

## **Regional Wastewater Celebration May 27, 2016**

Welcome to our guests from the Province, to our residents, the press and others; Fellow Councillors and Administration.

First of all, on behalf of the Grandview Council and its residents, I would like to thank the Provincial Government - Transportation, Environment and Parks and Municipal Affairs, for the support they have given us in getting this wastewater project rolling. It would have been impossible without that support. And also to the Federal Government for their support with the Province for the Building Canada grant which will help us bring this project to a conclusion. We have a special thanks also the Frank Coutney and the staff at the County of Wetaskiwin who put so much effort into this project.

It certainly has been a long road we have travelled to get us this far and yet we still have a long way to go. It is much like climbing a mountain, like Mount Everest. It started many years ago, 1989, I believe when our late mayor, Owen Hamblin with others, Frank Coutney from the County, Brian Keeler from Norris Beach and others, came up with this project. I know that Mayor Hamblin was a visionary who saw the need to protect the lake from those awful septic fields that were lining most of our shore. He saw the need to bring Pigeon Lake into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Well now we are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We spent a lot of time in base camp, far too long. We had a few false starts; do we climb the north face or the south face; but now we are in our race for the summit. Almost there! Along the way, we found the value of working in collaboration, counting on each other for support and help. And to Municipal Affairs, I am glad that your department puts so much value on collaboration between municipalities. It is a great way to achieve a lot!

We now are above 25,000 feet; in the death zone. We had to send some Sherpas down for more oxygen and supplies, ... and for funding for the Phase 2 of the regional line. If they don't make it back, some of our party will not make it to the top.

In our collaborative mountain climb, we are all roped together, depending on each other to have success as a group. We will be seeing more progress this year as the local collection system becomes built and connections made to the homes. Sharing ideas and hopes.

At Grandview, our goal is to have 100% happy hook-ups. I am personally visiting each resident to explain the type of system we are putting in and to answer their questions. I must say that after speaking to almost two thirds of the residents, I can confidently say that they are excited for this system to be finished and supportive of our plan. We also recognize our responsibility within the provincial framework and for the efforts to spur on the economy. Although Grandview must wait for the Phase 2 funding before we can complete our system, we see the value in completing our mainline infrastructure as soon as possible for both local and provincial benefits. We hope that this will happen before the end of next year.

To complete the mountain climbing analogy, I am looking forward to the results of the MGA review. Grandview made a submission regarding wastewater projects with the hope that the ambiguity and uncertainty of authority would be cleared up. This will allow the mountain climbers to focus only on achieving the summit without worrying about being challenged over the basic idea of being on the mountain at all.

Thanks again to everyone for coming out today and for your support on this important project. I certainly look forward to celebrating the first flush of the toilet!

Don Davidson

Mayor, Summer Village of Grandview.