

# STARLAND COUNTY

## COUNCIL MEETING, MARCH 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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A regular meeting of the Council of Starland County was held via ZOOM videoconference on Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020, commencing at 9:00 a.m.

Attendance	Present:	Reeve:	Steve Wannstrom
		Deputy Reeve:	Bob Sargent
		Councillors:	Murray Marshall, John Rew and Jackie Watts
		Staff:	CAO Shirley Bremer
			Assistant CAO Matthew Kreke
			PW Supervisor Ken Menage
			Agricultural Fieldman Alan Hampton
			Municipal Services Manager Glen Riep
			Financial Manager Judy Fazekas
Approval of Minutes	Approval of the minutes of the March 11 <sup>th</sup> , 2020 meeting of the Council of Starland County will be tabled until the April 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2020 meeting.		
Accounts Checked	Accounts for Starland County will be checked by Council at the next in-person meeting.		
CAO Report	Chief Administrative Officer Shirley Bremer reviewed the CAO Report with Council. Highlights of the report included the following:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Since the last meeting of Starland County Council, the Alberta government has declared a State of Public Health Emergency due to the COVID-19 virus pandemic. In response, Starland County has activated their Emergency Operations Center (EOC) team and implemented several protocols for staff to keep everyone safe and healthy.</li><li>• Glen, in his capacity as Director of Emergency Management (DEM), has been working diligently to keep up with new updates and mandates and is keeping all stakeholders informed of the steps the County is taking to stop the spread of the virus. Notices have been posted in the Drumheller Mail and on our website and social media with regards to the office and shop closures.</li><li>• The new building complex is progressing, and the contractors have the office floor poured and have commenced the polishing process. They will be starting the framing work in the non-grind areas. If all goes well over the next three to four weeks, they hope to make up for lost time and have the building ready by the end of July 2020.</li><li>• There was a break-in and theft on the night of Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020 into the contractor's trailer. It was recorded on our security cameras and the BEO is dealing with it. The contractor has requested they be allowed to place a trailer on the jobsite and have someone stay onsite to serve as night watchman. No concerns were noted with this request.</li></ul>		

PW Report	Public Works Supervisor Ken Menage reviewed the PW Report with Council. Highlights of his report included the following:
PW Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The PW Crew have been brushing, rigging up steamer units, ploughing snow and splitting wood.</li><li>• The Shop Crew have been working on 29 pieces of equipment, performed 4 CVIPs, while Gary has completed the outlet structure for McLaren Dam.</li><li>• Graders have been blading roads when the conditions are good and ploughing snow.</li><li>• Ken has been working on bridge inspections, 2020 budget, fuel contract, gravel pit application for the Morton Pit North, and with seasonal hiring.</li></ul>
Fencing Tender	Ken reported that only one bid was received for the fencing tender from Ben Smythe. The tender amount was \$2,200.00 per mile for labour only. Costs for gates and bracing are in addition to labour costs.
<b><u>C20-082</u></b> Fencing Tender	<b><u>[C20-82] MOVED BY COUNCILLOR REW</u></b> that Starland County award the fencing tender to Ben Smythe at a cost of \$2,200.00 per mile for labour only and additional costs for gates and bracing.
	<b>CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.</b>
Walker Road	Ken reported that he consulted with Stantec Engineering and they advised that Starland County could defer the Walker Road project for a year without incurring any additional costs.
Morton Pit North	Ken advised Council that Starland County currently has two-year's gravel inventory on hand which would enable the County to postpone the development of the Morton Pit for one year.
Aggregate Levy	The County of Stettler is enforcing an aggregate levy on all gravel leaving their county. Shirley advised that we likely are exempt, but she will confirm with the County of Stettler.
Municipal Managers Report	<p>Glen reviewed with Council his COVID-19 situation reports as well as the risk assessment for essential services in the County should the province mandate a total lock down. He is currently working on the Service Continuity Plan for essential services (services that need to be handled within 24 hours), necessary services (services that need to be resumed within 2 weeks) and desired services (services that can be resumed in greater than 2 weeks). Department managers have been asked to develop continuity plans for essential and necessary services, including road maintenance, should there be a total lockdown. Water and cemeteries are deemed essential services and currently have plans in place.</p> <p>Pandemic plans and staff protocols were reviewed with Council. Currently pregnant employees are working from home and some other employees are also working from home due to mandatory isolation, lack of childcare, or other health risks.</p> <p>Glen also reviewed the emergency response protocols for all fire departments. The County is experiencing some difficulty in acquiring PPE for emergency response personnel. We will be soliciting help from the community to get some cloth face masks made.</p>
FCSS COVID-19 Funding	The Province of Alberta has approved \$30 million in funding to municipalities, charitable and non-profit organizations to provide help to individuals, seniors, families and other vulnerable Albertans who are isolated or impacted by COVID-19 measures. Some of the eligible activities include food and prescription deliveries, grocery shopping,

housekeeping services, caregiver relief, helplines, out-of-pocket expenses for volunteers, mental health supports, and supports to address food security needs. The County will contact community groups in our area advising of the new funding and how to apply for the grant. Information will also be posted on the County website.

**Tax Deferrals** The Government of Alberta is mandating a six-month deferral of the Alberta School Foundation Fund requisition tax for all non -residential ratepayers. There will be a webinar on March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020 outlining these new requirements. The Province is encouraging municipalities to consider similar tax deferrals for the municipal portion of non-residential taxes. As our taxes are not due until September 30<sup>th</sup> and the tax notices will not be issued until June, Council will wait on deciding on any further tax deferrals.

**Utility Payment Deferrals** The province has introduced a 90-day deferral on utility bills payments (power and gas) and has asked the municipalities to consider implementing similar measures for water and sewer utilities. Some municipalities have already deferred utility payments until the end of August.

**C20-83**  
**Utility Payment Deferrals** **[C20-83] MOVED BY COUNCILLOR WATTS**  
**that Starland County customers can defer their water/sewer utility payments for 120 days without penalty if they notify the County office of the need.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

A notice will be sent out with the next utility bill advising of this provision.

**Generator Hauling** Craigmyle Oilfield Services cannot pick up and deliver the generator as the seller, Enviro Tekno, has temporarily shut its doors due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Council Room Table Design** The meeting with Eagle Builders and Ponoka Cabinet Makers Ltd regarding the design of the Council Room table has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Joint Meeting** The joint meeting with Starland, Paintearth and Stettler Counties and Special Areas is postponed due to the pandemic.

**Joint Meeting** The joint meeting with Starland County, County of Stettler and Honourable Kaycee Madu, Municipal Affairs, Honourable Doug Schweitzer, and MLA Nate Horner to discuss gas tax relief and police funding issues has been rescheduled to take place via teleconference on March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020 at 10:30 a.m.

**Tolman Bridge Campground** Starland County has contacted Alberta Parks with regards to Tolman Bridge Campground and Starland County's name is registered to receive further updates once government operations return to normal.

**Campgrounds** Starland County will be delaying the opening of our campgrounds for at least two months. Signage will be placed in our hamlets to restrict access to playgrounds. If we start experiencing problems with people accessing our campgrounds, temporary fencing and barricades can be installed to restrict access.

**Cemeteries** Cemeteries in Starland County will continue to be maintained during the pandemic, but we need to ensure the protection of our staff and communities.

**Council Meetings** Future council meetings will continue to be facilitated using Zoom videoconferencing for as long as the COVID-19 situation requires. Council communications will be sent as attachments in a pdf format and Jason can have the documents on the screen for Council review and discussion. Special meetings must be scheduled with 24-hour notice, but decisions can still be made using that forum.

Craigmyle Truck Fill Station	Glen reported on the situation that occurred at the Craigmyle Truck Fill Station on March 17-19, 2020 whereby an industrial customer had tampered with the truck fill equipment. He has reported this infraction to Alberta Environment. This truck fill station was originally intended for residential use only; however, Glen has developed some capital plans for changing the truck fill station to accommodate industrial users with an estimated cost of \$16,000.00. He also recommended that a screening process be established for industrial users before a new account is approved addressing intended use, quantity of water required, and rates for industrial users. Signage will be posted at the truck fills advising that tampering with a water facility is a criminal offence.
Truck Fill Stations	Glen is in the process of having TKNT Mechanical conduct third party certification testing on the backflow facilities at our County-operated truck fill stations.
Council Committee Reports	Council had no committee reports to share. Steve has been sitting in on the Drumheller EOC meetings held daily in order to keep informed in the event we have to provide mutual support to one another.
Internal Meetings	All internal meetings of Starland County have been cancelled except for our EOC meetings held daily at 1:00 p.m.
Road Bans	Ken will contact Road Data to have permitting suspended. Farmers will need to apply for exemptions to the road bans to allow for grain hauling.
911 Issues	The 911 system has been experiencing some problems over the last few days. Currently, you cannot dial 911 from a cell phone.
<b><u>C20-84</u></b> <b>Adjournment</b>	<b><u>[C20-84] MOVED BY DEPUTY REEVE SARGENT</u></b> <b>that the meeting be adjourned at 11:31 a.m.</b>

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**The next meeting of the Council of Starland County is to be held on Wednesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 via ZOOM videoconferencing, commencing at 9:00 a.m.**

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**Reeve:**  
**Steve Wannstrom**

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**Chief Administrative Officer:**  
**Shirley Bremer**