



Mayor's Monthly Message

January 2019

It's that time of year when we often set new goals for ourselves. These personal objectives can range from wanting to shed a few pounds, eating better or perhaps making a change in job or career. Council set out a five-year business plan at the beginning of our term and continues to work against delivering those strategic priorities. The start of a new year also means it is time for the annual renewal of business, dog and livestock licenses.

Renewing your dog license each year ensures that lost pets can be quickly reunited with owners. Spayed and neutered dogs are \$25 each while non-spayed or non-neutered dogs are \$45 each. You can find more information on requirements and potential penalties on the Village website under Bylaw 423 – Dog Control Bylaw or on this page <http://stirling.ca/government/bylaws-policies>. Help us protect your four legged friends and register them.

Livestock licenses are \$25 per animal or a flat fee of \$25 in the case of chickens and poultry. Requirements and potential penalties are set out in Bylaw 471 – Animal Bylaw. Registration of livestock is particularly helpful in our community emergency response planning. License records help to identify where animals are located and help inform the required tasks during the unlikely event of an evacuation.

A business license is required for anyone operating a business in the Village or those hoping to do business as a vendor with the Village itself. We have a reciprocal recognition arrangement with a number of other communities so a business license issued by Stirling is recognized in Raymond, Magrath, Coaldale, Barons, Picture Butte, Coalhurst and Nobleford. Licensed businesses are also featured in the business directory of the Village website. As we move forward to engage with renewable energy projects in our region, it will be that business directory that we use to showcase the potential suppliers in our community. Make sure you are listed! The business license application form for new applications can be found here: <http://stirling.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Business-License-Application-2013-Village-of-Stirling.pdf>

Did you know that Stirling ranks 22nd out of 182 municipalities in Alberta for "sustainable spending"? The Canadian Federation of Independent Business (or CFIB) recently ranked communities across the province for 10 year increases in municipal budgets compared against population growth and inflation. (Lower rates of growth in spending and a higher ranking generally indicates budget increases more on pace with actual growth requirements.) Communities around us and their rankings were as follows: Magrath #10, Cardston #36 and Raymond #57. Stirling has many great amenities like the pool, Lion's Hall/Community centre, Reunion centre but Council is very conscious of keeping a tight lid on spending to ensure that we can "live within our means." You can read or download the whole CFIB report at this link: https://www.cfib-fcei.ca/sites/default/files/2018-12/cfib_alberta_municipal_spending_watch_report_2018.pdf

Council was pleased to hear from representatives from NOKA Lethbridge at our January Committee of the Whole Meeting. The No Kill Association provided information on their programs in Lethbridge that have helped to reduce the stray cat population in the City while at the same time reduce the number of euthanizations at the shelter. We appreciate the efforts of Marsha Edwards to help arrange the presentation and sharing of best practices when it comes to controlling the cat population.

With both a provincial and federal election on the calendar in the year ahead there is the potential for considerable change. Council will be keeping a close watch on budget announcements to prepare for any policy or spending changes that will impact our municipality.

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