



AGENDA

Municipal District #124 Committee of the Whole
Friday, June 14, 2024 - 10:00 AM - MD Council Chambers

Page

CALL TO ORDER

ACCEPTANCE OF THE AGENDA

- 2.1 June 14, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting Agenda

Proposed Motion: Move to accept the June 14, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting Agenda as presented.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 3.1 May 15, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes 3 - 5

Proposed Motion: Move to adopt the May 15, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes as presented.

[05152024 DRAFT COW Minutes](#)

DELEGATIONS

- 4.1 Johann Reimer - Aurora Fibre Optic

REPORTS & PRESENTATIONS

- 5.1 Animal Units - Options for Bylaws 6 - 10

Proposed Motion: Motion to direct Administration to conduct a public consultation survey through the summer months online, presenting all four options to MDLSR ratepayers for their feedback and input.

[Council Briefing AU Discussion](#)

[AU County Comparison](#)

- 5.2 Additional Beach Grooming Areas 2024 11 - 12

Proposed Motion: Move to accept the Additional Beach Grooming Areas 2024 Briefing for information.

[Council Briefing Beach Grooming 2024](#)

- 5.3 Proposed Resolution – Enhanced Brushing Along Powerlines to Mitigate Wildfires 13 - 17

Proposed Motion: Move to direct Administration to bring back the Proposed Resolution - Enhances Brushing Along Powerlines to Mitigate Wildfires to the next regular meeting of Council for approval.

[20240614 - Proposed Resolution -Enhanced Brushing Along Powerlines to Mitigate Wildfires](#)

[RMA-Resolution-Powerline-Wildfire-Mitigation](#)

- 5.4 Proposed Resolution - Reinforcing Railway Mitigation Procedures 18 - 22

Proposed Motion: Move to direct Administration to bring back the Proposed Resolution – Reinforcing Railway Mitigation Procedures to the next regular meeting of Council for approval.

[20240614 - Proposed Resolution -Reinforcing Railway Fire Mitigation Procedures](#)

[RMA-Resolution-CN-Wildfire-Mitigation](#)

CONSIDERATION OF BYLAWS & POLICIES

- 6.1 B21 Proclamation of Special Days Policy 23 - 25

Proposed Motion: Move that Council direct Administration to bring forward an amended Proclamation of Special Days Policy to the next Committee of the Whole meeting for review.

[20240614 - Council Briefing - Proclamation Policy](#)

[B21 Proclamation of Special Days](#)

CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS - CLOSED SESSION

- 7.1 Closed Session as per Section 16 of the FOIP Act

Proposed Motion: Move to go into Closed Session at ____ p.m.

- Canyon Creek Recreation Association

Proposed Motion: Move to return to Open Session at _____ p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

MINUTES

**Committee of the Whole Council Meeting
Municipal District of Lesser Slave River No. 124
May 15, 2024
MD Council Chambers**

- MEMBERS PRESENT** Murray Kerik - Reeve
Lana Spencer - Deputy Reeve
Darren Fulmore - Division 1
Sandra Melzer - Division 1
Nancy Sand - Division 1
Brad Pearson - Division 2 (Absent)
Norm Seatter - Division 2
- IN ATTENDANCE** Barry Kolenosky - CAO, MD LSR
Rudolf Liebenberg - Operational Director, P&D, Protective Services, & Utilities
S/Sgt. Bruyns - Slave Lake RCMP
Pearl Lorentzen - Reporter, Lakeside Leader
Marilyn Gladue - Recording Secretary, MD LSR
- CALL TO ORDER** Reeve Kerik called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.
- ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA** **May 15, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting Agenda**
MOTION COW 040-24
Moved by Councillor Seatter to accept the May 15, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting Agenda as amended:
Add: 5.2 Additional information distributed
5.3 Bill 20
5.4 FRIAA
7.2 moved to Closed Session
Remove: 4.2 Delegation respectfully declined – will be rescheduled
CARRIED
- ADOPTION OF MINUTES** **April 17, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes**
MOTION COW 041-24
Moved by Councillor Fulmore to adopt the April 17, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes as amended:
Correction – Motion COW 034-24 – correct “May” spelling
CARRIED
- DELEGATIONS** **Sgt. Bruyns – Slave Lake RCMP**
MOTION COW 042-24
Moved by Councillor Melzer to accept the report from Sgt. Bruyns, Slave Lake RCMP as information.
CARRIED

REPORTS & PRESENTATIONS

Community Policing Plan 2025-2026 DRAFT MDLSR

MOTION COW 043-24

Moved by Deputy Reeve Spencer to accept the Community Policing Plan 2025-2026 as information and that the Draft Community Policing Plan 2025-2026 be brought back to the June 26, 2024, Regular council meeting.

CARRIED

Councillor Sand exited at 11:22 a.m.
Councillor Sand returned at 11:24 a.m.

Recreational Vehicles/Lakeshore Residential Lots MDLSR

MOTION COW 044-24

Moved by Councillor Melzer to accept the Recreational Vehicles/Lakeshore Residential Lots MDLSR briefing as information.

CARRIED

Councillor Seatter exited at 11:38 a.m.
Councillor Seatter returned at 11:40 a.m.

**CONSIDERATION OF BYLAWS
& POLICIES**

PS-26-02 Community Standards Enforcement Policy

MOTION COW 045-24

Moved by Councillor Sand that Administration add PS-26-02 Community Standards Enforcement policy & related procedure to the June 12, 2024, Regular Council Agenda as amended.

CARRIED

Councillor Melzer exited at 11:51 a.m.
Councillor Melzer returned at 11:53 a.m.

PD-61-05 Closures, Leasing & Licencing of Municipal Roads Policy & Procedures

MOTION COW 046-24

Moved by Councillor Seatter that Administration brings policy E9 Leasing of Undeveloped Road Allowances, H8 Licence of Occupation, and H9 Road Closure Policy (for the sale of road plans and road allowances) to June 12, 2024, Regular council meeting for rescinding.

CARRIED

MOTION COW 047-24

Moved by Councillor Sand that Administration add PD-61-05 Closures, Leasing & Licencing of Municipal Roads Policy & Procedure to the June 12, 2024, Regular Council Agenda.

CARRIED

**RECESS
RECONVENE**

12:00 p.m.
12:40 p.m.

**ITEMS FOR
DISCUSSION**

Legacy Road Segments

MOTION COW 048-24

Moved by to accept the Legacy Road Segments report as information.

CARRIED

Councillor Sand exited at 12:48 p.m.
Councillor Sand returned at 12:52 p.m.

Bill 20 – Municipal Affairs Statutes Amendment Act, 2024

MOTION COW 0049-24

Moved by Councillor Seatter to accept Bill 20 – Municipal Affairs Statutes Amendment Act, 2024 for information.

CARRIED

Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (FRIAA)

MOTION COW 050-24

Moved by Councillor Melzer to accept the discussion on the FRIAA Grant as information. Consensus was to sign the Agreements.

CARRIED

Pearl Lorentzen left meeting at 1:05 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

MOTION COW 051-24

Moved by Deputy Reeve Spencer to go into Closed Session at 1:06 p.m. as per the following section of the FOIP Act with CAO Kolenosky and Recording Secretary Gladue in attendance.

- Section 19 – Confidential Evaluations

CARRIED

- Organizational Chart & HR-17-01 Employee Policy

OPEN SESSION

MOTION COW 052-24

Moved by Councillor Melzer to return to Open Session at 1:57 p.m.

CARRIED

MOTION COW 053-24

Moved by Deputy Reeve Spencer to direct Administration to draft a CAO Sub Committee Bylaw to establish a Chief Administrative Officer Performance Evaluation Committee and bring forward to the May 22, 2024, Regular Council meeting.

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION COW 054-24

Moved by Councillor Melzer to adjourn at 1:58 p.m.

CARRIED

Chief Administrative Officer

Reeve



Council Briefing

Title	Animal Units- Options for Bylaws
Date	06/14/2024
Presented By:	Kendra Kozdrocki, Agricultural Fieldman/Rudolf Liebenberg, Operational Director Planning, Utilities & Protective Services
Attachments	Section 8.8 of Current Land Use Bylaw (LUB): 'Keeping of Domestic Pets and Animals' 20240514 AU County Comparison

Proposed Motion	<i>Motion to direct administration to conduct a public consultation survey through the summer months online, presenting all four options to MDLSR ratepayers for their feedback and input.</i>
Administrations Recommendation(s)	As per selected Council Option, as provided by Administration.

BACKGROUND

At the April 17, 2024, Committee of the Whole Meeting, the topic of animal units in the Land Use Bylaw (LUB) was discussed, focusing on the challenges of housing animals (specifically livestock) on small residential lots within the municipality, especially those located close to hamlets. Council acknowledged existing regulations and various concerns, including manure management, environmental stewardship, noise, and the stress experienced by animals in these settings.

Administration has assessed approximately fifteen (15) residents that are housing animals (livestock and/or poultry). These are residents that are visible from roadways, those who are off the road or treed in have not been assessed. Majority of these properties are in Southshore Serviced Residential Areas.

As a result, Council directed the administration to revisit the issue and develop potential options for addressing these concerns. Administration has been tasked with providing comprehensive solutions to ensure responsible animal husbandry throughout the MD, with a focus on small hamlets. The options provided below will be presented to community members through public engagement throughout the summer months to gather community feedback and ensure transparency in the decision-making process. Once the survey period is complete, Council direction will be provided, and the selected option will be incorporated into the MD's existing bylaw(s) accordingly (Municipal Development Plan, Land Use Bylaw, or Animal Control Bylaw). This approach aims to balance the needs of animal owners with the well-being of the community, the environment, and the animals themselves. Public feedback will be shared with Council for further discussion and any future amendments made to the corresponding documents to reflect such feedback will be brought forward for Council review/approval.

Administration has proposed the following options for further consideration:

Option 1	The Municipal District of Lesser Slave River No.124 (MDLSR) will allow current animals to remain until the end of their natural life expectancy and permit small animal units on lots smaller than 2.5 acres (1 hectare, ha) (e.g., poultry & rabbits). Large livestock, such as cows, horses, and bison, will not be permitted. Additionally, no animals will be allowed in Residential Serviced (RS) Districts.
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Option 2	The MDLSR will allow current animals to remain until the end of their life expectancy, while enforcing the existing bylaw for violations. Animals will not be permitted on lots smaller than 2.5 acres (1 hectare, ha), and no animals are permitted Residential Serviced (RS) Districts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No livestock shall be kept on lots with an area of 2.5 acres (1 hectare, ha) or less. • On lots larger than 2.5 acres (1 hectare, ha), livestock may be kept at a ratio of two (2) animal units per hectare. • No livestock are permitted within a hamlet, except on lands designated as Agricultural.
Option 3	The MDLSR will maintain the current animal unit regulations but adopt a stronger enforcement and educational approach to address animal-related issues. Animals are still not recommended in Residential Serviced (RS) Districts.
Option 4	Address the animal units in the existing Animal Control Bylaw instead of the Municipal Development Plan and/or Land Use Bylaw.

ALTERNATIVES

Option 1: Direct administration to conduct a public consultation survey through the summer months online, presenting all four options to MDLSR ratepayers for their feedback and input.

Option 2: Accept the Council Report as information.

BENEFITS/RISKS

Benefits: Enhanced bylaws and enforcement are necessary to ensure effective management of livestock and pets in accordance with evolving community dynamics and needs, while promoting environmental protection and good animal husbandry

Risks: Failing to address these issues through enhanced bylaws and enforcement may result in increased conflicts between residents, inadequate management of animal-related issues, and potential negative impacts on environmental and human health/ safety.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

- Animal Health Act*
- Alberta Land Stewardship Act*
- Agricultural Operation Practices Act*
- Water Act*
- Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*
- Existing MDLSR Bylaws*

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Municipality may incur costs associated with enforcement and animal control ordinances, including monitoring compliance with lot size requirements, and addressing complaints related to noise, odor, and waste management. Increased demand for municipal services, such as animal control and emergency response, may strain limited resources and necessitate budget allocations for additional staff and equipment.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Residents may be upset with this review due to perceived restrictions, financial concerns, lack of consultation, livelihood impacts, uncertainty, cultural considerations, and public health worries. At this time, it is a municipal discussion that will have public consultation before any final decisions are made.

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

AGENDA ITEM #5.1

To effectively communicate the proposed revisions with residents, public consultation will consist of public meetings, informational materials, online platforms, and regular public engagement.

Prepared By: Kendra Kozdrocki, Agricultural Fieldman/ Molly Fyten Director (Contractor), Strategic Projects & Initiatives

Reviewed By: Marilyn Gladue, Executive Assistant

Approved By: Barry Kolenosky, Chief Administrative Officer

OTHER ANIMALS

8.8.6 In the Residential Serviced (RS), Residential Un-Serviced (RUS) and Urban Reserve (UR) districts, the keeping of animals, other than domestic pets, shall be in accordance with the following table:

Lot Size (ac)	Number of Animal Units
< 0.5	0.5
0.5 – 0.99	1
1 – 1.49	1.5
1.5 – 1.99	2
2 – 2.49	2.5
2.5 – 2.99	3
> 3	a maximum of 3 animal units plus an additional 0.5 animal unit per each 0.5 acres.

8.8.7 For the purpose of this Bylaw, one animal unit shall be considered:

Animal Type	# of animals = 1 Animal Unit
Horse (over 1 year old)	1
Foals (up to 1 year old)	2
Cow (over 1 year old)	1
Calf (up to 1 year old)	2
Llama	1
Alpaca	2
Pig (over 1 year old)	1

Animal Type	# of animals = 1 Animal Unit
Piglet (up to 1 year old)	2
Poultry – hens, duck, geese, turkey, quail, pigeons, pheasants	12
Sheep	2
Goat	2
Rabbits (and similar rodents)	20
Other fur bearing animal, fowl, or <u>livestock</u>	1
Beehive	2

8.8.8 Regardless of subsection 8.8.7, animals that are not weaned are not counted towards animal units.

8.8.9 In the Residential Serviced (RS) and Residential Un-Serviced districts, no roosters are permitted.

8.8.10 Beehives shall be considered a discretionary activity and require an approved development permit. Applicants will be required to confirm with adjoining landowners whether or not any person inhabiting the residences has allergies and must disclose findings to the Development Authority. The Development Authority shall require a site plan indicating where the proposed beehive(s) are intended to be placed, and may implement additional setback requirements at their sole discretion.

Figure 1: Section 8.8 of Current Land Use Bylaw (LUB): ‘Keeping of Domestic Pets and Animals’

Animal Unit Discussion			
	Animals Under 1 ha	Allowed in Hamlets	Specific Stipulations
MD of Acadia No. 34	N	N	
Athabasca County	N	N	2 acre
County of Barrhead	N	N	2 acre
Beaver County	N	N	3acres
Big Lakes County	N	N	1 acre. No animals other than poultry
Md of Bighorn	N	N	3 acre
Birch Hills County	NA	NA	
MD of Bonnyville	N	N	3 acre
Brazeau County	N	N	1 acre minimum
Camrose County	N	N	2.5 acres
Cardston County	NA	NA	
Clear Hills County	N	N	9 acres
Clearwater County	NA	NA	
Cypress County	Y	Y	Must have permit
MD of Fairview	N	N	
Flagstaff County	N	N	1.5 acres
Foothills County	N	N	3 acres
County of Fourty Mile	N	N	1 acre
County of Grande Prairie	N	N	3 acres
MD of Greenview	N	N	3 acres
Kneehill County	N	N	
Lac St Anne County	NA	NA	
Lacombe County	N	N	
Lamont County	N	N	
Leduc County	N	N	Must be zoned AG or CR
Lethbridge County	NA	NA	
Mountain View County	Currently redoing bylaw		
County of Newell	N	N	2.97 acres
County of Northern Lights	N	N	5 acres
Northern Sunrise County	N	N	1 acre
County of Paintearth	N	N	5 acres
Parkland County	N	N	
MD of Peace	N	N	1 acre
MD of Pincher Creek	N	N	3 acres
Ponoka County	N	N	2.5 acres
MD of Provost	N	N	
MD of Ranchland	NA	NA	
Red Deer County	NA	NA	Animal Control Bylaw
Rocky View County	N	N	3.46 acres
Saddle Hills Conty	N	N	2acres
Smoky Lake County	NA	NA	
MD of Smoky River	N	N	Fowl Allowed in 0.5 of an animal unit
MD of Spirit River	N	N	3 acres
County of St. Paul	NA	NA	
Starland County	NA	NA	
County of Stettler	N	N	3 acres
Sturgeon County	NA	NA	
Thorhild County	N	N	
County of Two Hills	N	N	10 acres
County of Vermilion River	N	N	10.1 acres
Vulcan County	NA	NA	
MD of Wainwright	N	N	3 acres
Westlock County	N	N	1.5 acres
Woodlands County	N	N	2 acres
Yellowhead County	NA	NA	



Lesser Slave River

Council Briefing

Title:	Additional Beach Grooming Areas 2024
Date:	06/14/2024
Presented By:	Kendra Kozdroski, Agricultural Fieldman
Attachments:	

Proposed Motion:	<i>Move to accept the Additional Beach Grooming Areas 2024 Briefing for information.</i>
Administrations Recommendation(s):	As proposed.

Background

At the May 22, 2024, Council Meeting, a motion was made to obtain a Temporary Field Authorization (TFA) for the purpose of grooming beaches at West Fawcett Lake (the Provincial Recreation Area) and Martin Beach.

Motion 274-24 Moved by Deputy Reeve Spencer to direct Administration to apply make application for a Temporary Field Authorization (TFA) for West Fawcett Lake and Marten Beach for the purpose of Beach Grooming.

West Fawcett Lake PRA

This site is managed by the MDLSR under an agreement with Alberta Parks. According to the agreement, the MDLSR is responsible for maintaining the PRA site throughout the summer months, excluding any fixes or new infrastructure development. Currently, there is no designated beach area, although there are sandy stretches along the shore that are approximately a meter wide from the water's edge. Alberta Parks holds a water act approval for the area, allowing the MDLSR to operate under this agreement without needing a TFA. The water act approval specifies that the approval holder (Alberta Parks/MDLSR) must avoid activities that could cause adverse environmental effects and must minimize the removal or disturbance of the existing bank and its vegetation. Under the agreement the grass and small willows can be removed but no earth work can take place, meaning using a skid steer or groomer to smooth out the area is unable to take place.

Martin Beach

Administration is taking the necessary steps to obtain the approval needed for the area. The groomer and tractor will need to be hauled to the area to groom, as it is too far and dangerous to take the equipment on the highway.

Jean Luc Deba

The beach area will be groomed in June to ensure it is ready for the grand opening of the Canyon Creek reclamation area.

Alternative Options

Option 1: Move to accept the Beach Grooming Areas 2024 Briefing for information.

Option 2: Move to bring back the Beach Grooming discussion to an upcoming Council Meeting.

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Benefits/Risks

Benefit: Removal of debris from the areas may attract tourism and increase the usage.

Risks: Requires multiple hours of administrative time to complete applications, do site visits etc. Staffing hours to clean these areas is high, usually taking one day per clean up.

Strategic Alignment

*Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Alberta Parks & MDLSR.
Water Act, R.S.A. 2000, c. W-3*

Financial Implications

Administrative Hours- Applications, site visit with Alberta Parks, further research.

Staffing Hours- Staff on site to do the task. Approximately 6-8 hours with 5-7 staff.

Equipment- Multiple hand-tools (chainsaws, whipper snippers, shears), brusher, trucks etc.

Communication Strategy

Inform- Post on social media and website before and after beach cleanups

Prepared by:	Kendra Kozdroski, Agricultural Fieldman
Reviewed by:	Marilyn Gladue, Executive Assistant
Approved by:	Barry Kolenosky, Chief Administrative Officer

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Lesser Slave River

Council Briefing

Title:	Proposed Resolution – Enhanced Brushing Along Powerlines to Mitigate Wildfires
Date:	June 14, 2024
Presented By:	Sandra Rendle
Attachments:	Proposed Resolution – Enhanced Brushing Along Powerlines to Mitigate Wildfires

Proposed Motion:	<i>Moved to direct Administration to bring back the Proposed Resolution – Enhances Brushing Along Powerlines to Mitigate Wildfires to the next regular meeting of Council for approval.</i>
Administrations Recommendation(s):	As Proposed.

Background

On April 10th, 2024, the following motion was carried:

MOTION 189-24

Moved by Councillor Fulmore to direct Administration to draft a resolution that can be presented at a Pembina River District 3 meeting and to be forwarded to the 2024 Fall Rural Municipalities of Alberta Conference in regards for the need to provide Bushing along the ATCO powerlines in the province to mitigate the Wildfires.

Throughout the process of drafting this resolution, multiple sources of information were considered to provide an overview of the present issues, achievements, and avenues of growth within the context of powerline brushing and vegetation management within Alberta. Included within this process was research into the causes and contributors of wildfires, wildfire mitigation tactics and techniques, and powerline vegetation management plans and procedures. Background information was attained through a combination of consultation with the CAO, as well as secondary research. Assembly of the resolution was aided by a combination of reviewing existing RMA resolutions, in addition to consultation with RMA policy advisors.

Issues

Wildfires pose a significant threat to rural municipalities in Alberta endangering lives, property and natural resources. Overgrown vegetation along these powerlines increases the risk of wildfires due to potential contact with power infrastructure.

Interests

Powerlines serve as a common ignition source for wildfire, causing 85 wildfires within Alberta in 2023. Prioritizing and expanding brushing initiations on crown lands and widening powerline right of ways for vegetation management is crucial for enhancing wildfire mitigation.

Alternatives

Direct Administration to bring forward to the next regular meeting of Council for approval.

Accept for information.

Analysis

N/A

Next Steps

Once approved at a regular Council meeting, the resolution will be brought forward at a Pembina River District 3 meeting for consideration.

Prepared by: Erik Loken, MD Inter and Sandra Rendle, Legislative Services
Reviewed by: Marilyn Gladue, Executive Assistant
Approved by: Barry Kolenosky, Chief Administrative Officer

Items noted in red font will be completed by RMA

Resolution **?-17F**

Enhanced Brushing Along Powerlines to Mitigate Wildfires

MD of Lesser Slave River

*Three-fifths (3/5) Majority Required
Endorsed by*

WHEREAS wildfires pose a significant threat to rural municipalities in Alberta, endangering lives, property, and natural resources; and

WHEREAS powerlines traverse vast areas of the province, including areas of high fire risk; and

WHEREAS overgrown vegetation along these powerlines increases the risk of wildfires due to potential contact with power infrastructure; and

WHEREAS proactive measures such as brushing along powerlines have been proven effective in reducing wildfire risk by creating firebreaks and limiting the spread of fires; and

WHEREAS the current level of brushing along powerlines in high-risk areas does not adequately mitigate wildfire risk; and

WHEREAS the rugged terrain and expansive forests found within many rural municipalities increase the complexity of wildfire management and the urgency of preventative measures; and

WHEREAS the cost of wildfire suppression and recovery places a significant burden on provincial and municipal resources;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) urge relevant provincial authorities to prioritize and expand brushing initiatives on crown lands along powerlines to reduce the risk of wildfires;

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the RMA advocate to the relevant provincial authorities to widen powerline right of ways for vegetation management within areas of high wildfire risk.

Member Background

Wildfires have long been a concern for rural municipalities in Alberta, posing a significant threat to public safety, infrastructure, agriculture, and the environment. The impact of wildfires extends beyond immediate damages, often resulting in long-term economic and ecological repercussions.

In recent years, the risk of wildfires has been exacerbated by factors such as climate change, prolonged droughts, and the encroachment of vegetation into areas near powerlines. Powerlines serve as a common ignition source for wildfires, causing 85

wildfires within Alberta in 2023¹. When vegetation comes into contact with powerlines, the risk of ignition increases substantially, leading to devastating wildfires that can spread rapidly and unpredictably.

To address this risk, brushing initiatives along powerlines have emerged as a proactive measure to mitigate wildfire danger. Brushing involves the removal or trimming of vegetation near powerlines to create a buffer zone, reducing the likelihood of sparks igniting nearby vegetation. By creating firebreaks and reducing fuel loads, brushing initiatives not only decrease the risk of wildfires but also facilitate more effective firefighting efforts by providing access to affected areas. However, given the increased length and severity of recent fire seasons, many rural municipalities continue to face significant wildfire risk due to a level of brushing along powerlines which is now inadequate, leaving communities vulnerable to the devastating consequences of uncontrolled wildfires.

Specifically, within the M.D. of Lesser Slave River, fires caused by powerlines have endangered residents. Additionally, the threat of this risk is amplified within local roads surrounded by forest which only feature one entrance/exit, resulting in the possibility of residents becoming trapped if a fire were to block the exit. Because of this, we are looking to proactively reduce the risk of this happening through improved brushing programs among powerlines on crown lands.

The expansion of brushing initiatives along powerlines is crucial for enhancing wildfire prevention and mitigation strategies in rural municipalities. By proactively managing vegetation near powerlines, Alberta can reduce the frequency and severity of wildfires, thereby safeguarding communities, infrastructure, and natural resources.

It should be recognized that regulation exists regarding tree and vegetation brushing near utilities. It is also worth recognizing that Alberta's electricity distribution companies have made great steps in vegetation management processes^{2,3,4}, which should be celebrated. With that being said, the continued development of wildfires because of vegetation's contact with these utilities indicates that there is still more work to be done on this front.

In summary, this resolution aims to achieve the outcome of further mitigating wildfires through an enhanced process of brushing powerlines. By investing in proactive measures to reduce wildfire risk, Alberta can enhance the safety, resilience, and sustainability of communities across the province.

¹ Alberta Wildfire Season Statistics: <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/alberta-wildfire-season-statistics>

² Altalink Vegetation Management: <https://www.altalink.ca/safety-and-preparedness/vegetation-management/>

³ Atco Integrated Vegetation Management Plan: https://electric.atco.com/content/dam/web/atco-electric/IVM%20Plan_Final.pdf

⁴ Fortis Alberta Wildfire Mitigation: <https://www.fortisalberta.com/about-us/sustainability/our-environment/wildfire-mitigation>

Relevant Sources:

Alberta Wildfire Season Statistics:

<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/alberta-wildfire-season-statistics>

Altalink Vegetation Management:

<https://www.altalink.ca/safety-and-preparedness/vegetation-management/>

Atco Integrated Vegetation Management Plan

https://electric.atco.com/content/dam/web/atco-electric/IVM%20Plan_Final.pdf

Fortis Alberta Wildfire Mitigation:

<https://www.fortisalberta.com/about-us/sustainability/our-environment/wildfire-mitigation>

RMA Background

RMA will provide after resolution is endorsed at district level.



Lesser Slave River

Council Briefing

Title:	Proposed Resolution – Reinforcing Railway Mitigation Procedures
Date:	June 14, 2024
Presented By:	Sandra Rendle
Attachments:	Proposed Resolution – Reinforcing Railway Mitigation Procedures

Proposed Motion:	<i>Moved to direct Administration to bring back the Proposed Resolution – Reinforcing Railway Mitigation Procedures to the next regular meeting of Council for approval.</i>
Administrations Recommendation(s):	As Proposed.

Background

On April 10th, 2024, the following motion was carried:

MOTION 190-24

Moved by Reeve Kerik to direct Administration to draft a resolution that can be presented at a Pembina River District 3 meeting to be forwarded to the 2024 Fall Rural Municipalities of Alberta Conference in regard to CN reverting back to the process of Wildland fire car mitigation being followed up during train movement that would assist in mitigating the Wildfires.

Throughout the process of drafting this resolution, multiple sources of information were considered to provide an overview of the present issues, achievements, and avenues of growth within the context of railway wildfire mitigation within Alberta. Included within this process was research into the causes and contributors of wildfires, wildfire mitigation tactics and techniques, and railway fire mitigation plans and procedures. Background information was attained through a combination of consultation with the CAO, as well as secondary research. Assembly of the resolution was aided by a combination of reviewing existing RMA resolutions, in addition to consultation with RMA policy advisors.

Issues

Wildfires pose a significant threat to rural municipalities in Alberta, endangering lives, property and the environment and Railway operations can result in the creation of fires.

Interests

CN currently does have a Fire Risk Mitigation Plan in place and has also invested in additional Firefighting trains in 2024, but one specific avenue of enhancing railway wildfire mitigation would be to advocate for CN to revert to the process of wildland fire car mitigation followed up during train movement within areas of high fire risk.

Alternatives

Direct Administration to bring forward to the next regular meeting of Council for approval.

Accept for information.

Analysis

N/A

Next Steps

Once approved at a regular Council meeting, the resolution will be brought forward at a Pembina River District 3 meeting for consideration.

Prepared by: Erik Loken, MD Inter and Sandra Rendle, Legislative Services
Reviewed by: Marilyn Gladue, Executive Assistant
Approved by: Barry Kolenosky, Chief Administrative Officer

Items noted in red font will be completed by RMA

Resolution **?-17F**

Reinforcing Railway Fire Mitigation Procedures

MD of Lesser Slave River

*Three-fifths (3/5) Majority Required
Endorsed by*

WHEREAS wildfires pose a significant threat to rural municipalities in Alberta, endangering lives, property, and the environment; and

WHEREAS the rugged terrain and expansive forests found within many rural municipalities increase the complexity of wildfire management and the urgency of preventative measures; and

WHEREAS wildfire seasons are growing increasingly longer and more intense, placing a significant strain on provincial and municipal wildfire resources; and

WHEREAS Railways such as Canadian National Railway (CN) operate extensive railway infrastructure throughout Alberta, intersecting with wildland areas prone to fires; and

WHEREAS Railway operations can result in the creation of fires; and

WHEREAS the implementation of effective mitigation measures during train movement could significantly reduce the occurrence and severity of wildfires in affected areas;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rural Municipalities of Alberta (RMA) advocate for relevant provincial authorities to work with railway companies to enhance railway wildfire mitigation strategies and procedures; and

FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that the RMA advocate for railway companies to have “fire cars” follow trains during train movement within high fire risk areas during fire season as a means of mitigating wildfires.

Member Background

Wildfires have historically been a recurring challenge for rural municipalities in Alberta, posing a threat to public safety, property, and natural resources. With the M.D. of Lesser Slave River containing areas of high fire risk, and seeing the growing threat and scope of wildfires, we are looking to mitigate these events through multiple

avenues. One of these avenues is fire mitigation within railway operations, including those of CN, which have been identified as potential contributors to wildfire ignition due to factors such as sparks generated during train movement¹.

Despite the existence of corresponding regulations such as Transport Canada's Railway Extreme Heat and Fire Risk Mitigation Rules², recent incidents and developments, including high-profile wildfires and public concern over railway-related wildfire risks^{3,4,5} have underscored the urgency of revisiting wildfire mitigation strategies across all avenues, including railway operations.

It is worth noting that railway companies have made recent developments within the realm of firefighting and mitigation, such as CN implementing an extreme weather fire risk mitigation plan in 2022⁶, and incorporating specialized firefighting trains into its fleet as recently as 2024⁷. With that being said, it is too early to fully understand the impact these will have on overall fire mitigation.

One specific avenue of enhancing railway wildfire mitigation would be to advocate for CN to revert to the process of wildland fire car mitigation followed up during train movement within areas of high fire risk. This would involve the use of "fire cars" which would follow trains within high fire risk areas to quickly put out fires as they are created, before they reach a substantial size. This is different from the above-mentioned firefighting trains, which are limited in quantity, and have a larger focus of fighting more established fires.

The impacts of wildfires in rural Alberta are profound, ranging from ecological damage and loss of biodiversity to threats to public safety, property, and livelihoods. Additionally, smoke and air pollution resulting from wildfires can have adverse effects on public health. By enhancing fire mitigation strategies and procedures across a wide range of potential contributors such as railway operations, we can proactively work to limit the threats posed by wildfires within Alberta.

¹ Transportation Safety Board of Canada Common Causes of Fire in Canada's Rail Transportation Sector: <https://www.tsb.gc.ca/eng/medias-media/fiches-facts/r21v0143/r21v0143-20210715.html>

² Transport Canada Railway Extreme Heat and Fire Risk Mitigation Rules: <https://tc.canada.ca/en/rail-transportation/rules/railway-extreme-heat-fire-risk-mitigation-rules>

³ Rail Transportation Safety Investigation Report: <https://www.tsb.gc.ca/eng/rappports-reports/rail/2021/r21v0144/r21v0144.html>

⁴ Sparks from CN Train to Blame for Wildfires: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/brush-fires-train-tracks-edmonton-cn-rail-1.5286886>

⁵ TSB Warns of Locomotive Wildfire Risk: <https://calgary.citynews.ca/2023/08/24/tsb-report-warns-that-unnoticed-locomotive-fires-pose-wildfire-risk/>

⁶ CN Fire Risk Mitigation Plan: <https://www.cn.ca/-/media/files/your-industry/customer-reports/cn-extreme-weather-plan-en.pdf>

⁷ CN New Firefighting Trains: <https://www.cn.ca/en/news/2024/05/cn-launches-new-firefighting-trains-to-help-protect-supply-chain>

Resources:

CN Fire Risk Mitigation Plan:

<https://www.cn.ca/-/media/files/your-industry/customer-reports/cn-extreme-weather-plan-en.pdf>

CN New Firefighting Trains:

<https://www.cn.ca/en/news/2024/05/cn-launches-new-firefighting-trains-to-help-protect-supply-chain>

Rail Transportation Safety Investigation Report:

<https://www.tsb.gc.ca/eng/rapports-reports/rail/2021/r21v0144/r21v0144.html>

Sparks from CN Train to Blame for Wildfires:

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/brush-fires-train-tracks-edmonton-cn-rail-1.5286886>

Transport Canada Railway Extreme Heat and Fire Risk Mitigation Rules:

<https://tc.canada.ca/en/rail-transportation/rules/railway-extreme-heat-fire-risk-mitigation-rules>

TSB Warns of Locomotive Wildfire Risk:

<https://calgary.citynews.ca/2023/08/24/tsb-report-warns-that-unnoticed-locomotive-fires-pose-wildfire-risk/>

Transportation Safety Board of Canada Common Causes of Fire in Canada's Rail Transportation Sector:

<https://www.tsb.gc.ca/eng/medias-media/fiches-facts/r21v0143/r21v0143-20210715.html>

RMA Background

RMA will provide after resolution is endorsed at district level.



Lesser Slave River

Council Briefing

Title:	Proclamation Policy
Date:	June 14, 2024
Presented By:	Sandra Rendle
Attachments:	Proclamation of Special Days Policy B.21(ADM-12-17)

Proposed Motion:	<i>Move that Council direct Administration to bring forward an amended Proclamation of Special Days Policy to the next Committee of the Whole meeting for review.</i>
Administrations Recommendation(s):	As proposed.

Background

At the May 22, 2024 Regular Meeting of Council the following motion was made:

Motion 276-24

Moved by Deputy Reeve Spencer to bring back B21 Proclamation of Special Days policy to next Council meeting for review.

Administration did a quick search to see which municipalities have proclamation policies and how they deal with proclamation requests. Some municipalities leave the decision for issuance of proclamations up to the Mayor; others bring the proclamations to Council for the decision. One common criterion is that the proclamation promotes initiatives of significance to MD residents.

One municipality researched, has a standing list of proclamations that are issued on an annual basis (Ex. Seniors Week, Mental Health Week, Volunteer Week and Metis Week), proclamations not on the standing list are brought to Council for decision, based on the criteria in the Policy.

If Council wishes to amend the Proclamation of Special Days Policy, Administration will do further research on best practices to ensure that the proclamations brought forward are relevant to our municipality and of significance to MD residents.

Issues

The current policy does not allow for any proclamations to be brought forward, no matter what the cause.

Interests

Proclamations acknowledge the importance of recognizing charitable causes or events, arts and cultural celebrations, and public awareness campaigns which enhance community awareness and positively impact the

Municipality.

Alternatives

Move that Council direct Administration to bring forward an amended Proclamation Policy to the next Committee of the Whole meeting for review.

Move to accept Policy B.21(ADM-12-17) for information.

Analysis

N/A

Next Steps

N/A

Prepared by: Sandra Rendle, Associate Director of Legislative Services

Reviewed by:

Approved by: Barry Kolenosky, Chief Administrative Officer



Lesser Slave River

TITLE: PROCLAMATION OF SPECIAL DAYS

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2000

POLICY NUMBER: B.21

PURPOSE:

The M.D. of Lesser Slave River receives a significant number of requests to issue proclamations designating special days or weeks in support of a variety of causes. Placing ads in newspapers at taxpayer expense to proclaim these special days is not seen as a reasonable action by M.D. Council.

1. The M.D. of Lesser Slave River #124 will not proclaim any special days, weeks or time periods for any reason. Administration shall respond to any such inquiries by declining to make any such proclamations.