

VILLAGE OF VILNA NEWSLETTER MARCH 2014

*The calendar says it's going to be spring in a couple weeks. I wish someone would tell the weatherman. However, when it gets to be plus 30 and the mosquitos are out, I'll be complaining about that instead.
Never satisfied.*

The sure sign that spring is on the way is the threat of frozen water lines. To protect yourself from this, leave a tap dribbling. It does use more water, but it is cheaper than hiring a plumber to thaw out your water line.

X-RAY Machine

The meeting on January 22nd, to discuss the replacement of the X-Ray machine and the blood testing equipment at the Vilna Medical Clinic was very well received. A committee was formed that will make application for society status so we can fundraise to replace the equipment. Our MLA Shane Saskiw was here and has offered to work with us. He has been communicating with Alberta Health for us. Our wonderful Fire Department has very generously offered to match any donations received (to a maximum of \$75,000.00). Alberta Health has still not stated that they will or will not be replacing the equipment. We're waiting to hear their decision definitively. Based on that decision we will need to get confirmation that when we purchase the equipment they will assure us that they will let us put it in their (Alberta Health's) facility. From that point we will proceed with the fundraising if necessary.

SMOKY LAKE Senior Housing FOUNDATION

The Foundation is currently building 40 supportive living units in Smoky Lake, construction started in fall 2013. From the time the project was proposed until construction started, costs have increased. The province, recognizing the need for more senior housing has made a commitment to help with the funding of the project.

DOGS

Dogs running at large have become a major concern in the community. We have found it necessary to contract a Bylaw Enforcement Officer to pick up the animals and impound them. If your dog goes missing there's a good chance it has been picked up. There will be fines attached and you will not get the dog back until the fines are paid.

Remember.... Dog Licenses are due NOW. \$10.00 each.

2014 Projects

We have been looking for grants that will help us to upgrade our roads. Unfortunately, we're finding that before we spend too much money on the roads, we may have to upgrade some of the water and sewer mains.

The water line from Smoky Lake to Spedden is completed. We used all of our MSI Capital Project grants to pay for the water line. We are hoping to replace the faulty water meters in the Village, because it is Council's intention to re-write the water rate bylaw so that the water charges will reflect the consumption.

The province has changed the format for the Municipal Sustainability Operating Grant. In the past we've used it to offset the cost of the water line repairs; hydrant replacements; equipment repairs, maintenance, or replacement; maintenance of the sewage lagoon, and to cover our contribution to the Joint Economic Development Initiative with the County and Town of Smoky Lake and the Village of Waskatenau.

The operating spending plan must reflect eligible expenses that include those related to planning activities, capacity building, municipal services and assistance to non-profit organizations, and must be for the purpose of providing good government, providing services, maintaining facilities or other things that are necessary or desirable for all or part of the municipality, or to develop and maintain safe and viable communities.

In order to receive the Municipal Sustainability Operating funds we now have to use it for regional initiatives that will improve the viability and long term sustainability of municipalities through regional collaboration and capacity building.

Eligible projects include regional planning, exploring and establishing shared administrative or municipal services, municipal internship placements, inter-municipal mediation, and establishing municipal cooperation protocols.

GENERAL ITEMS

The next Council Meeting will be held at the Village office at 7pm on March 17th, 2014 at the Village office.

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