



## Mayor's Monthly Message

December 2019

Council continued to work through both operational and capital budget processes in December. The Government of Alberta also provided further details on the new police funding model that will see new incremental costs for Stirling beginning in 2020. Policing costs will work out to an equivalent of \$17 per resident in 2020 and eventually rise to \$52 per resident by 2024. Historically, communities with populations under 5,000 people have not had to contribute to policing costs. In addition to new costs, the Government of Alberta has also advised that transfers for capital (ie: grant revenues we use for projects) will be reduced by 9% in 2020 and reduced by a further 14% in 2021.

Council has been focussed on holding the line on potential increases to fees, charges and taxes wherever possible. In fact, there were very few changes to the fees and charges bylaw for 2020 which received third and final reading at our December 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. We are also looking at creative ways to generate new revenues that do not place a burden on residents. For example, expanded products and services available at the ATB Financial Agency which the Village operates and receives a commission from.

One of the key capital projects planned for next year is the relocation of the Theodore Brandley Municipal Library to the lower level of the Lion's Hall/Community Centre. The Library Board has been working hard to develop a long-term vision for the programs, facilities and services needed by the community. Libraries are changing to support creativity and innovation. It's not just about the books! The lower level of the Community Centre will allow for a significant increase in the amount of space available for the library to expand their offerings over time. Modifications will be required to ensure barrier free access to the new location.

Engineering work is being finalized for the rehabilitation of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenues. (Also known as the block in front of the school.) Work should begin in the spring to address drainage, traffic safety and other concerns while we replace the overlay on the road. Thanks to all residents who provided feedback on the design of the proposed improvements to the street.

Arrangements have also been made for an external review of the pool by a qualified energy efficiency engineer thanks, in part, to grant funding available through the Municipal Climate Change Action Centre. We will be exploring upgrades to the pool's mechanical systems to reduce the operating costs.

Council also heard from Chief Robin Fisher of the Stirling Fire Department this month. Chief Fisher provided a report on the department's activities over the year and plans for training, equipment and community involvement in the new year. As always, we appreciate the hard work and dedication of our volunteer fire fighters. A friendly reminder to keep an eye on over-burdened power bars, worn extension cords and unattended candles to help prevent fires.



Page 2

Council meetings normally fall on the first and third Wednesday of each month beginning at 7:00pm. The meeting schedule for January has been changed to accommodate the New Year's Day statutory holiday. Council meetings for January have been moved to Wednesday, January 8<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>. The regular meeting schedule will resume in February. As always, meeting agendas and minutes can be accessed from the Village website. Council meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcome in the gallery.

As we gather with family and friends this holiday season, I extend my sincere best wishes for a very Merry Christmas.

I am grateful for the countless dedicated volunteers in our community who contribute in so many ways through a broad range of different organizations. THANK YOU!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trevor Lewington', is written in a cursive style.

Trevor Lewington

**Have a comment? Question? Idea? Suggestion?**

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