



## Mayor's Monthly Message

**October 2021**



A reminder that although there is no municipal election as both Council and local school trustee positions were all filled by acclamation, there is still an opportunity to vote in Alberta's Senatorial selection process and two provincial referendum questions. Voting takes place at the Stirling Community Centre on Monday, October 18<sup>th</sup>. More information can be found on the Village website here: <http://stirling.ca/archives/9816>

Stirling's Free Flu Clinic will be held on Thursday, October 21<sup>st</sup> from 3:00pm to 7:00 pm at the Community Centre. The clinic is available to residents who are 5 years old and up. Please remember to bring your Alberta Health Care card. No appointment is necessary. A big thank you to Save-On Foods Pharmacy for offering this service.



The move is complete! The Village office and ATB Agency have relocated into newly modernized and improved facilities. The good news is that you don't have to go far as the move was a short one – to the other side of the building. The building's outdated mechanical systems have been replaced to improve energy efficiency and staff comfort. The Administration team looks forward to serving you from the new location. The recently vacated portion of the building is being considered for a potential retail lease which will provide new services to Stirling and a new revenue stream for the Village. More to come as that process unfolds.

I want to express appreciation to Sgt. Kevin Wright from the Raymond/Magrath Detachment of the RCMP along with his colleagues from the Alberta South District command who hosted a virtual community townhall on Thursday, October 14<sup>th</sup>. Regrettably, there were no residents who logged in to participate in the meeting. Sgt. Wright relayed improvement this year in key metrics across the detachment's reporting region including:

- ➔ Overall criminal code offences were DOWN by 8% when you look at January to September 2021 compared to the same time last year
- ➔ There were 4 fewer break and enters in 2021 so far vs 2020
- ➔ There were 9 fewer motor vehicle thefts in 2021 so far vs 2020
- ➔ There were 27 fewer thefts under \$5,000 in 2021 so far vs 2020



This month Council approved renewals to both ATCO and Fortis franchise agreements. The agreements enable the utility companies to use Village right of ways to install, operate and maintain their infrastructure. (ie: Natural gas pipelines, electric powerlines and poles.) In exchange, the utility companies collect and remit a franchise fee to the Village. Council opted to maintain current franchise fee rates with no increase as these costs are passed on to our residents as the final consumer. We know that market volatility has led to increasing costs for both natural gas and electricity so the last thing anyone needs is yet another cost increase.



Speaking of market volatility, we have seen increased interest in fixed rate options available through Ridge Utilities as market prices have jumped. In fact, fixed rate options are temporarily unavailable for natural gas due to demand but we will have new gas fixed rate options beginning again in November. Fixed rate plans are still available for electricity with no penalty for early cancellation or changes. If you are still on a regulated rate option that floats with the market – a fixed rate plan from Ridge Utilities at around 8¢ per kilowatt hour is much cheaper than October RRO rates. You can build your plan on the [www.ridgeutilities.net](http://www.ridgeutilities.net) website or stop by the Village office to find out more.

October RRO Rates (cents/kWh)			
Retailer	Distributor	Rate ¢/kWh	Admin Fee \$
Direct Energy	Atco Electric	10.658	14.73
ENMAX Energy	Enmax Power	10.384	6.60
EPCOR (Edmonton)	Epcor D&T	10.730	6.16
EPCOR (outside Edmonton)	FortisAlberta Inc.	10.527	6.30
Battle River	Battle River	11.437	7.00
EQUS	EQUS	12.831	8.00
Lethbridge	Lethbridge	10.451	30.00

Council also approved a borrowing bylaw this month. The bylaw is required periodically to authorize the use of a purchasing credit card and line of credit with ATB. It is not new borrowing but rather formal approval to maintain some credit tools we already have.

We also passed an updated bylaw for the Regional Assessment Review Board. Stirling participates in this regional body rather than maintain our own. The bylaw contained several administrative updates that were required but Stirling was already a member of the Regional Assessment Review Board.



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We know that many residents in Stirling use Sunday as a day to focus on family and faith. At their October 6<sup>th</sup> meeting, Council did approve a motion to “recognize” Halloween on Saturday this year. Council clearly cannot mandate when people choose to celebrate any occasion or move a date on the calendar so think of it more as encouragement to engage in the festivities on Saturday where possible.



We recognize that people may choose to hand out candy and kids may trick or treat on Saturday or Sunday or both. It really comes down to personal preference. We just ask that people respect the choices of their neighbours as each family chooses to engage or not on the day of their choice. (And respect those people who choose not to be part of it at all and keep their lights off on one night or the other or both.)

Historically, Stirling will see more external visitors when the community recognizes Halloween on a Saturday so you may want to stock up on the treats! Drivers should remember to be watchful for the little ghosts and goblins who will be wandering around in the dark and paying less attention to the roads.

Trevor Lewington