

Policy and Priorities Committee Meeting

May 5, 2015

The Policy and Priorities Committee is a standing Committee of Council responsible for reviewing policies, bylaws, plans, studies and other County activities that are in a draft or planning stages in order to provide Administration with direction. Recommendations may be made during Policy and Priorities (POP) meetings, but final decisions regarding bylaws and policies must be referred to future Regular Council Meetings.

Business Licenses

- Council has been looking into the possibility of instituting a business license program in the County. The purpose is to equip the County with timely data on local businesses in order to provide this information to residents, prospective residents and industry. In addition, the procurement of a business license can lend validity and legitimacy to home-based businesses.
- The former Town of Lac La Biche had a business license program; however it was not continued after amalgamation. Business licensing at this time was based on the honour system—the responsibility to apply for a business license was left up to the business owner.
- Administration conducted some initial research about business license practices in other municipalities for Council's consideration. The research included a survey of 56 municipalities, of which 30 require business licenses.
- After discussing the purpose, level of enforcement required and potential costs of a business license program in the County, Council requested more information from Administration before making a decision.
- Council directed Administration to bring forward a report addressing the advantages and disadvantages of a business licensing program, including impacts on home business occupations, different classifications of licenses, possible impacts on municipal assessment and the different administrative models.

Control of Clubfoot Disease Policy and Procedure

- Clubroot is a soil-borne disease of canola, mustard and other crops in the cabbage family that can significantly reduce crop yield and quality and can even destroy a crop if infestation levels are high.
- Clubroot is spread by farm machinery and vehicles, seed contamination and wind and water erosion and has the potential to spread quickly.
- The Alberta Clubroot Management Plan was developed by the government of Alberta and requires that Clubroot control is implemented and enforced by individual municipalities.
- The County's Control of Clubroot Disease Policy and Procedure was developed to reflect the requirements of the Alberta Clubroot Management Plan. The policy and procedure were

Policy and Priorities Committee Meeting

May 5, 2015

scheduled for review and revision and Administration presented the updated documents for Council's review.

- Some updates include:
 - Inspections will take place annually in August.
 - Boot covers will be changed, or disinfectant applied to footwear upon entry at every new field.
 - The County will notify the producer immediately if Clubroot is detected and make every effort to work with the producer to mitigate the infestation.
 - Fields that are tested and shown to have a low incidence of Clubroot disease (i.e. one positive test out of 10 samples taken in the field) will be prohibited from hosting canola or other susceptible crops for three subsequent years and will be required to plant a Clubroot-resistant variety in the fourth year.
 - Fields that are tested and shown to have a moderate to high incidence of Clubroot disease (two or more positive tests out of 10 samples) will be prohibited from hosting canola or other susceptible crops for five subsequent years and must plant a Clubroot resistant variety in the sixth year.
 - If the producer does not follow the policy and procedure after notification has been given, a notice will be issued through the Alberta government and the Alberta Pest Act and the crop will be destroyed.
- The County's Agricultural Services staff surveyed fields in every township in the municipality with canola or other Clubroot-susceptible crop and found no evidence of Clubroot for 2015.
- The Control of Clubroot Disease Policy and Procedure will be brought forward for final approval at a future Regular Council Meeting.

Community Garden

- County Agricultural staff presented updates to the Community Garden Policy and Procedure to Council for their review.
- The County's Community Garden is located at Alexander Hamilton Park in Lac La Biche. The current site consists of 40 plots open free of charge to County residents and community groups, as well as a water tank, composting bins and waste receptacles for gardeners' use.
- The major update to the Community Garden Policy allows for gardeners from previous years to retain the same plot year after year if they prefer.
- The updates to the Community Garden Policy will be brought forward for final approval at a future Regular Council Meeting.

Policy and Priorities Committee Meeting
May 5, 2015

Intergovernmental/Aboriginal Relations Committee

- Council has discussed organizing a committee that would include representatives from neighbouring Aboriginal communities in order to share information and resources and partner to develop initiatives that will enhance the region.
- Council approved a motion identifying the Mayor as the point person to liaise with elected officials from neighbouring Aboriginal communities to determine their interest in joining this committee.