

The Public Works Committee is a standing Committee of Council responsible for developing and evaluating matters of policy and providing oversight and recommendations for Transportation Services, Utilities and Solid Waste and Resource Recovery Management.

Solid Waste and Resource Recovery Update

- General Manager of Operations, Jeff Lawrence, reported on the department's projects and activities.
 - Implementation of new volume and fee tracking software to be installed at select landfill sites this fall.
 - Weekly recycling pickup implemented September 1, 2014, for participants in Curbside Pickup Program.
 - New landfill and transfer site hours implemented September 1, 2014. New winter hours to commence October 1, 2014.
 - Concrete crushing in progress at Beaver Lake.
 - Storage tanks ordered to expand placement of oil recycling sites in County.

Transportation Services Update

- Transportation Services Manager, Brian Shapka, reported on the department's projects and activities.
 - Over 360 kilometres of County road re-graveling will be complete by mid-September.
 - Beaver Hill Road Improvement Project is complete.
 - The re-oiling of Venice Road, Sunset Bay, Holowachuk Estates Access Road and portions of Lakeview Estates are complete, with Bonesville and Golden Sands subdivisions underway.
 - Pothole patching.
 - Sign maintenance.

Utility Services Update

- Utility Services Manager, Gary Siebold, reported on the department's projects and activities.
 - Routine operations and maintenance are ongoing.
 - Construction underway to water/sewer service systems in Claude Lake and Eagle Haunt subdivisions.
 - Engineering and design underway for a number of capital projects.

New Business

In-House Road Construction

- In the interest of increasing cost-savings and enhancing autonomy when it comes to project development and timelines, Council directed Administration to research the feasibility of the municipality undertaking various in-house public works projects.
- The research looked at new road construction, reconstruction of existing roads, drainage projects, bridge culvert construction, gravel crushing and hauling and water/sewer repair.
- In order to implement one or all of these programs, it would be necessary to commit to a three-year construction program, a capital start-up cost and the retention and training of key staff.
- The County would also need to purchase new equipment, like graders, dozers, excavators, scrapers, crushers and equipment haul trailers.
- Council discussed starting in-house projects in a few of these areas (i.e. in-house gravel crushing and hauling) and working towards building capacity to complete other public works projects in the future.
- Council directed Administration to come back with a long-term transitional plan, including budget implications, for a hybrid approach to in-house versus contracted manpower for public works projects. Council will discuss this item further during 2015 budget deliberations.

Hamlet Road Maintenance

- In the interest of improving maintenance to the hamlet roads in the County, Council directed Administration to research the cost to resurface 1 kilometre of road.
- The cost to resurface one kilometre of road is just under \$300,000. Resurfacing instead of patching can also greatly improve the lifespan of a road.
- Council discussed the possibility of an annual road resurfacing schedule as part of regular road maintenance. Council may look at funding such a program during 2015 budget deliberations.

Speed Limit on Egg Lake Road (Township Road 670)

- In response to the inquiry of residents, Council directed Administration to research the possibility of a speed limit increase on Egg Lake Road, from 80 km/h to 90 km/h.
- Road engineers conducted a geometric assessment of the vertical and horizontal curves of the road, and recommended the speed limit remain at 80 km/h. While the road may be designed for a speed of 90 km/h, in the interest of safety, a 10 km/h buffer is typically applied. In fact, the engineers found that if the road should see an increased volume of traffic in the future, road design best practices might dictate a speed limit lower than 80 km/h if approaches were not relocated.

Safety Concerns, 101 Street

- Council discussed driver and pedestrian safety on 101 Street in Lac La Biche. Areas of concern include the intersection of 101 Street and 102 Avenue near the Post Office, and the crosswalk connecting Sobeys to the parking lot across the street.
- Pedestrians neglecting to use the designated crosswalk (i.e. jaywalking) contribute to the safety issues on the road.
- Line painting was redone this summer, more clearly delineating parking stalls, crosswalks and no-parking areas, and has increased safety along the road; however lines will not be easily visible under snow during the winter months.
- Council discussed a number of options to improve pedestrian and driver safety on the street, including a four-way stop at the 101 Street and 102 Avenue intersection, and making 101 Street a one-way thoroughfare. Both of these options, however, would have major traffic impacts on surrounding streets and intersections, and, as such, are not ideal.
- Council discussed the implementation of a safety education campaign for pedestrians and drivers in the County, especially regarding the dangers of jaywalking.

Partnership with Lac La Biche Natural Gas Co-op

- Lac La Biche County Utility department already works closely with the Lac la Biche Natural Gas Co-op to bring gas service to the region.
- In the interest of solidifying the partnership between the County and the Natural Gas Co-op, the Joint Utility Committee and staff from both parties worked together to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Council's review.
- Some items included in the MOU are the potential development of high pressure gas distribution lines that would allow both parties access to an adequate supply of natural gas as the region continues to develop, as well as cost-sharing and manpower.
- Once the MOU is finalized, a detailed final agreement will be developed for the County and Co-op to review.