaw.

The annual rate changes are separate from potential financing charges for individual infrastructure projects, including the wastewater work illustrated for Cluny and Gleichen.

‘Pretty much total shock’: Darrell Damen honoured for decades of rodeo service

MELISSA CRISPIN-PICHE
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Darrell Damen thought he was watching someone else receive an award. When he arrived at the Canadian Professional Rodeo Association’s Night of Champions in Edmonton during Canadian Finals Rodeo Week, the long-time Strathmore Stampede volunteer understood that his friend and mentor, Don Johansen, would be recognized.

Instead, Damen heard his own name called as the CPRA’s Committee Person of the Year. “Pretty much total shock,” said Damen on how he felt when he realized it was he who was getting the award. “It’s definitely an honour.”

The national honour recognizes the dedication and leadership of people working behind the scenes in professional rodeo. For Damen, whose involvement with the Strathmore Stampede spans more than three decades, it was unexpected recognition for work he enjoys.

Damen’s introduction to rodeo work came while he was still in high school. Around Grade 11, (1980-1981) he began helping his high school teacher Gordon Prusky with paperwork and organizing high school rodeo.

He found his place on the working side of the arena, taking on the jobs that help keep an event moving. Over the years, those responsibilities have included working the bucking chute gates, managing the centre gate and stepping into whatever role needed filling.

One assignment remains particularly memorable. When Strathmore moved from amateur to professional rodeo, Damen was handed a rope and told he would be pulling gates.

There was little time to learn.

“It was do it right or get run over,” he said.

Today, Damen serves as the Stampede’s Volunteer Arena Dirt Manager. The title covers ground preparation, but his responsibilities also reach into equipment maintenance and other work around the grounds.

During the rodeo, he relies on a crew with professional experience working the dirt. Throughout the rest of the year, he helps maintain the ground and keep it in the best condition possible.

At Strathmore that work comes with a particular challenge: rodeo competitors and chuckwagon racers share the arena, but their ideal footing differs.

“But you can’t, unfortunately, you can’t have perfect ground for both,” Damen said.

Scheduling helps bridge the gap. Barrel racing runs first in the rodeo performance when the ground has been prepared for those competitors. By the time the chuckwagons run later in the evening the surface has firmed up.

Changes to the arena have helped, too. As part of an expansion undertaken when the suites were built, the chutes were moved back about 30 feet. Damen said the additional space helped keep barrel racers off the harder racetrack surface and gave team ropers more room to make their turns. He said there is still work to be done to make it as close to perfect as they can.

The work continues well beyond the Stampede’s four days. Planning for the next year begins before the current event has even finished. Afterward, committee members take a month to record concerns and ideas before returning to regular planning.

Damen credits the people around him for helping him learn along the way. Johansen, in particular, has been a steady source of advice, including over the past decade or so as they have worked together.

His involvement also extends to the High School Rodeo and Rodeo School at the Strathmore agricultural grounds. Along with helping young competitors develop their skills, Damen sees those events as places where lasting friendships begin.

The people competing against one another become a community, he said, supporting fellow athletes and carrying those connections through their lives.

That connection has become a family affair for Damen. His sons, Travis, J.D. and Tyson, have all been involved in rodeo in one way or another. Watching them find their own place in the sport is now among his biggest reasons for returning.

“Well, it’s the love of the sport,” he said. He hopes his grandchildren might eventually follow those footsteps, too.

For all the attention brought by the award, Damen wanted to make sure the rodeo committee and fellow volunteers received credit. Their support, he said, made the recognition possible.

And there is still work ahead. Each year brings another set of improvements to consider, another rodeo to prepare and another chance to hear what fans think as they leave the grounds.

For Damen that means continuing the work that brought him to the arena in the first place.



Longtime volunteer and Strathmore Rodeo Committee member Darrell Damen was named the Canadian Professional Rodeo Association’s (CPRA) Committee Person of the Year during the most recent Canadian Finals Rodeo.

Photo Courtesy of Billie-Jean Duff

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Kings look for team-first approach

MELISSA CRISPIN-PICHE
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Agra Risk Wheatland Kings have enough talent to expect more of themselves. General manager Cody Holdaway wants to see that talent start working together.

With the Kings sitting with a 5-3 record, they place somewhere in the middle of the standings. Holdaway said the club had yet to meet the expectations he and the coaching staff brought into the season.

"We have a very talented top-end group of guys," he said. "We're just not playing as a team right now."

For Holdaway, the immediate challenge is getting players to put the group ahead of individual success. Coaches have been making adjustments in practice with an emphasis on how the Kings work together.

"When you put the same jersey on as the guy next to you, you're going to war together, not war for yourself," said Holdaway.

Roughly 10 new players joined the dressing room this season. While that has changed the mix, Holdaway said many already knew one another before becoming Kings. Building chemistry remains part of the work, but unfamiliarity alone does not explain the team's uneven start.

Away from the standings, the players have another reason to find the net.

Through the club's Goals for Cancer initiative, Agra Risk Solutions is donating $20 for every Kings goal this season to support the Canadian Cancer Society. The program gives the team's offence a purpose that reaches beyond the rink.

For Holdaway, the cause is personal. His grandfather died of cancer 16 years ago and members of the team's off-ice volunteer crew are dealing with the disease while continuing to help at games.

"I don't think there's really anyone out there anymore that hasn't been affected by this disease," he said.

Holdaway estimated the running total was approaching $700, with the potential to raise several thousand dollars by season's end. No other businesses had committed matching donations at that point, although he hoped more sponsors would get involved as the total grew.

The Kings were also planning their annual Hockey Fights Cancer game in conjunction with the Canadian Cancer Society, with an online donation link to be made available closer to the event.

"Obviously, as a player you always want to put the puck in the back of the net," Holdaway said. "But knowing that this year it just means that little bit more is extra special."

The club's community commitments also offer players a chance to spend time together outside the dressing room.

Holdaway said a planned team-building day would split the roster between helping set up the Celebration of Lights at the Strathmore Ag Society baseball diamonds and assisting with the Hope Bridges Artists Among Us Gala, followed by an afternoon together.





The Wheatland Kings suffered a 3-0 home loss to the Cochrane Generals on Oct. 23 at the Strathmore Family Centre. Despite scoring seven goals in the next two games, the Kings fell 7-6 the following day on home ice before losing a close 2-1 road battle to Coaldale on Oct. 25. The Kings will now travel to High River on Oct. 30 before hosting Cochrane on Halloween evening.

Joe Lepage Photos

Those efforts are part of a responsibility he believes comes with representing Strathmore, particularly when residents continue to turn out at the rink.

Holdaway said home crowds range from roughly 400 to as many as 600 fans, support the organization values.

"We have one of the best fans supports in our league," he said. "And we definitely don't take that for granted."

The Kings want to reward that backing with stronger hockey. For now, Holdaway's message is straightforward; the ability is there, but the results will depend on players buying into one another.

Fans can find the team's schedule at wheatlandkings.com with additional club updates on Facebook and Instagram.

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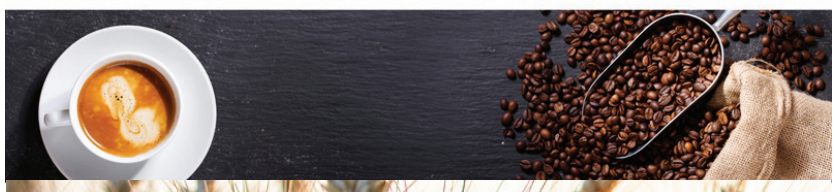
Upcoming Meetings

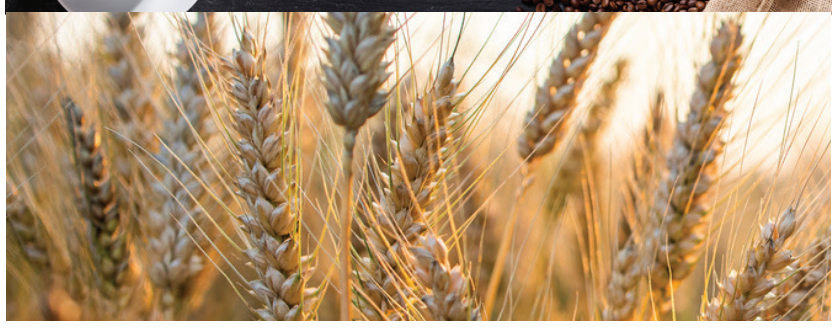
Council and committee meetings will now be open to the public and via teleconference.
For public hearings it is strongly encouraged that you attend in person.

November 10, 2026, 9:00 a.m. | Council Meeting
November 17, 2026, 9:00 a.m. | MPC | COW | PPC
November 18, 2026, 9:00 a.m. | ASB Org Meeting

For call-in details, access links, and agenda packages, please visit our website.
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Battle for the championship

The Strathmore Badgers peewee (right) and bantam (left) football teams advanced to their respective championship finals with wins on Oct. 24 at the Crowther Memorial Junior High School. The peewees defeated the Olds Huskies 32-18 to earn a spot in the Division C championship finals in Lacombe, Alta., on Oct. 31. The bantams shut out the Carstairs Tigers 57-0 to advance to the Division B championship finals in Stettler, Alta., also on Oct. 31.

Joe Lepage Photos



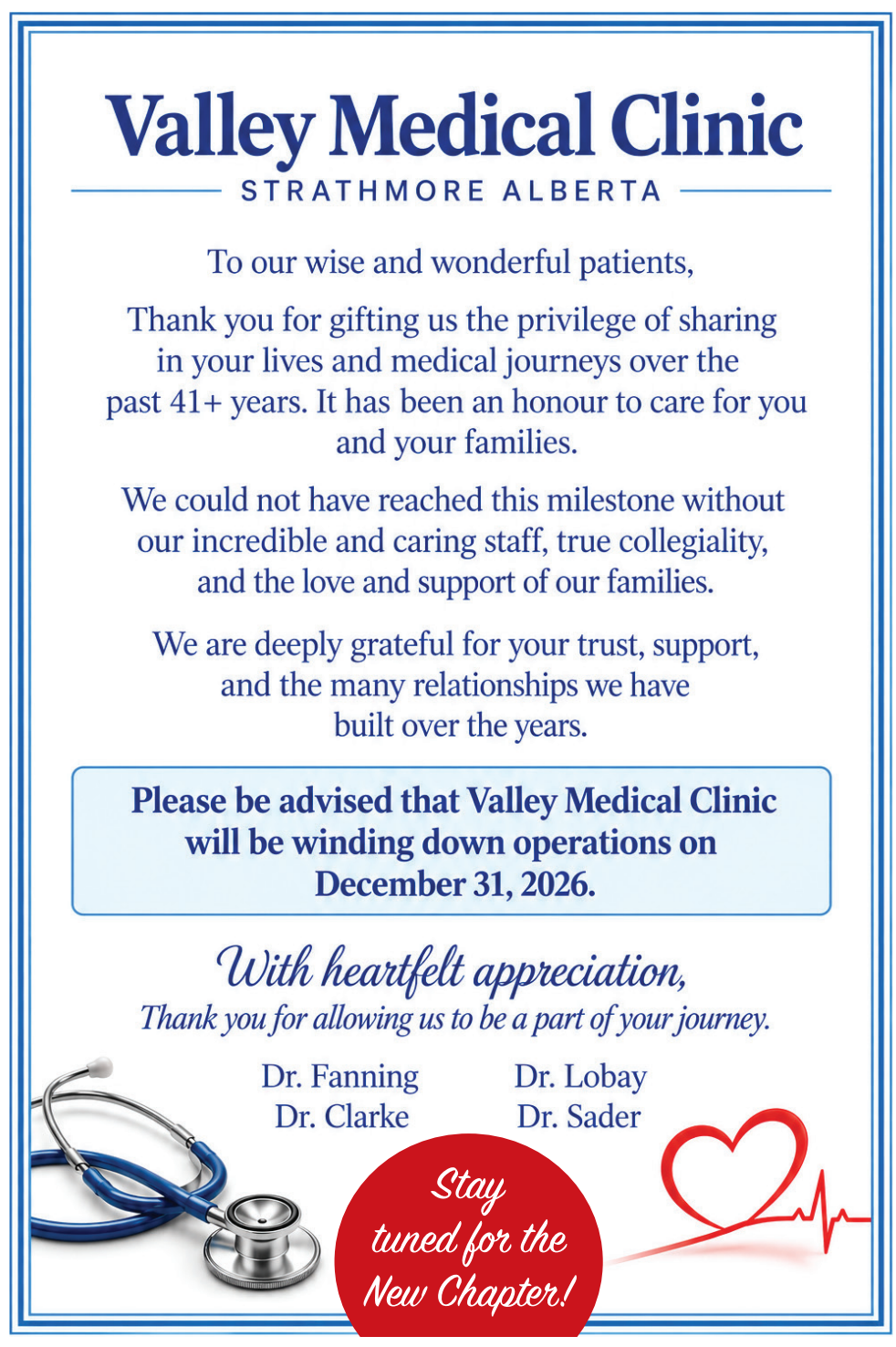
Warriors win

The Wheatland Warriors U16AA hockey team defeated the CHNA Northstars 6–2 on Oct. 25 at the Strathmore Family Centre, rebounding from a 5–2 road loss to the Medicine Hat Hounds the night before. The Warriors next home game is Nov. 6 in Hussar, where they will host Airdrie.

Joe Lepage Photo







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Strathmore council briefs

MELISSA CRISPIN-PICHE
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Higher utility bills, a disputed housing proposal and the pressures facing local businesses were among the issues before Strathmore council on Oct. 21. Council also advanced changes to the town's growth plan, while a separate organizational meeting confirmed appointments to several community boards.

Higher water bills coming in January

Strathmore council approved its 2027 fees bylaw, bringing an estimated increase of about $200 a year for customers in the smallest water meter category.

According to the administration report, the average monthly utility bill in that category will rise from $155.39 to $172.07. That is an increase of $16.68 a month, or approximately 10.7 per cent. Individual bills will vary with consumption.

The new schedule adds $1.05 per cubic metre to water consumption charges. Administration attributed the increase largely to higher costs for water purchased from Calgary, where infrastructure investments are affecting the price charged to surrounding communities.

Coun. Claude Brown acknowledged the strain on households.

"It's not easy raising fees on anything because I know times are tough," Brown said.

He thanked administration for working to limit the increase.

The bylaw also raises cemetery fees by 10 per cent and increases selected recreation rental charges. Most recreation admission charges and passes remain unchanged.

The new fees take effect Jan. 1, 2027. The town plans to explain the water rate changes through budget communications, newspaper advertisements and an insert accompanying the first utility bill of the year.

Credit card fee survives challenge

During the same discussion, council rejected Coun. Melissa Langmaid's proposal to remove a three per cent credit card transaction fee from the bylaw.

Coun. Langmaid said the charge had not yet been implemented and argued it could penalize residents who rely on credit cards when an unexpected expense leaves them short of cash.

She also raised concerns about the town's online utility payment system, saying residents paying at month-end could face charges for both the outstanding bill and the next billing period.

Administration said the surcharge was intended to recover the processing costs the town pays when accepting credit cards. Staff described its intended application as extending beyond utilities to credit card payments generally.

Coun. Brent Wiley supported putting the fee into effect after asking whether the town was already absorbing those costs.

"So, I'd actually like to see that get into effect sooner. Thank you," Wiley said.

Langmaid's amendment was defeated. The fee remains in the approved bylaw although the discussion did not establish when collection would begin.

Westdale rezoning passes after infrastructure debate

Council approved a zoning change allowing a semi-detached home at 126 Westdale Street after hearing concerns about water main breaks, drainage and neighbourhood character.

A neighbouring resident told the public hearing that repeated repairs had left the street with uneven pavement and pooling water. He questioned whether additional housing should proceed before infrastructure problems were addressed.

Administration said a portion of the cast iron water main had been replaced with PVC and further engineering work was underway. Staff also said the utilities could accommodate the proposed development.

"There are zero concerns with the ability of the infrastructure to service this property regardless of R1 or R2 zoning," council was told.

Coun. Wiley remained concerned about servicing. Councillors Matt Hyde and Claude Brown also spoke against the change, citing infrastructure and consistency within the neighbourhood.

Coun. Melissa Langmaid supported the proposal as a modest way to add housing.

"And one way that we can increase affordability is by gently densifying existing neighbourhoods," she said.

Mayor Pat Fule said rear-lane access helped address his parking concerns. The applicant's preliminary concept included two garages accessed from the lane.

Council passed second and third readings. Detailed development plans and permits still require review.

Businesses seek practical help and downtown visibility

Rising costs and staffing pressures topped the concerns identified in the 2026 Strathmore Business Walks survey.

Community Futures Wild Rose executive director Chantale Sangster presented responses from 156 businesses. Eighty-two identified rising costs as a challenge, while 57 selected staffing, hiring or retention.

"Higher costs reduce margins. Staffing shortages can limit hours or growth," Sangster said.

There were encouraging results as well: 79 respondents described their businesses as stable and 45 as thriving. Respondents could select more than one description, so those figures are not separate groups.

Seventy-one businesses selected "none" when asked which business supports they knew about or used. The question did not distinguish between a lack of awareness and a decision not to use available services.

"Either way, there is a clear connection problem," Sangster said.

She also pressed for a highway sign directing travellers downtown. Administration said that would require a business case and budget approval, and Brown offered to pursue the proposal.

Community Futures has also arranged a session with a lawyer on commercial leases and tenant rights in response to concerns raised during business visits.

Growth plan moves toward public hearing

Council gave first reading to a major Municipal Development Plan amendment and scheduled a public hearing for Nov. 18 at 6 p.m. in council chambers.

Known as Module A, the proposal addresses growth management, infrastructure efficiency, fiscal sustainability and economic development.

It includes an aspirational target of accommodating 10 per cent of new dwelling units within existing built-up areas. Presenter Glenn Ferguson explained that the target applies across the town rather than requiring a 10 per cent housing increase in every established neighbourhood.

The policies would help council assess where additional density is appropriate.

The amendment has not received final approval.

CT scanner request remains under review

An Oct. 2 letter from Hospital and Surgical Health Services Minister Adriana LaGrange offered no approval date or dedicated funding commitment for a Strathmore CT scanner.

"My ministry continues to review proposals regarding CT imaging services, including in Strathmore," LaGrange wrote.

The letter referenced $280 million in provincial diagnostic imaging investment over three years, but did not identify funding for a local scanner.

Council handled the correspondence through its consent agenda without separate discussion.

Volunteers appointed to community boards

At the organizational meeting, council approved appointments to the subdivision and development appeal board, assessment review board, community improvement program committee, FCSS advisory board and municipal library board.

The appointments carry terms ranging from one to three years.

Wiley thanked residents willing to take on volunteer governance roles.

"And so, it's with a great amount of gratitude that I thank all these volunteers," he said.

Council also directed administration to advertise remaining board and committee vacancies and bring applications to a future meeting.

Wiley specifically encouraged residents to consider an opening on the Family and Community Support Services advisory board.









Brass kick off

Foothills Brass and Friends performed at the Strathmore United Church on Oct. 24, opening Arts on 817's ninth concert season with a program of 1960s pop music. The ensemble included two original members whose history with the group stretches back more than 40 years.

Joe Lepage Photo



Artists Among Us

The Hope Bridges Society hosted the 19th annual Artists Among Us Fall Gala on Oct. 25 at the Hope Community Covenant Church. The event featured a concert followed by dinner for guests. Proceeds support the society's inclusive music, movement and arts programs, which promote community enrichment and connection.

Joe Lepage Photo

Thinking of CFB Wainwright

CHANTELLE DE JONGE
Chestermere-Strathmore MLA

Albertans continue to mourn the loss of four Canadian Armed Forces members, Sergeant Morgan Wong, Private Shaun Farrell, Private Aidan Goulding, and Private Hayden Lykkemark, who lost their lives during a training exercise at CFB Wainwright on Oct. 17. Our hearts are with their families, loved ones, fellow service members, and the many affected by this painful loss. We also continue to keep the 39 injured members and their families in our thoughts.

Amid these difficult days for so many Albertans, voters made an important decision about our future in the Oct. 19 referendum. Albertans have spoken clearly: they want Alberta's future to remain within a strong and united Canada. At the same time, they want a greater say in the decisions that affect their communities, livelihoods, and future. Alberta's government respects that democratic decision and will continue standing up for Alberta's constitutional rights while pursuing a fair deal within Confederation.

Our government is delivering results by defending Alberta's economic interests, advancing projects like the Pacific Link pipeline, and attracting new investment that creates good-paying jobs and supports economic growth. After years of federal policies that held Alberta back, there is growing recognition across Canada that Alberta's energy, agriculture, and natural resources are essential to the country's prosperity. Now is the time to come together and build on Alberta's momentum. Regardless of how Albertans voted, we all share a desire for a prosperous, free, and successful province.

As the 2026 harvest season nears its end, most Alberta farmers have their crops in the bin despite challenging weather conditions. Rain, frost, and snow have delayed work in some areas, but crop yields are estimated to be above average, particularly in central and southern Alberta. Soil moisture and pasture conditions are also encouraging as farmers prepare for winter. Agriculture remains a cornerstone of Alberta's economy, and our farmers play an essential role in putting food on Albertans' tables and on tables around the world. Their hard work keeps our communities strong and ensures Alberta remains a global leader in food production.

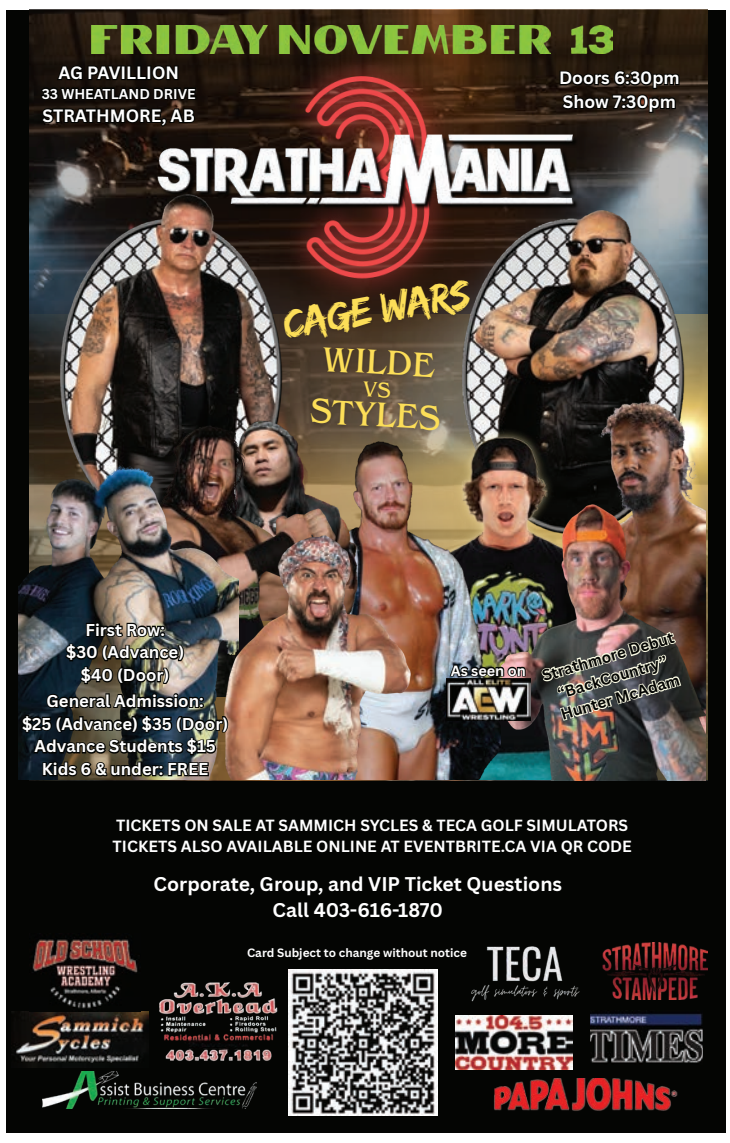
Alberta's government has introduced clearer guidance to help students receive the support they need to succeed in school. The new Student Support Policy Framework will help teachers and school boards identify students' learning, behavioural, and mental health needs earlier. It will also determine what support is appropriate for each student. The framework reinforces the important role of parents in making decisions about their children's education and encourages schools to assess whether the support provided is working. The framework lays the groundwork for updating provincial student support standards that have been in place for more than 20 years, while allowing schools to respond to individual student needs.

Our government is also investing more than $6 million to improve security at 10 courthouses across Alberta. The upgrades will improve building access, emergency systems, security technology, and areas used to move people in custody. These improvements will help protect judges, court staff, peace officers, and members of the public who access court services across the province. These upgrades are expected to be completed in 2027.

As we reflect on the loss felt across Alberta last week, our government remains focused on strengthening our communities, creating opportunities, protecting Alberta's interests, and continuing to build a strong Alberta within a united Canada.

As always, please free to reach out to my office with your feedback and questions

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



Wheatland renews development appeal board appointment

MELISSA CRISPIN-PICHE
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

George Szakaly will serve another three years on Wheatland County's Subdivision and Development Appeal Board after council approved his reappointment. His new term expires Oct. 31, 2029.

Administration said Szakaly wished to continue and had completed the mandatory provincial training required for the position.

The board hears appeals involving subdivision and development permit decisions and conditions.

Council also appointed the board to hear appeals under the Weed Control Act and Agricultural Pests Act for 2027. The Agricultural Service Board will hear appeals under the Soil Conservation Act.

Acting agriculture and environment manager Russel Muenchrath said the annual appointments ensure people receiving enforcement notices have a way to challenge them.

"So, if someone wishes to appeal a notice that we issue, they're able to do so," he said.

Wheatland retains MNP for 2026 audit

Wheatland County council has appointed MNP LLP to audit its 2026 financial statements completing the final year of the firm's current three-year contract.

Joel Chiasson, Manager of Financial Services with Wheatland County told council the county had a good working relationship with MNP and was satisfied with its work and pricing.

Coun. Glenn Koester asked how the county's options to extend the agreement would work. Administration said the contract allows separate one-year extensions for 2027 and 2028.

Pricing is fixed through the end of 2026 with the cost of a potential 2027 audit still to be negotiated.

After the extension period, administration said it would return to the market through a request for proposals as a matter of best practice.

Council approved the 2026 appointment. It did not approve an extension for either subsequent year.

Wheatland sets divisions for 2027 open houses

Wheatland County will hold its 2027 public open houses in Division 1 in January and Division 4 in July.

Council approved both locations at its organizational meeting, with exact dates, venues and times to be determined.

Chief administrative officer Sherry Baers said administration would arrange the details closer to the events.

"We will set up the location and date and time as we get closer," Baers said.

The open houses give residents an opportunity to hear about county initiatives, meet council and provide feedback.

Administration will contact community centres in the two divisions and bring location and date options to a future council meeting.

The proposed locations continue a rotation through the county. Earlier open houses were held in Cluny, Cheadle, the county administration office, Carseland and Dalum, followed by Lyalta and Nightingale in 2026.

Council also approved its 2027 meeting and event calendar as presented.

The calendar includes 19 regular council meetings, six Committee of the Whole meetings, four Public Presentation Committee meetings, 12 Municipal Planning Commission meetings and four Agricultural Service Board meetings.

Administration's report says the approved calendar will be posted on the county website.

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2017 Brent 2096



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2003 Ford F-350 XLT 4x4



John Deere 680 19 ft



2016 Case IH Patriot 4440 120 ft



2001 GMC 3500 4x4

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- (2) 2024 Case IH 8250 Combine Harvesters
- (5) 2021 Case IH 7250 Combine Harvesters
- (5) 2024 MacDon FD240 40 ft Flex Draper Combine Headers
- (2) 2024 Case IH 3016 Series II 15 ft Draper Combine Pickup Headers
- 2002 International 2654 4x2 Feed Truck
- 2001 GMC 3500 4x4 Service Truck
- 2003 Ford F-350 XLT 4x4 Crew Cab Pickup
- 2022 John Deere P556 56 ft Air Drill w/ C650 Air Cart
- 2016 Case IH Patriot 4440 120 ft High Clearance Sprayer
- John Deere 680 19 ft Dry Spinner T/A Manure Spreader
- (2) 2017 Brent 2096 ± 2000 bu T/A Grain Carts
- Bobcat 7 ft Skid Steer Grader
- (4) Michelin 620/70R38 Tires

Equipment viewing: Nov 5-10 from 9am to 6pm or by appointment only
GPS: 50.8482734, -113.5475575
Legal Land Description: NE 04-22-26 W4

Michael Janzen
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