

APRIL 2017 NEWSLETTER

The longest serving employee of the Town of Maple Creek has announced her retirement effective May 5, 2017. Deb Machay has faithfully served the Town of Maple Creek for the past 33 years. Her expertise and knowledge will be greatly missed. The Mayor, Council and staff wish Deb all the best in her future.

There is a correction to my last report. I incorrectly posted that the second visit by Maltese Fire Inspection would be at an hourly rate plus mileage. There is no mileage charge, only a flat hourly rate.

The Town has not been informed yet whether or not our grant applications for the water treatment plant and lagoon upgrades have been approved. The upgrades are needed to meet the ever-increasing standards generated by the Federal and Provincial Governments. The Town has to complete upgrades to the lagoon system by the end of 2021 to meet the requirements of discharging wastewater into a fish bearing body of water.

The water treatment plant upgrades are mainly to increase the current storage capacity. Current storage is approximately 2.5 days. The council feels that storage capacity should be at least 5 days. This amount of storage would provide adequate margin of safety should there be some sort of emergency i.e. Main water line break or a major fire.

The Cypress Hills Destination Association has applied to the Co-op Community Spaces Program for funding to rehabilitate the Esso Brownfield across from the new Co-op Gas Bar and C-Store. The whole area would be revitalized with flower beds, raised community gardens and a larger garden for the Foodbank. There would also be a new welcome to Maple Creek sign.

The Town is having ongoing meetings with the RM of Maple Creek regarding fire protection. The Town has almost completed the purchase of the old hospital property from the Chinook Regional Health Authority. Once the purchase is completed a portion will be subdivided out for the new fire hall. The balance of the property will be subdivided and rezoned to serve the Towns' best needs.

The fire department has been touring new fire halls in the area were been built within the last 3 - 4 years and will bring those plans forward for consideration. Once the plans have been selected and agreed upon by all parties' plans will be drawn up and submitted for tender. The proposed timeline on this is expected to be 2 to 3 years.

The Public Works committee on the advice of Neil Bookout, Public Works Foreman, has decided to reline approximately 4.5 blocks of the oldest sewer pipe in Town. The pipe is still intact but is showing signs of serious deterioration in these areas. This is a huge cost savings to the Town as no excavation is needed therefore no disruption on the street. The cost to do the 4.5 blocks is \$200,000 compared with approximately \$200,000 per block with excavation and paving.

There are many parts of Town where the pipe is at least 60 years old. Overall the system appears to be in fairly good shape but the infrastructure is old and needs to be maintained on a regular basis. Camera work will be done this year to determine the areas requiring to be relined next year.

Tax notices will be going out on April 28, 2017 and the discount of 1.5% will end on May 31, 2017.

The Cemetery Preservation Committee brought forward a proposal to the Council meeting held on Tuesday April 25, 2017 to purchase a 64-niche columbarium for the Maple Creek Cemetery. The proposal is to place the columbarium at the east end of the cemetery. Keep watching for more details as they become available.

Did you know that that the Town of Maple Creek has a storm drain system as well as a sanitary sewer system? After the flood of 2010 a large portion of the sanitary system was flushed and cleaned paid for by PTAP. The Town has implemented a 3-year schedule of flushing the sanitary system throughout the town.

Neil Bookout had concerns regarding the storm system which did not seem to perform as needed. The storm drains have been in the ground almost as long as the sanitary system. No one could remember or find records of when the storm system had been inspected or flushed. It was known that the system had not been cleaned after the flood. The storm drain system consists of 18-inch pipe running north south along the streets to the 30-inch main on Pacific Avenue, then west to Petro Canada where it goes under the tracks and into Maple Creek.

It was decided that the system needed to be cleaned due to the frequent flooding when the sudden summer cloud bursts would happen. What we thought would be a small two to three-week job turned into a major project that spanned several months. It turned out that the 30-inch main was almost plugged off and was not accepting the flow from the other lines. The cost of doing this work was over \$175,000 but now the system functions as it should.

If you noticed the rapid thaw after the last big snow the water disappeared without the usual ponding around the catch basins. That tells us that it was money well spent.

Talk to you soon.

Don McLeod - CAO