

Information hand-out from Open House, 2022-Jan-17

Highlights of the 2020-2021 years

GRAVEL SALES

The Village worked with Special Areas gravel expert, Kelsey Martin to develop an extensive plan for the development of the gravel pit, as well as a marketing plan. Over the past 4 years we have had \$284,943.84 dollars in gravel sales revenue, with \$141,185.84 of those sales in the 2021 year.

NEW BUSINESSES

In the 2020 & 2021 year we have supported 4 new businesses in the Village by partnering with them in the servicing of their lots utilizing grant dollars. One or possibly 2 will be operational in the 2022 year and the other 2 in 2023-24.

LOT SALES

In 2020 the village sold 5 lots, and in 2021 we sold another 5 lots, for a total of 10 lots in the past 2 years. Total lot sales in the ten-year period prior to 2020 (2010-2019) was 3 lots.

PRIVATE SALES

In the past 2 years we have seen private sales of numerous properties, with most selling above assessed value.

MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS

Municipal Affairs received a petition from residents in the Village of Empress In 2020. The petition was declared insufficient, but in discussion with Municipal Affairs, we determined that we could push up the Municipal Accountability Program (MAP) review for the Village. Every Municipality under 2500, must go through a MAP review every 5 years.

MUNICIPAL ACCOUNTABILITY (MAP) REVIEW

In 2021 the Village went through the MAP review with Municipal Affairs. This review looks at all our legislative requirements and evaluates whether or not we are in compliance. The review identified 57 areas, of which 12 were identified as needing some work. Council reviewed the legislative gaps at the March 2021 Council meeting and made the necessary adjustments to bring everything in to compliance.

The majority of the changes were interpretation and were easily rectified. We were required to create and pass a Bylaw Officer Bylaw that is new.

The only thing left to send in will be our 2022 tax millrate Bylaw that removes all reference to the policing requisition. This amount is to be added to the Municipal millrate without being referenced as a requisition by the Province. This is a contentious issue in Municipalities as it goes against the open and transparent government the Province is prescribing for Municipalities.

MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS INDEPTH ASSESSMENT REVIEW

Municipal Affairs also did an in-depth assessment review for the Village of Empress. Of the 30 areas evaluated, there were 2 minor things identified in the assessment review: one of which was to identify

vacant properties that have services to them, and ensure the assessor is assessing those properties differently than unserviced lots. This is in progress.

The 2nd was to ensure all property cards had the land use zoning code on them. This has been completed.

There was also a recommendation to have a formal form for a request for assessment information. A policy and form are in development to go before Council.

MUNICIPAL INDICATOR DASHBOARD

The third thing Municipal Affairs completes every year for all Municipalities is the Municipal Indicators Dashboard that reviews 13 areas including Audit Outcome, Ministerial Intervention, Tax Base Balance Accumulated Surplus/Deficit, Investment in Infrastructure, Tax Collection Rate, On time financial reporting, Infrastructure Age, Population Change, Debt to Revenue Percentage, Current Ratio, Debt Servicing to Revenue Percentage and Interest in Municipal Office. The only area of any concern for Empress is the rate of Tax Collection. Anytime it is below 90% it triggers concerns. Empress is at 85.09% for 2020.

Overall, Municipal Affairs has indicated they are pleased with the cooperation and the results of all these reviews and considers Empress to be in compliance with their legislative responsibilities.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

MNP completes the annual financial audit for the Village and copies of the 2019 and 2020 financial statements are available at the office, on our website, and a few here tonight. Highlights are:

- Schedule I the change in accumulated surplus, which includes cash and tangible capital assets on page 5 indicating in 2019 an increase in accumulated surplus of \$575,449, and in 2020 an increase of \$567,919.
- The second area to turn to is on page 15 which highlights DEBT limits. This outlines what the Village is eligible to have for debt based on our revenue, and also what we have for debt. Please note, the Village **HAS NO DEBT**.

If anyone has questions with regard to any of these reports or financial statements, please make an appointment with our CAO, Debbie Ross, and she will be happy to answer any questions you may have.

As we are a newly elected Council as of the end of October, I think we need to recognize that much of the work done, being presented in this report, was done by the outgoing Council, and we need to thank them for the work they have done on the Villages behalf, to ensure our community is moving forward.