

**Rate Payer Meeting
Spring 2025**

A G E N D A

- 1:30 pm
1.

Call for nominations for Chairman
2.

Adoption of previous year’s minutes
3.

Advisory Council Member Report
4.

Special Areas Board Reports
 - Shaune Kovitch, Chair
 - Darren Jones, Director, Finance and Administration
 - Vacant, Director Municipal Services
 - Trent Caskey, Director, Property Administration
5.

Other Speakers
6.

New Business
7.

Adjournment

SPRING RATEPAYER 2025 Report Book
Index

Reports

Road Work Summary of Expenditures	3
Subdivision Mileages for 2024	4
Aggregate Resources Report.....	6
Special Areas Facilities Manager	7
Fire Chief’s Report	10
Enforcement Services Report	12
Parks Report	14
Big Country Waste Management Commission Report	18
Water Technical Services Report.....	20
Special Areas Tax Recovery Land Sale	25
M.S.L.’s, R.O.E.’s and L.O.C.’s as of December 31, 2024	27
Development Control Reports	28
Acreage by Land Use Classification, as of December 31, 2024.....	28
Grazing and Cultivation Rentals and Taxes	29
Regrassing, Grazing, Feed, Cultivation, and Hay Permits	30
Range Management Report	31
Assessment Report.....	32
Water Development Credits	33
Agricultural Service Board Report- Special Area No. 2	34
Agricultural Service Board Report – Special Area No. 3	36
Agricultural Service Board Report- Special Area No. 4	38
Community Pasture Report.....	41
Special Area No. 2 Recreation Report For 2024	44
Special Area No. 3 Recreation Report For 2024	45
Special Area No. 4 Recreation Report For 2024	46
Economic Development	47
CARA	54
Wildlife Management Update for Special Areas	59
Motions from Ratepayer Meetings 2024.....	62
Motions and Actions Taken Fall 2024 Advisory Council.....	64
Special Areas Board January 30, 2024	69
Special Areas Advisory Council March 27 & 28, 2024	73
Special Areas Board December 4, 5 & 6, 2024.....	85

Special Areas Board Mission Statement

WE ARE DEDICATED TO IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE RESIDENTS OF THE SPECIAL AREAS THROUGH THE PROVISION OF COST-EFFECTIVE, PROACTIVE AND RESPONSIVE MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND EFFECTIVE LONG-TERM LAND AND WATER MANAGEMENT. WE WILL ACTIVELY WORK TO INCREASE THE POPULATION OF THE SPECIAL AREAS AND WORK TO OFFER DIVERSE OPPORTUNITIES TO FACILITATE THAT GROWTH.

Road Work Summary of Expenditures

Report Dates: 01/01/2024 to 12/31/2024

		2023		2024	
	Prior Year Kms	Prior Year Expenditures	Current Year Kms	Current Year Expenditures	
ROAD MAINTENANCE:					
Grading		\$3,387,083.47		\$3,705,325.47	
Snow Removal		\$1,098,843.87		\$870,293.94	
Gravelling	590	\$1,921,534.19	894	\$3,241,089.12	
Other **		\$2,093,044.96		\$3,240,413.31	
Total		\$8,500,506.49		\$11,057,121.84	
BRIDGES & CULVERTS:		\$148,939.65		\$387,525.26	
CONSTRUCTION: Local Roads					
	32	\$5,290,389.11	10	\$2,931,588.19	
BCWMC Cell E Cst.		\$1,349,473.01		\$0.00	
Sheerness Industrial park		\$0.00		\$2,007,118.31	
Sheerness Reservoir		\$0.00		\$1,977,153.76	
Total		\$6,639,862.12		\$6,915,860.26	
BACK TRAIL REPAIRS		\$208,354.23		\$132,324.27	
RE-CROWN	31	\$1,776,304.08	27	\$1,566,512.63	
CALCIUM/LIGNO DUST ABATEMENT		\$224,195.58		\$203,904.00	
OILING: Hamlet				\$ 191,143.11	
Oil Repair:		\$508,250.98		\$448,181.63	
Total		\$508,250.98		\$639,324.74	
STAGED SURFACING PROGRAM:					
GBC & DSC	561, 886 South	\$2,026,798.23	862 South, 886 South, 899 repairs	\$4,896,317.73	
	11 DSC		25 DSC		
	1.3 DSC				
GBC (Granular Base Course) Local Rds	22	\$2,100,134.97	0.5	\$29,485.03	
DSC (Double Seal Coat) Local Rds	22	\$1,700,037.03	1	\$134,570.10	
SSC (Single Seal Coat) Local Rds	0	\$0.00	0	\$0.00	
Total		\$5,826,970.23		\$5,060,372.86	
REPORT TOTAL		\$23,609,187.78		\$25,759,041.86	

**Other: Administration, Base, Checking, Culvert Install, Culvert Repair, Earthwork, Education, Engineering, Equipment Haul, Equipment Move, Equipment Repair, Equipment Service, Fence Material, Fire Guard, Flagging, Gravel Checking, Gravel Testing, Haul, Mowing, Road Side spraying, Rock Picking, Safety, Salt & Sand, Signs, Snow Fence, Staking, Stockpile, Supervision, Sweeping, Texas Gate, Travel, Water, Weeds & Brush

Subdivision Mileages for 2024

Special Area No. 2	2023	2024
	Kilometers	Kilometers

<u>Subdivision No.1</u>		
Gravel	82	98
DSC (Double Seal Coat)	9	
Granular Base Course	9	1.3
Dust Abatement - MG30	2.45	1.15

Advisory Council Member, Kevin Bossert, Hanna

<u>Subdivision No. 2</u>		
Gravel	31	120
Construction		1
Granular Base Course		12.8
DSC (Double Seal Coat)		12.8
Dust Abatement - MG30	22.85	22
Dust Abatement - Lignosulfonate	6	6

Advisory Council Member, Neal Roes, Homestead Coulee

<u>Subdivision No. 3</u>		
Gravel	63	51
Re-Crown	8.2	
Dust Abatement - MG30	1.1	1.1

Advisory Council Member, Brad Slorstad, Sunnynook

<u>Subdivision No. 4</u>		
Gravel	48	40
Construction		0.7
DSC (Double Seal Coat)	23.7	
Granular Base Course	23.7	
Dust Abatement - MG30		0.5

Advisory Council Member, Justin Griffith, Cessford

<u>Subdivision No. 5</u>		
Gravel	65	37
Construction	3.2	3.2
Re-Crown	7.2	
Dust Abatement - MG30	0.9	

Advisory Council Member, Mark Blair, Youngstown

<u>Subdivision No. 7</u>		
Gravel	0	100
Dust Abatement - MG30	0.6	1.05

Advisory Council Member, Daryl Swenson, Bindloss

<u>Subdivision No. 8</u>		
Gravel	0	83
Dust Abatement - MG30	0	0.3

Advisory Council Member, Brad Osadczuk, Iddesleigh

Subdivision Mileages For 2024

Special Area No. 3	2023	2024
	(Kilometers)	(Kilometers)
<u>Subdivision No. 4</u>		
Gravel	68	144
Construction	6.9	1
Granular Base Course		0.5
DSC (Double Seal Coat)		0.5
Repair		9.5
Dust Abatement - MG30	0.3	0.5
Advisory Council Member, Erika Tessier, Esther		

<u>Subdivision No. 5</u>		
Gravel	83	109.4
Construction	11.2	
Recrown		16
Dust Abatement - MG30	1.3	1.85
Advisory Council Member, John Kimber, Youngstown		

<u>Subdivision No. 6</u>		
Gravel	83	27.4
GBC (Granular Base Course)	1.3	11.9
DSC (Double Seal Coat)	1.3	11.9
Recrown		8.1
Dust Abatement - Ligno Sulphanate	12	3
Dust Abatement - MG30	0.3	0.3
Advisory Council Member, Kevin Wilson, Oyen		

Special Area No. 4

<u>Subdivision No. 1</u>		
Gravel	45	3.3
Construction	6.7	
Back Trail Repair	6.4	
Dust Abatement - MG30	0.3	0.3
Advisory Council Member, Gordon Long, Veteran		

<u>Subdivision No. 2</u>		
Gravel	0	14.3
Construction		4
Re-Crown	15.4	
Dust Abatement - MG30	1.8	2.15
Advisory Council Member, Laurie Ference, Monitor		

<u>Subdivision No. 3</u>		
Gravel	22	68.2
Construction	3.8	
Granular Base Course		0.1
DSC (Double Seal Coat)		0.1
Dust Abatement - MG30	2.95	3
Advisory Council Member, Doug Noble, Altario		

Aggregate Resources Report

1. Exploration:

- a. Exploration for the Fall of 2024 and Winter of 2025 focused on gravel exploration for the Tax Recovery Land Sale. As of March 24th, 2025 there are 674 quarters to review for TRLS. 500 quarters have been cleared with 174 in the queue (74% cleared).
- b. The key exploration area for Winter 2025 was north of Spondin. The Simkin pit has now been exhausted and a replacement is needed to service the Spondin to North of Veteran area and provide base course and chip for the Solon Road in 2026. Approximately 200 testholes were dug in this area and a new deposit of 200,000 in situ tonnes has been modelled. Next steps are to obtain regulatory approvals and finalize the development plan.

2. Pit Operations:

- a. A crushing contract was executed in the summer of 2024. Paragon Custom Crushing was the successful bidder at \$4.3 million. Crushing took place in 6 pits throughout the Special Areas over the Fall and Winter.
- b. Crushing was completed in the Pollockville pit in early March and the crusher was released for the spring and summer months. Crushing will resume this Fall.
- c. 65% of the contract value has been expended to date with 74% of the aggregate being processed.

3. Reclamation:

- a. Reclamation did not take place in the previous year primarily due to limited resources.

4. Focus for 2025:

- a. Continue exploration for the Tax Recovery Land Sale.
- b. Winter hauling GBC where warranted to protect surfaced roads from accelerated deterioration.
- c. Continuation of the current crushing contract.
- d. Continue to develop deposits and work on replacing reserves to match historical gravel consumption.

Respectfully Submitted by Kelsey Martin.

SPECIAL AREAS FACILITIES MANAGER – FALL 2024 REPORT

2024 was a very busy year with projects and corrective tasks, both for our internal facilities team and externally hired contractors. Our facilities team consists of a Maintenance Service Worker Brian Christie, Carpenter Wesley Saunders, Carpenter Spencer Reed and Facilities Manager Ryley Girletz. The team has become very well rounded, and the responsibilities of our team seem to be forever expanding.

Over the past year, we have had to focus attention on some responsibilities outside of our historical facilities purview. I continued to work with Journey Engineering in 2024, to create and stabilize our Dam Safety program, which included coming up with a 10-year budget and work plan. We were also brought in to various community driven programs to help with RFPs and guidance during projects. These community programs include the Oyen Lodge Expansion, New Brigden Community Hall Build, Sedalia Community Hall Transfer Switch Install, Cereal Scale Repair and more recently the Oyen Medical Clinic. Both the Lodge and New Brigden Community Hall are under construction, and the Oyen Medical Clinic is slated to begin in spring 2025. We also continue to support the municipality shared fire halls, sometimes on a project management level and sometimes only on a financial basis. The role we play is dependent on the wishes of the municipality that we have the shared agreements with.

A major internal project that took place in 2024 was the renovation of the Oyen Office. Although the plan was to hire an external contractor to execute the renovations, we were unable to award the RFP due to over budget. SAB carpenters were utilized to renovate the office, which included new flooring, new bathrooms, drywall repairs, new kitchen area and fresh paint throughout the office. The most apparent change was the change to the front office with the installation of a new front counter and desks, which has garnered lots of attention from the public, as they comment on how much better it looks and flows.

Our other large project for our in-house carpentry staff was the construction of a water building at Scotfield. Scotfield was identified as requiring further storage and improvements in fill rates, and due to the current building having an underground cistern, a new building location was presented. A 24'x40' building has been constructed on the west side of RR10-3, which included the construction of a new pad. The building was completed in the fall of 2024 including electrical which was completed by Double B Electric, and it has been turned over to the water department for set up. One challenge we came across in this project was the discontinuation of our card terminals, therefore this station will be coin operated.

A major construction project began at Cessford in September 2024. This project is the construction of a new combination 2 bay Firehall and single bay Grader Shop. The project was delayed by 2 months as we sorted out details of both the contract and the construction with Armor Building Systems, who were the successful contractor on the RFP. This building will follow the trend of being a combination fire hall and grader shop. We have seen many positives in building combination buildings in the past as savings can be seen on utilities and operational costs of the buildings, not to mention the ability to consolidate some key building infrastructure such as mechanical and electrical equipment. Completion is expected in April 2025.

In the fall of 2024, our Sounding Creek Range Rider House experienced some ground water infiltration into the basement. There were a few small corrections made to downspouts. However, upon investigation, it was found that the buried plywood exterior wall had various holes throughout due to rot. Further investigation found that the build up of soil around the house had become higher than the treated plywood level, and that the flashing was improperly installed on the last siding job. We made the decision to excavate the north and east sides of the basement, which allowed us to replace the damaged plywood, then reapply a water barrier and weeping tile. Some small landscaping was also completed to help water drainage, then we also used this opportunity to fix some safety issues in the front yard with winter walking, by adding steps down from the house.

Safety is also a key driver of many tasks and in 2024 we were able to complete 2 major projects that improved safety. The first was the addition of roof railing at our Youngstown Service Centre. Because this roof is 20ft high, it requires fall protection, and due to the roof being a flat roof membrane, finding options for anchor points became difficult. We made the decision to install counter-weight roof railing as a non-penetrating option which allows us to perform work safely on all HVAC equipment that is located on the roof.

The second safety driven item was the removal of the Sounding Creek Community Pasture old bunkhouse. A previous hazardous materials assessment found various materials with asbestos or lead content. Because the house was in a state of disrepair and was only heated for water purposes, it was decided a demolition would be required. Before the house could be demolished the water system needed to be moved from the basement, which required our internal staff to build a small, heated space off of the garage. The demolition project was awarded to OPC Services, who took care of the abatement, demolition and proper disposal of hazardous materials, in December 2024.

The Facilities Department continues to gain traction in our effort to serve the Special Areas with quality maintenance and project work on facilities, while maintaining a high standard of safety. The Facilities Department has successfully completed or nearing complete of the following activities in 2024:

2024 Internal Major Projects & Preventative Maintenance Completed Summary

- 63 Facility Annual Roof Inspections
- 106 Annual Overhead Door Maintenance & Inspections
- 61 Annual HVAC Maintenance & Checks (smaller systems)
- 18 Monthly Generator Maintenance and Checks
- 365 Corrective Tasks
- Blood Indian Shop New Roof
- Camp Trailer Inspection and Repairs
- Cereal Shop OH Door Upgrade
- Cereal Scale Repair
- Oyen Office Renovations
- Remount Exterior Siding & Porch
- Scotfield H2O Building Construction
- Sounding Creek Stairs
- Sounding Creek Exterior & Interior Basement Repairs
- Sounding Creek Garage Modifications for H2O System & Utility Move
- Various Overhead Door Operator Installs
- Veteran Shop OH Door Upgrade
- Veteran Shop Overhead Heater Upgrade
- Youngstown Plumber Trailer Shelving
- Youngstown Old Shop Sign Room Repair

2024 Major Contractor Projects Completed Summary

- All Areas Hazardous Material Support – ASE Services
- All Dams Dam Safety – Journey Engineering
- All Offices & Community Pastures Duct Cleaning Assessments – ASE Services
- All Towers Inspections & Deficiencies – Waybest Tower
- Cessford Fire Hall Construction – Armor Building Systems
- Consort Office Handicap Accessible Doors – Anchor Glass & Thornton Elec.
- Hanna Office Bathroom Renovation & Abatement – Westview Coop, ASE & Ask Environmental
- Hanna Office Boiler Noise – Hanna Plumbing & Heating
- Hanna Office Duct Cleaning – Awaiting Award
- Homestead Coulee Abatement – Axiom (demo still outstanding)
- Jenner Firehall Install Larger Septic – Oyen Backhoe
- Jenner Shop Geotech & Dirt Work - Envirogeotechnical
- Scotfield H2O Electrical – Double B Electric
- Sedalia H2O Plant Generator Install – Ollies Electrical
- Sounding Creek Old Bunkhouse Abatement & Demo – ASE & OPC Services
- Youngtown Old Shop Abatement Continuation – ASE & Ask Environmental
- Youngstown Service Centre HVAC Maintenance – Fixed Right
- Youngstown Service Centre Fire Panel Engineering – 908 Engineering
- Youngstown Service Centre Fall Protection Railing – Gravysis

2025 Major Projects Planned Summary

- All Areas – Tower Inspections and Deficiencies
- Bartman Dam – Dam Safety & Engineering
- Blood Indian Dam – Dam Safety & Engineering

- *Cereal Fire Hall – New Boiler (Complete)*
- Cereal Shop – Upgrade Ceiling and Lights
- Cessford Fire Hall/Shop – Completion and High Flow Water Set Up
- Consort Fire Hall – Boardroom Renovation
- Consort Office – Barrier Free Entrance
- Consort Office – Duct Cleaning
- Dorothy Elevator - Restoration
- *Handhills Tower – New Lighting (Complete)*
- Hanna Office – Duct Cleaning & Abatement
- Hanna West Shop – Structural Repairs and Upgrades (OH Doors, Heater)
- HWY 570 H2O – Building Addition
- *Jenner Fire Hall – Air Exchanger Servicing (Complete)*
- *Jenner Fire Hall – New Boiler (Complete)*
- Oyen Canalta – New H2O Building
- Oyen Fire Hall – Install New Generator
- Oyen Office – Exterior Landscaping and Exterior Upgrades
- Oyen Office – Duct Cleaning
- Oyen Settlement – New H2O Building
- Youngstown Shop – Overhead Door Services
- Youngstown Shop – Fire System Replacement
- Youngstown Shop – HVAC Engineering
- Youngstown Shop – Boardroom Renovation (In Progress)

Respectfully Submitted,
 Ryley Girletz,
 Facilities Manager

Fire Chief’s Report

2024 Call Numbers (Jan 1, 2024 – Dec 31, 2024)

Type	Number	% Of total
Grassfires	32	53 %
Equipment fires	5	7 %
Vehicle fires	9	15 %
Powerline Fires	9	15 %
Structure Fires	4	7 %
Feed Fires	2	3 %
All Fires (Total)	60	100 %
MVC	51	47 %
Medical	33	30 %
False Alarm	10	9 %
Misc. (C0. Fire Investing...)	8	7 %
Out of Area	7	6 %
Total Other calls	109	100%
TOTAL CALLS	150	

Total Incidents to December 31st,2024 is 170. (Primary calls.)
Total Responses to December 31st,2024 is 210. (More than 1 Fire Department responds to a primary call)

The 2024 fire season has been on par with our 10-year average.

The 2024 spring saw precipitation in all Special Areas that aided in lowering the fire hazard. This moisture produced a large fuel load to deal with in the hot dry months of June, July and August. Fortunately, with these heavier fire loads our departments have had a relatively slow year for grass fires. I attribute these lower numbers to the success we are seeing with local ranchers and farmers learning about temperature and humidity cross over and adjusting their farming activities to avoid these very dangerous fire conditions. I consider it a huge win for our communications department when our rate payers are talking about fire smart ideas and crossover information they have seen on our social media pages. Job well done!

With The dry summer and fall Fire Departments responded to multiple crop fires.

- Oyen Fire Department responded to a large crop fire southeast of Oyen that consumed 546 acres of standing wheat.

2024 Capital projects:

- Oyen Rapid Response unit was put in service in May of 2024.
- Cessford Tender is currently being built and scheduled for delivery in the first quarter of 2025.
- Cessford Fire Hall / Grader shed is under construction and scheduled for completion in the first quarter of 2025.

2024 Donations - Revenue:

- A Special, “Thanks” to our corporate partners in stepping up to assist local fire departments.
- Fire Department revenue from Cost Recovery incidents for Jan 1st to Oct 31st, 2024, is \$92677.75.

- Fire Department revenue from Jasper deployment August 6 to August 17, 2024.
\$71,356.00

Training:

- The East Central Emergency Training Partnership (ECETP) completed Pump Driving and Maintenance, Pump Operations, and NFPA 1001 level 2 courses this year. With the installation of the Level 2 flammable liquids props at the Hanna Training center we were able to provide these courses locally with funds staying in SA and have our fire fighters from other departments training together which fosters team building within SA & Acadia Valley Fire Departments. With the completion of the 1001 level 2 course, Special Areas went from 7 members trained to this level to 29. This is a huge accomplishment to have this many members trained to this level.
- ECETP has been working with Heartland Generation in providing training to their employees.
The Hanna Training tower is an asset to this region as it provides high quality training locally.
- Air Endorsement & Class 3 Training opportunities are ongoing.
- Medical First responder training took place in February for Cereal and Bigstone Departments. 14 members were certified for MFR responses on completion of this course.
- In October Special Areas Deputy Chief Kyle Rohl and Fire Fighter Braden Volk from Hanna attended Lake Land Fire School and completed their NFPA 1041 level 1 instructor’s course. With these younger members trained as instructors it will ensure we are able to continue offering high quality in-house training to our departments.

Miscellaneous

- The 2024 wildfire season in Alberta was busy and on August 6th, 2024, the Special Areas Fire deployed a crew to the Jasper wildfire complex.

A first crew was arranged and consisted of the following fire fighters:

Glen Durand	Hanna Captain
Shane Oleson	Hanna Fire Fighter
Rob Howe	Veteran Fire Fighter
Kenton Wagstaff	Oyen Fire fighter

This crew was on site for 7 days supporting wildfire efforts in the Town of Jasper and surrounding areas

On 13 the following crew relived the first crew and consisted of the following firefighters:

Rob Palmer	Special Areas Fire Chief
Berard McCoy	Hanna Fire Fighter
Braden Volk	Hanna Fire Fighter
Pauline Howe	Veteran Fire Fighter

This crew was on site for 4 days to support the Jasper Fire department in cleanup efforts and resident reentry.

The deployment lasted for 11 days with the crew arriving back home on Aug 17th.

The annual Fire Chiefs meeting will be held on December 10, 2024 with 25 members attending.

Lastly, Thanks to the Special Areas Board, Council Members and our staff for the support they provide, and most importantly to those that answer the call – our responders.

Thanks,
Rob Palmer
Special Areas Fire Chief.

Enforcement Services Report

- Public Safety and Infrastructure protection continue to be the primary focus of Enforcement Services for the Special Areas.
- Special Areas currently has a department of one Community Peace Officer, Sr. CPO (Sgt) Jamie Erickson, Peace Officer Erickson continues to focus enforcement activities within the Special Areas Parks during peak season as well as enforcement for Infrastructure Protection and Traffic Safety on all roadways within the Special Areas.
- Enforcement Services will look to recruit for the open Peace Officer positions in the early part of 2025.
- Enforcement Services has been utilizing Electronic Ticketing for one year now, allowing for a streamlined process between issuance of charges, uploading of disclosure information for court packages and trial notifications. The only violations that still require handwriting are the Ministerial Orders.
- Enforcement Services procured new Mobile In-Vehicle Radios which will be installed in the coming weeks, these radios will allow direct communication between Enforcement Services CPOs and the RCMP Detachments within the Special Areas.
- Enforcement Services went live with the Employee Safety Office (Dispatch Centre in Edmonton) using ESO Safety, this allows our dispatch centre (ESO) to use GPS data for real time location viewing of our Patrol Vehicles and Officer phones while away from the vehicle.
- To date there have been 23 Occurrence Reports, and 261 Daily Events recorded, including 22 Campground Patrols and 164 patrols of Special Areas roadways, Hamlets, and Villages.
- Of the 261 Daily events 137 (57%) were in Special Areas #2, 70 (29%) were in Special Areas #3 and 34 (14%) were in Special Areas #4.

Roads/Infrastructure Enforcement

- Special Areas Enforcement Services Peace Officers patrol throughout the Special Areas, including local road as well as primary and secondary highways. Significant traffic volumes and violations continue to pose a public safety risk on highways within our region, specifically on Highways 9, 36, 41 and 570.
- There continued to be significant activity within the Special Areas, however with the large number of industrial projects (wind/solar) winding down, the number of Heavy Haul and total permits has reduced. The north-east portion of Special Area #4 continued to see well servicing, service rig and drilling activity although those numbers are also down from 2023 totals. Enforcement activities focused on these areas and continued to emphasize education when practicable.
- As of December 31st, 2024, a total of 171 traffic stops have been conducted resulting in a total of 234 violations. As a result of the traffic stops there have been 90 Citations (38%) and 144 Warnings (62%) issued for a variety of offences. Speed continues to be a serious concern on roadways within Special Areas with 26 (20%) of the speeding violations being speeds of over 50+ km/h over the posted speed limit with a high of 203 km/h.
- Commercial vehicle enforcement accounted for 20% of all recorded violations with the main issues being logbook violations and equipment violations. A total of 12 Commercial Vehicle inspections completed with 6 (50%) of vehicles placed Out of Service, 4 (33%) required maintenance and 2 (17%) passing inspection. Accurate records and data from previous years as well as close monitoring of permits has allowed for precise targeted enforcement activities including days of the week, time of day and location.
- A large portion of the administrative time in 2024 has been continued work on revising, updating, and developing new Standard Operating Procedures and Policies for the department.

- Roadata continued to manage road permits and Peace Officer Erickson is the primary point of contact for Roadata, approving permits and routing for overweight and over-dimensional movement within the Special Areas.
- Roadata also has continued to manage our Road Use Agreements for Special Areas at no additional cost. In 2023 they issued 90 RUA's, and we have had 92 RUA's issued in 2024.

Parks Enforcement

- Officer presence and education continue to be the main enforcement tool for protection of park property and public safety. Enforcement Services has increased the number of patrols made especially on busy weekends and late evening patrols which require adjustment to schedules.

Regional Enforcement

- Peace Officers continue to work closely with other enforcement agencies throughout the year to enhance working relationships. These operations focus on regional priorities and ratepayer complaints and concerns. There were 6 Special Events and 3 Joint Force Operations in 2024 so far, but work on a regular basis is conducted alongside RCMP, Fish and Wildlife and the Sheriffs.

ROADATA PERMITS ISSUED

PERMIT TYPE	2023 (Full Year)	2024 (to Oct 31)	2024 (Full Year)	+/- 2024 vs 2023
Service Rig	963	541	678	-285
Well Service	30	33	43	+13
Drilling Rig	116	33	44	-72
Heavy Haul	2349	331	419	-1930
Total Permits	3458	940	1186	-2272
Total Single Trip Loads	3400	961	1235	-2165
Total Multi Loads	3907	7293	9169	+5262
Total Loads	7307	8254	10404	+3097

Respectfully Submitted,
Shaune Kovitch, Director
Municipal Services

Parks Report

The Parks Department had another successful year, marked by the continued operation of established systems and the introduction of several new initiatives. While there were some challenges along the way, many significant achievements highlighted the department's progress.

Thanks to spring rains and late summer/fall moisture, the growing season was ideal, providing much-needed relief to the irrigation systems. The department's park surveys offered valuable insights into park usage, amenities, visitor preferences and areas for improvement. A partnership with the Harvest Sky Region Economic Development Corporation helped secure funding to create new branding and marketing materials for Carolside, Prairie Oasis and Blood Indian Parks, including design for updated future signage.

During the summer months, Prairie Oasis Park remained the top destination for camping in the Special Areas. The excellent Northern Pike fishing, couple with rumors of a growing Walleye fishery began to draw more visitors to Carolside, including a Kayaking fishing derby. Blood Indian Reservoir was stocked with a range of trout sizes in hopes of improving the fishery.

Key initiatives for 2024 include the following updates and improvements across the parks:

Blood Indian Park

- After early discussions with the Fish and Wildlife Stewardship Branch and further letters to the Minister of Forestry and Parks and Minister of Environment and Protected Areas, the direction for the fisheries at Blood Indian Reservoir is still under review. The Parks Department is actively working to improve the aquaculture and reduce the Prussian Carp population, with hopes to have a Fisheries Management Objective in place for 2025.
- The reservoir was stocked with 72,087 - 20cm Rainbow Trout, 6000 - 10-20cm Brown Trout, 4000 – 19cm Tiger Trout, 181 – 40-55cm Brown Trout (Brood Stock), 212 – 55-65cm Rainbow Trout (Brood Stock). This year saw an increase in the variety and volume of trout stocked compared to 2023, although the numbers are still below historical averages. The Youngstown School participated in both spring and fall stocking events.
- Shoreline stabilization was completed along the north end of the reservoir, and approximately 150 shrubs were planted late in the fall, including species such as caragana, lilac, chokecherry, hawthorn and sea buckthorn.
- Site improvements, including graveling and seeding of grass, were made throughout the full-service sites.
- Trenched septic line from campground septic tank to old trailer dump station – allowing for a reduced odour and noise for campers during removal.
- Special Areas Carpenters installed new roof on shop at Blood Indian.

Prairie Oasis Park

- The reservation system encountered technical difficulties on the opening day (March 1st), leading to an early, premature launch. However, thanks to the quick action by the SAB team, the issue was resolved, ensuring equal access for all campers.
- Campground Hosts Corrine Taylor and Melanie Parent continued to fulfill their duties on a one-year contract, while Trina Hernden entered her final year under contract at the park's concession. A Request for Proposal will be issued in January 2025 for a new three-year contract.
- Warm fall weather allowed for additional landscaping, including the planting of grass and 150 shrubs within the park.
- Caliber Construction Ltd was hired to build the shell of the shop extension, which will be utilized for equipment and supply storage.
- New centrifugal pump wired and installed along the shoreline to support irrigation system.

- New 16,800-gallon water tank brought to PO to support irrigation system in northern part of campground and provide stock watering opportunities for Bullpound Community Pasture. Installation will take place in spring of 2025.
- Cleaned and painted inside of shower buildings with upgrades made to benches and trim.

Carolside Campground

- ATCO was contracted for the power installation at Carolside, with groundwork scheduled for completion in the spring of 2025.
- Continued installation and extension on the irrigation allowed for better watering of trees in the campground.

Gooseberry Lake Provincial Park and Little Fish Lake Provincial Park

- John and Gail Weist committed to a three-year service contract at Gooseberry Lake Provincial Park, ensuring stability and value for both the SAB and park visitors.
- New management within Alberta Parks has prompted discussions about necessary site improvements and infrastructure upgrades, addressing the park's outdated facilities.
- New 25% senior discount to roll out in the summer of 2025.

Parks General

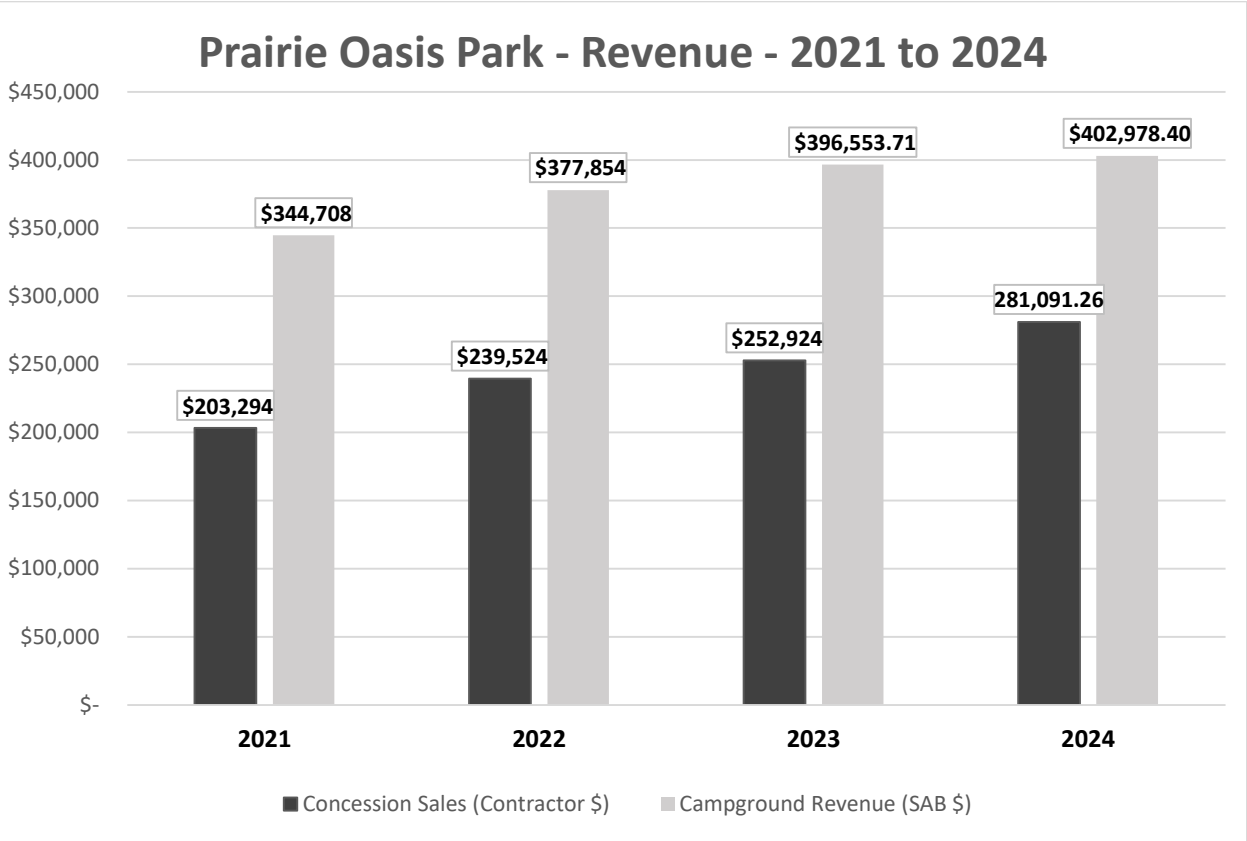
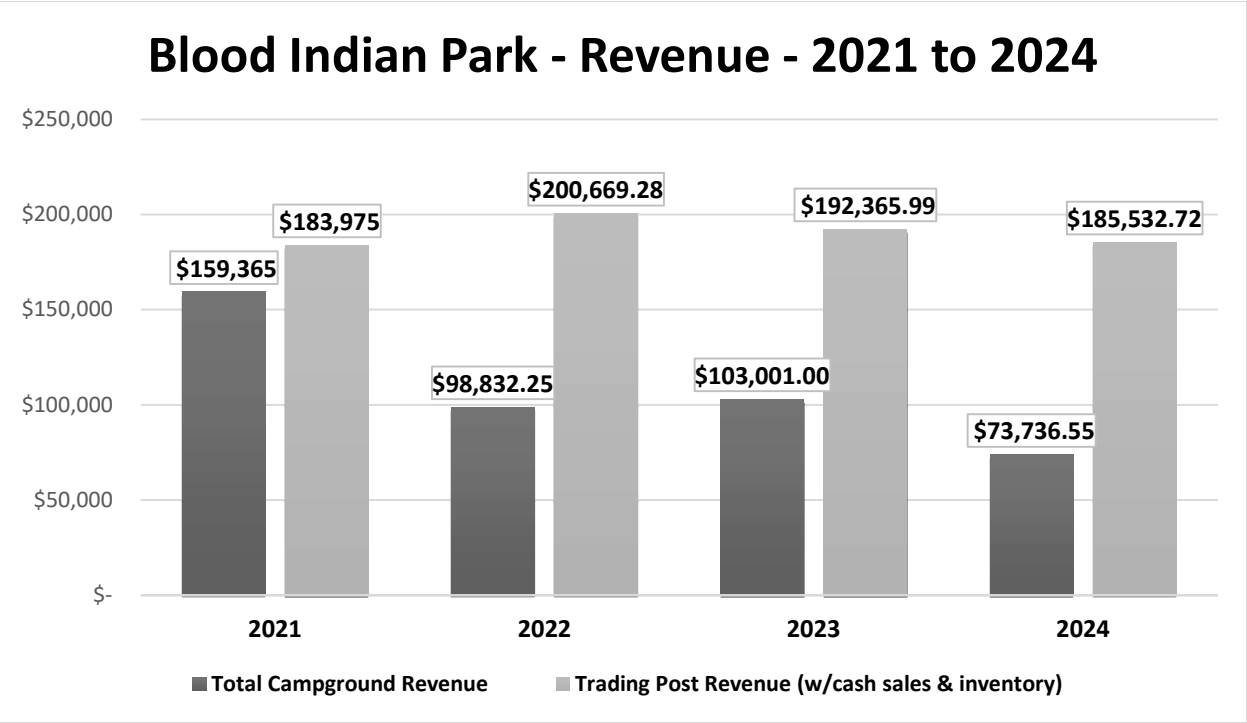
- Gravel was brought into Bindloss, Buffalo and Jenner campground to improve the sites and create buffer zones around fire pits.
- Landscaping and mowing were completed at all Special Areas rest stops.
- Completed 5-yr Strategic Plan to assist in guiding projects over the next 5yrs with in the Parks Department.

Overall, the year has been a productive one for the Parks Department, marked by significant improvements in facilities, successful partnerships and a commitment to sustainable park management. There are a few areas that need attention, the technical issues with the reservation system and the ongoing uncertainty at the Blood Indian Reservoir, but the department is on a strong path to further growth. With continued attention to infrastructure development, ecological attention and community involvement, the Special Areas parks will continue thriving in the coming years.

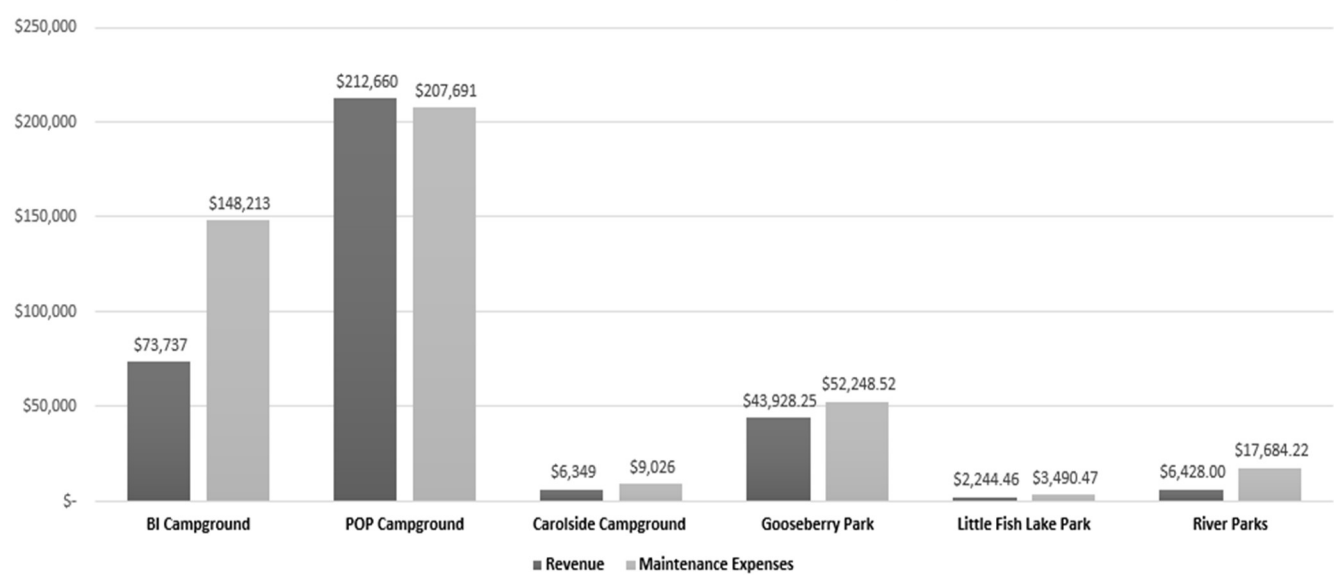
Respectfully submitted by:

Melissa Lee, Parks Supervisor

	Prairie Oasis Concession (Non SAB - Contractor)		Blood Indian Trading Post	
Year	Total Cash Sales	Total Inventory/ Labour Costs	Total Cash Sales	Total Inventory/ Labour Costs
2019	\$ 148,209.44	\$ 145,968.23	\$ 193,697.27	\$ 210,920.64
2020	\$ 179,394.36	\$ 172,595.43	\$ 96,975.82	\$ 107,195.51
2021	\$ 203,294.68	\$ 198,825.98	\$ 137,956.21	\$ 160,858.78
2022	\$ 239,523.79	\$ 229,415.10	\$ 144,449.55	\$ 184,174.26
2023	\$ 252,923.59	\$ 248,643.77	\$ 130,811.31	\$ 117,569.87
2024	\$ 281,091.26	\$ 241,120.34	\$ 118,360.00	\$ 116,032.10



2024 SAB Parks - Revenue vs. Maintenance Expenses



Big Country Waste Management Commission Report
Youngstown Regional Class II Landfill including a Waste Treatment and Storage Facility
(Approval No. 307766-00-00)

The Big Country Waste Management Commission was established in 1986 and is a legislated entity responsible for delivering service for the members as established by the Lieutenant Governor.

The Commission involves eight member municipalities: The Special Areas, Town of Hanna, Town of Oyen, Village of Consort, Village of Empress, Village of Veteran, Village of Youngstown, and MD of Acadia; 5,113,000 acres (8000 square miles), approximately 10,208 population.

- **Member Municipalities and Representatives:**

Mark Blair	Special Areas 2 Representative
Kevin Wilson	Special Areas 3 Representative
Gordon Long	Special Areas 4 Representative
Robert Blagen	Youngstown Representative
Fred Crowle	Hanna Representative
James Walker	Oyen Representative
Arlen Johnston	Empress Representative
Jerry Wipf	Veteran Representative
Michael Beier	Consort Representative
Scott Heeg	MD of Acadia Representative
- **Executive of Big Country Waste Management Commission:**

Chairman – Mark Blair	Vice-Chairman - Robert Blagen
Secretary/Treasurer – Kevin Wilson	Member-At-Large – Fred Crowle

The regional landfill originally operated under a Code of Practice, managing less than 10,000 tonnes/year of waste disposal; grants from Alberta Environment were received for initial construction. Revenue is derived by requisitioning member municipalities at a 45% per capita and 55% assessment basis as well as tipping fees on non-household, non-local waste. The commission operates on a total annual budget of approximately \$2 million.

The Commission utilizes two 53-foot tractor trailer units to collect waste from 28 Transfer Station sites. Several sites have additional areas to collect material that can be diverted from the landfill. We divert from the landfill significant amounts of cardboard, metals, white goods, fridges, air conditioners, tires, electronics, paint, clean untreated burnable wood, and C&D waste.

Alberta’s Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) Program (2024) – legislation places full responsibility on producers of residential single-use products, packaging and paper products to collect and manage the materials they supply to Alberta residents. The Town of Hanna, M.D. of Acadia, Town of Oyen, Village of Veteran, Village of Consort and SAB designated BCWMC as their representative to participate in the EPR recycling system. Communities currently without recycling services may start receiving recycling collection services in Phase II of this program, slated for October 1, 2026.

Operations History: In August 2012, the Commission received approval of the Code of Practice for Land Treatment of Soil Containing Hydrocarbons - registration No. 315639-00-00; (formerly known as the Ridgeline Treatment Pad now owned/operated by Ambipar Response Canada). In December 2014, AEP approved construction, operation, and reclamation of the Youngstown Regional Class II Landfill and Storage Facility subject to terms and set to expire December 2024. The Commission moved forward with building Cells A, B, C, D and Cell E.

Landfill Fire: On October 10, 2022 at approximately 10:00 pm a fire was reported at the Youngstown Regional Landfill in the domestic garbage in Cell D. Upon arrival the Director of Operations noted that tire shred was ignited in the southwest corner of Cell D and reported the event to the AEP emergency line. Upon AEPA approval, restoration work began immediately and continued throughout 2023. Cell D restoration is complete and fully operational.

Cell Development: The Director of Operations, along with Tetra Tech Canada Inc. (providing support and assistance for landfill development) submitted information to AEPA regarding restoration plan of Cell D and Approval Amendment Application requesting permission to construct Cell E; approval to construct Cell E was received July 17, 2023. With assistance from Special Areas workforce and equipment, construction of Cell E was completed.

Approval No. 307766-00-00 Expiry: Working with Tetra Tech Canada the approval renewal process has been initiated. In accordance with Section 69 of the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*, an extension was granted to December 31, 2025.

Employees at the Youngstown Regional Landfill:

- One Director of Operations – Salary employee
- One Foreman (Foreman III) – Salary employee
- Three Equipment Operators (EO III) – Salary employees
- One Scale Attendant (MSW II) – Full time wage employee

Employees at the Hanna Transfer Station/Recycling:

- One Hanna Transfer Supervisor (Foreman I) – Full-time wage employee
- Two Recycling Attendants (MSW I) – One Full-time wage employee, One Full-time salary employee

Transfer Station Contracts: Fifteen attendants.

Administrative Support: Supplied by Special Areas

Reporting Period: January 1 to December 31, 2024.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Sean Olmstead, Director of Operations

March 1, 2025

Water Technical Services Report

The water services department continues to focus on delivering current projects while streamlining operations to capture cost efficiencies.

Staffing Update

The water services department has seven certified operators including: Wyatt Girletz, Dale Rolheiser, Ken Lenfesty, Janice Berg, Mike Kern, Levi Westerlund and Billy Rude. The department is rounded out with plumber Ian Hernden. We also brought back Shayna Fecho this summer as our departments one and only summer student. This year Shayna continued the valve exercising program and database, continued mowing and painting, continued hauling water and cleaning tanks, and updated all the operators standard operating procedures as some of her main tasks.

Certified operators continue to fulfill AEP's continuing education requirements, allowing them to respond quickly and safely to water/wastewater issues. Due to the preventative maintenance program in place, and because of our operator's excellent performance and knowledge of the systems all issues were resolved in a timely and safe manner. We have continued to supply safe drinking water and have enjoyed providing services for the Special Areas. This service includes not only the hamlets, villages and towns within Special Areas but also provides support and services to the parks, shops, offices, community pastures and all the road crews.

Some major highlights in 2024 were beginning the new water plant at Scotfield. Completing the new trailer that we use at dig sites to house parts and fittings and all the tools we use. Continuing to learn and run the treatment system in Iddesleigh, Sibbald and Bindloss and see the noticeable difference in the water we are providing. Installing the new chlorine analyzer at Cereal to reduce site visits. Installing the camera systems in some water plants that alarm for heat and moisture. Lastly, we got to present at a career fair this year in Oyen at SCHS. We showed kids how to perform an electro fuse, take apart and repair water meters and how we do the daily chlorine tests. This was a success we felt as it was a good way to get younger people exposed to what we do and see there is a need for this skill set in our area.

Another ongoing project is balancing our water meters, this is also reducing our operating costs. We continued responding to first calls for the regional water line that runs from highway 9 to Wardlow. Also continued calibrating truck fills, cleaning up dig sites and cleaning tanks.

Finally, I would like to thank the water department for their dependability and knowledge of our water systems. I am very proud of our team for their ability to adapt and tackle any challenges that may come our way and respond appropriately to ensure safe and reliable drinking water to the residence of Special Areas.

Respectfully submitted,
Wyatt Girletz,
Technical Services Supervisor

Special Areas 2:

Scapa: Shut down the influent line so HKRWC could do a repair on their water line. Byemoor was not able to fill due to the leak and water levels in their storage tanks were decreasing. A new 10GPM flow restrictor was installed as it was worn out and allowing more flow than what was allotted. Installed a new meter as existing meter stopped recording flow. Change truck fill hose due to leak in hose. Remove distribution pumps so we have them to use at other water plants since there is no distribution system and only a truck fill here. Installed a small rv pump to run the circulation line. Replumb the recirculation line to fill in to all the tanks to evenly distribute the chlorine. Bacteriological samples are taken weekly and have been satisfactory.

Hanna East: Manually inspected all meter vaults for leaks and other infrastructure along the line. Installed seven new meter tables in meter vaults that have a PRV in the pipe installation. This will reduce pressure on the customers' floats and hopefully prevent them from wearing out so frequently. Repaired meter vault leaks at eight residences. The flow restrictors were cracked, or the meters were leaking due to the frost plates being cracked.

We installed two new check valves in the booster station due to them both failing and allowing some backflow during a pressure loss event. The effluent meter in the plant began to gradually read low/fail so we had an electrician look at it and it was determined the meter needed replaced. MPE had to fix some issues with SCADA system and pump issues. Dig at Tohms yard to repair leak on water line. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Stanmore: Cleaned storage tank in spring. Exercised all curb stops and recorded in data base. Repaired a curb stop that broke off and was stuck in the off position after exercising valves. Fixed with Hydrodig and the tool we built that allows for repairs without a big hole dug by an excavator. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Scotfield: Only truck fill is operational. No operational issues at the existing building. A new water plant was built and as of this time we are just waiting for the ground to thaw. Once this happens, we will get our truck fill standpipe up, get the truck fill line installed and then dig up the existing line on the East side of the highway and tie it into the new water line that runs to the new building. After this we will clean the tanks, fill them with water and sample the water and hopefully have it operational by end of April. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Richdale: Exercised all curb stops and recorded in data base. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Dorothy: Cleaned tanks twice this year as settling happens in the tank and buildup from iron is present. We try to do this 2-3 times a year to prevent buildup from going out to the distribution system. We are looking into the same treatment that we have at Iddesleigh to install in this water plant. Inspected well pit and installed a new heater to avoid freezing. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Sunnynook: Cleaned storage tank in spring. Replaced an e-coder on influent water meter as old one failed and was no longer reading usage. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Cessford: We have continued the flushing program once a month of our sewer system to prevent sewer backups and it has reduced calls regarding sewer issues. Dugouts for raw water fire protection were filled this year. Lift station was cleaned by Hydrodig. This will be a bi-annual cleaning to keep grease and fat from accumulating on the walls of the piping and pit causing backups and pump issues. Chlorine analyzers calibrated and cleaned by TLC instrumentation in May. Camera installed for monitoring purposes. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Pollockville: Replaced PRV on the chlorine analyzer. The chlorine analyzer was calibrated and cleaned by TLC instrumentation in May. Replaced influent solenoid valve as it was leaking. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Wardlow: Chlorine analyzers calibrated and cleaned by TLC instrumentation in May. Replaced PRV on chlorine analyzer as it was causing limited water to go through the device and readings were inaccurate. Replaced sump pump in analyzer tank. Exercise all valves and found and repaired a leak on Cyr line. This line was replaced from the curb stop all the way to the home. Camera installed for monitoring reasons. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Iddesleigh: Flushing of the distribution continues to try to scour water lines. Cleaned storage tank. The treatment special areas created and installed have been optimized since installation date and is performing very well at removing manganese from the water. It is normally below aesthetic objectives. Filters were changed in November. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Jenner: Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory. Turbidity analyzers calibrated every 3 months, chlorine/PH analyzer calibrated as needed by operator. Biofilter backwashes take place numerous times a year. Wells are pumped out every three months to help water quality. When we airlifted the wells with McAllister's it was found one well casing was collapsed and no longer usable so we are running off of one well now until we can get a well company out in the spring to drill a new one. Monthly data entry to AEP submitted each month. East well was pumped out without restriction at the well site to purge built up iron. A new camera system installed for monitoring/security purposes. Collect annual THM and HAA samples and take them to lab. An inspection with Alberta Environment took place in October and passed. In December TLC Instrumentation was on site to perform third party calibration of all water plant and handheld analyzers and meters. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Social Plains Truck Fill: Usage continues to be steady. Cleaned storage tanks. New camera system installed to reduce site visits and monitoring purposes.

Bindloss: We have installed two iron/manganese filters, a retention tank to pre chlorinate, a carbon filter to eliminate chlorine before the filters and an arsenic filter. Currently arsenic, iron, and manganese are all at good levels. These filters backwash every day. A follow up chemical analysis was taken in November, and results continue to show the treatment is reducing arsenic as well as iron levels in the water. Had our June ERP at this location and did a mock confined space rescue from the well pit inside the water building. Cleaned storage tank in January. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Buffalo Truck Fill: Cleaned storage tanks in March. No operational issues.

Buffalo Hamlet: Well pump failed so McAllister's came to site and replaced well pump and all the galvanized drop pipe with poly pipe. The well was pumped for few days until it was back to normal and samples came back satisfactory. Clean storage tank in May. Bacteriological sampling performed weekly during months RV Camp is in service. Every second week the rest of the year. Bacteriological samples satisfactory.

Buffalo Atlee Community Pasture: Replaced UV bulb. Bacteriological samples taken monthly have been satisfactory.

Burnatt Truck Fill: Cleaned storage tanks in March. No operational issues.

SDS (Watts) Truck Fill: The new building now has 12'000 gallons storage, all above ground tanks. This has been a good addition as we had no calls due to there being no water for the user, which used to be an issue before we increased the storage. Replaced the influent water meter. Repairs were done to the standpipe after a user forgot to unhook their tank from the hose and ripped the hose off and twisted the standpipe. Also cleaned up the site with bobcat and tried levelling so water would run away from building. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Prairie Oasis Park: Cleaned tanks before season. Assisted parks with blowing out the water lines to the camp sites. The usage was high at the park this year mainly due to leaks so it has been determined in the future a new water line may be the best step forward. Fuse and repair water line when requested. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Carolside: Cleaned tanks before the season. Assisted parks with blowing out the water lines to the camp sites. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory. Fuse for parks when needed.

Bartman Raw Water Line: Installed pump in spring and drove line and marked all culverts by number so they'd be easier to identify for operator. After these were marked collected GIS information for mapping. Blow out and pig water line in fall. Looked after this water line with Jesse Williams all summer.

Cessford Regional Water Line: Drove regional line from highway 9 to Wardlow and inspected for leaks and mowed all valves. Installed a meter vault and barrier for Trevor Kingcott on the regional line. Many lines are located for first calls as we are the responding locators for our water line and need to respond in a timely manner.

Sheerness Industrial Park: Electro fusing 12" and 6 "water line for Kelsey. Also fusing all valving. Supposed to begin in August but have begun majority of it in November. The weather will prolong this job for our department but hoping to get it done this year pending how the fuses hold up and how long it takes for each length of pipe.

Special Areas 3:

Cereal:

Wastewater: No discharge taken place in 2024. Continued flushing program twice a year on all the sewer manholes in the hamlet to prevent fat buildup and hopefully decrease sewer main issues. Treated lagoon with Chemzyme and oxiboost to reduce solids in the lagoon and help activate bacteria growth to promote healthy wastewater treatment. This is done twice a week all spring/summer and fall. Continue cleaning out sewer and lagoon manholes in a few sections deemed to be problem areas 4x a year using vac truck. Used a sewer camera on six plugged septic lines in the community to determine issues.

Water: Start up water in parks and campgrounds and operate through the summer. Shut down and blow out the lines in the fall in the camp site, rec grounds and water fountain. Install seasonal meters at five residences and remove them all in the fall. Installed a new chlorine analyzer on the effluent line in the plant to continuously monitor chlorine. This allows us to cut down the number of days we are required to do testing in the plant. MPE tied in chlorine reading to our SCADA and alarm systems so we can monitor remotely. Ten water shut offs or turn on requested. Install new meter in five locations. Had our mechanics

do a complete service and repair on generator. Tested the bloc heater and repaired a leaking pipe on the cooling line. Tested PRV on main line to make sure its set right, excess flow will circulate back into the cistern and not over pressure the distribution system. There was a water leak in which we were losing 200 litres/minute on 2nd avenue. The water line had to be dug up and the saddle replaced. The line was flushed and sampled. A new camera system was installed for security and monitoring the heat issues in the water plant. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

New Brigden: Tank clean performed twice. Blow out truck fill line in the fall. At this moment, the new community hall build is in full swing. They'll be working throughout the winter months to try and get it finished before Christmas. Our department will turn on the water for them when its completed. All curb stops exercised and working will need to straighten some risers next summer. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Sedalia: Continue hauling safe, clean drinking water to this hamlet. This has significantly reduced operator time and operating costs. Clean all raw tanks in March. Cleaned all treated tanks in April. Re-plumb suction lines for raw tanks. Electrical work to remove PLC from potable water system. This was a constant problem as every time there was a power bump we had to go to site to reset pumps, with this change the pumps now reset themselves and trips no longer needed. A new camera system has been installed for monitoring purposes, so we know when we need to haul water. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Chinook: Exercised all curb stops and recorded in data base. Shut off two tanks in the winter to keep chlorine up to regulation standards and pump them out. Located a water curb stop that we didn't know existed. Found this due to our valve exercising program. Will have to be repaired at a future time. Cleaned up site with bobcat as piles of dirt were left here. Leveled them out and spread for better runoff away from the building. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Excel: Fixed the standpipe as user didn't unhook from tank and pulled it apart. A lot of time has been spent in this hamlet looking for loss water as our meter balancing shows water loss. We have used pin finders, sonar devices and existing maps to try to locate missing water. We did find an unmetered property, so we installed a meter, but this still didn't find the main issue. We don't believe this is a leak but rather unmetered property so the work will continue. The next step will be to install new water meters. Exercised all curb stops and recorded in data base. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Lanfine: Installed a new distribution meter as the old one had stopped reading due to age. Installed a new valve on the recirculation line due to leakage. Exercised all curb stops and recorded in data base. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Oyen Co-OP Distribution Line: SA operators continue to operate line for co -op group. HKRWC had a leak at their main supply vaults and had to shut down to make repairs. We maintained pressure on the system by back pressuring the system from our water truck and this prevented us from losing pressure and having to flush and sample. HKRWC had to remove their meter vaults and installed a temporary set up that will supply water for the winter, but a more permanent solution is being worked on with SAB and Oyen Co-op and HKRWC. Leaks on the campground and co-op meter vaults had to be repaired. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Oyen West Distribution: Bacteriological samples taken monthly have been satisfactory. No operational issues.

Sibbald: We have installed two iron/manganese filters, a retention tank with a chlorine pump to pre chlorinate, a carbon filter to eliminate chlorine before the filters and an arsenic filter. Currently arsenic, iron, and manganese are all at good levels. These filters backwash every day. We have seen a vast improvement in the quality of water and have heard from the homeowners that they like the water that is being delivered to the system. An inspection in November was held between SAB operators and Alberta Health Services inspectors. The inspection went well as the plant layout and operation was explained to AHS. Another chemical analysis was collected and was satisfactory. Installed new curb stop at lot that new home is being built on. Pumps quit working and got called to site for no water. Pumps needed reset and issue was found within wiring and relays. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Sibbald Truck Fill: No operational issues.

Big Stone: Tank clean in May. Assisted parks with blowing out the water lines to the camp sites. November, we had an inspection with AHS. A chemical analysis was collected and when results came back it was found to have high nitrite levels. This was due to inactivity in the sample line we initially thought. A resample was collected and all nitrite levels came back as satisfactory levels just as they have every time we've collected a chemical analysis sample. The first test we found out was not taken to the lab for two weeks after it was collected by the AHS inspector. Had it been taken in at time of collection this probably would've never happened. The truck fill was shut down during this time until we had results from a resample. A new truck fill hose was installed. Bacteriological samples taken weekly during park seasons have been satisfactory. Bacteriological samples taken bi-weekly during the off season have been satisfactory.

Sounding Creek Community Pasture: Replace UV bulb on treatment system. Install gas and water line to house. Bacteriological samples taken monthly have been satisfactory.

570 Truck Fill: Water usage continues to increase. Coin box was ripped out of wall and coins taken. The coin box was emptied a couple days before and it was estimated they took about \$20. Coin box has been taken out of service and only running on a card reader system at this site. The Solenoid valve failed and had to be replaced to insure there would be no overfilling of our storage tanks. Clean all storage tanks. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Special Areas 4:

Altario: Continued sewer flushing program to prevent sewer issues. Frozen sewer at residence in Altario resulting in new flushing protocol for sewer system. Cleaned storage tanks in April. Flow has increased this past year due to the school adding more cattle at their outdoor ag center. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Compeer: Compeer continues to have sporadic high usages. With the irregular high usage and a small amount of storage available, it is very tough to keep a consistent level of chlorine in the distribution water thus causing complaints from residence. The hamlet could benefit from having a new, larger building. The current building is one of the worst in our department and lacks the space for more storage. Oil field activity Levi believes caused some issues with the well aquifer this year for about a week, but he flushed it and kept doing preventative maintenance on it and it all returned to normal. All tests he did at this time came back satisfactory as well. Storage tank cleaned twice. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Kirriemuir: Clean storage tank in May. There are signs we may be getting this pipeline extension in 2025 from Pemukhan to Compeer so Levi and I have investigated options where the building will be built. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Consort South: No operational issues. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Monitor: Non-potable and potable water truck fill are used regularly. Annual lead and THM sample submitted. Repaired leaking service line at Rossiter's residence. Installed curb stop and hydrant on southeast side of town to give us a good flush point when needed. A new camera system was installed, replacing the old one that hadn't worked for years. Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory.

Loyalist: Bacteriological samples taken weekly have been satisfactory. Continues to be highly used truck fill. So much so that users are requesting more storage.

Gooseberry Lake: Clean tanks in both buildings. Two bacteriological samples were taken weekly and were all satisfactory. Assisted parks with blowing out the water lines to the camp sites.

Special Areas Tax Recovery Land Sale

TRLS III	As of Dec 31, 2023	As of Dec. 31, 2024
2004 Sale Total Agreements in Place to Date	951	951
New Agreements Initiated During Year	0	0
Acres Sold this Year	0.00	0.00
2004 Sale Total Acres Sold to Date (2004 - 2018)	245,680.11	245,680.11
Parcels Paid Out & Transferred to Date	1,456	1,511

Agreements For Sale in Arrears:		As of Dec 31, 2023	As of Dec. 31, 2024
**All Arrears Includes Penalty Interest	Area	Number	Number
	SA #2	2	2
	SA #3	2	2
	SA #4	1	1
	TOTALS	5	5
		As of Dec 31, 2023	As of Dec. 31, 2024
		Time	Amount
		< 1 Year	10,182.34
		1 Year	3,069.26
		2 Years	0.00
		> 2 Years	0.00
		TOTALS	\$13,251.60
			\$5,441.83

Note: Acres Offered Under 2004 Sale: 435,000 (More or Less)

TRLS IV	As of Dec 31, 2023	As of Dec. 31, 2024
2023 Sale Total Agreements in Place to Date	0	18
2023 Sale Total Parcels in Agreements in Place to Date	0	51
New Agreements Initiated During Year	0	18
Acres Sold this Year	0.00	8,097.84
2023 Sale Total Acres Sold to Date (2023 - 2024)	0.00	8,097.84
Parcels Paid Out & Transferred to Date	0	48

Agreements For Sale in Arrears:		As of Dec 31, 2023	As of Dec. 31, 2024
**All Arrears Includes Penalty Interest	Area	Number	Number
	SA #2	0	0
	SA #3	0	0
	SA #4	0	0
	TOTALS	0	0
		As of Dec 31, 2023	As of Dec. 31, 2024
		Time	Amount
		< 1 Year	0.00
		1 Year	0.00
		2 Years	0.00
		> 2 Years	0.00
		TOTALS	\$0.00
			\$0.00

NOTE: Parcels (quarters) Offered Under 2023 Sale: 2057 (More or Less)

Respectfully Submitted: Brenda Schnurer

Total TRLS Applications (2023-2026):				
Applications Accepted & Sent to Prop Admin for processing				
Date	SA2	SA3	SA4	Total
August 2023	3	1	5	9
September 2023	10	10	21	41
October 2023	9	3	4	16
November 2023	6	2	11	19
December 2023	3	1	2	6
January 2024	3	2	3	8
February 2024	7	4	1	12
March 2024	1	3	1	5
April 2024	4	2	2	8
May 2024	3	1	6	10
June 2024	3	0	1	4
July 2024	4	2	14	20
August 2024	3	0	0	3
September 2024	0	0	1	1
October 2024	2	0	1	3
November 2024	2	1	3	6
December 2024	3	2	5	10
January 2025	0	1	1	2
February 2025	0	2	3	5
TOTAL	66	37	85	188

Applications:	SA2	SA3	SA4	Total
In process at DO	0	0	0	0
Waiting for inspections	143	32	53	228
Waiting on Gravel	123	55	18	196
Waiting on Assessor	12	8	15	35
Waiting on F&W	12	8	15	35
Waiting on FN Review	4	8	0	12
Need to send for FN Consultation	0	0	43	43
FN Consultation completed			40	40
Approved	74	62	134	270
Withdraw	31	12	19	43
AFS Signed	35	11	13	55
Paid in Full	35	6	11	52
Payments		0	3	3
Completed	4	0	0	4

Last Update March 6, 2025

	SA2	SA3	SA4	Total
Total Quarter applied for:	291	140	227	658
Total Quarters sold	35	6	14	55
Quarters on the voluntary List	48		16	64
Land Designation:				
Tax Recovery	129	55	56	240
Crown	125	63	135	323
Revested	29	16	30	75
Dept of M.A.	8	6	6	20
Leases affected:				
Grazing	110	41	104	255
Cultivation	7	16	6	29

Mineral Surface Leases (M.S.L.’s), Right of Entries (R.O.E.’s) and License of Occupations (L.O.C.’s) as of December 31, 2024

Active Oil & Gas Leases:

Easements	1534
License of Occupation	73
Mineral Surface Lease	9355
Right of Entry	344

Pending:

Mineral Surface Lease	1
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Total	11,307
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Inactive Oil & Gas Leases:

Easements	41
License of Occupation	19
Mineral Surface Lease	6576
Right of Entry	397

Total	7033
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Pipeline Agreements/Applications:

Pipeline Agreement	8,992
Pipeline Applications	536

Total	9,528
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Pipeline Agreements	-	Inactive	-	1001
		- Active	-	7,633
		- Abandonment	-	358

Pipeline Applications

- Inactive	-	500
- Pending	-	36

**MSL, PLA, ROE, LOC and EASEMENT REVENUE
December 31, 2023 to October 31, 2024**

	<u>Dec 31, 2023</u>	<u>Dec. 31, 2024</u>
Mineral Surface Lease Applications Received	8	25
Mineral Surface Lease Revenue	\$ 2,995,482.88	\$ 2,823,925.23
Pipeline Application Revenue	\$ 41,826.70	\$ 37,263.35
Rights of Entry Revenue	\$ 91,695.50	\$ 90,016.00
License of Occupation Revenue	\$ 66,552.50	\$ 59,255.00
Easement Revenue	\$ 105,510.45	\$ 110,802.35
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	\$ 3,301,068.03	\$ 3,121,261.93

Development Control Reports

2023

-----Dec 31, 2024-----

<u>APPLICATIONS</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>HANNA</u>	<u>OYEN</u>	<u>CONSORT</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>
Received	50*	9	8	12	25
Approved	48	8	8	12	25
Appealed	0	0	0	0	0
Estimated Development Costs	\$7,006,463	\$4,890,000	\$5,202,300	\$1,900,000	\$11,532,300

*Includes value of 2 Not Approved

Brett Richards, Administrator, Hanna
Darran Dick, Administrator, Oyen
Taryl Abt, Administrator, Consort



Acreage by Land Use Classification, as of December 31, 2024

	SA #2	SA #3	SA #4	TOTAL	TOTAL (Hectares)
PRIVATE LAND					
Private Patented	1,087,839.00	824,054.73	663,940.60	2,575,834.33	1,042,403.16

PUBLIC LAND					
Crown	774,532.15	489,942.41	301,931.75	1,566,406.31	633,902.14
Tax Recovery	475,887.70	317,861.77	128,896.02	922,645.49	373,381.38
Departmental Patented	4,524.92	4,476.77	4,480.82	13,482.51	5,456.18
TOTAL Public Land	1,254,944.77	812,280.95	435,308.59	2,502,534.31	1,012,739.70

TOTAL ALL Land	2,342,783.77	1,636,335.68	1,099,249.19	5,078,368.64	2,055,142.86
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CLASSIFICATION

Disposition	Community Pasture	129,301.54	43,156.50	0.00	172,458.04	69,791.29
	Cultivation Lease	8,884.82	40,671.24	16,565.79	66,121.85	26,758.56
	Cultivation Permit	159.17	23.56	0.00	182.73	73.95
	Grazing Lease	1,036,527.25	690,061.08	367,353.72	2,093,942.05	847,388.28
	Grazing Permit	5,847.08	277.94	12,041.05	18,166.07	7,351.55
	Miscellaneous Lease	4,888.60	363.26	123.84	5,375.70	2,175.47
	Water Body	23,050.55	6,942.34	12,954.12	42,947.01	17,380.04
Private	River Accrued Area	820.13	38.68	0.00	858.81	347.55
	Tax Recovery AFS	4,781.37	7,706.22	4,668.77	17,156.36	6,942.93
	Titled / AFS Paid	1,112,714.99	844,331.13	681,368.12	2,638,414.24	1,067,728.36
	Exceptions [e.g. crown vacant, road plans, railway, etc.]	15,808.27	2,763.73	4173.78	22,745.78	9,204.89
TOTAL ALL Land		2,342,783.77	1,636,335.68	1,099,249.19	5,078,368.64	2,055,142.86

Grazing and Cultivation Rentals and Taxes

(January 1 to December 31, 2024)

	HANNA	OYEN	CONSORT	
G.L. Rentals				
2024 Current Levy	\$1,585,135.80	\$1,259,293.99	\$707,784.94	\$3,552,214.73
Current Outstanding	\$90,033.14	\$ 42,962.88	\$ 9,374.32	\$ 142,370.34
Number of Accounts	42	44	18	104
1 Year in Arrears	\$ 541.73	\$ 3,162.16	\$ 921.17	\$ 4,625.06
No. of Accounts	1	10	6	
2 Years in Arrears	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
No. of Accounts	0	0	0	
>2 Years in Arrears	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
No. of Accounts	0	0	0	-
Total G.L. Rentals	\$90,574.87	\$46,125.04	\$ 10,295.49	\$ 146,995.40
G.L. Taxes				
2024 Current Levy	\$ 295,014.76	\$ 237,454.50	149,670.36	\$ 682,140
Current Outstanding	\$14,982.13	\$ 4,306.90	\$ 5,008.65	\$ 24,298
Number of Accounts	17	22	28	67
1 Year in Arrears	\$ 6,898.33	\$ 83.36	\$ 69.99	\$ 7,051.68
No. of Accounts	3	1	1	5
2 Years in Arrears	20.96		\$ -	\$ 20.96
No. of Accounts	1		0	
>2 Years in Arrears	79.12		\$ -	\$ 79.12
No. of Accounts	1.00		0	1
Total G.L. Taxes	\$ 21,980.54	\$4,390.26	\$5,078.64	\$ 7,151.76
C.L. Rentals				
2024 Current Levy	\$ 48,470.22	\$ 332,987.57	\$129,244.09	\$462,231.66
Current Outstanding	\$ 927.21	\$ 18,012.54	\$ 1,588.71	\$ 19,601.25
Number of Accounts	2	11	1	
1 Year in Arrears	\$310.28	\$ 2,305.01	\$ 1,444.28	
No. of Accounts	1	1	1	
2 years in Arrears	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
No. of Accounts	0	0	0	-
>2 years in Arrears	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
No. of Accounts	0	0	0	-
Total C.L. Rentals	1,237.49	20,317.55	\$1,588.71	\$ 462,231.66
C.L. Taxes				
2024 Current Levy	\$ 6,320.02	\$ 40,011.46	\$ 15,530.56	\$ 61,862.04
Current Outstanding	\$41.12	\$ 1,198.82	\$ 335.32	\$ 1,575.26
Number of Accounts	1	9	2	12
1 Year in Arrears	41.12	\$ 305.33	\$ 191.31	\$ 537.76
No. of Accounts	1	1	1	3
2 Years in Arrears	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
No. of Accounts	0	0	0	-
>2 Years in Arrears	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
No. of Accounts	0	0	0	-
Total C.L. Taxes	82.24	1,504.15	\$ 335.32	\$ 62,399.80
Total Outstanding	\$ 113,875.14	\$ 72,337.00	\$ 17,298.16	

Regrassing, Grazing, Feed, Cultivation, and Hay Permits

	2023 ACTUAL		TO Dec 31, 2024	
REGRASSING PERMITS	NO. OF PERMITS	AREA (ACRES)	NO. OF PERMITS	AREA (ACRES)
Hanna	1	80	1	75
Oyen	8	1,018	5	930
Consort	4	539	7	1,281
TOTAL				2286
GRAZING PERMITS				AREA (ACRES)
Hanna	29*	7583.25	29*	7,583.25
Oyen	5	330.82	5	308.82
Consort	34	11,636.55	34	11,636.85
TOTAL			67	19528.92
			*Includes 5 Permits under Misc. Lease to Alberta Power 2000, 1,152.21 acres	
FEED PERMITS	NO. OF PERMITS	AREA (ACRES)	NO. OF PERMITS	AREA (ACRES)
Hanna	4	154.5	4	154.5
Oyen	12	557	11	547
Consort	2	58	2	62
TOTAL				763.5
CULTIVATION PERMITS				AREA (ACRES)
Hanna	4*	297.56	3	160.56
Oyen	0	0	0	0
Consort	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	297.56	3	160.56
**1 Permit under Misc. Lease to Alberta Power 2000 for 137 acres			**1 Permit under Misc. Lease to Alberta Power 2000 for 137 acres	
HAY PERMITS (TONS)	NO. OF PERMITS	AREA (ACRES)	NO. OF PERMITS	AMOUNT (TONS)
Hanna	3	6.3	3	6.3
Oyen	0	0	0	0
Consort	6	25	6	273.5
TOTAL	9		9	279.8

Range Management Report

The Special Areas received a large year over year increase in rainfall from May to October in 2024. The region received approximately twelve inches of rainfall on average recorded at the twenty-two ACIS weather stations. The rainfall recorded at Consort, Gooseberry Lake, Kirriemuir and Esther was the most moisture in the Special Areas with rainfall totals from 13.5 – 15 inches. Homestead Coulee, Spondin, Steveville, and Wardlow recorded as the drier areas with rainfall totals from 9.5 – 10 inches, but still above average amounts for growing season. The rainfall received from May to October has dramatically increased the annualized amounts to 95% - 140% compared to long-term averages.

There was a positive response in vegetation growth from the increased moisture across the Special Areas in 2024. A total of 233 range health assessments were completed across the entire region. Ninety-six assessments, or forty-one percent of the total, rated in the *Healthy* category. This means that these locations were performing key ecological functions, such as optimum forage production, capture of sunlight, and enhancing water infiltration and retention. The bare ground cover was low at these locations and the presence of invasive noxious weeds was absent. Eighty-nine assessments, or thirty-eight percent of the total, rated in the *Healthy with Problems* category. This rating reflects a reduction in carryover and a shift in species composition. Forty-seven, or twenty percent of the total rated in the *Unhealthy* category. This rating indicates that grazing management has eliminated the carryover on these lands and the species has shifted to mostly grazing resistant grasses and forbs.

The community pastures were lightly stocked in 2024 to allow the recovery of forage production following several years of drought across the Special Areas. The light stocking rate utilized much less of the available forage in the fields which will maintain or improve the range condition and carryover to sustain grazing in future years. The longer-term plan is to increase the stocking rates to 75% of each community pastures capacity for the 2025 season to allow a buffer against a possible return to drought conditions. The low stock-water supplies could be problematic in 2025 if the winter does not produce a large snowpack for runoff. Water development is still a priority in all five community pastures with several miles of pipeline systems and water storage tanks being added, as well as more dugout construction been completed where there is potential for runoff collection or groundwater reserves to be developed. With water development and proper grazing management, the goal of a 100% stocking rate in new next two years should be achievable.

The reclamation of decommissioning oil & gas well sites continues to be active across the Special Areas. Year to date, there has been seventy-three reclamation certificates received from the AER on public lands. There were sixteen new well sites dispositions and eleven new pipeline applications approved in 2024 on public land. All the new oil & gas activity is connected to the production of light crude oil with horizontal drilling technology.

Respectfully Submitted By:
Nolan Ball, Rangeland Agrologist

Assessment Report

Key Points

- The annual assessment was completed prior to the end of February 2025.
- Benchmark Assessment Consultants Inc. has been working with our assessment department and has been reviewing residential aspects of the roll and helping with any questions and problems we have as well as working to finalize our roll for 2025.
- The annual 2025 Designated Industrial Property Assessment will be mailed to the assessed persons (owners/operators of designated industrial property) on February 28, 2025, with a copy to the affected municipalities. A complaint about an assessment for designated industrial property must be filed at the start of May 2025 as pursuant to s. 309(1) of the *Municipal Government Act*.
- In 2024 Farm residences were re-inspected in Special Area #4 portions as well as the following hamlets and villages: Veteran, Consort, Altario, Monitor, Kirriemuir and Compeer areas as part of our five-year cycle to re-inspect all residences within Special Areas. Farm residences will be re-inspected in Special Area #3 around the Oyen, New Brigden, Sibbald and Cereal areas starting in the spring of 2025.

In 2024 staffing is still at one Assessor and he is working alongside Benchmark Consultants to re-inspect current residences and add any new assessable buildings to the roll while he learns any new procedures for assessing land and improvements as well as working towards his accreditation. The goal of the department is to maintain status quo while any direction from Municipal Affairs is given. Processes, workload and responsibilities are subject to change in the future as we work together with Benchmark Assessment Consultants Inc.

Assessment Department

Water Development Credits

2023	Hanna	Oyen	Consort	TOTAL
Number of Leases	5	10	2	17
2023 Applied Credits	\$7,848.93	\$17,545.38	\$ 732.57	\$26,126.88
2023 Carry Forward	\$3,440.11	\$ 2,113.90	\$ 398.77	\$5,952.78
2024	Hanna	Oyen	Consort	TOTAL
Number of Leases	10	8	4	22
2024 Applied Credits	\$4,440.10	\$ 2,535.15	\$2,302.52	\$9,277.77
2024 Carry Forward	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 96.25	\$96.25

Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa Bietelspacher
Lease Supervisor

Pumping Units Report to December 31, 2024

	2023	2024
Applications For Use	21	24
Customers Pumped	18	22
Usage of Pump (Hours)	9 to 36	5 to 50
Total Hours Pumped	223	222
Customers Cancelled	3	2
Customers to Do		0
Charges For Usage	\$5,980.00	\$19,445.00
Total Revenues	\$5,980.00	\$19,445.00

	2023	2024
Labour Cost to Move Pumps/Pipe	\$3,159.69	\$897.64
Equipment Cost to Move Pumps/Pipe	\$1,653.72	\$732.58
Pump Repairs	\$19,547.89	\$7,713.32
Trailer Repairs	\$5,238.35	\$97.20
Pipe Parts/Labour		
Total Expenses	\$29,599.65	\$9,440.74

Seven rentals were for pipe or discharge hose only.
There was one courtesy (no charge) usage - Spondin Community Hall

Respectfully Submitted,
Paulette Gillespie

Agricultural Service Board Report- Special Area No. 2

The Special Area No. 2 (SA2) Agricultural Services Department has recently offered four seasonal weed inspector positions for May- August to assist in the field work for the upcoming field season. This is supported by the newly submitted 2025-2029 ASB Grant Application completed in January, 2025, which outlines the priorities, strategies and outcomes of the Agricultural Service Department in Special Areas. In recent years, the \$166,247 annual grant offset approximately 45% of the department's budget. A joint Resource Management Stream (extension services) application with SA2, SA3, SA4, M.D. of Acadia Valley and Chinook Applied Research Association (CARA) was also submitted, with high hopes of securing additional funding (in recent years, \$66,000) due to the new merit-based application grading system from Alberta Agriculture & Irrigation.

Training of department staff encompasses an enormous amount of resources and approximately 16% of the season to complete, due to the associated legislation around pesticide application in Alberta. In an effort to minimize cross-training costs while sharing expertise, several resources have been developed and shared with Municipal Services staff, as well as an extension to attend our "Snakes on a Plain" species at risk training occurring on May 9, 2025 in Pollockville to all field staff in the organization.

The Agricultural Service Board (ASB) met four times in 2024 and have since met once in January 2025. Two ASB members attended the Provincial ASB Conference in Edmonton with department staff, representing SA2 agricultural producers on resolution session voting.

Since the publishing of the last report, there has been significant progress achieved on the ASB-led staff/youth recruitment committee, of which the aim is to encourage agricultural interest in our youth, and in turn, our Agricultural Services Department. The ASB's of SA2, SA3 and SA4 identified the difficulty of recruiting staff and the lack of young people entering agricultural careers in Special Areas as major concerns in 2024. The formation of this committee aligns with the duties set out by Alberta's *Agricultural Service Board Act*, part 2(d) *to promote, enhance and protect viable and sustainable agriculture with a view to improving the economic viability of the agricultural producer.*

Meetings with Prairie Land Regional School Division (PLRD), in consultation with Prairie Rose Regional School Division have yielded the upcoming April 14-15, 2025 Trades & Ag Career Day being hosted at Youngstown Community Center. The Agricultural Services Department will be showcasing careers in agriculture and within the department. Negotiations are also underway to include the pesticide applicators certificate course within their value-added dual credit program in PLRD, as well as creating opportunities for agricultural fieldmen to enter elementary classrooms for hands-on student activities to begin building rapport at a young age. We appreciate the school divisions willingness to collaborate to offer our students unique agricultural opportunities and look forward to the growth of this initiative in 2025.

One such collaboration was the five J.C. Charyk female high school students that the ASB sponsored to be part of the Vet-Student Mentorship at the Tri-County Ladies Calving Clinic in Rumsey on February 27th. The Agricultural Fieldmen from Special Area No.2, Starland County and Stettler County organized the University of Calgary's Veterinary Medicine (UCVM) program and local veterinarians to host an hour workshop with students interested in large animal rural vet careers. The fifteen (5 from each county) young women had one-on-one access to the UCVM Dean of Admissions, current students and doctors to discuss their future, make networking connections and gain insight into their potential careers. They were then asked to stay for the Ladies Calving Clinic and gain knowledge from industry experts.

The Ladies Calving Clinic has now been a cherished skill-building experience offered by our municipality for ten years. Since 2015, Special Area No. 2 Agricultural Services Department has hosted a ladies livestock event eight times, serving an impressive 765 women! The popularity of this event was obvious by the record breaking 147 attendees in 2025 from 16 municipalities, two provinces and with the overwhelming support of 37 local sponsors! The next event is planned for 2027 in the Handhills area.

Further to the extension services offered by Special Area No.2, the Winter Webinar Series was organized by Agricultural Fieldmen for the second time, this year with a focus on highlighting pest/wildlife conflicts on the farm/ranch. The free webinars ran every Monday in March with topics ranging from ungulate damage on livestock feed and wild boar sightings to coyote predation, mice/rat programming and Richardson's ground squirrel control. The webinars were recorded and are available on our website, as well as CARA's. These webinars compliment the newly passed suite of Special Areas Agricultural Pests Policies 03-03a through c. A Shelterbelt Workshop and unveiling of the new ASB/Parks Shelterbelt Interpretive Walk is scheduled for June 11, 2025 at Prairie Oasis Park. Planning of Baby's breath herbicide trial demonstration days are also underway.

With the 2022 de-registration of 2% liquid strychnine for Richardson's ground squirrel control, there has been growing concern from the Agricultural Fieldmen and ASB's about "off-label" products being used by producers. These homemade concoctions may threaten our soil and water quality, affect alternative wildlife or livestock and may even cause harm to the individuals applying. Our producers are desperate for sustainable, efficacious gopher control as they watch their crops and pastures be devoured first by ground squirrels, then drought, followed by grasshoppers, for several years in a row now. At the provincial ASB Conference resolutions have been passed asking the Ministry of Agriculture and Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency to reconsider the registration of 2% liquid strychnine, but as of yet, with no avail. Dr. James Tansey gave our producers an informative presentation during the Winter Webinar Series on the most efficacious products currently available, as well, we have posted new resources to our Agricultural Services webpage and through our social media platforms.

To date, zero producers have inquired about Compound 1080 (monofluoroacetate) for livestock predation by coyotes, nor have any inspections been requested in 2025. The process for the participation in the Coyote Predation Management Program can be found in Special Areas Policy 03-03c.

Policies are currently being drafted by the ASB's in regards to the *Animal Health Act*, *Soil Conservation Act* and the *Weed Control Act* to provide clarity to our ratepayers about the services our department offers. In addition, new factsheets have been developed in an effort to showcase rentals, grant funding and resources specific to our region.

Since the last report to Council, work on noxious weed control within the municipality has been focused on education and field season preparation. Over 200 letters have been sent this month to Special Area No.2 landowners with noxious weeds identified on their properties in recent years. The letters showcased suggested control methods, available resources within Special Areas and a request to control as per the *Weed Control Act*. Our approach has been collaborative rather than enforcement-based, as per the direction we have received from Advisory Council, ASB's and SAB management. The 2024 Project Costing Report is included for your review.

The *Weed Control Act Regulation* is currently under review with Agricultural Fieldmen, as well as many others at the negotiating table with Alberta Agriculture & Irrigation. This

process began back in 2023 and is still ongoing. While no official changes have been made, to date there has been no discussion on down-listing any noxious species that have been found in Special Area No.2. Additions like *Ventanata dubia* and *Taeniatherum caput-medusae* (invasive grass species prevalent in northern USA) have been highly encouraged by Agricultural Fieldmen to protect our producers.

To aid in the weed inspection program, the approved 2025 budget granted the department a new GIS, data and mapping software called MRF. This has been a request by the Agricultural Fieldmen since 2015, as the current Esri based system has been incapable of meeting our data requirements. The new system will hopefully be available for the 2025 field season, and will send individualized mapping reports and management plans to producers in real time. The goal of this software is to put more power into the landowner's hands for invasive species control, improve Special Areas data capture, reduce municipal liability, and optimize efficiencies in weed control on private lands.

As you may recall from the previous report, by utilizing drone, vehicle and horse-back inspections in 2024 at the Buffalo Atlee Community Pasture, approximately 1/3 of the land base was examined and a total of 196 acres of leafy spurge was identified. The rugged terrain, sensitive ecosystems, soil texture and proximity to ground/surface water makes controlling these infestations exceptionally difficult. A request for proposal (RFP) is being drafted to apply herbicide via helicopter in 2025 to limit spread from surrounding private lands. In the case of the potential grazing co-op proposed at this site on subsequent years, the responsibility for compliance with the *Weed Control Act* would lie with the occupier.

Respectfully Submitted By:
Jesse Williams, Agricultural Fieldman
Special Area No. 2

Agricultural Service Board Report – Special Area No. 3

Summer Staff

The 2024 summer work season began with training of new and returning staff attending the required Special Areas orientation and ASB orientation. ASB 3 and RDR staff traveled to High River for stewardship training. Staff traveled to Vulcan for the authorized assistants training. WHMIS, ATV training, TDG, and First Aid courses were also provided for the new staff.

Spray season started with bridges and gravel pits. On windy or rainy days, staff cleaned pesticide container transfer sites. There are 10 sites in Special Areas No.3. Starting 2025, the chemical collection sites will be cleaned, and there will be no more chemical containers collected at these sites. The Bindloss collection site will remain open due to distance. This will hopefully eliminate any burning or burying of chemical containers. At this point, the retailer will provide producers with bags that will hold between 45 and 50 chemical jugs. Producers will then be responsible for returning the bags to the retailer, where Clean Farms will pick up the bags and deliver them to a recycling facility.

Pest Control

Producers were complaining about Richardson Ground Squirrels being a nuisance, devouring acres of crop and hay land. An alternative for Richardson Ground Squirrel Control is Rozol; however, this product requires multiple dosages to be effective. A new product, (BORROW OAT)-(ZINC PHOSPHIDE), is having some success. The grasshoppers were in high numbers this year. For coyote control, a total of 55 1080 tablets were given out to producers who were having issues with coyotes preying on newborn calves.

The MD of Acadia No. 34 manages the RAT program from the South Saskatchewan River through Special Areas 2, 3, and 4 to the MD of Provost. Baiting occurs in the spring and fall in Range 1, annually in Range 2, and at 50 sites in Range 3.

Burdock Project

Mature Burdock plants were pulled and seed heads picked at Bar Diamond Project. Due to a robust seedbed, first-year plants will require continued chemical treatment. Burdock is now being found on the Howe ranch in the flood plain along the Red Deer River. This noxious weed is hard to control as the bur seeds will stick to the animals; when the animal walks through brush or trees, the burs rub off and re-seed. A total of 10 days this season were spent on this project. ASB 3 will continue their efforts to control Burdock on this project and surrounding area. Continued support from the rate payer is also helping with efforts to control this noxious weed. MD of Acadia Valley No.34 also helped with this project.

Leafy Spurge Project

The Leafy Spurge Project, located East of Highway 41, off Highway 555, was deemed a special project in January of 2015. There are 39 quarters, and every year, it is impossible to inspect and spray this whole project. If possible, the ASB staff could spend all summer on this project if time permitted. This year the crew worked 20 days on this project. Lots of new infestations of Leafy Spurge are appearing and requiring attention. With some investigation, it was discovered that deer and birds are moving viable seeds around and starting new patches. This project will require ongoing control efforts.

Baby's Breath Project

Baby's breath is always an ongoing concern, spreading vigorously throughout Special Areas. ASB 3 uses a couple of different chemicals on Baby's breath. The results are positive with the control. Baby's breath has been moving into the Remount Community pasture; the crew spent four days in the pasture spraying. The crew spent time at Cavendish and Sibbald spraying and picking.

Scentless Chamomile Project

Trucks and quads were used to spray the Scentless Chamomile infestation at Andrew Gurdecki's. This infestation has been kept from spreading; ASB 3 will continue these efforts.

Russian Knapweed Project

James Larson's V-V project, there was no change; the staff were on this project for 12 days. The Russian Knapweed on this project grows vigorously from the same root system, which makes it hard to control. Leafy Spurge is now appearing along the riverbanks in certain areas on the V-V project. This project will be ongoing for years ahead. ASB 3 staff also did weed inspections at Dale Ross's. Spraying Russian Knapweed and other various weeds that grow along the Red Deer River. Weed inspections were conducted through Curry's, MacDonald's, and Buck's ending at James Larson's (V-V project). The staff found Russian Knapweed along this stretch of the river. The Red Deer River crew would not be able to see the infestation from the river.

Surveys in Special Area No. 3

- CARA completed pest monitoring.
- Alberta Agriculture surveyed Bertha Armyworm and Diamond Back Moths.
- ASB 3 did; 4 Canola fields were sampled for the annual Club Root Survey.
- ASB 3 did; 37 sites were swept for the annual Grasshopper Survey.
- ASB 3 did; 16 wheat fields were sampled for the annual Fusarium Survey.
- The Brooks research lab also did surveys for wheat midge and sawfly damage. Canola and wheat samples were taken to the research center in Brooks.

Roadside Spraying

Roadside spraying in Special Area 3 was confronted by different challenges this year. Kochia and other weed issues on back trails and graveled roads. Glyphosate-resistant Kochia is becoming more prevalent in Special Area 3. This season, 1050 miles of gravel and back trails in SA3 were sprayed, with multiple roads being sprayed twice. New construction and shoulder-pull roads were sprayed and mowed to keep the weeds controlled. Octtain XL tank mixed with glyphosate was used on 30% of the roads and trails. Octtain XL was used on 70% of gravel and back trails. The best chemical that was used this year was Octtain XL. A trial of Esplanade used on four miles of back trail.

Chemical Usage

- Tordon 22K – 214 Litres
- Octtain XL – 486 Litres
- Round up Weather Max – 475 Litres
- 2,4-D Ester 700 – 139 Litres

Trial on Backtrails

- Thumper – 96 Litres
- Prestige – 171 Litres
- EsplAnade – 1 Litres

Events

South Central High School (SCHS) had a career day. ASB 3 participated by talking to students about what a day looks like as a weed inspector. The equipment and personal protective equipment that is used. The airboat was on show as well; there was a lot of interest.

Blood Indian Raw Water Line

The Blood Indian raw water line was used this year to fill dugouts for 6 rate payers in the Blood Indian area. The water line takes 6 days to fill a legal-size dugout. It ran for 40 days. The water pump was pulled, and the water department blew out the line on the 18th of October.

Red Deer River Report

Due to mechanical issues with the Airboat, there was no weed inspection done by the Airboat this 2024 spray season. The river crew did some inspection on the river, what could be reached with quads. With the river crew not able to spend the summer on the river, the river crew helped the ASB crew. Progress was made on special projects as more area was covered with the RDR help.

The airboat spent the entire spray season at Wester's Garage in Tilley. The issue wasn't fixed until the end of October.

I would like to thank the ASB 3/RDR crew for their hard work and dedication this 2024 spray season.

Don Hogan, Agricultural Fieldman, ASB 3

Agricultural Service Board Report- Special Area No. 4

The spring of 2024 began with onboarding the new crew members Natalie Wittmack and Sean Murphy and welcoming back Joe Van Lagen for another season.

A total of 247 weed sites were mapped in 2024. 211 sites confirmed to have noxious weeds requiring control, and an additional 79 from historical data were inspected and marked as clean. 206 sites were mapped as controlled by our efforts and the remaining

29 were being controlled by the landowner or were found too late in the season to provide effective control and will be followed up with priority next season. All 5 hamlets were inspected at least twice through various times in the season, with Monitor being of the most concern due to Baby's Breath infestations there. Baby's Breath, Leafy Spurge, and the nonregulated Absinthe Wormwood were also of concern in Altario and the surrounding area. All active and inactive SA gravel pits were inspected for noxious weeds this year with very little found. All current SA road construction projects were also inspected to ensure the reclamation remains free of noxious weeds. Staff also covered the inactive railway bed from Veteran to Pemukan this year and the Yellow Toadflax and Common Mullein found was controlled.

The most challenging noxious weed issues posed this year were Leafy Spurge and White Cockle. Baby's Breath remains a problem in Monitor, S of Altario, and N of Loyalist with weaker populations of this drought loving plant emerging due to spring moisture, although it took advantage of decreased plant competition later in the summer when the precipitation tapered off. Leafy Spurge S of Altario took advantage of moisture early in the year to kickstart its populations ahead of emerging native species. A few new sites around the borders of the Forrester project and along 899 were marked and this population will remain closely monitored as oil and gas traffic in the area is heavy. With a similar biology to Baby's Breath, the nonregulated, but extremely invasive, Kochia also became a very big issue to our ratepayers and construction/ reclamation crews alike this year. The Ag Services spray crew partnered with roads and streets to help with control of both the road construction sites where Kochia infestations were preventing any desirable reclamation species from establishing; as well as on roadsides when they needed an extra hand with application timing. Canada Thistle moving off the Highway ROWs continues to be an issue we are addressing with Alberta Transportation as we work to keep our ROWs clean as well. In the beginning of each year, Alberta Transportation is made aware of the existing infestation levels that they will need to control. They typically then come back to us with a control plan using a combination of chemical application, mowing, and hand picking when necessary. The Agricultural Fieldman will then make further recommendations or agree that their plan fulfills their obligations under the Weed Control Act. We continue to have positive results on our primary and secondary weed control efforts thanks to the cooperation and collaboration with Alberta Transportation.

Special projects began with Scentless Chamomile at the Tanaschyk Project and only required a day of our time. The staff then headed down to Special Area No. 2 to help with some of their leafy spurge projects, as well as some knapweed issues near Jenner. The Forrester location is our largest project, with leafy spurge located south of Altario. ASB 4 staff were at this project for a total of 8 days including pre and post inspections after our main control efforts. The Blueweed project required little attention, with only a couple plants being spotted at time of inspection due to great landowner cooperation and its biennial nature.

Besides tending to weed sites, the staff and I were busy managing inspections and conducting required provincial surveys throughout the summer. This season we participated in Bertha Armyworm, Grasshopper, Elm Beetle, Clubroot, Blackleg, and Fusarium (Wheat and Barley) surveys. The staff also cleaned out the satellite pesticide container recycling sites twice. The 2-inch pipe plow was rented twice this year, and skunk traps also continued to be popular. A rental sprayer skid was asked for on multiple occasions this summer, but we do not have a rental unit at this time, as the old ones were rarely used, frequently brought back damaged, and eventually used for parts to keep our own equipment running. Other tasks this summer included lending a hand to spray around the firehalls, grader shops and water stations to keep any ignitable material to a minimum.

Time was dedicated to promoting our social media presence on Chewing Cud, which is a great avenue to promote all things ASB related happening in the Special Areas. Through

this increased online presence, and over 52,000 impressions across the platforms 2024 was a successful year for outreach to our ratepayers. 3 quarterly newsletters have been published to date that help us to massively increase our reach for early detection rapid response of invasive species. Our next newsletter is set to hit the website early in the new year and you can find up to date extension events and information being posted regularly on Chewing Cud through Facebook, X, and Instagram.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Justine Comeau, Agricultural Fieldman
Special Area No. 4

Agricultural Services Special Projects 2024

Ag Services No. 2 Special Projects

Project	Labour	Materials	Equipment	Subcontract	TOTAL	
Buffalo Atlee CP	\$ 9,542.75	\$ 4,642.71	\$ 5,193.66	\$ 240.01	\$ 19,619.13	
Cosgrave	\$ 1,736.06	\$ 1.97	\$ 511.37		\$ 2,249.40	
Cutter	\$ 1,008.66	\$ 32.20	\$ 509.79		\$ 1,550.65	
Jenner Colony	\$ 6,517.08	\$ 154.20	\$ 3,230.08	\$ 15,544.76	\$ 25,446.12	*subcontract includes \$5,500 for biocontrol releases & \$10,000 for drone mapping.
Majestic Ranch	\$ 154.45	\$ 12.85			\$ 167.30	
Pierson	\$ 2,170.01	\$ 98.42	\$ 864.67		\$ 3,133.10	
Prairie Oasis	\$ 3,127.48	\$ 1,150.85		\$ 32.38	\$ 4,310.71	
White		\$ 900.90			\$ 900.90	
TOTAL	\$ 24,256.49	\$ 6,994.10	\$ 10,309.57	\$ 15,817.15	\$ 57,377.31	

Ag Services No. 3 Special Projects

Project	Labour	Materials	Equipment	Subcontract	TOTAL	
Baby's Breath	\$ 10,992.41	\$ 1,660.20	\$ 5,546.44		\$ 18,199.05	
Bar Diamond Burdock	\$ 12,466.47	\$ 1,251.66	\$ 2,731.32		\$ 16,449.45	
555 East Leafy Spurge	\$ 28,549.04	\$ 9,790.80	\$ 13,622.48		\$ 51,962.32	
Red Deer River	\$ 469.65	\$ 2,714.69	\$ 5,839.56	\$ 5,571.81	\$ 14,595.71	*ACTUAL Chemical Costs= \$0
Ross Ranch	\$ 944.46		\$ 407.36		\$ 1,351.82	
V-V	\$ 13,474.42	\$ 727.20	\$ 6,298.42		\$ 20,500.04	
TOTAL	\$ 66,896.45	\$ 16,144.55	\$ 34,445.58	\$ 5,571.81	\$ 123,058.39	

Ag Services No. 4 Special Projects

Project	Labour	Materials	Equipment	Subcontract	TOTAL
Forrester	\$ 4,112.20	\$ 9,022.73	\$ 7,376.01	\$ 69.52	\$ 20,580.46
Blueweed			\$ 381.60		\$ 381.60
TOTAL	\$ 4,112.20	\$ 9,022.73	\$ 7,376.01	\$ 69.52	\$ 20,580.46

2024 COMBINED TOTAL	\$ 95,265.14	\$ 32,161.38	\$ 52,512.76	\$ 21,458.48	\$ 201,397.76
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Community Pasture Report

Buffalo Atlee Community Pasture

Total AUM = 10,608 Total Allotment = 7955 AUM % Allotment in 2025 = 75%

- One patron did not re-apply to the pasture
- Three new patrons were given allotment this year
- The pasture range condition is Good to Fair

2025 plans:

- Spring cleanouts

Bullpound Community Pasture

Total AUM = 4,658 Total Allotment = 3,477 AUM % Allotment in 2025 = 75%

- Two patrons did not re-apply to the pasture
- Four new patrons were given allotment this year
- The pasture range condition is Good to Fair
- Water supplies on the west side of the pasture are lacking
- A patron association has asked for the development of a long-term water supply plan with water sourced off the ATCO water line or HKRWC raw water line

2025 plans:

- Investigate potential and cost of building water storage reservoirs and running water pipelines

Remount Community Pasture

Total AUM = 8,136 Total Allotment = 6,087 AUM % Allotment in 2025 = 75%

- One patron on year 2/3 of a roll out due to OAS eligibility
- Four new patrons were given allotment this year
- One patron took allotment in Remount Community Pasture by moving AUMs from Sounding Creek Community Pasture
- The pasture range condition is Good to Fair

2025 plans:

- Finish constructing water storage and trough sites that was started in Fall 2024
- Rebuild loading chute at the AI Corrals

Richdale Community Pasture

Total AUM = 930 Total Allotment = 630 AUM % Allotted in 2025 = 68%

- Two patrons did not re-apply to the pasture
- The pasture range condition is Good to Fair
- Water supplies are concerning with dugouts drying up at the end of 2024

Sounding Creek Community Pasture

Total AUM = 7,920 Total Allotment = 5,945 AUM % Allotted in 2025 = 75%

- Three patrons did not re-apply to the pasture
- One patron was removed from the pasture for not meeting eligibility requirements
- One patron moved allotment of AUMs from Sounding Creek Community Pasture to Remount Community Pasture
- Six new patrons were given allotment this year
- Range Condition is Fair

2025 plans:

- Replacement of 4.5 miles of interior cross fencing

Respectfully Submitted,
Nolan Ball

**SPECIAL AREAS COMMUNITY PASTURE
2025 FINANCIAL STATEMENT PROJECTED**

REVENUE:

	2024 Projected	2024 Actual	2025 Projected
Spring Pasture Fees Invoiced	\$ 367,397	\$ 364,854	\$ 821,527
Fall Pasture Fees Invoiced	\$ 17,664	\$ 24,356	\$ 36,224
Pasture House Utilities/Rent	\$ 15,840	\$ 15,840	\$ 15,840
	\$ 400,901	\$ 405,050	\$ 873,591

EXPENDITURES:

Operating Expenditures:

Salaries	\$ 248,354	\$ 247,118	\$ 248,028
Wages for Assistants	\$ 171,504	\$ 96,895	\$ 174,553
Employer Contributions	\$ 59,573	\$ 64,500	\$ 70,577
Worker's Compensation Board	\$ 6,676	\$ 6,863	\$ 7,395
Travel & Sub	\$ 3,500	\$ 2,659	\$ 3,500
Mileage	\$ 5,000	\$ 3,801	\$ 5,000
Membership and Conference fees	\$ 1,200	\$ -	\$ 1,200
Telephone	\$ 12,000	\$ 9,506	\$ 12,000
Advertising	\$ 1,700	\$ 668	\$ 1,700
Training & Education	\$ 1,500	\$ 2,427	\$ 1,500
Building Repairs	\$ 92,000	\$ 113,863	\$ 43,200
Machinery Repairs	\$ 30,000	\$ 44,072	\$ 30,000
Contract Repairs	\$ 2,500	\$ 17,029	\$ 2,500
Machinery & Equipment Rental	\$ 2,500	\$ 8,628	\$ -
General Supplies	\$ 10,000	\$ 16,742	\$ 10,000
Water Development & Repair	\$ 106,000	\$ 31,693	\$ 20,000
Fuel/Oil	\$ 55,000	\$ 44,225	\$ 55,000
Fencing Supplies	\$ 20,000	\$ 15,161	\$ 20,000
Attractive Items	\$ 4,500	\$ 5,164	\$ 3,000
Chemicals & Salt	\$ 10,000	\$ 5,774	\$ 10,000
Natural Gas	\$ 8,000	\$ 7,108	\$ 8,000
Electric Power	\$ 30,000	\$ 28,457	\$ 30,000
Capital	\$ 161,000	\$ 171,787	\$ 107,500
	\$ 1,042,507	\$ 944,139	\$ 864,653

Depreciation of Capital Assets:

2024 Buffalo-Atlee Solar Water Trough	10 yrs	1		\$ 1,070
2024 Bullpound Truck	10 yrs	1		\$ 8,809
2024 Internal Fencing	20 yrs	1		\$ 3,618
2024 Generator	5 yrs	1		\$ 654
2023 Generator	20 yrs	2	\$ 1,839	\$ 1,839
2023 Internal Fencing	20 yrs	2	\$ 800	\$ 800
2023 Sounding Creek Bunkhouse	20 yrs	2	\$ 3,463	\$ 3,463
2023 Buffalo Atlee Truck	10 yrs	2	\$ 7,268	\$ 7,268
2022 SCCP Utility Vehicle	15 yrs	3	\$ 1,466	\$ 1,466
2022 Internal Fencing	20 yrs	3	\$ 4,972	\$ 4,972
2021 Internal Fencing	20 yrs	4	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000
2020 Generator	15 yrs	5	\$ 280	\$ 280
2020 Internal Fencing	20 yrs	5	\$ 2,842	\$ 2,842
2020 Sounding Creek Barn	40 yrs	5	\$ 1,954	\$ 1,954
2019 Remount Stockwater Troughs x3	15 yrs	6	\$ 1,040	\$ 1,040
2019 Buffalo-Atlee Loading Chute	40 yrs	6	\$ 115	\$ 115
2019 Sounding Creek Water Development	40 yrs	6	\$ 1,142	\$ 1,142
2019 Remount Water Development	40 yrs	6	\$ 1,565	\$ 1,565
2019 Internal Fencing	20 yrs	6	\$ 8,400	\$ 8,400
2019 Sounding Creek Corrals	40 yrs	6	\$ 2,646	\$ 2,646
2017 Buffalo Atlee House	40 yrs	8	\$ 10,555	\$ 10,555
2017 John Deere Gators x2	8 yrs	8	\$ 4,600	\$ 4,600
2017 Buffalo Atlee Jeep	10 yrs	8	\$ 2,729	\$ 2,729
2016 Three Shipping Containers	10 yrs	9	\$ 840	\$ 840
2014 Generators x2	15 yrs	11	\$ 273	\$ 273
2013 Generators x2	15 yrs	12	\$ 273	\$ 273
2013 Bullpound Internal Fencing	20 yrs	12	\$ 1,930	\$ 1,930
2013 Bullpound Water (Cystern & Bldg)	40 yrs	12	\$ 141	\$ 141
2013 Bullpound Corrals	40 yrs	12	\$ 1,770	\$ 1,770

2013 Cereal West Corrals	40 yrs	12	\$	2,871	\$	2,871	\$	2,871
2012 SCCP Natural Gas	40 yrs	13	\$	563	\$	563	\$	563
2012 Buffalo Atlee Corrals	40 yrs	13	\$	1,195	\$	1,195	\$	1,195
2011 Buffalo Atlee Barn	40 yrs	14	\$	1,164	\$	1,164	\$	1,164
2010 Bullpound Assistant Quarters	40 yrs	15	\$	1,908	\$	1,908	\$	1,908
2009 Bullpound Barn	40 yrs	16	\$	1,599	\$	1,599	\$	1,599
2008 Remount Bunkhouse	40 yrs	17	\$	1,572	\$	1,572	\$	1,572
2007 Remount Barn	40 yrs	18	\$	781	\$	781	\$	781
2006 Bullpound Sea Can	40 yrs	19	\$	70	\$	70	\$	70
2005 Buffalo Atlee Assistant Quarters	40 yrs	20	\$	1,329	\$	1,329	\$	1,329
2000 Remount Salt Shed	40 yrs	25	\$	149	\$	149	\$	149
1999 Sounding Creek Salt Shed	40 yrs	26	\$	167	\$	167	\$	167
1998 Buffalo-Atlee Salt Shed	40 yrs	27	\$	210	\$	210	\$	210
1997 Bullpound Salt Shed	40 yrs	28	\$	119	\$	119	\$	119
			\$	82,601	\$	82,601	\$	96,752
TOTAL OPERATIONS			\$	964,108	\$	854,952	\$	853,905
TOTAL REVENUE			\$	400,901	\$	405,050	\$	873,591
SURPLUS / LOSS			-	\$ 563,206.55	-	\$ 449,901.89	\$	19,686.45
Royalty and Taxes:								
Royalty								
173,206	acres	1.5482	(\$/acre)	\$	238,158		\$	268,158
Taxes								
5,662,500	Assessment	9.3873	(mils)	\$	53,156		\$	53,156
				\$	291,314.25		\$	321,313.12

SPECIAL AREA NO. 2

RECREATION REPORT FOR 2024

		10 YEAR ADVANCE	INSURANCE	CHEQUE
COMMUNITY CLUB	ADJUSTMENT	GRANT \$	DEDUCTION	ISSUED
Berry Creek Ag Society		\$ 22,156.74		\$ 22,156.74
Berry Creek (Cessford) Library*		\$ 2,087.57		\$ 2,087.57
Big Country Riding & Roping Club		\$ 2,609.47	\$ 1,044.00	\$ 1,565.47
Bindloss Community Hall Board		\$ 22,156.74	\$ 5,019.91	\$ 17,136.83
Buffalo Agricultural Society		\$ 25,549.04		\$ 25,549.04
Cessford Home & School Association		\$ 1,565.68		\$ 1,565.68
Diamond Jubilee Rec & Cult Centre		\$ 28,466.90	\$ 16,231.41	\$ 12,235.49
Dorothy Community Club		\$ 6,262.72	\$ 1,356.00	\$ 4,906.72
Empress, Village of		\$ 41,609.12		\$ 41,609.12
Empress & Dist Friendship Centre		\$ 5,218.93		\$ 5,218.93
Empress Library*		\$ 1,423.34		\$ 1,423.34
Empress & Dist Historical Society		\$ 2,846.69		\$ 2,846.69
HandHills Lake Club		\$ 13,047.33		\$ 13,047.33
Hanna, Town of		\$ 184,180.83		\$ 184,180.83
Hanna Municipal Library*		\$ 8,540.07		\$ 8,540.07
Homestead Coulee Community Assoc		\$ 9,678.75	\$ 2,141.91	\$ 7,536.84
Jenner Hall Committee		\$ 5,218.93		\$ 5,218.93
Pollockville Curling Club		\$ 21,634.84		\$ 21,634.84
Richdale Community Club		\$ 5,218.93	\$ 1,841.40	\$ 3,377.53
Sandhills Roping Club		\$ 2,087.57		\$ 2,087.57
Scapa Athletic Association		\$ 5,218.93		\$ 5,218.93
Social Plains Community Club		\$ 2,372.24		\$ 2,372.24
Spondin Community Club		\$ 9,394.08		\$ 9,394.08
Table Rock Riding & Roping Club		\$ 2,087.57		\$ 2,087.57
*Supplemental Library Funding		\$ 22,500.00		\$ 22,500.00
TOTAL INSURANCE PREMIUM DEDUCTIONS			\$ 27,634.63	
TOTAL GRANT		453,133.00		
HOLDBACKS		-	Total of Chq Issued	\$ 425,498.38
TOTAL ALLOCATION LEVY		453,133.00		

The Special Area No. 2 Recreation Board consists of the following members:

Hanna Maynard	Kindra Mashon
Nicole Skappak	Jane Christianson
Darcy Ferguson, Special Areas Board	Brett Richards, Secretary

Submitted by: Brett Richards, Secretary
Special Area No. 2 Recreation Board

SPECIAL AREA NO. 3 RECREATION REPORT FOR 2024

The 2024 Recreation Mill Rate Levy was designated as follows:

	Grant Withheld for 10 yr Advance	Insurance	Total Amount	note 1
Big Country Agricultural Society			\$ 13,239.11	
Big Stone Community Building Fund Assoc.		\$ (3,791.82)	\$ -	
Cappon Community Club		\$ (2,246.81)	\$ 1,838.77	
Cereal Athletic Association		\$ (962.00)	\$ 3,677.53	note 2
Cereal Golden Center			\$ 1,838.77	
Cereal Community Centre			\$ 14,710.12	
Cereal Board of Trade		\$ (712.00)	\$ 1,838.77	note 2
Chinook & District Community Club		\$ (3,902.81)	\$ 2,022.64	
Esther Community Hall New Building Society		\$ (3,079.81)	\$ 2,022.64	
Lanfine Hall Community Association		\$ (2,568.81)	\$ -	
New Brigden Central Curling Club			\$ 11,032.59	
New Brigden Community Association		\$ (424.00)	\$ 0,480.96	note 2
Sedalia Hall Club			\$ 0,017.59	note 3
Sibbald Community Club			\$ 0,017.59	note 3
Town of Oyen	\$ (10,000.00)		\$142,872.06	note 4
Oyen Municipal Library Board			\$ 0,017.59	
Village of Youngstown			\$ 1,004.47	
Youngstown & District Library Board			\$ 5,008.80	
	\$ (10,000.00)	\$ (17,688.06)	\$281,640.00	

note 1 (Numbers are total allocation before insurance and 10 yr advances are removed)

note 2 (Insurance paid directly)

note 3 (Includes special allocation \$ 1,000.00 extra for insurance)

note 4 (2024 is year 9 of 10-year rec advance - ball concession/training facility)

The Special Area No. 3 Recreation Board consists of the following members:

Brett Peterson	Member	Resident
Quinn Wagstaff	Member	Resident, Chair
Kerry Molzan	Member	Resident
Darcy Ferguson	Member	SAB Staff
Darran Dick	Member	SAB Staff, Secretary

Special Area No. 4 Recreation Report For 2024

The 2024 Recreation Mill Rate Levy of \$241,155.00 was designated as follows:

	Advance	Jubilee Insurance	Total Grant
Village of Consort	(\$32,500.00)		\$121,853.33
Consort Municipal Library Board			\$15,000.00
Village of Veteran			\$40,755.00
Veteran Municipal Library			\$2,500.00
Altario Community Association		(\$2,092.41)	\$7,821.67
Compeer Community Centre		(\$3,960.31)	\$24,700.00
Hemaruka Hall Association			\$5,000.00
Kirriemuir Community Association		(\$1,631.41)	\$8,233.33
Monitor Community Club			\$5,000.00
Consort Lakeview Golf Club			<u>\$10,291.67</u>
			\$241,155.00

The 2024 Special Areas No. 4 Recreation Board consists of the following members:

- Paulette Long
- Dan Beier
- Carley Day
- Darcy Ferguson
- Taryl Abt

Taryl Abt, Secretary
Special Area No. 4 Recreation Board

Economic Development

Special Areas Regional Economic Development Report

Spring 2025 Update

This update provides a summary of the current status of projects and initiatives undertaken by Special Areas Regional Economic Development (SARED), highlighting progress in workforce development, community capacity building, and marketing efforts to support economic growth and regional collaboration.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Alberta Advantage Immigration Program (AAIP)

The designation of the Special Areas Region under the Alberta Advantage Immigration Program (AAIP) has generated strong interest from newcomers. Special Areas Regional Economic Development (SARED) and Harvest Sky Economic Development continue to play key roles in the Rural Renewal Stream, issuing over 70 endorsement letters to applicants from countries such as India, the Philippines, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and Sri Lanka, many of whom were already residing in Canada. Moving forward, only candidates currently living in Canada will be considered for endorsement to streamline the process and ensure better alignment with employer needs.

While the program remains an essential workforce solution, recent changes have shifted more responsibility to employers, requiring them to take a more active role in the endorsement process. Additionally, the Provincial Nomination system has become overwhelmed, with long processing times leading many candidates to explore alternative pathways to permanent residency. The introduction of an Expression of Interest (EOI) requirement has added further stress for applicants, as it increases competition and uncertainty in securing nominations. Despite these challenges, the program continues to provide valuable staffing support for local businesses while offering newcomers opportunities to build their future in the region.

Alberta Living Wage Network (ALWN)

To address workforce shortages, Special Areas Regional Economic Development joined the ALWN to calculate and publish local living wages, providing businesses with insights into the real cost of living and assisting with job retention and attraction. The calculated wages for the region are:

- **Family of Four:** \$21.81 per hour (each adult)
(Two adults 35-year-old working adults (same wage), a 7-year-old child, and a 3-year-old child.)
- **Lone Parent with One Child:** \$27.51 per hour
(A 35-year-old adult, and a 7-year-old child)
- **Single Individual:** \$22.50 per hour
(A 35-year-old adult)

This initiative is designed to help businesses recognize the potential advantages of paying a living wage, which can aid in attracting and retaining employees. Ensuring that workers earn enough to cover their expenses is essential for staff retention. Higher wages can also boost local economies through increased consumer spending. A well-compensated workforce supports both individual livelihoods and the broader local economy.

Career Fair

The Return to Rural Career Fair was hosted in March 2024 at South Central High School. It showcased opportunities in local careers across various sectors including healthcare, agriculture, municipal government, trades, and hospitality. The event saw strong student participation from Youngstown, Oyen, and Acadia Valley and benefited from collaboration with Careers Next Gen, Medicine Hat College, and local employers. The event showcased the region's career opportunities; however, ironically, some employers were unable to participate due to staffing challenges.

HEALTHCARE INITIATIVES

The Oyen Healthcare Committee was established to monitor, advocate, and support the delivery of consistent, quality healthcare services in Oyen. Formed in response to a hospital service disruption, the committee aims to safeguard healthcare access for the community by assisting with recruitment, retention, program support, and community engagement.

The committee meets as needed to discuss key topics, including workforce needs, housing for healthcare staff, incentive programs, recruitment fairs, and future initiatives such as student programs. Adequate housing for staff remains an ongoing challenge. Recently, a Physician Incentive Plan was developed for the Big Country Medical Dental Board to review and approve along with Special Areas Regional Economic Development provided marketing to support the Big Country Medical Dental Board's recruitment efforts.

Attendance at the RhPAP Conference in Wainwright highlighted the increasing availability of rural programs for nursing and physician training. Starting in 2025, the University of Calgary's medical program will be expanding into Lethbridge, and the University of Alberta's medical program will be expanding into Grand Prairie. These programs benefit students living in rural areas and will require evidence of residing in a rural area.

Our region is moving in the right direction, with significant potential to harness technology for advanced healthcare services and develop and implement programs that give our students access to educational opportunities where being from a rural area is an advantage. Small communities, like the ones in our region, are well-positioned to embrace technology as they focus on the future of our rural healthcare and health workforce. *“The next 15 – 25 years, data science, a relatively new discipline, will do more for medicine than all the biological sciences combined.” Vinod Khosla, Co-founder Sun Microsystems*

As new roles like Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants become more prevalent, we anticipate that these professions will provide critical support to regional healthcare. Consort, for instance, already benefits from having a Nurse Practitioner. Reflecting on advocacy efforts from over a decade ago for Nurse Practitioners, we hope that Physician Assistants will be integrated into the healthcare system more swiftly than Nurse Practitioners were.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Economic Developers Alberta (EDA) Capacity Building Workshop

In March, Special Areas Regional Economic Development hosted an Economic Developers Alberta workshop in Consort. This workshop provided community members with valuable insights into regional economic potential, strategic grassroots initiatives, and practical knowledge for economic planning and growth.

Housing Initiatives

Following the completion of the Special Areas Housing Needs Assessment in 2023, Special Areas Regional Economic Development continued exploring a range of housing strategies, including tax incentive programs and region-wide discussions on housing solutions. Meetings with community leaders and employers aimed at addressing workforce housing shortages and developing comprehensive strategies to create inclusive, resilient communities.

Pathfinding

Special Areas Regional Economic Development hosted an online Pathfinding Session with staff from across Special Areas, introducing many to the world of economic development and emphasizing how it intersects with various roles and responsibilities. The session highlighted that economic development is not just one department—it is woven into everything we do, from infrastructure and planning to workforce development and community services. Follow up sessions will take place in the spring of 2025.

Small Communities Opportunities Program (SCOP)

Special Areas Regional Economic Development successfully secured the SCOP grant, a 90/10 funding initiative with the Government of Alberta, leveraging \$10,000 in local funds to receive \$90,000. The project has a focus on aligning workforce development with broader economic objectives and addressing housing needs essential for workforce attraction and retention.

MARKETING

Travel Special Areas Promotion

Special Areas Regional Economic Development has promoted regional tourism through strategic projects, including showcasing the Carolside Mosasaur and highlighting the area's unique history. These efforts have involved creating driving routes, contributing to travel guides, and enhancing the region’s visibility to potential tourists.

The *Travel Special Areas’* social media platforms have been consistently updated to captivate and engage visitors, leading to a significant rise in interest and interaction, particularly with posts highlighting the region's history. To further boost engagement and showcase the beauty of the area, Special Areas Regional Economic Development held a photo contest, encouraging residents and visitors to submit images that capture the essence of the region.

Return to Rural Initiative

New marketing materials, including videos, have been completed and are ready for promotion. The Return to Rural project has been updated to serve as a more comprehensive resident attraction portal. With the upcoming launch of the refreshed website and a marketing plan in place, the initiative is set to enhance outreach and help attract new residents to the region.

Investment Attraction

Special Areas Regional Economic Development hosted investor delegations and facilitated discussions between investors and local stakeholders, responding to inquiries from Site Selectors as well as strategically placing advertisements in Site Selector magazines.

These marketing components are streamlined under Special Areas Regional Economic Development to present a cohesive approach to regional growth and community collaboration.

In 2024, Special Areas Regional Economic Development made significant strides in workforce development, capacity building, and marketing to drive economic growth. Efforts ranged from advancing the Alberta Advantage Immigration Program to tackling staffing and housing shortages, all with a strong focus on addressing community needs and fostering strategic partnerships. While challenges persist, Special Areas Regional Economic Development remains dedicated to supporting our communities and promoting long-term sustainability and growth.

Submitted by,
Wanda Diakow
Economic Development Officer
Special Areas Regional Economic Development



Economic Development Newsletter

Invest here. Visit here. Live here.

September 2024



Welcome to the Harvest Sky Region!

Endless possibilities await investors, residents, and visitors.

Harvest Sky Newsletter

Hello, Harvest Sky community!

I'm excited to introduce myself as your Economic Development Manager, a role I'm deeply passionate about. I have strong roots in this area, with my family having farmed here for over a century. I grew up in this community, graduating from Delia School before attending the University of Lethbridge, where I earned my Bachelor of Management with a 3.82 GPA.

I am incredibly proud to be in a position where I can contribute to the growth and prosperity of the community that I love. Through my role, I aim to support local businesses, foster economic development, and ensure that this region continues to be a great place for future generations to thrive.

In this newsletter, we'll share updates on exciting developments in the Harvest Sky region, from new business opportunities at Sheerness Industrial Park to expanding our social media reach and engaging with local community members.

Sheerness Industrial Park Development

This past month, Harvest Sky has been placing a strong emphasis on the development of the Sheerness Industrial Park, a key area poised for significant growth. This month, we held discussions with a potential partner interested in purchasing lots within the park. While no agreements have been finalized, the talks were positive and indicate promising prospects for the future.

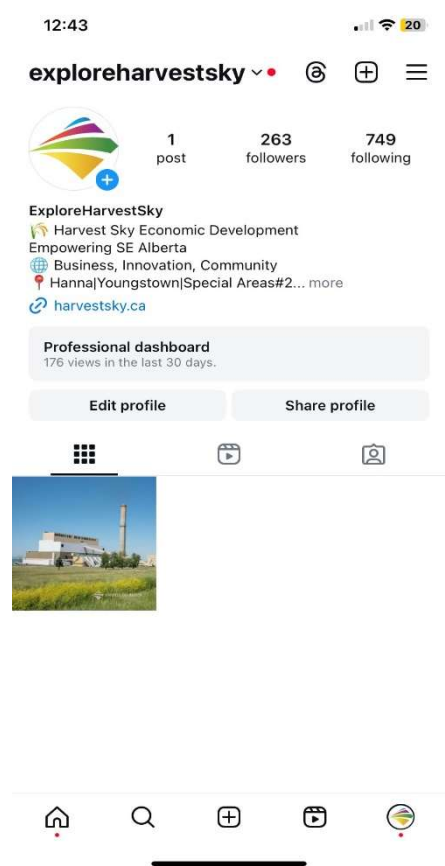


The Sheerness Industrial Park has been identified as a prime location for industries looking for expansion opportunities. It is ideally situated, offering access to key infrastructure, affordable land, and a supportive community. This project will help diversify the regional economy and create new jobs, while also strengthening our industrial base. We will continue to work closely with local authorities and potential investors to ensure the park's development moves forward smoothly. By creating a hub for new industries, we aim to position the region as a leader in innovation and sustainable growth.

Social Media Growth Initiative

This month, Harvest Sky made significant strides in expanding its online presence to increase regional visibility and engagement. The ExploreHarvestSky Instagram page, which showcases the region’s natural beauty, community events, and economic opportunities, grew by an average of 10 new followers per day, reaching a total of 250 followers by September 30. This growth is attributed to a targeted content strategy and greater community engagement, designed to highlight the region’s unique offerings.

Looking ahead, Harvest Sky will be expanding these efforts to Facebook with the goal of reaching 500 Instagram followers and 700 Facebook followers by the end of the year. A reciprocal engagement strategy, modeled after successful campaigns like Barack Obama’s 2008 Twitter strategy, will be employed. This involves engaging actively with users through comments, shares, and collaborations to foster a more interactive community. The focus on expanding social media presence is part of a broader effort to market the Harvest Sky region as a great place to live, work, and invest.



Alberta Advantage Immigration Program

To address local workforce needs, Harvest Sky continues to work closely with the Alberta Rural Renewal Stream, an immigration program that supports local employers by allowing them to recruit international talent. This month, Harvest Sky successfully endorsed three additional candidates to help fill essential positions in the community. These candidates are being placed with employers who have been approved through the program, ensuring that skilled workers are brought into the region to support growing industries.

In total, four employers in the Harvest Sky region have been approved to participate in this program, and Harvest Sky is actively working to match them with suitable candidates. This initiative plays a critical role in bolstering the local economy by ensuring businesses have access to the workforce they need to thrive. The Alberta Advantage Immigration Program aligns with Harvest Sky’s goals of economic growth and community development, helping to attract skilled workers to the area.



Office Move Approved

Harvest Sky has finalized the decision to move offices from the Town of Hanna building to a new location at Lynks. This move is part of Harvest Sky’s efforts to improve operational efficiency and create a more collaborative working environment.

The new office space will better meet the needs of Harvest sky as it aligns with Harvest Sky’s goals of enhancing productivity and maintaining a central presence within the community.

Community Engagement

Last month, Harvest Sky continued to prioritize community engagement by meeting with key local stakeholders and business owners. Efforts included introducing Harvest Sky's initiatives to the Youngstown Town Council and engaging with business leaders, to discuss future development opportunities.

These discussions are essential for strengthening relationships within the community and identifying areas where Harvest Sky can provide support to local businesses. By fostering open communication and collaboration, Harvest Sky aims to ensure that regional development aligns with the needs of the community and supports long-term economic growth.



Upcoming Projects & Initiatives

Looking ahead, Harvest Sky is preparing to lead the marketing efforts for the Sheerness Industrial Park to attract potential investors and developers. There is also expropriation of provincial grants to support future regional development initiatives. These efforts are key to fostering continued growth and creating new opportunities for the region



Social Media

Follow us on Instagram & Facebook



For more information contact

Thomas Trout, Economic
Development Manager
at 403-820-2489 or
Ecdev@harvestsky.ca



CARA's program in 2024 continued to focus on the three key areas as outlined in the Strategic Plan developed in 2023:

- Renowned Soil, Crop and Forage Research for Dryland Sustainability
- Locally Trusted Agriculture Knowledge Leaders
- Thriving Organization with Highly Engaged Board, Staff and Producers

Outside of a hot and dry July, Mother Nature was much easier to get along with this year, resulting in more meaningful data from CARA's adaptive research program. Grasshoppers, combined with the July heat, did cause problems and helped deny data collection from some trials. A few new projects were initiated in 2024, including an evaluation of various residual chemicals for controlling kochia in field peas. Alberta Grains funded 2 agronomy projects on durum and barley. Performance Seeds asked several groups in the province to evaluate different crops for silage as well as the impact of nutrient products on soil parameters. Monitoring the effects of sulphur and seeding depth on canola production was supported by the Canola Council of Canada. Custom research for a few companies was conducted as well.

A native grass propagation study was funded by the Alberta Rangeland Sustainability Program. This involved collection of seed from needle and thread, green needle and Western wheatgrasses by hand clips at several locations within the Sounding Creek Community Pasture and from a near-by native pasture. A portion of the seed was planted in late October while the remainder was saved for seeding in the spring. Late in the growing season CARA received approval from RDAR for a Pasture/Hayland Rejuvenation Project. A number of treatments will be applied early in the spring on an aged stand of crested wheatgrass.

2024 was the final year for the CARA-led project verifying the impact of management practices on changes in specific soil health parameters. We are looking forward to the correlation of management practices to changes in soil health once the results are rolled up during the next few months.

Renovations and calibration of new equipment continued in 2024 within the CARA Soil Health Lab, while analysis was performed on more than 3000 samples. Dr. Yamily Zavala trained 2 grad students in various lab procedures during March through May and also hosted a producer workshop and a tour for the Canola Council of Canada agronomists.

More than 4000 producers and industry personnel attended CARA events, met with staff individually or heard CARA staff members share expertise at nearly 60 events across Alberta and Saskatchewan during the past year. Grazing clubs were very popular events, where presentations from industry specialists as well as producers related to grazing management and feeding were shared amongst attendees. Annual cropping practices, crop varieties, farm safety, pests, marketing and soil health topics were addressed at a number of events across east central Alberta.

CARA 2024 Board of Directors

Richard Bailey, Veteran	John Kimber, Youngstown <i>SAAC Rep</i>
Curtis Benedict, Hanna	Tyrel Kuhn, Acadia Valley
Nathan Berg, Cessford <i>ASB 2 Rep</i>	Kirby Laughlin, Youngstown
Kyle Christianson, Sedalia	Kevin Letniak, Consort
Marie Cowan, Acadia Valley, <i>President</i>	Gordon Long, Veteran, <i>ASB 4 Rep</i>
David Eaton, Sibbald	Gloria Nelson, Veteran, <i>Past President</i>
Matthew Gould, Consort	Landon Olsen, Cereal, <i>Financial Supervisor</i>
Dan Grudecki, Acadia Valley	Barry Redel, Consort
Scott Heeg, Acadia Valley, <i>MD Council Rep</i>	Olivia Sederberg, Sibbald
Jory Hoffmann, <i>MD of Acadia</i>	Chad Williams, Hanna
Don Hogan, Oyen <i>ASB 3 Rep</i>	

CARA 2024 Staff

Dianne Westerlund, <i>Manager & Forage Agronomist</i>
Yamily Zavala, <i>Soil & Crop Nutrient Management Specialist; Soil Health Lab Manager</i>
Braeden Peers, <i>Crop Agronomist</i>
Karin Roen, <i>Program Agronomist and Extension Specialist</i>
Karly Willis, <i>Soil Health Lab Technician</i>
Lizanne Booker, <i>Soil Health Lab Technician</i>
Lacey Gould, <i>Livestock Nutritionist and Conservation Agronomist (part-time)</i>
Rae Jorgenson, <i>Office Manager</i>
Shirley Burns <i>Bookkeeper (part-time)</i>
Navneet Kaur, <i>Lab Research Assistant</i>
Jerry Pratt and Renae Pratt, <i>Field Technicians</i>
Nicole Bodnaruk, Kinley Beier, Presley Bouvier, Randi Meyers, Naman Naman, Jaskarndeeep Singh, <i>Summer Technicians</i>

CARA 2024 PROGRAM SUMMARY

Projects by Municipality

Site	Funder/Program	Description
MD of Acadia		
Dan Grudecki	Alberta RVT	Green & Yellow Peas, Lentils
		Flax
	Vantage Ag	Phosphorus Replacement Trial
	AngloAmerican	Poly 4 Canola Trial
	RDAR	Kochia Control
	Canola Council	Role of Sulphur and Seeding Depth in Canola
Gord VanSickle	Alberta RVT	Winter Cereals (Winter Wheat, Fall Rye)
		Spring Triticale
Tim Peers	Alberta RVT	CWRS, CPSR, Durum
	CARA Variety Trials	Durum, Wheat
Soil Management Verification Project		RDAR
		Coordination and analysis of soil samples locally and from across Alberta

Special Area 2		
Madge Farms, SA 2	CARA Variety Trial	Wheat, Triticale, Barley
	West Met Mine	Humalite Trial
	Performance	Forage Trial Demo's
	Seeds	
WestMet Mine		Humalite Trials – Crop and Forage
		Soil Building Demonstration

Berry, Big Stone and Sounding Creeks, SA 3 & 4	ASB Partnership	Riparian Health Assessments
Soil Management Verification Project	RDAR	Coordination and analysis of soil samples locally and from across Alberta
Special Area 3		
Dwayne Smigelski, SA 3	Alberta RVT Alberta Grains Alberta Grains Sask RVT's CARA RVT's Alpine AngloAmerican Humaterra RDAR	Durum, Triticale Trials Durum With Heat Trial Barley Fertility Trial Wheat (Hex 1 and Hex 2), Durum, Oats Durum and Barley Fertility Treatments on Wheat Poly 4 Wheat Trial Biological Treatments on Peas and Canola Ultra Early Seeded Winter Cereals for Forage
Jarrod Kuhn	RDAR/PCBFA	Perennial Cereal Grain Trial
Tim Peers	RA West	Fertility Treatments on Peas and Canola
Tyrel Kuhn		Evaluation of Biological Products for Soil Amendment
Aaron Rude		Perennial Forage Longevity Trial
Mark Strutt		Shelterbelt Demo, Mulch Demo
David and Cyndi Eaton	RDAR Rangeland Sustainability Program	Pasture/Hayland Rejuvenation Propagation of Native Seed
Berry, Big Stone and Sounding Creeks, SA 3 & 4	ASB Partnership	Riparian Health Assessments
Soil Management Verification Project	RDAR	Coordination and analysis of soil samples locally and from across Alberta
Special Area 4		
Barry Redel	Alberta RVT Special Areas & MD	Green & Yellow Peas, Lentils, Fababeans Wheat, Durum and Barley Variety Trials Silage Variety Trial MASH Trial
Gould Ranching, Deagle Farms Craig Gould	AWES	Shelterbelt and EcoBuffer Demos
Hadwin Cattle Co.	CFGA, Consort 4-H	Grazing Management/Riparian Health/Fencing Demo September 2022 - 2023
Berry, Big Stone and Sounding Creeks	ASB Partnership	Riparian Health Assessments Maintaining Riparian Health
Soil Management Verification Project	RDAR	Coordination and analysis of soil samples locally and from across Alberta

Crop Extension

Kochia Webinar	Jesse Williams (ASB FM SA 2)	March 5, 12 and 19
Fertilizer Webinars	Nitrogen Considerations for the Brown Soil Zone (Dr. Regis Caramanos)	March 7
Market Outlook Webinar	Crop Market Outlook (Neil Blue)	March 13
Soil Health/Crop Field Day	MD & SA 3 Sites	July 29
Ag Smart	Braeden attended	July 31,Olds
Crop Walk	Redel Site, Neil Whatley	August 8
Field Diagnostic Calls	Crop disease, pests and fertility issues	On-going
One-on-one producer consultations	On-going; follow-up from extension events	CARA Center or On-farm/phone

Facilitation of Seed, Soil & Disease Analysis	Submit samples to labs; provide info for producers	On-going
Bi-monthly Newsletters	Research information, coming events	Mass mailed
Specialist Consultation	Connection to various industry specialists	On-going
Social Media	Research information, coming events	On-going

Forage/Livestock Extension

Grazing Clubs	Periodic meetings: funding programs, watering systems, Dave Sammons, Lee Smith, dugout mgmt.(Joe Harrington), virtual fencing (Alexandra Harland (U of A), Fencing & Water Infrastructure Grant Lastiwka, Minerals (Arno Doerksen), Feed (Barry Yaremicio), Tips for Reducing Winterfeed Costs (Karin Schmid, Sean McGrath), Grazing Mgmt (Karin Lindquist), Targeting Grazing for Weed Mgmt (Kelsey Beasley), Cow Efficiency Calc (Justin Delver, Gregg Penner U of A), Rafter J Ranch, Grazing Mgmt (Tracy Kupchenko AB Gov), Matthesis Ranch (Marcel Busz), SA Comm Past Mgmt (Nolan Ball)	Pollockville Jan 17, Feb 15, Mar 20 Consort: Jan 24, Feb 28, Mar 13 Oyen: Feb 7 Palliser: Mar 4 Rumsey Spondin Mar 14
Ladies CowBoss Clinic	Teat and bag scoring, antibiotics, feed efficiency, EPD's, skills stations	March 6 Pollockville
4-H Clinic	Ultrasound of Carcass Project Calves	May 15
Southern AB Women's Grazing School	Classroom and pasture sessions related to range mgmt., riparian health, plant ID, etc.	July 24, 25, Seven Persons
Ranching for Profits		November 16 Delia
Cattlemen Clinic	Genetic Selection, water and feed quality, producer programs, producer panel	November 28 Oyen
Assistance with Ration Development	Assistance for producers	On-going
Facilitation of Feed and Water Analysis	Hay probe; various labs Connection with industry specialists	CARA Center
Social Media	Research information, coming events	On-going
Bi-monthly Newsletters	Research information, coming events	Mass mailed
Beef/Forage Email Contacts	Event, information updates	On-going
One-on-one producer inquiries	Various Topics	On-going

Conservation and Soil Health Related Extension

Environmental Farm Plan Workshops & Individual Help	Assistance from Lacey and Karin	On-going February 21 Youngstown March 20 Pollockville November 4 Youngstown
Humalite Webinar (BRRG)	WestMet Mine presentation	February 2
Sask Watershed Mtgs	4 soil health presentations by Yamily	February 6-9
Grad Students in CARA Soil Health Lab	Training by Yamily, Karly, Lizanne and Navneet	March 13- April Zhino Karimi May 15-30 Somto
Soil Health Focus Group	Focus group discussion	March 14 Oyen

Mini-Soil Health Mini-Conference	Soil Mesofauna Diversity (Jeff Battigelli, NAIT), Cover Crops and Intercrops (Lana Shaw, WARC), Plant Interconnectivity 4 Soil Care and Soil Balances (Rick Beiber), Positive Change (Shorty Fenski), MASH Initiative (Yamily)	March 15 Oyen
Shelterbelt Workshop	Toso Bozic	March 28 Youngstown
EcoBrooks Workshop	Soil Health Presentation (Yamily)	April 13, Brooks
Dr. Isbelia Reyes	Training and micro-biological assessments	June 1 – July 10
MASH Field Day	Soil Health Presentation (Yamily)	June 2, Calgary area
Classroom Ag Presentations	Soil Health (Karin presented)	June 17 Warren Peers, AV June 26 Youngstown
BRRG Soil Health Event	Soil Health Presentation (Yamily)	June 20
Compost Workshops	Building a bio-reactor composter and using compost tea (Dr. David Johnson and Hui-Sung Su-Johnson, Shorty Fenski, Jana Von Freier and Yamily)	Oyen June 25 Lara June 27 FFGA July 2 GWFA July 3
Canola Council of Canada	Agronomists tour of CARA Soil Health Lab	July 31
Pasture Walk	AC Sattlander, CCC	cancelled
Organic Oat Growers	Training for Soil Sampling Webinar (Yamily)	September 18
Intercropping Field Day	Soil Health Presentation (Yamily)	October 16, Mannville
Shelterbelt Webinar	Managing Shelterbelts with Toso Bozic	October 21
Organic Conference	Yamily presents	Nov 6, 7 Saskatoon
Social Media	Research information, coming events	On-going
RDAR Producer Meeting	Verification and other Soil Health Projects (Yamily and Dianne)	November 21 Medicine Hat
WCCSHG		Dec 10-12 Edmonton

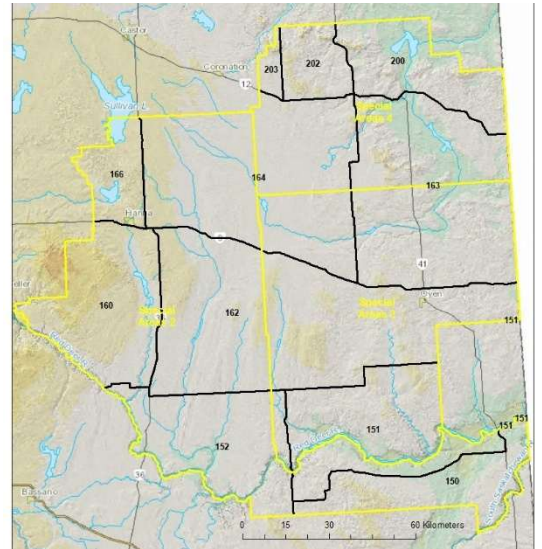
Economic Development and General Awareness Component

Meals on Wheels	Staff delivers meals	January 17-31 June 11, 12
Career Fairs/Career Day	Info on careers in agriculture and CARA	February 6, Olds College March 22 SCHS, Oyen U of S, Saskatoon
Ultra Sound Demo	Hanna District 4-H Carcass Project Achievement Day; Jamie Rieger ultrasounded all yearlings	May 15 Oyen
4-H Weigh-in & Achievement Days	Use of CARA's scale	June 3 Rumsey June 5 Consort
Farm Safety		June 7
Ranching for Profits		November 16 Delia
CARA AGM	CARA Business and Program Update	December 3 Oyen
RALP, SCAP Program	General presentations and individual consultations on programs by Lacey and Karin	On-going
Age Verification		On-going
Social Media	Research information, coming events	On-going
General Inquiries	Weed ID, custom rates, business contacts, etc.	CARA Center
Newsletters	Monthly or Bimonthly	Mass mailed

Wildlife Management Update for Special Areas

Scott Stevens, Senior Wildlife Biologist

Alberta Environment and Parks



Important changes

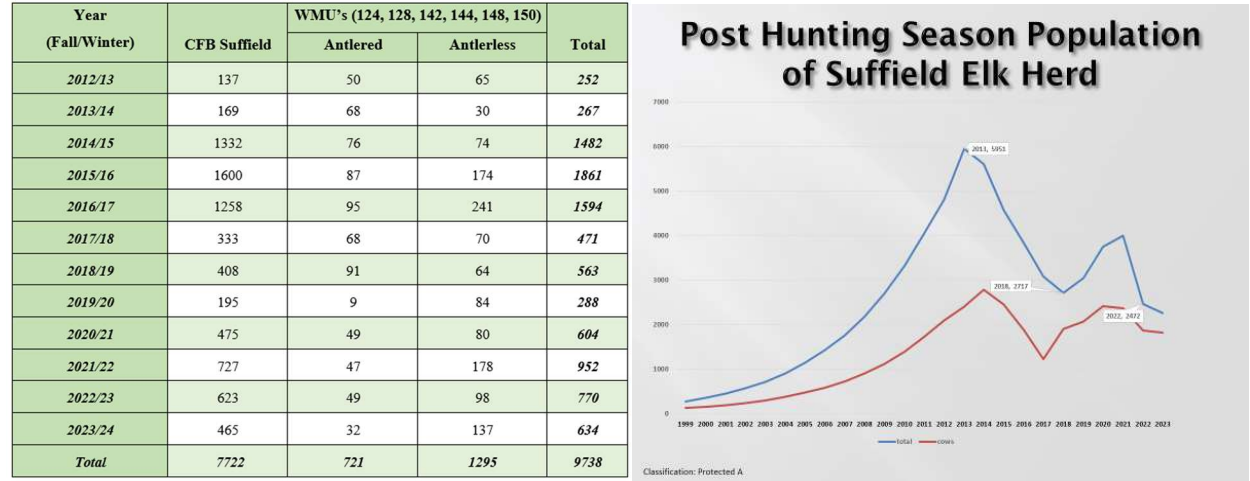
- Changes to mandatory deer head submission Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) for CWD (in Special Areas, only WMUs 150, 151, 200 are mandatory deer head submission, but all heads submitted are accepted for testing regardless of kill-location). 24-hr freezers have been removed from Hanna, Cereal, Oyen, Sedalia but remain at Acadia Valley, Consort, Hilda, and Jenner and major centers in southern and central Alberta (see <https://www.alberta.ca/chronic-wasting-disease-information-for-hunters> for 24-hr CWD freezer locations). Implementation of mandatory CWD mule deer surveillance area in western and northern WMUs at leading edge of the disease.
- Supplemental white-tailed deer licence available in select 200, 300, 400, and 500 series WMUs (includes WMU 200, 202, 203 in Special Area 4).
- Two tags/licence for antlerless elk in zone 200/202/203/232/234. One tag/licence in 162/163/164/166.
- Antlerless elk seasons have been extended to January 31 in 151/152, 162/163/164/166, and 200/202/203/232/234 zones and to February 8 in WMU 150.
- One tag/licence for antlerless mule deer.

Aerial Ungulate Surveys (AUS)

- Since 2014, winter AUS have been conducted by EPA in all Special Areas WMUs. Select wildlife survey results can be viewed online at <https://www.alberta.ca/wildlife-management>.
- WMU 151 (Alkali Creek) is listed as regional priority for 2024-25. It was last flown in 2015 with estimates of 2,670 mule deer, 1,569 white-tailed deer, 98 moose (24 elk observed). WMU 151 has one of the highest rates of CWD infection in the province.

Elk

- All Special Areas WMUs have regulated elk hunting.
- No elk were observed during the 2022 WMU 162 AUS. Two small groups totaling 30 animals were observed in the Sounding Creek area of WMU 164 AUS in 2020.
- In the 2021 WMU 166 AUS, 244 elk were observed in 13 groups in and around Rumsey Natural Area and Ecological Reserve (County of Stettler). That is roughly double the number observed during the last survey in 2014.
- A minimum total count survey for elk was conducted at CFB Suffield (WMU 732) February 16-18 2022. A total of 2,472 elk were observed during the survey among 26 groups, representing a 9% reduction from results in 2019.
- The total harvest of elk at CFB Suffield for the 2023-24 season was 465. Since hunting seasons began in 2012/13, 7,772 animals were harvested on the base as of January 2023. An additional estimated 2,016 animals were harvested by resident hunters in adjacent units over the same period and total elk harvest in the area is approaching 10,000 since 2012.
- In 2024/25 there are three three-day seasons for antlerless and antlered elk spanning January 11 through January 29 at CFB Suffield. Hunts in WMU's around the base are ongoing. Based on expected harvest and recruitment rates, the Suffield elk population should remain stable this season (personal communication Joel Nicholson, Senior Wildlife Biologist, Medicine Hat).



Moose

- There are antlered and antlerless moose special licence seasons in all WMUs in the Special Areas.
- Moose populations have increased in some Special Areas WMUs but with adjusted harvest goals over the past 10 years are thought to be relatively stable. In the 2020 WMU 164 survey the number of moose observed was 123, compared to 20 in the last survey from 2009. In the 2022 WMU 162 AUS, 25 moose were observed, compared to 32 in 2014.

Mule deer

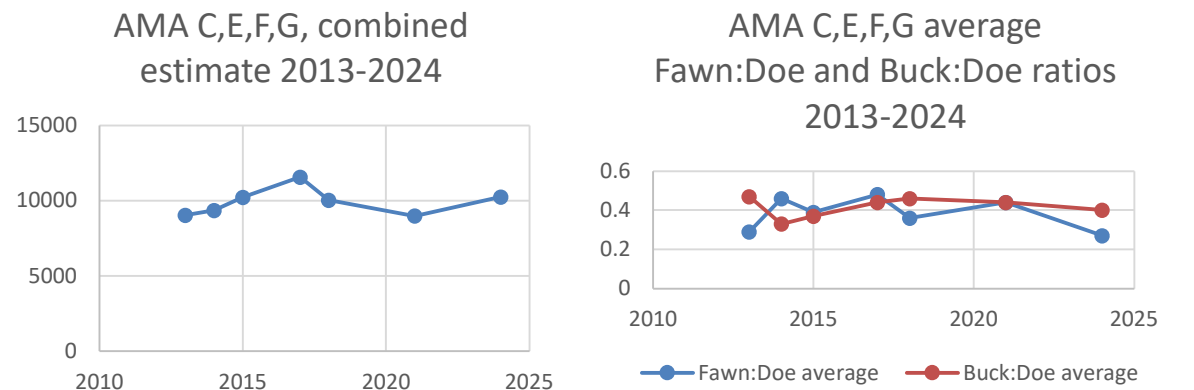
- Mule deer populations appear to be relatively stable in Special Areas WMUs; the mule deer estimates in WMU 162 (2,722 in 2014 vs 2,528 in 2022) and 164 (2,127 in 2009 vs 2,133 in 2020) reflect that. However, several landholders in Special Areas reported winter die-offs in 2023, so population may have declined. WMU 158 (Threehills) survey showed a marked decline in mule deer abundance between 2015 (2,308) and 2024 (1,445).

White-tailed deer

- White-tailed deer populations may have declined in some Special Areas WMUs. The WMU 162 survey indicated a 50% reduction in estimated white-tailed deer abundance since the last survey in 2014 (1,805 vs 951 in 2022). WMU 164 estimates showed a similar pattern (1,503 in 2009 vs 961 in 2020), as did the 2024 WMU 158 survey from Threehills/Drumheller (487 in 2015 vs 269 in 2024).

Pronghorn

- Four of eight Antelope Management Areas (AMAs) were surveyed in July of 2024, including AMA G (WMUs 150, 151, 152) . Combined results of the four AMAs surveyed indicated a 14% increase in total population in those areas compared to 2021. Buck to doe ratios were stable, but fawn to doe ratios declined in those AMAs indicating lower recruitment in 2024.



- A pronghorn research initiative led by Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) is set to launch in December 2024 which aims to provide information on movement patterns using GPS collars. The collars will gather detailed data on travel routes, stopover points, and habitat use across their northern range.

- Animals will be captured using a helicopter net-gun methodology so landholders in the southern portion of Special Areas may notice helicopter activity in their area. Captures are planned for December-January for three years.
- ACA will be conducting landholder outreach to have a pre-approved list of landholders willing to grant access for captures. The capture crew will NOT be landing or capturing pronghorn on private or lease lands without prior consent of the landholder.
- Contact Amanda MacDonald (ACA) at 403-894-9651 for inquiries about the program.

Chronic Wasting Disease Update

- In 2023 EPA tested 3,801 wild cervids

CWD was found in:

- 30.5% of 1,884 mule deer
- 7.9% of 1,417 white-tailed deer
- 5.8% of 224 elk (primarily from CFB Suffield)
- 3.1% of 223 moose (primarily from CFB Wainwright)

In 3,291 deer for which gender/sex was reported, CWD was detected in:

- 42.3% of 870 male mule deer
- 20.5% of 1,011 female mule deer
- 9.8% of 937 male whitetails
- 4.2% of 473 female whitetails

CWD was detected in only one Wildlife Management Unit where it was not previously documented (WMU 334). However, the prevalence (% infected) of CWD continues to rise in most areas, particularly in mule deer males, and at CFB Wainwright.

Species at Risk

- 2024 was the year of a national census for piping plover on the Prairies with surveys occurring in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Overall piping plover populations in Prairie Canada were at their lowest number observed during a census year with 887 birds. In Alberta, 54 lakes were surveyed and 75 plovers were observed, which was increase over the previous two years. Piping plovers were observed at Little Fish Lake for the first time since 2011.
- Loggerhead shrikes are a Species of Special Concern in Alberta, due to widespread declines in their population. A prairie-wide provincial roadside survey has been conducted in Alberta every five years since 1987 to monitor populations of the loggerhead shrike. In 2024, loggerhead shrike surveys showed an increase in the population, with the majority of observations occurring within the Special Areas.
- The northern leopard frog is a Threatened amphibian in Alberta. Prince's springs, southwest of Blindloss, remains an important breeding site for this species.
- Researchers from San Diego State University continued studies of predator-prey relationship between Ord's kangaroo rat and prairie rattlesnake in the Empress Dunes area. A research project concerning the Ord's kangaroo rat commenced for a Master's of Science student at the University of Regina. Ord's kangaroo rat populations in the Empress Dunes (20 individuals captured and marked with microchips) and Dune Point area (132 individuals captured and marked with microchips) are included in the study. The kangaroo rat population in the Dune Point area continues to be stable, but the Empress Dunes populations appear to be in decline. The project will continue in 2025.

Renewable Energy Development

- EPA continues to provide renewable energy referral reports that document and assess the risk to wildlife and wildlife habitat for proponents of renewable energy project applications to the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC).
- EPA provided wildlife referral reports for 8 proposed solar developments and 1 proposed wind development in Special Areas in 2024.

Final Thought

- Special Areas continues to be a stronghold for native grasslands in the province, and the diversity and abundance of wildlife and occurrence of rare species is evidence of that.

100 YEAR FARM FAMILY AWARDS

Year:	# of Awards
1908	12
1909	36
1910	46
1911	36
1912	14
1913	6
1914	5
1915	4
1916	3
1917	2
1918	1
1919	1
TOTAL	166

*Respectfully submitted,
Shyanne Jones*

Motions from Ratepayer Meetings 2024

Motions:

SA2SUB2 - Motion 1: Be it resolved that all Special Areas Board members attend all Special Areas Ratepayer Meetings. Moved by Stratton Peake. Seconded by Craig Horner. **Carried.**

SA2SUB2 - Motion 2: Special Areas install a new line from the Sheerness pipeline to Homestead Municipal dugouts. Moved by Jim Faubion. Seconded by Stratton. **Carried.**

SA2SUB2 - Motion 3: Be it resolved that the Special Areas Board investigate with Alberta Transportation a long range plan for 862 south for moving assets to and from the Finnegan pit. Moved by Craig. Seconded by Laurie Gillespie. **Carried.**

SA2SUB3&4 – Motion 1: Bruce Beasley moved that the Special Areas Board act on the coyote control incentive program. Seconded by Shaylee. **Carried.**

SA2SUB3&4 – Motion 2: Bruce Beasley moved that a water project expansion from the Henry Kroeger line south to the Wind River colony move forward as fast as possible. Seconded by Wade Christianson. **Carried.**

SA2SUB3&4 – Motion 3: Wade Christianson moved that Special Areas engage with Canada Post to provide parcel delivery boxes at rural mailboxes. Seconded by Shaylee Christianson. **Carried.**

SA2SUB7&8 – Motion 1: Debbie Ross moved Special Areas Board reduce 2024 grazing lease rentals by 25% for herd reduction during drought recovery. Kendra Waldner seconded. **Carried.**

MOTIONS from SA3 Sub4,5,6:

SA3Div456 Motion 3:

Moved by Elizabeth Roberts that the 2 year Special Areas operation of the community center be extended to 5 years. Seconded by Hans Mundt. **CARRIED.**

SA3Div456 Motion 4:

Moved by Murray Senkiw that Special Areas revisit roadside cutting starting date of June 15, and move it to July 15. Seconded by John Kimber. **CARRIED.**

SA3Div456 Motion 5:

Moved by Murray Senkiw that the SAB look at firefighting incentives for ratepayers and come up with cost sharing to adapt the high clearance sprayers with “fire tamers” to assist with firefighting. Seconded by Richard Bailey. **CARRIED.**

Motions from SA4 Sub 1,2,3

Doug Fawcett moved that the Special Areas Board make a request to the federal government to reinstate the Strychnine program. Seconded by Barry Redel. **CARRIED.**

Motions and Actions Taken Fall 2024 Advisory Council

MOTION AC06-08-24: SHEERNESS PIPELINE EXTENSION FOR MUNICIPAL USE

MOVED BY KEVIN WILSON AND SECONDED BY NEAL ROES THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND TO THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD TO PURSUE ENGINEERING AND EXPLORE A WATER LINE EXTENSION FROM THE SHEERNESS PIPELINE TO THE HOMESTEAD DUGOUT FOR MUNICIPAL WATER USE. CARRIED.

Action Taken:

Will engage with MPE to perform preliminary work on possible outcomes or options.

MOTION AC06-09-24: EXPLORE STOCK WATER/COMMUNITY WATER JENNER

MOVED BY BRAD OSADCZUK AND SECONDED BY BRAD SLORSTAD THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD PURSUE ENGINEERING AND EXPLORE A WATER LINE FOR STOCK WATER/COMMUNITY WATER FOR THE JENNER AREA AND INTO THE MD OF CYPRESS COUNTY. CARRIED.

Action Taken:

Will engage with MPE to perform preliminary work on possible outcomes or options.

MOTION AC06-11-24: RECONSTRUCTING GRAVEL ROADS

MOVED BY JUSTIN GRIFFITH AND SECONDED BY KEVIN WILSON THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD EXPLORE RECONSTRUCTING PORTIONS OF EACH HWY 561, 862 AND 899 WITH HWY 862 AS THE PRIORITY. CARRIED.

Action Taken:

Meeting has been arranged with ATEC Central Zone Management on April 7, 2025. Items for discussion will focus on Secondary HWY's both Gravel and Surfaced structures with HWY 862(gravel) south of HWY 570 as priority. Consideration for partnerships will be given and what opportunities are available for re-vitalization of graveled Secondaries.

MOTION AC06-20-24: LETTER TO FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RE: STRYCHNINE

MOVED BY BRAD SLORSTAD AND SECONDED BY JOHN KIMBER THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD SEND A LETTER TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REQUESTING THE REINSTATEMENT OF STRYCHNINE. CARRIED.

Action Taken:

Done – response received February 27, 2025 from Frederic Bissonnette.

MOTION AC06-23-24: NEW RESIDENCE ROAD BUILDS

MOVED BY DARYL SWENSON AND SECONDED BY JOHN KIMBER THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD BUILD A NEW RESIDENCE ROAD ON THE ROAD ALLOWANCE TO THE CLOSEST QUARTER OF THE RESIDENCE. CARRIED.

Action Taken:

The draft Policy has been completed and will be presented for review/feedback in Municipal Services portion of Agenda.

MOTION AC06-27-24: DOROTHY ELEVATOR RESTORATION

MOVED BY DARYL SWENSON AND SECONDED BY LAURIE FERENCE THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD ADD \$200,000 FOR THE DOROTHY ELEVATOR RESTORATION INTO THE 2025 BUDGET. CARRIED 2 OPPOSED.

Action Taken:

\$200,000 dollars was added to 2025 Budget, and approved, to restore Dorthy Elevator. RFP for the restoration work closed February 28th with only one bid received. MAST Construction Inc. from Rockyview County was awarded the contract to restore the Elevator. Bid was under Budget and tentative start date-April 1, 2025

MOTION AC06-29-24: FIRST NATIONS CONSULTATION ON TRLS

MOVED BY MARK BLAIR AND SECONDED BY ERIKA TESSIER THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD DIRECT TRLS APPLICANTS PAY FOR FIRST NATIONS CONSULTATION IF THE APPLICATION IS APPROVED, AND SPECIAL AREAS PAYS IF THE APPLICATION FOR TRLS IS DENIED. CARRIED.

Action Taken:

Motion made on December 10, 2024 Board meeting for SAB to pay for First Nations consultations required in WMU200 for tax recovery land sales. Carried.

RESOLUTION #2: DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FEES

WHEREAS current development permit for all projects is \$50

WHEREAS there has been an increase in the requests of development permits for large scale industrial projects

WHEREAS they require a much greater time commitment for administration.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED (Give timelines) that the Administration develop an updated fee structure that would better provide a development permit fee that was inline with the expected costs of the project.

MOVED BY Erika Tessier

SECONDED BY Laurie Ferrance

CARRIED

Action Taken:

Administration will investigate further and provide recommendations/option for consideration at Fall Advisory Council meeting-2025. Once approved, SAB Administration will establish new rates into Policy 04-04A and come into effect Jan 1, 2026.

RESOLUTION #3: SAB INVESTMENT DIRECTION

WHEREAS AIMCO is our intended company for investing

WHEREAS the goal is to create a protected endowment fund

WHEREAS AIMCo provided recommendations

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED (give timelines) that Advisory Council recommends that Special Areas Board takes the recommended 30% Equity, diversified between Canadian and Global equities.

MOVED BY Laurie Ference

SECONDED BY Erika Tessier

CARRIED

Action Taken:

Motion made on December 10, 2024 Board meeting supporting resolution #3. Carried. A final report will be reviewed prior to implementation.

RESOLUTION #4: POLICY NEW RESIDENCE ROAD

WHEREAS there is no current written policy regarding new residence roads

WHEREAS it has been standard operating practice to build on the road allowance of the adjacent quarter section

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED (give timelines) that Special Areas Administration develop a policy framework for the construction of new residence roads.

MOVED BY John Kimber

SECONDED BY Erika Tessier

CARRIED

Action Taken:

The Board supported this Resolution and draft Policy to be reviewed at Spring Advisory Council.

RESOLUTION #5: MAINTENANCE ON PRIVATE DRIVEWAYS/PUBLIC ROADWAYS

WHEREAS there are inconsistencies to how maintenance is being carried out on private driveways versus public roadways

WHEREAS there are differences experienced by ratepayers in different areas of Special Areas

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED (give timelines) that Administration develop options or policy recommendations regarding maintenance of private driveways,

And FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that administration research the historical significance of some of these roads how they have been handled in the past.

MOVED BY Erika Tessier

SECONDED BY John Kimber

CARRIED

Action Taken:

Motion was made at the Board to support Resolution #5. SAB Administration will continue working on delivery options and recommendations for Fall Advisory Council-2025. More time is required to assess situations where private roads are maintained and the circumstances in which these come to be. Maintenance operations have resorted to status quo until further notice.

RESOLUTION #6: BUFFALO ATLEE COMMUNITY PASTURE

WHEREAS The Buffalo-Atlee Community Pasture Association has requested the Special Areas Board allow them to operate the Buffalo Atlee Community Pasture as a Grazing Coop

WHEREAS The Buffalo-Atlee Community Pasture Breeding Association has developed policy and procedures to operate the Buffalo Atlee pasture as a grazing coop.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Special Areas Advisory Council recommend to the Special Areas Board that the Buffalo-Atlee Community Pasture Association be given that opportunity and to formalize a 3-year operational agreement with them.

MOVED BY Erika Tessier

SECONDED BY Laurie Ference

CARRIED

Action Taken:

Nolan and Lisa presented policy and procedure proposals to the Board on March 11, 2025 for feedback. The proposal was then presented to Buffalo/Atlee Breeding Association week of March 17th for their feedback.

RESOLUTION #7: COMMUNITY FOUNDATION PRAIRIE CROCUS FUND

WHEREAS the Community Foundation of Southeastern Alberta, Prairie Crocus Fund provides support to all of Special Areas and MD of Acadia

WHEREAS investment to this fund is providing a long-term contribution for community endowment

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Special Areas provide a \$100 000 donation to the Community Foundation Prairie Crocus Fund.

MOVED BY Erika Tessier

SECONDED BY Laurie Ference

CARRIED

Action Taken:

Cheque printed and delivered to CFSEA.

RESOLUTION #8: POLICY 04-04A – RATES IN EFFECT

WHEREAS Policy 04-04A was presented to Advisory Council with amendments

THEREFORE Special Areas Advisory Council recommends that Policy 04-04A be approved as presented.

MOVED BY Erika Tessier

SECONDED By John Kimber

CARRIED

Action Taken:

Policy has been updated and communicated with staff.

SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL
January 30, 2024
Lynks
Hanna Provincial Building

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Kevin Bossert	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 1 – Absent
Neal Roes	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 2
Brad Slorstad	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 3
Justin Griffith	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 4
Mark Blair	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 5
Daryl Swenson	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 7
Brad Osadczuk	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 8
Erika Tessier	Special Area No. 3, Subdivision No. 4
John Kimber	Special Area No. 3, Subdivision No. 5
Kevin Wilson	Special Area No. 3, Subdivision No. 6
Vacant	Special Area No. 4, Subdivision No. 1
Laurie Ference	Special Area No. 4, Subdivision No. 2
Doug Noble	Special Area No. 4, Subdivision No. 3

SPECIAL AREAS BOARD

Jordon Christianson	Chair, Special Areas Board
Shaune Kovitch	Director, Municipal Services
Darcy Ferguson	Director, Finance & Administration – Regrets
Trent Caskey	Director, Property Administration
Taryl Abt	Administrator, Special Area No. 4
Darran Dick	Administrator, Special Area No. 3
Brett Richards	Administrator, Special Area No. 2 - Regrets
Brent Fecho	Superintendent of Roads and Equipment
Kelsey Martin	Aggregate Manager
Darren Jones	Coordinator of Financial Services
Maeghan Chostner	Communications
Shyanne Jones	Recording Secretary

Guests

Rain Saulnier	WaterSMART
Nancy Inglis	Associated Engineering (AE) - Via Teams
Peter Hooge	Associated Engineering (AE)
Ryan Husband	Associated Engineering (AE)
Catlan Dallaire	Clifton Engineering Group Inc.

CALL TO ORDER 1:01 P.M.

Mr. Christianson welcomed everyone and thanked them for taking the time to attend on short notice. The agenda for the afternoon was reviewed and introductions were made around the room and online.

Mr. Saulnier provided a recap of Phase 1: Conceptual Design work completed on the MD of Acadia and Special Areas Joint Irrigation Project. Phase 2 includes work on procurement and financing as well as engineering; the engineering work will provide the information needed for the water licence application. The key parameters of the water licence application include purpose of use, intake water source, intake location, maximum rate of diversion, and maximum annual withdrawal volume. The pumphouse for this project would be one of the largest in Alberta with a max diversion rate of 15m³/s and a volume of 170,000,000 m³.

Previously submitted water licence applications such as Special Areas Water Supply Project (SAWSP) and the MD of Acadia project combined equate to approximately 130,000,000 m³. These applications will need to be withdrawn for there to be room in the basin for the Joint Irrigation project. As the basin becomes allocated, the province will review allocations not in use and if projects are not progressing, the allocations could be withdrawn.

The current allocations out of the Red Deer River were reviewed noting there is a volume of water not available for allocation due to environmental needs. There are a number of licences

that only use a portion of their licence, for example the Sheerness Deadfish Irrigation systems typically uses less than 50% of the licence allocation.

The Joint Irrigation project is working to complete an administratively complete water licence application, which, once submitted will be assigned a priority date.

A business case will need to be developed for the project; it will be tough as the project is all pumped water. When this project started, there was provincial push to diversify revenue sources and gross domestic product avenues outside oil & gas.

The Phase 2 work is expected to be complete in early 2025 which will include detailed engineering, costing, and design.

It was noted the work on SAWSP will be retained in case a future project can use the data, however the data would need to be updated.

Mr. Christianson thanked Mr. Saulnier for the information and presentation.

Ms. Chostner came forward to provide an overview of the public consultation related to the SAWSP engagement. A map of the project was displayed, and costs related to the SAWSP project in 2019 dollars. The findings from the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) were discussed at a high level. There were no red flags identified. The costs of the project exceeded the benefits. Three options were presented to the Council at the time: do not submit the EIA for technical review to Alberta Environment (\$0 cost), submit the EIA for technical review by Alberta Environment (\$1M+ cost), or submit the EIA to the NRCB for a full review (\$2-\$10M cost). The Council made a motion to go with option one and shelve the project.

Mr. Christianson thanked Ms. Chostner for the information.

Ms. Inglis provided an overview of the work AE and Clifton are doing and outlined the roles of each of the upcoming speakers.

Mr. Dallaire came forward to discuss the soils in the project area and potential crop mixes. The preliminary layout of the project defined in Phase 1 proposed 108,000 acres of irrigation. A GIS system for LiDAR has been developed to review the land classifications for irrigation. The LiDAR is high resolution with a point every 50 cm which enables analysis of elevation, drainage, slope, soil texture and potential pivots. In Alberta, lands to be irrigated require a level 2 analysis to determine the class of soil in a parcel. Several studies have already been conducted and those can be leveraged for this project. There is benefit to getting level 2 studies on specific quarter to see where the high density is for irrigation.

The Red Deer River is an old glacial meltwater channel with medium grain soils and high density soils.

Mr. Dallaire continued to review the crop mix and required crop water demand. It was noted an irrigation district develops over a number of years and the crops generally shift to more speciality crops with higher values, and forages could decrease. Three scenarios were discussed, the current dryland irrigation crop mix, moving to a mix of current and specialty crops, and third a stabilized crop rotation of varied speciality crop mix with higher-value crops.

Mr. Christianson thanked Mr. Dallaire and welcomed Mr. Husband to come forward to discuss the irrigation layout.

Mr. Husband reviewed the irrigable area and identified pivot locations for the 108,000 acres. The model is for quarter section pivots. It was noted canals are cheaper to move large quantities of water, however pipelines can be beneficial too. Canals are suggested to get water to the reservoirs and then pipeline to the pivots. Getting the right pressure to the right point at the right time is key. Not only will the project need to consider elevations, the current infrastructure in the ground (O&G) also needs to be taken into account.

Mr. Christianson thanked Mr. Husband for the interesting information.

BREAK

Mr. Hooge came forward to review the river in-take and pump stations. There are two big challenges with this project: 1. Every single drop is pumped – some drops pumped up to three times, and 2. Pumping out of a river and not a reservoir initially.

Two locations were discussed for intake – one being the Hairpin location and the second being just below the Bindloss Bridge. Location one has favourable river intake but less favourable valley Geotech for pipelines. Location two has favourable river intake and favourable location for 15cms pump and pipelines each direction.

There was discussion on the Prince's Springs reservoir if the alkalinity needs to be mitigated. Engineering is scheduled to determine hydrology and water management in that reservoir. It may need to be a smaller footprint.

It was noted if Alberta has snowfalls of previous years, some reservoirs would be filled. The reservoirs questions are not required for an administratively complete water licence.

Another major issue to manage is the sediment in the Red Deer River. Sediment is a big issue for the Deadfish Pumphouse and the Heartland General Pumphouse. The characteristics of sediment were discussed: bed sand vs suspended sand. Suspended sand cannot be avoided. An operational component will need to be developed to manage sediment removal.

Fish screening is another aspect to consider. New regulations require 1/10 of an inch screen.

The volume of water required for this project, and an intake 15cms with a flow velocity of 2m/s in a 1.5 diameter pipe will bring in a lot of sediment and required de-sledging each season.

Mr. Christianson thanked Mr. Hooge for the presentation.

There was a question about putting a weir in the river – that has not been considered at this point as it is an entirely different set of regulations.

Ms. Inghish thanked the Council for their time and the opportunity to present the project.

Mr. Christianson noted the Council will be asked for direction on the SAWSP water licence application. The timeline of the Joint Irrigation project was discussed, it could be up to 10 years before the project is functioning. Another decision point on the project will be in early 2025.

The Council decision on the future of SAWSP in December 2020 was a difficult one. That project started in the late 1980's so there were a lot of time and funding put into it, however there was not a strong business case. The project was more about delivering water to an arid part of the province, not an irrigation project.

The province is interested in the Joint Irrigation project moving forward, with Alberta Agriculture and Alberta Infrastructure at the table as well as Canada Infrastructure Bank.

There was discussion on the Ardley Dam project – that project is not required for this one – although it would assist with water management in the Red Deer River.

There are two options: 1. Wait for the province to take the SAWSP water licence as the project has not progressed, or 2. Voluntarily withdraw the application and request those acres be moved to the Joint Irrigation project. It is understood this decision will have impacts throughout the region.

MOTION AC01-01-24: WITHDRAW SAWSP WATER LICENCE AND APPLY FOR JOINT IRRIGATION PROJECT WATER LICENCE
MOVED BY KEVIN WILSON AND SECONDED BY NEAL ROES THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND TO THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD TO REQUEST A WITHDRAWAL OF THE SAWSP WATER LICENCE AND SUBMIT A WATER LICENCE APPLICATION FOR THE MD OF ACADIA AND SPECIAL AREAS JOINT IRRIGATION PROJECT. CARRIED.
1 OPPOSED

As Council leaders in the community – we need to look forward. The economy has gotten to a point in time where the SAWSP project does not work. However the work has been done and will not be lost, it can be used if a project develops in the future. There is a need to take advantage of the opportunity when it is present, there is political will and allocation available in the river now.

The Council moved on to discuss a recent release from the province on a pilot project for site reductions on well sites. O&G is looking to have only the tear drop assessed to reduce the lease rental by up to 60%. This is for information only.

It was asked if Special Areas can push managing the Carp at the Blood Indian Reservoir. Mr. Kovitch recently met with fisheries folks to indicate SAB will not accept status quo and will be bringing recommendations to the Board at the next meeting.

Mr. Christianson thanked the Council and staff for their time today.

MR. CHRISTIANSON MOVED FOR ADJOURNMENT AT 4:40PM.

SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL
March 27 & 28, 2024
Lynks
Hanna Provincial Building

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Kevin Bossert	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 1 – Absent
Neal Roes	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 2
Brad Slorstad	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 3
Justin Griffith	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 4
Mark Blair	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 5 – Via Teams March 28
Daryl Swenson	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 7
Brad Osadczuk	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 8 – Absent
Erika Tessier	Special Area No. 3, Subdivision No. 4
John Kimber	Special Area No. 3, Subdivision No. 5
Kevin Wilson	Special Area No. 3, Subdivision No. 6
Gordon Long	Special Area No. 4, Subdivision No. 1
Laurie Ference	Special Area No. 4, Subdivision No. 2 – Via Teams
Doug Noble	Special Area No. 4, Subdivision No. 3

SPECIAL AREAS BOARD

Jordon Christianson	Chair, Special Areas Board
Shaune Kovitch	Director, Municipal Services
Darcy Ferguson	Director, Finance & Administration – Via Teams
Trent Caskey	Director, Property Administration
Taryl Abt	Administrator, Special Area No. 4
Darran Dick	Administrator, Special Area No. 3
Brett Richards	Administrator, Special Area No. 2 – Absent Mar 27
Brent Fecho	Superintendent of Roads and Equipment
Braden Grover	Shop Superintendent
Kelsey Martin	Aggregate Manager
Darren Jones	Coordinator of Financial Services
Maeghan Chostner	Communications
Dawn Lyon	Office Manager, Youngstown Service Centre
Tenille Stevens	Office Manager, SA2
Tori Munroe	Office Manager, SA3
Erin VanKoughnett	Office Manager, SA4
Ryley Girtetz	Facilities Manager
Nolan Ball	Rangeland Agrologist
Darlene Herzog	Administrative Assistant, Municipal Services
Shyanne Jones	Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER 10:04 A.M.

Mr. Christianson welcomed everyone to the Spring Advisory Council meeting and introductions were made around the room and online. The agenda for the next two days was reviewed. An emergent issue: Harvest Sky Economic Development Corporation was added to the agenda.

MOTION AC02-01-24: MEETING CHAIRMAN

JUSTIN GRIFFITH NOMINATED JORDON CHRISTIANSON TO ACT AS CHAIRMAN OF SPRING ADVISORY COUNCIL. NEAL ROES MOVED NOMINATIONS CEASE. CARRIED.

MOTION AC02-02-24: MEETING VICE-CHAIRMAN

NEAL ROES NOMINATED TRENT CASKEY TO ACT AS VICE-CHAIRMAN OF SPRING ADVISORY COUNCIL. JUSTIN GRIFFITH MOVED NOMINATIONS CEASE. CARRIED.

MOTION AC02-03-24: ORDER OF BUSINESS CHAIR

DARYL SWENSON NOMINATED BRAD SLORSTAD TO ACT AS ORDER OF BUSINESS CHAIR FOR SPRING ADVISORY COUNCIL. JOHN KIMBER MOVED NOMINATIONS CEASE. CARRIED.

MOTION AC02-04-24: RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

JUSTIN GRIFFITH NOMINATES GORDON LONG;

JOHN KIMBER NOMINATES ERIKA TESSIER;

DARYL SWENSON NOMINATES JOHN KIMBER FOR THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE FOR SPRING ADVISORY COUNCIL. MARK BLAIR MOVED NOMINATIONS CEASE. SECONDED BY NEAL ROES. CARRIED.

Mr. Christianson referred the Council to the previously distributed Fall Advisory Council meeting minutes and the meeting minutes from January 30th, 2024.

MOTION AC02-05-24: 2023 FALL ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

MOVED BY NEAL ROES AND SECONDED BY DOUG NOBLE THAT THE MINUTES OF 2023 FALL ADVISORY COUNCIL BE APPROVED AS PRESENTED. CARRIED.

MOTION AC02-06-24: JANUARY 30, 2024 ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

MOVED BY MARK BLAIR AND SECONDED BY JUSTIN GRIFFITH THAT THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 30, 2024 ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING BE APPROVED AS PRESENTED. CARRIED.

Mr. Christianson noted good news has been received for the Joint Irrigation project – the water licence application for 170,000,000 m³ of water was deemed administratively complete and a priority date has been assigned. A water licence will be issued once the pumps have been turned on.

Emergent issues brought forward include the Road Use Agreement. Mr. Kovitch reviewed information presented to the Board on options after the Advisory Council motion to exempt all agricultural uses out of the Road Use Order. There was discussion on process as the Council made a motion and the Board requested administration provide options as the RUO was developed because of challenges on the road networks.

The purpose of the Road Use Agreement is so staff are aware of where activity is and can plan maintenance activities around scheduled traffic. It was suggested an online notification system be developed like the Burn Notices where folks can submit information so staff is aware.

Mr. Nolan Ball came forward to inform the Council of the interim directive from Alberta Environment and Protected Areas allowing the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) to implement a trial to reduce well site spacing. The pilot will allow companies with a project in to reduce the size of the site if they apply for a reclamation certificate. The site must retain enough space for reclamation activities. Landowners must provide written permission for the company to be able to reduce. Shallow gas in this area is disappearing, and a number of sites have been abandoned. Those sites already in the process of reclamation will likely not apply. The program does not change the authority of any surface lease agreement, updated survey plans are

required if the surface lease is amended. There is an assessment component as if the site is reduced, there will be a reduction in assessment and subsequent taxes collected.

The Special Areas as a Crown land manager can submit concerns on reclamation to the AER as they issue the certificates.

Mr. Christianson thanked Mr. Ball for the information.

There was discussion on Harvest Sky Economic Development. The funding from the Coal Transition has run out. Special Areas and the Town of Hanna each contribute \$45k and the Village of Youngstown contributes \$6k annually. Without the grant funding, there are not a lot of funds to develop projects. Economic development is difficult to quantify as it's hard to know if something is working – but it is important to have a presence. The Coal Transition funds were substantial, it was millions of dollars. It was suggested an area that needs focus is housing, there is a lack of housing in many areas in the region. Different groups have different priorities – rural vs urban, funding should dictate direction. Economic development in the region would benefit from clear direction from the funding partners.

LUNCH

Mr. Christianson reviewed the afternoon agenda.

Welcome to Shelagh Olmstead, Don Hogan, Jesse Williams and Justine Comeau.

Mr. Jones came forward to review the SA Trust Account. The Audit Exit is scheduled for April 17th and the Board expects another clean audit. The 2023 Financial Statements can be released after that meeting.

The statement of financial position was reviewed noting Special Areas uses a cash-basis for managing capital assets. Total financial assets at the end of 2023 are \$99.7M with total liabilities down to \$11.9M. There was an opportunity to advance the capital fleet by purchasing a grader and the zombie killer mulcher. Deferred government grant revenue is down due to the AT advance. Asset retirement obligation is new legislative requirement to record the liability in terms of assets if buildings were torn down. When an asset is retired, what liability needs to be mitigated.

Trust Equity was reviewed noting reserves from TRLS 1 & 3 sit at \$55M.

Accumulated excess of revenue over expenditures are down from \$35M in 2022 to \$32.8M at the end of 2023.

Net taxes for municipal purposes is up as assessment has increased due to renewable energy projects coming online. Recovery on bad-debt that were written-off in the past were actively pursued and some funds have been received. The Board did approve a 25% reduction in grazing rental rates due to drought conditions.

Total revenue is down to \$54M from the budgeted \$57M.

Mr. Jones moved on to review expenditures. \$70.6M was budgeted and actual was \$57M as there were operational savings on GBC, hauling, and not being able to have a full compliment of staff. The plan was to draw down the accumulated operational surplus by \$13.5M but ended up being \$2.9M. The cash at the end of the year equated to \$57.6M.

The approved 2024 Budget includes a \$18M planned deficit to draw down the accumulated operational surplus. Assessment is predicted to be over \$4B with the renewable energy projects coming online. The 2024 Budget also includes projects for the Sheerness Industrial Park, the Joint Irrigation project and paving Hwy 855.

Mr. Christianson thanked Mr. Jones, Mr. Ferguson, and Ms. Olmstead for the good work on the financial statements and putting together the 2024 budget.

MOTION AC02-07-24: ROAD USE AGREEMENT

MOVED BY BRAD SLORSTAD AND SECONDED BY KEVIN WILSON THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD MANDATE NO ENFORCEMENT TO CURRENT RUA FOR AGRICULTURE PRODUCERS. AND ESTABLISH AN ONLINE NOTIFICATION PROGRAM TO INFORM OPERATIONS OF MULTIPLE LOAD MOVEMENTS; LIKE BURN NOTIFICATIONS. CARRIED.

Commercial haulers would be exempt if hauling for agricultural purposes. An online system should be set up similar to burn permits for those hauling more than 10 loads per day.

Mr. Christianson noted with Mr. Schetzle stepping down there are vacancies on boards and committees. Acadia Foundation, Big Country Waste Management Commission are two big one and a few smaller committees.

The Council moved to a Committee roundtable discussion.

Alfred Brown Handibus: Mrs. Ference – a new bus has been acquired. Original mandate has been located. Grants will be applied for as there are two buses now. Looking for drivers.

Acadia Foundation: Mr. Bossert, Mr. Swenson – vacancy rates are still high in Consort, Hanna is leveling, and expansion of SL3 and SL4 beds in Oyen. Employees received 3% for a cost-of-living increase.

Mr. Christianson noted the assisted living and dementia care project which contains seven units for each. The project has been in the making since 2005, and funding has been secured along with designs as the units are being built onto the existing Lodge. Tenders for the project have been received and are being reviewed. It is hoped construction can be started in June 2024. Site prep will be done locally this spring. The Province has committed \$4.4M to the project and Special Areas will backstop if necessary. Tenders came in over \$9M. There is a lot of value and a lot of need for the project so a request will be made to Minister Nixon and MLA Horner for additional support.

Ag. Service Board SA2: Mr. Osadczuk, Mr. Roes – Staffing issues – hoping to get a permanent position landed.

Welcome to Mr. Bruce Beasley to discuss a Coyote Control Program offered by the County of Newell and his experience. Mr. Beasley noted he is a fur trader by trade and helped the County of Newell develop their program. The fur market has collapsed so only those passionate about it will participate. The program offers \$20/coyote plus a \$5 administration fee.

From his experience, it's better to be proactive rather than reactive. The season begins December 1 and ends by the end of March. It's important to stop the influx before they kill calves. It was asked how carcasses are managed. Mr. Beasley suggested the program require the full coyote to be submitted, and suggested a cap of \$2,000 for the program in a given year.

Mr. Christianson thanked Mr. Beasley for taking the time to come and provide the information to Council.

BREAK

There was discussion suggesting ranchers manage coyote issues on their own. There are other issues with the loss of strychnine for gophers – coyotes help control.

MOTION AC02-08-24: COYOTE CONTROL POLICY

MOVED BY JUSTIN GRIFFITH AND SECONDED BY DARYL SWENSON THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD DEVELOP A COYOTE CONTROL POLICY. CARRIED.

4 OPPOSED.

Ms. Williams noted the ASBs will be involved as Ag Fieldmen are designated as officers under the *Agricultural Pests Act*.

Mr. Kovitch reviewed the 2024 road construction, surfacing and recrowning programs. The paving project on Hwy 855 is going forward. Construction plans are outlined blue on the map.

MOTION AC02-09-24: 2024 ROAD CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM

MOVED BY KEVIN WILSON AND SECONDED BY NEAL ROES THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD APPROVE THE 2024 ROAD CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM AS OUTLINED IN APPENDIX A. CARRIED.

The surfacing plan was reviewed noting the Jenner to Iddesleigh road is on and Cypress County has been contacted to see if they want to extend the project on their side. At this point, they are content with the current condition.

MOTION AC02-10-24: 2024 ROAD SURFACING PROGRAM

MOVED BY ERIKA TESSIER AND SECONDED BY MARK BLAIR THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD APPROVE THE 2024 ROAD SURFACING PROGRAM AS OUTLINED IN APPENDIX A. CARRIED.

A concern was brought forward on Hwy 886, and that will be put on the program for 2025.

The award letter for paving Hwy 855 has been signed and the contractor is in place. Engineered at \$9M, bids came in \$8M-\$10M, the bid for \$8.3M was selected which equates to \$73/tonne. Tetra Tech is managing the contract work – which also includes repairs to Snake Trail north of Hanna.

There was a question on the carbon tax and impacts to Special Areas. The tax will affect the price of oil, which goes back to bidding contractors submitting the best price.

The Berry Creek Bridge work has been awarded to Lafarge. A detour is expected to be in place by the end of April/beginning of May with a by-pass bridge expected to be in place by June 2024. It was suggested Alberta Transportation be asked where the process for this bridge broke down. There was an increase in bridge funding provincially, part of the issue is available engineers and contractors to do the work.

A concern was raised on the Sletton Road, Mr. Kovitch will investigate.

The Council returned to the Committee Roundtable discussion.

Ag. Service Board SA3: Mr. Kimber, Mr. Wilson – a river boat is needed, and would assist with spraying noxious weeds up and down the river. Mr. Fecho noted work will be done on the current boat once temperatures improve. A new boat is scheduled in 2025.

Ag. Service Board SA4: Mrs. Ference and Mr. Long – covered already.

Battle River Watershed Alliance: Mr. Noble – education is the focus, a presentation was made to the Board. They focus on watershed health.

Big Country Medical Dental Centre: Mr. Wilson, Mrs. Tessier – the medical clinic is moving to blueprints, land has been acquired across the street. Subdivision is needed and the consolidation of titles should be straight forward.

Big Country Waste Management Commission: Mr. Blair, Mr. Wilson – Cell E is complete and Cell D with the fire is complete. The cells should last for up to 15 years. There is an opportunity to bring in sulphur soil waste which could be profitable. It comes from the soil washed off beets. Ridgeline makes up 75% of income for BCWMC.

Mr. Christianson thanked the Council for their time today and suggested the Resolutions committee reach out if they need assistance.

ADJOURNMENT 3:48 PM

Day 2: March 28, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: 9:02 AM

Ms. Brett Richards and Ms. Wanda Diakow joined the meeting. Mr. Blair connected on Teams.

Mr. Christianson reviewed the agenda for the day and noted Prairie Crocus has requested representatives from SA2 and SA4. The group supports community initiatives and provides funds for local projects. Ms. Richards and Ms. Abt will provide some names.

The Council returned to the Committee Roundtable discussion.

Carolside South Irrigation Advisory Committee: Mr. Griffith, Mr. Roes – there hasn't been a meeting scheduled in 2024. Not much run-off this year so could be another challenging year. The Deadfish pumphouse is slotted to get new power in the next couple of years as it was an issue last year. Heartland Generation is getting the pumps ready, this is the earliest we've seen. Still need to get a ditch rider hired for the season. The Deadfish pumphouse has two kinds of pumps and the guts for the pumps. Plans were in place to replace the controls but it wasn't completed due to availability – it was funded. There was discussion on governance for irrigation – an Irrigation District is not an option.

CARA: Mr. Kimber – expansion to the lab building with an ICP machine. The lab can now do 95% of what the U of A lab can do on analysis of soils. Interest from private companies to have research completed which would be a profit opportunity. Funding for research facilities has doubled in the provincial budget but federal grants have decreased. CARA is in a better financial position and looking to hire 7-8 summer students. Research will start of focus on Kochia and weeds resistant to chemical.

Consort and District Medical Centre Board: Mr. Noble, Mrs. Ference – the group is grateful for the hiring of Ms. Amy Deagle – the groundwork she has accomplished has been phenomenal. There is a Nurse Practitioner coming and recruitment for another doctor. The hope is the hospital will become a teaching facility.

East Central Ambulance: nothing to report.

East Central Housing Society: Mrs. Ference – The hall is being rented often but the St. Patrick's event was cancelled due to lack of ticket sales. A casino is coming in May, work is being done on fundraising. There has been discussion on regional housing. This may need to be municipally driven as it is a large, regional issue. And each community has unique needs.

Hanna Medial Society: Mr. Bossert – not present. No reports received.

Harvest Sky: Mr. Blair, Mr. Griffith – information was covered yesterday.

Henry Kroeger Regional Water Services Commission: Mrs. Tessier – a report has been submitted for bigger projects on the horizon – the raw water line will need to be replaced within the next seven years. The reservoir south of Hanna is full and there is enough water for the coming year. The province will be sending conservation of water agreements to municipalities.

Municipal Planning Commission: Development Officers - A public hearing was held in Youngstown with nine members of the public in attendance for the Special Areas Land Use Order. Written submissions were received, and some presented at the hearing. It is a well engaged topic. The document will have second reading after the feedback has been considered.

Palliser Economic Partnership: Ms. Tessier – housing is a focus and developing a housing infrastructure plan.

Palliser Regional Municipal Services: Mr. Kimber, Mr. Blair, Mr. Noble. PRMS has assisted with the SA LUO. Things are running better with the current CEO, but it is difficult to get planners on staff. A new contractor will be secured for permits.

Prairie Conservation Forum: Ms. Tessier – defer to Mr. Ball. The focus has been a search for a new executive director.

Provincial Endangered Species Committee: Mr. Noble. Recovery reports have been received – a meeting will be scheduled shortly.

Red Deer River Watershed Alliance: Mr. Caskey – similar to BRWA, RDRWA is in the process of hiring summer staff. The group is interested in the joint irrigation project and the mid-stream storage project.

Red Deer River Municipal Users Group: Mr. Christianson – Mr. Rudy Freisen will provide an update this afternoon.

Shirley McClellan Regional Water Services Commission: Ms. Ference – Phase 6 to Rochan Sands is complete and a grand opening being planned. Progress is being made on Phase 7 – extension to Compeer. There was discussion on costs to tap-into a water line.

South East Alberta Water Alliance: Mr. Swenson – group has not reached out.

Southern Alberta Energy from Waste Alliance: Mr. Roes, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Blair – The Council received a presentation from Mr. Greg Sheppard last fall, he is looking to step down. The project is at a pivotal point – either continue moving forward or full stop. At this point the tipping fee is not feasible. Special Areas is in for the project and outcome but has not committed to sending garbage to the project.

Special Areas and Oyen Development Corporation: Mr. Swenson, Mr. Caskey – a feasibility study was done on expanding rail from Oyen to Calgary or to Camrose. It a project funded by the SAODC, the provincial government and Canada Infrastructure Bank. The study is complete but without CN Rails cooperation the results are flawed. There would be large cost for bridges in the Drumheller area, and new line would need to be created if the line was going to Camrose. There was discussion to extend the line to Hanna for humalite. The rail yard has been sold and the last commitment from the sale has been satisfied.

Now that the Oyen Rail Project is complete – this group could start to focus on a regional housing strategy.

And that covers all the committee reports. There are vacancies on Acadia Foundation and Big Country Waste Management Commission that will require appointments.

BREAK

Dr. Reagan Weeks, Superintendent of Prairie Rose School Division came forward to inform Council of happenings in the division. Funding is received by population across the division not by region. Enrollments have been increasing the past three years resulting in the largest enrollments in 15 years. PRSD has implemented a trades program with six options. Students can enroll in the program and select a trade after completing one year. The intent of the program is for students to graduate with year one of a trade completed. The trades are offered as a program in Medicine Hat College, trades such as heavy-duty mechanic, pipe trades, electrician, aviation mechanics, welding, and power engineering. A teacher must be in a supervising position to be able to submit marks but are not required to be present all the time. Students can get practical hours in Oyen and go to MHC for schooling. This programing may not increase enrollments in a school like Oyen, but so far 68 students have registered in Eagle Butte to gain access to such a program, which allows the Division to fund schools that don't have the economic means to be viable.

There has been much frustration around transportation – work continues to be done on the topic. Southland won't certify drivers they don't employ and that's a barrier to finding

drivers in these rural areas. The cost to start up is more than every, it would be nice to see a priority for local contractors to get bus routes.

PRSD has purchased a house in Oyen to accommodate staff. As that is an issue.

The fire fighting program has been well received in Foremost and there is interest in the program from the Hutterite Colonies. The program will be expanded to other schools. Students graduating with this program are employable by urban municipalities.

Dr. Weeks thanked the Council for the time to review current programs and initiatives PRSD has undertaken.

Mr. Cam McKeage, Superintendent of Prairie Land School Division and Board Chair Holli Smith came forward. There are close to 4,000 students in Prairie Land including an Islamic School in Calgary and three online school options. The online schools do not require infrastructure and buildings but still have teachers. This has increased the funding allowing for more resources for students such as hiring a speech pathologist and psychologist.

Rural schools belong to the community and Prairie Land is looking to add value added programming as part of students regular education. In Hanna, an innovative stem lab – second to none in the province, gives students access to technology and innovation opportunities. Value added agriculture is offered in Altario with the Growcer facilities, the school community has done great things with hydroponics. There are hockey academies and baseball academies available as well as green houses at the Youngstown School and Berry Creek School. An online fine arts academy gives schools access to drama, music and fine arts any time of day. A painter can create a program and send to any school in the district. Rural jurisdictions lead the way in innovation for students.

The new provincial funding formula is beneficial and works well for rural school districts, the funding for transportation has improved but there are still challenges to find drivers to put in extra routes. Teacher recruitment is a struggle and a request was made to the province to allow Superintendents to determine if an out of province teacher has the credentials to teach in Alberta. Research as shown if a new teacher grad gets to year three in a school, they will likely stay but it's difficult to get to year three.

Mr. Christianson thanked Mr. McKeage and Ms. Smith for their time this morning, the Council recognizes the good work being done in the region – schools are a big part of the community. Special Areas often hears about challenges, we may not be able to offer a solution but we are happy to try.

LUNCH

Mr. Rudy Freisen from Red Deer River Municipal Users Group (RDRMUG) came forward to present on the mid-stream storage project.

RDRMUG came together with the formation of 35 municipalities. The Red Deer River is part of the South Saskatchewan River basin which also includes the Bow River and the Old Man River. There has been talk, since 1954, to build a mid-stream storage solution in the form of Ardley Dam. Ardley would be 390ft deep which is three times the capacity of Glennifer, allowing for more control and more consistent water to be sent downstream. As the years go by, storage of water is becoming more and more important. The latest provincial budget included \$5M for a mid-stream storage project including the scope study, conceptual design, a feasibility study, and preliminary engineering. RDRMUG has capacity to assist with this project if the province requests – there is a consensus now is the time to build Ardley Dam. Currently, the Red Deer River

does not have enough levers to effectively manage the variability induced by a changing climate.

Mr. Freisen reviewed the direct and recurring benefits of Ardley Dam. The annual recurring value is projected at \$2.4B with the economic spin offs for agriculture, the environment and municipal growth. There was a question on the federal appetite for participation in this project and the question has not yet been asked. An environmental impact assessment will be triggered with this project, so that ask could come during that process. The estimated time for the project is 20 years.

Mr. Christianson thanked Mr. Friesen for taking the time to come today and providing the information. Special Areas is in favor of the project and will support it moving forward.

Mr. Colin McNab Mr. Evan Latumas from MPE Engineering was welcomed to the meeting to discuss a regional water feasibility study. Mr. McNab reviewed the 2012 study that reported on Watts, Scapa, Hanna East and Cessford. The system for these areas would be a trickle system with 0.5gallons/minute with a meter ball system. The system details for each area were reviewed with cost in the range of \$100-200/site.

In 2024, the four areas explored include Oyen West, Cappon, Youngstown South and Iddesleigh/Jenner. The maps and considerations for each of the areas was reviewed. There are water constraints in Iddesleigh/Jenner as there would need to be a tap off at Patricia to have the required pressure. Youngstown South would have a 6" line as there would be an anchor user at the end of the line.

The next step is public engagement to see what the appetite for potable water is and what costs are reasonable. A booster station would be required from the Henry Kroeger Line south to Cessford as the line is fully utilized. The Water For Life funds are still available, but there is a queue of projects in line for the funding. That fund fits for hamlets but not as much for rural distribution.

Mr. Christianson thanked Mr. McNab and Mr. Latumas for the presentation today.

The Council reviewed items in the Issues Binder.

Mr. Kovitch noted the costing analysis shows the work Special Areas does is significantly more cost-effective than contractors or Alberta Transportation. Tetra Tech is now preparing engineering for projects in Special Areas. The operational foremen are invested and see when productivity goes down – they can adjust and make better decisions based on current information.

There was a comment Special Areas does a good job on the whole road.

Tetra Tech provided some information on the Girletz Road and administration needs to work through the analysis – further information will come back in Fall 2024.

Mr. Caskey noted Community Pasture allotments will be reduced in light of current conditions, the rate is approved at \$1.05/head/day with \$8/calf/season.

The Sheerness Industrial Park project to build a reservoir and road will take one construction crew for the season. Steps are in place to secure an anchor tenant.

TRLS applications are coming into District Offices. So far, one agreement is executed with many others submitting inquiries.

Mr. Ferguson reviewed the financial targets and noted the historical trends of mill rates and comparisons with urban municipalities are available on the Sharepoint Site. Municipal partners are pleased with the sharing agreements and Nichols Applied

Research is doing some work on what SAB provides to others. The increase to the industrial tax transfer was not expected this year and municipal partners appreciated the increase in funding.

Mr. Ferguson reviewed the medical mill rate and discussed upcoming projects requiring funding in the region. The Oyen Medical Clinic is moving forward and there is funding in place for the Nurse Practitioner in Consort. It has been suggested SAB offer scholarships to locals to entice into the medical field. Work is being undertaken in that aspect and options will be presented to the Board when ready.

Grants – MSI has shifted into Local Government Fiscal Framework (LGFF).

The Board has acquired four corporate credit cards with a limit of \$5,000 on each card. The cards are for the Chair and Directors. An approval limit for borrowing has been increased to \$25,000,000 with a max of \$100,000 for unsecured borrowing. The credit cards have been procured as some vendors are no longer accepting purchase orders and require immediate payment.

There was discussion on the Hamlet of Cereal, work is being done on the scale and there are \$60k in transition funds remaining to be used in 2024. Special Areas is paying for utilities at the school, assisted by the Cereal mill rate, the size of the building should be evaluated to what is currently being used. The infrastructure is under SAB with hope of the community stepping up to manage the community hall, however the volunteer base is shrinking.

The Joint Irrigation Project is scheduling an Open House on May 2, 2024 in the MD of Acadia from 2-8pm. Further information will be sent to Council ahead of the event.

Council had made a motion to transfer revenues from TRLS II to a reserve and that will require a Ministerial Order, one consideration is the cash flow SAB requires in the third quarter.

There was discussion on adding a mill rate for paving. Assessment is back to \$4B, adding 1 mill would generate \$4M in revenue. There are a number of roads that are close to the paving stage, it may be beneficial to build a fund. Mr. Kovitch will analyze which roads are close and which roads AT are likely to partner on for paving.

An issue was brought forward regarding the TRLS – not everyone wants to buy and not everyone can buy. As more TRLS lands are sold, does that put other leases in jeopardy? It was suggested 100-year leases be offered if SAB is interested in creating security for farmers and ranchers. It was noted the length of time for a lease is based on the *Public Lands Act*, so making that change would require a change in legislation. It's not clear if 100-year leases will solve the issue, local governance is more the issue.

Mr. Christianson brought forward unfinished business: appointments to boards and committees.

MOTION AC02-11-24: APPOINTMENT TO ACADIA FOUNDATION

LAURIE FERENCE NOMINATED GORDON LONG TO REPRESENT THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD AS THE REPRESENTATIVE FOR SA4 ON THE ACADIA FOUNDATION. DOUG NOBLE SECONDED THE NOMINATION. DARYL SWENSON MOVED NOMINATIONS CEASE. CARRIED.

MOTION AC02-12-23: APPOINTMENT TO ASB3

JUSTIN GRIFFITH NOMINATED DARYL SWENSON TO REPRESENT THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD ON ASB3. JOHN KIMBER SECONDED THE NOMINATION. NEAL ROES MOVED NOMINATIONS CEASE. CARRIED.

MOTION AC02-13-24: APPOINTMENT TO ASB4

DARYL SWENSON NOMINATED GORDON LONG AS THE ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER AND JASON BISHEL AS THE FARM MEMBER TO REPRESENT THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD ON ASB4. KEVIN WILSON SECONDED THE NOMINATIONS. JUSTIN GRIFFITH MOVED NOMINATIONS CEASE. CARRIED.

MOTION AC02-14-24: APPOINTMENT TO BCWMC

KEVIN WILSON NOMINATED GORDON LONG AS THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD REPRESENTATIVE FOR SA4 ON THE BIG COUNTRY WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMISSION. DOUG NOBLE SECONDED THE NOMINATION. ERIKA TESSIER MOVED NOMINATIONS CEASE. CARRIED.

MOTION AC02-15-24: APPOINTMENT TO EAST CENTRAL AMBULANCE

DOUG NOBLE NOMINATED GORDON LONG AS THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD REPRESENTATIVE FOR EAST CENTRAL AMBULANCE. ERIKA TESSIER SECONDED THE NOMINATION. NEAL ROES MOVED NOMINATIONS CEASE. CARRIED.

MOTION AC02-16-24: APPOINTMENT TO SA TRLS GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE

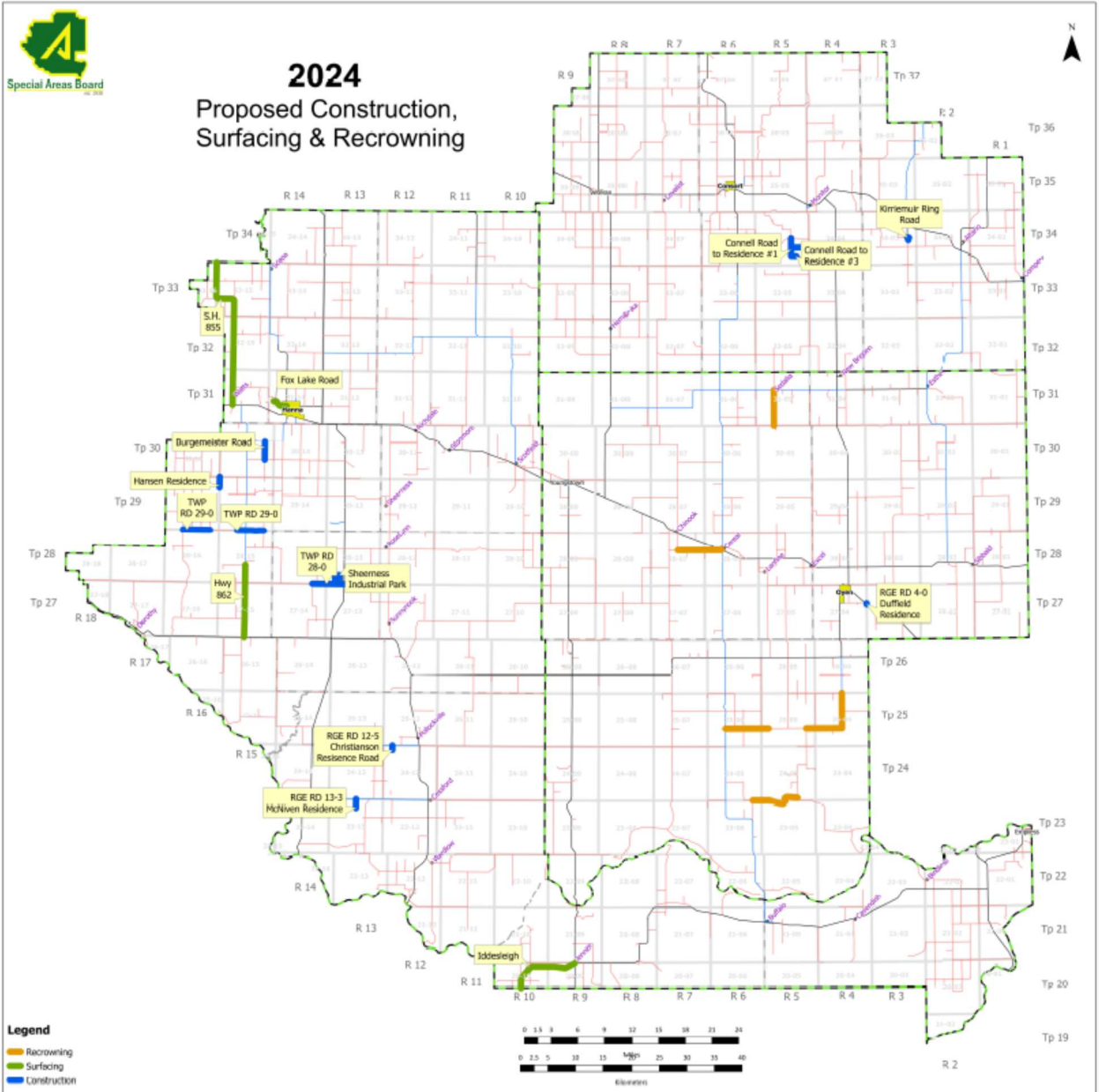
ERIKA TESSIER NOMINATED GORDON LONG TO REPRESENT THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD ON THE SA TAX RECOVERY LAND SALE GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE. NEAL ROES SECONDED THE NOMINATION. JUST GRIFFITH MOVED NOMINATIONS CEASE. CARRIED.

Mr. Christianson thanked the Council and staff for their time over the past two days. Special thanks to Ms. Herzog for the hospitality room, Ms. Abt and Ms. Munroe for the hotel hospitality room and Ms. Jones for organizing the meeting.

Happy Easter everyone.

MR. CHRISTIANSON MOVED FOR ADJOURNMENT AT 3:24PM.

APPENDIX A: 2024 ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND SURFACING PLAN



SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL
December 4, 5 & 6, 2024
Lynks
Hanna Provincial Building

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

Kevin Bossert	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 1
Neal Roes	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 2
Brad Slorstad	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 3
Justin Griffith	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 4
Mark Blair	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 5
Daryl Swenson	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 7
Brad Osadczuk	Special Area No. 2, Subdivision No. 8 – Regrets Dec 6
Erika Tessier	Special Area No. 3, Subdivision No. 4
John Kimber	Special Area No. 3, Subdivision No. 5
Kevin Wilson	Special Area No. 3, Subdivision No. 6
Gordon Long	Special Area No. 4, Subdivision No. 1
Laurie Ference	Special Area No. 4, Subdivision No. 2
Doug Noble	Special Area No. 4, Subdivision No. 3

SPECIAL AREAS BOARD

Jordon Christianson	Chair, Special Areas Board
Shaune Kovitch	Director, Municipal Services
Darcy Ferguson	Director, Finance & Administration – Via Teams
Trent Caskey	Director, Property Administration
Taryl Abt	Administrator, Special Area No. 4
Darran Dick	Administrator, Special Area No. 3
Brett Richards	Administrator, Special Area No. 2
Brent Fecho	Superintendent of Roads and Equipment
Braden Grover	Shop Superintendent
Kelsey Martin	Aggregate Manager
Darren Jones	Coordinator of Financial Services
Maeghan Chostner	Communications
Dawn Lyon	Office Manager, Youngstown Service Centre
Tenille Stevens	Office Manager, SA2 - Regrets
Tori Munroe	Office Manager, SA3
Jody Bishell	Office Manager, SA4
Wanda Diakow	Economic Development Officer
Darlene Herzog	Administrative Assistant, Municipal Services
Shyanne Jones	Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER 10:00 A.M.

Mr. Christianson welcomed everyone to the Fall Advisory Council meeting and introductions were made around the room and online. The agenda for the next three days was reviewed.

MOTION AC06-01-24: MEETING CHAIRMAN
JUSTIN GRIFFITH NOMINATED JORDON CHRISTIANSON TO ACT AS CHAIRMAN OF FALL ADVISORY COUNCIL. NEAL ROES MOVED NOMINATIONS CEASE. CARRIED.

MOTION AC06-02-24: MEETING VICE-CHAIRMAN
JUSTIN GRIFFITH NOMINATED TRENT CASKEY TO ACT AS VICE-CHAIRMAN OF FALL ADVISORY COUNCIL. NEAL ROES MOVED NOMINATIONS CEASE. CARRIED.

MOTION AC06-03-24: ORDER OF BUSINESS CHAIR
JUSTIN GRIFFITH NOMINATED BRAD SLORSTAD TO ACT AS ORDER OF BUSINESS CHAIR FOR FALL ADVISORY COUNCIL. BRAD OSADCZUK MOVED NOMINATIONS CEASE. CARRIED.

MOTION AC06-04-24: RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

**JOHN KIMBER NOMINATES ERIKA TESSIER;
NEAL ROES NOMINATES JOHN KIMBER;
JOHN KIMBER NOMINATES LAURIE FERENC FOR THE RESOLUTIONS
COMMITTEE FOR FALL ADVISORY COUNCIL. BRAD OSADCZUK MOVED
NOMINATIONS CEASE. CARRIED.**

Mr. Christianson referred the Council to the previously distributed Spring Advisory Council meeting minutes.

**MOTION AC06-05-24: 2024 SPRING ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES
MOVED BY KEVIN WILSON AND SECONDED BY LAURIE FERENC THAT THE
MINUTES OF 2024 SPRING ADVISORY COUNCIL BE APPROVED AS
PRESENTED. CARRIED.**

There was discussion on the Buffalo Atlee Community Pasture and the exploration to have alternate management in that pasture. The Buffalo Atlee Community Pasture Association has drafted policy and by-laws for review. The group can attend if Council is interested.

The Ratepayer motions from Spring 2024 were reviewed.

**MOTION AC06-06-24: RATEPAYER SA2 SUB 2 MOTION 1
MOVED BY NEAL ROES AND SECONDED BY LAURIE FERENC THAT THE
SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL MOVE SA2 SUB 2 MOTION 1 TO THE
FLOOR FOR DISCUSSION. CARRIED.**

SA2SUB2 - Motion 1: Be it resolved that all Special Areas Board members attend all Special Areas Ratepayer Meetings. Moved by Stratton Peake. Seconded by Craig Horner. **Carried.**

It is important for Board Members to attend and hear the conversations from around the region.

MOTION AC06-07-24: RATEPAYER SA2 SUB 2 MOTION 2

**MOVED BY NEAL ROES AND SECONDED BY MARK BLAIR THAT THE SPECIAL
AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL MOVE SA2 SUB 2 MOTION 2 TO THE FLOOR FOR
DISCUSSION. CARRIED.**

SA2SUB2 - Motion 2: Special Areas install a new line from the Sheerness pipeline to Homestead Municipal dugouts. Moved by Jim Faubion. Seconded by Stratton. **Carried.**

Shared water off the pipeline – this would be a single line to the community club. It's a good project to direct engineers to investigate, there is a tap available, and the line would be approximately 1.5 miles in length. There is the question of cost and who pays – previously municipal water was funded through the Water for Life grant.

**MOTION AC06-08-24: SHEERNESS PIPELINE EXTENSION FOR MUNICIPAL USE
MOVED BY KEVIN WILSON AND SECONDED BY NEAL ROES THAT THE SPECIAL
AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND TO THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD TO
PURSUE ENGINEERING AND EXPLORE A WATER LINE EXTENSION FROM THE
SHEERNESS PIPELINE TO THE HOMESTEAD DUGOUT FOR MUNICIPAL WATER
USE. CARRIED.**

Mr. Osadczuk brought forward getting water from the Jenner Colony to the community.

**MOTION AC06-09-24: EXPLORE STOCK WATER/COMMUNITY WATER JENNER
MOVED BY BRAD OSADCZUK AND SECONDED BY BRAD SLORSTAD THAT THE
SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS
BOARD PURSUE ENGINEERING AND EXPLORE A WATER LINE FOR STOCK**

WATER/COMMUNITY WATER FOR THE JENNER AREA AND INTO THE MD OF CYPRESS COUNTY. CARRIED.

MOTION AC06-10-24: RATEPAYER SA2 SUB2 MOTION 3
MOVED BY JUSTIN GRIFFITH AND SECONDED BY NEAL ROES THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL MOVE SA2 SUB 2 MOTION 3 TO THE FLOOR FOR DISCUSSION. CARRIED.

SA2SUB2 - Motion 3: Be it resolved that the Special Areas Board investigate with Alberta Transportation a long-range plan for 862 south for moving assets to and from the Finnegan pit. Moved by Craig. Seconded by Laurie Gillespie.
Carried.

Hauling crush out of the Finnegan pit and Hwy 862 was soft this spring. The haul route was adjusted before the road was destroyed which put added pressure on local roads.

Mr. Noble joined at 10:36am.

There are several structural issues to manage and thinking long-term how to manage all the kilometers in the region, specifically the orphaned three-digit roads that still belong to Alberta Transportation and are not covered in the operational agreement. The issue has been brought forward to Alberta Transportation and there is interest to have the conversation. There is a commitment to provide information on cost modeling for Hwy 561, 862 and 899. It was questioned why some of the roads are not included on the long-term plan or maintenance agreement; some roads were not planned to get a surface but remain gravel.

MOTION AC06-11-24: RECONSTRUCTING GRAVEL ROADS
MOVED BY JUSTIN GRIFFITH AND SECONDED BY KEVIN WILSON THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD EXPLORE RECONSTRUCTING PORTIONS OF EACH HWY 561, 862 AND 899 WITH HWY 862 AS THE PRIORITY. CARRIED.

MOTION AC06-12-24: RATEPAYER SA2 SUB3&4 MOTION 1
MOVED BY BRAD SLORSTAD AND SECONDED BY JUSTIN GRIFFITH THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL MOVE SA2 SUB 3&4 MOTION 1 TO THE FLOOR FOR DISCUSSION. CARRIED.

SA2SUB3&4 – Motion 1: Bruce Beasley moved that the Special Areas Board act on the coyote control incentive program. Seconded by Shaylee. **Carried.**

A motion did come to the Board after Spring Advisory Council and was defeated. There was a question of why the Board can reject a recommendation of the Advisory Council. That is the governance structure. The defeated motion was not because of the impact coyotes have on calves but having a policy on one pest over others and making a distinction between the two. New information would need to be provided to bring back to the Board.

MOTION AC06-13-24: RATEPAYER SA2 SUB3&4 MOTION 2
MOVED BY BRAD SLORSTAD AND SECONDED BY ERIKA TESSIER THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL MOVE SA2 SUB 3&4 MOTION 2 TO THE FLOOR FOR DISCUSSION. CARRIED.

SA2SUB3&4 – Motion 2: Bruce Beasley moved that a water project expansion from the Henry Kroeger line south to the Wind River colony move forward as fast as possible. Seconded by Wade Christianson. **Carried.**

This is for regional potable water off the HKRWSC line – to take water from Youngstown south to Big Stone and the Colony. MPE Engineering is investigating. The project will be difficult to move forward without grant funding.

MOTION AC06-14-24: RATEPAYER SA2 SUB3&4 MOTION 3

MOVED BY ERIKA TESSIER AND SECONDED BY LAURIE FERENGE THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL MOVE SA2 SUB 3&4 MOTION 3 TO THE FLOOR FOR DISCUSSION. CARRIED.

SA2SUB3&4 – Motion 3: Wade Christianson moved that Special Areas engage with Canada Post to provide parcel delivery boxes at rural mailboxes. Seconded by Shaylee Christianson. **Carried.**

Locals struggle with Canada Post for large parcel delivery. The Community members have come together to build large parcel boxes.

MOTION AC06-15-24: RATEPAYER SA2 SUB7&8 MOTION 1
MOVED BY BRAD OSADCZUK AND SECONDED BY NEAL ROES THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL MOVE SA2 SUB 7&8 MOTION 1 TO THE FLOOR FOR DISCUSSION. CARRIED.

SA2SUB7&8 – Motion 1: Debbie Ross moved Special Areas Board reduce 2024 grazing lease rentals by 25% for herd reduction during drought recovery. Kendra Waldner seconded. **Carried.**

There was moisture in the Special Areas throughout May and June this year and the grass was improving. Community Pasture allotments were reduced to 30% because of grass and it was asked if the same would hold true for grazing leases. The decisions on Community Pasture allotments are made in January and the decision to provide a reduction in grazing rental rates happens later in the year when more information is available.

MOTION AC06-16-24: RATEPAYER SA3 SUB4 5 6 MOTION 3
MOVED BY KEVIN WILSON AND SECONDED BY DOUG NOBLE THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL MOVE SA3 SUB 4 5 6 MOTION 3 TO THE FLOOR FOR DISCUSSION. CARRIED.

SA3Div456 Motion 3:

Moved by Elizabeth Roberts that the 2-year Special Areas operation of the community center be extended to 5 years. Seconded by Hans Mundt.
CARRIED.

Operations at the facility have been maintained by Special Areas, there is an ask of the community to take over operations.

MOTION AC06-17-24: RATEPAYER SA3 SUB4 5 6 MOTION 4
MOVED BY JOHN KIMBER AND SECONDED BY DOUG NOBLE THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL MOVE SA3 SUB 4 5 6 MOTION 4 TO THE FLOOR FOR DISCUSSION. CARRIED.

SA3Div456 Motion 4:

Moved by Murray Senkiw that Special Areas revisit roadside cutting starting date of June 15 and move it to July 15. Seconded by John Kimber.
CARRIED.

Mowing started June 17th and continued until November 22nd at full capacity.

MOTION AC06-18-24: RATEPAYER SA3 SUB4 5 6 MOTION 5
MOVED BY ERIKA TESSIER AND SECONDED BY LAURIE FERENGE THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL MOVE SA3 SUB 4 5 6 MOTION 5 TO THE FLOOR FOR DISCUSSION. CARRIED.

SA3Div456 Motion 5:

Moved by Murray Senkiw that the SAB look at firefighting incentives for ratepayers and come up with cost sharing to adapt the high clearance sprayers with “fire tamers” to assist with firefighting. Seconded by Richard Bailey. **CARRIED.**

Ratepayers could adapt high clearance sprayers to fight fires. Not likely with the cost of equipment.

MOTION AC06-19-24: RATEPAYER SA4 SUB1 2 3 MOTION 1
MOVED BY LAURIE FERENEC AND SECONDED BY BRAD OSADCZUK THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL MOVE SA4 SUB 1 2 3 MOTION 1 TO THE FLOOR FOR DISCUSSION. CARRIED.

Motions from SA4 Sub 1,2,3

Doug Fawcett moved that the Special Areas Board make a request to the federal government to reinstate the Strychnine program. Seconded by Barry Redel. **CARRIED.**

MOTION AC06-20-24: LETTER TO FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RE: STRYCHNINE
MOVED BY BRAD SLORSTAD AND SECONDED BY JOHN KIMBER THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD SEND A LETTER TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REQUESTING THE REINSTATEMENT OF STRYCHNINE. CARRIED.

That covers the motions from the Ratepayer meeting in Spring 2024.

Mr. Kovitch reviewed the proposed Policy 04-04a: Rates Charged in Effect which requires updating for 2025. Changes to rates were highlighted.

LUNCH

Mr. Christianson welcomed Rain Saulnier from WaterSMART and presenters Nancy Inglis, Peter Hooe and Andrew Rushworth from AE Associates along with Catlan Dallaire from Clifton, Jesse Solheim and Andrew Keeping from Boost Energy. The council from the MD of Acadia and new CAO also joined the meeting.

Mr. Christianson noted the group is here to present energy solutions and provide an engineering update on the Joint Irrigation Project.

Mr. Dallaire provided a project overview noting a big change since the last update is the deferral of the west section and extension to the north to accommodate the 108,000 acres. The shifting of blocks was to optimize the configuration of the project. The acres have been rebalanced to have 55,300 in SAB and 52,700 in the MD of Acadia as there is gravity to assist the system in the MD of Acadia. A pressure system is required for the acres in SAB.

MOTION AC06-21-24: GO IN-CAMERA
MOVED BY MARK BLAIR AND SECONDED BY LAURIE FERENEC THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL GO IN-CAMERA AS PER SECTION 24 OF FOIP AT 5:30PM. CARRIED.

MOTION AC06-22-24: OUT OF CAMERA
MOVED BY LAURIE FERENEC AND SECONDED BY MARK BLAIR THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL COME OUT OF CAMERA AT 6:30PM. CARRIED.

ADJOURNMENT 6:30PM

December 5, 2024

Call to Order 9:01 am

Mr. Christianson welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending day 2 of Fall Advisory Council. The Council was invited to the planned Special Areas Christmas gathering on December 17th at the Youngstown Community Centre from 11am – 3pm. The agenda for the day was reviewed.

Mr. Christianson noted the upcoming AIMCo presentation is a result of the direction provided by Council to create an endowment fund with approximately \$50M for TRLS II revenues, the trust currently has \$30-\$35M with intention to add \$12M into the trust from the TRLS II. The endowment will hold the principle, and the interest can give options for investment strategies.

Mr. Jones came forward to present the proposed 2025 Budget and reviewed the 2024 Financial Statements.

Starting with the 2024 Financial Statements, there is approximately \$2M in revenues from the TRLS with a number of applications still in process. Revenue was budgeted at \$70.5M and is expected to come in at \$74M. There were savings in Transportation Services and other areas. Expenditures were budgeted at \$88.5M and coming in at \$83.7M resulting in a change in the budgeted deficit from \$18M to \$10M.

Moving onto the proposed 2025 Budget. There is a focus on scrapers, medical centres and health expenditures as well as wrapping up the Sheerness Industrial Park and pertaining water infrastructure.

New scrapers are estimated at \$1.8M and rebuilds are budgeted at \$900k. The rebuild program has been updated from prior years. Machines can go through the rebuilding process twice.

Mr. Jones noted last year the mill rate was raised on municipal taxes and the industrial split. At this time there are no plans to increase the residential mill rate; however, once there is a clear picture of the overall assessment, a different decision may need to be made. There is room to move the industrial split if needed.

Mr. Noble noted a further request for medical funds will likely be coming.

Mr. Jones reviewed the interest generated on the SALTA noting the balance is currently at \$34M, Special Areas looks for a 4% rate of return. At this time the banks have better rates than the TRLS Policy so interested folks may pay out sooner.

Activity at Blood Indian Park has reduced and the budget reflects the change with a drop in \$50k for revenues.

The sale of fixed assets and capital equipment is budgeted at just over \$1M.

The Local Government Fiscal Framework grants have replaced the MSI grant funding stream with similar amounts.

Projected revenues for 2025 are \$72M.

Moving onto expenditures for 2025.

With a fully staffed Admin Office, expenses are estimated at \$4.2M. Up slightly from 2024 with work needed on the Handhills and New Brigden towers along with landscaping and building work needed on the Special Areas No. 3 office.

Fire services for each Special Area were reviewed, it was noted Cessford has a fire hydrant and asked why more storage is needed.

Medical Centres may require additional funding with the current and proposed projects on the horizon. The Acadia Foundation lodge expansion along with the Oyen Medical Clinic are two current projects.

Discussion moved to fire and costs for equipment. Special Areas does have a responsibility to have fire rated equipment for volunteers. The fire fleet has been extended out as far as possible.

Per the requirements outlined in the Local Emergency Management Regulation, the Regional Emergency Management is a new position to support and implement an effective emergency management plan with regional partners, the position will also provide support to CPO and Fire.

This will be the last year of contracted survey services. In future, the services will be contracted with Tetra Tech.

Mr. Jones reviewed the shops in each Special Areas and the Youngstown Service Centre. At this point, there are no paving contracts scheduled for 2025.

Roads and Streets, Construction and Maintenance all focus on summer activities – having manpower in winter for snow and weather events has been discussed.

At this point, grant funding for bridges has not been advertised.

BREAK

Mr. Jones discussed hamlet services, and airport services then moved onto Capital expenditures in 2025. There are five graders planned for 2025 at \$660k each, the replacement plan includes five graders over the next five years. This year will see the purchase of one scraper and rebuilding of two, 2026 is the reverse for scrapers.

Some equipment was not received/delivered this year: one plow truck, ¾ trucks, picker truck and two water supply trucks.

Discussion moved to the Oyen Water Co-op noting water vaults need to be upgraded with the increased demand. MPE has been engaged to look at the status of the system and concerns from the Henry Kroeger Regional Water Services Commission. Special Areas staff have been overseeing the line and have liability concerns. Three days of water is needed if something happens with the line. It was noted that smaller communities have difficulty obtaining licenced water techs and struggle with infrastructure.

There was a comment to upgrade storage south of Hwy 570 to take pressure off the truck fill at Hwy 895/570.

Work is still required on the Sheerness Industrial Park, the project has been funded by the Coal Transition grant and needs to have work wrapped up by March 31, 2025. Further information is in the Issues Binder.

Total capital is projected at \$16.4M compared to \$18.5M in 2024.

Ms. Lee provided information on upgrades at Prairie Oasis Park, such as the main boardwalk work.

Mr. Jones reviewed the water department projects and there was discussion on the hamlet of Wardlow and distribution along with other issues such as roads on private land.

Dams and Carolside South Irrigation were reviewed noting operations as usual.

Special Areas is the 90% payer on regional waste.

The Ag Service Boards expenses were reviewed, ASB2 is going to attempt helicopter spraying for leafy spurge in Buffalo Atlee Community Pasture. It was noted drone spraying is not an option until regulations change to allow drones to drop chemicals.

It was noted the bulk of work has been completed for water development in Community Pastures.

The remainder of the departments were reviewed, no major changes to any.

There was a question on why the policing requisition is not included, as it's different than school or seniors, finance will investigate.

The RCMP requisition will increase 39% in 2025 which will be covered by the Province, in 2026 the municipality will need to pick up which equates to \$750k.

Mr. Jones noted the deficit is projected at \$9.9M, which is well within the means of Special Areas with the conservative budgeting. It is anticipated that additional assessment will be realized with the renewable energy projects coming on-stream.

Mr. Christianson thanked Mr. Jones and Ms. Olmstead along with staff for all the work on the budget. The Council will be asked for direction before the end of this meeting.

Mr. Christianson welcomed Mr. Anish Talwar, Mr. Ty Duncan and Ms. Victora Skornyakova (via Teams) from AIMCo.

Mr. Talwar reviewed the agenda noting direction was provided to preserve capital. The current Special Areas mix is \$35M in funds, \$10M preservation, and \$25M growth oriented. The Board has indicated an addition of \$12M will go into the fund to grow it to \$50M. The SAB does not have liquidity requirements from this fund, the fund is used for operational expenses. There are different asset classes available to SAB that should be diversified between public and private investments. As the Special Areas Board is a long-term investor, a more diversified portfolio is recommended including 20-30% in private equity.

Mr. Christianson thanked the group for the presentation and good information. The Council will need to determine the tolerance for risk.

LUNCH

Mr. Christianson reviewed the afternoon agenda and continued the AIMCo conversation noting historically SAB has been overly cautious. The intent of the endowment is to stay at \$50M so long as the fund keeps up with inflation over the long term.

Mr. Kovitch reviewed 2024 road construction and maintenance projects; thanking Mr. Brent Fecho, Mr. Braden Grover and Ms. Dawn Lyon for all of the work organizing the projects. It was noted staffing was slightly better this year and crews were fully complemented.

There was discussion on new residence roads – this is a topic for discussion later in the meeting.

Mr. Kovitch provided an overview of completed projects. Camp 4 spent the summer at the Sheerness Industrial Park (SHIP) and further work is needed at that site in 2025.

The Chip/GBC was accessing gravel resources out of the Finnigan Pit and Ross Pit.

Shoulder pull worked on 6.4kms near Sedalia, and 9.6kms on Peacock Road, and the McKee Road will need additional work next year. This crew went to SHIP as more resources were needed.

Mr. Kovitch brought forward the proposed 2025 Road Construction and Surfacing plan.

Camp 4 construction crew will return to SHIP for another two months of work which is scheduled to be completed by July. Camp 2 construction crew will have projects and come to work on the tie-in road into SHIP. There was a question on rates used for this project and noted it's the SAB rates and that costs are recovered with the Prairies Can grants. Essentially, SAB is paying for diesel and labour. There is in-kind work to develop the site, build it and they will come thought.

The maps of road construction and road surfacing were reviewed. 25kms of road building proposed and 30kms of road surfacing.

The Council began discussions on new residence roads, one specific instance of the McNiven road. The house was built in 2022, and the original plan had it being put on the east side of Berry Creek on NE 27-33-13 W4; however, the house was placed west of Berry Creek and the family uses an oil & gas road for access. It was noted the oil & gas roads are not built to standard. Back to the requested road for development, blind line along north portion of NW 27-33-13 W4, there are challenges with pipelines and encroachment on a water body which may need a bridge and have environmental impact if land was to be broken (blind line). The Special Areas does commit to building a road on the nearest road allowance to the quarter.

MOTION AC06-23-24: NEW RESIDENCE ROAD BUILDS

MOVED BY DARYL SWENSON AND SECONDED BY JOHN KIMBER THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD BUILD A NEW RESIDENCE ROAD ON THE ROAD ALLOWANCE TO THE CLOSEST QUARTER OF THE RESIDENCE. CARRIED.

Another part of the issue is this is a school bus road that needs to be maintained and plowed.

MOTION AC06-24-24: 2025 CONSTRUCTION PLAN

MOVED BY JUSTIN GRIFFITH AND SECONDED BY NEAL ROES THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD APPROVE THE 2025 CONSTRUCTION PLAN AS OUTLINED IN APPENDIX A. CARRIED.

MOTION AC06-25-24: 2025 SURFACING PLAN

MOVED BY JUSTIN GRIFFITH AND SECONDED BY ERIKA TESSIER THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD APPROVE THE 2025 SURFACING PLAN AS OUTLINED IN APPENDIX B. CARRIED.

Mr. Jones reviewed the In/Out listing for the budget. At this time there is no proposed increase to the mill rates. Community Pasture allotments are at 75%. On the expenditure side, honorariums may be increased to be \$30k over the year. The Greystone tower needs power, Mascon is using the tower so a partnership there may be an option. There are funds for the nurse practitioner contract, the SL4 project in Oyen, the medical clinic build in Oyen, and potentially two houses in 2025 and one in 2026. Roads and streets projects and infrastructure were reviewed.

MOTION AC06-26-24: DOROTHY ELEVATOR DEMOLITION

MOVED BY BRAD SLORSTAD AND SECONDED BY BRAD OSADCZUK THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD MOVE THE DEMOLITION OF THE DOROTHY ELEVATOR AT \$200,000 INTO THE 2025 BUDGET. DEFEATED

The structure is iconic in the valley.

MOTION AC06-27-24: DOROTHY ELEVATOR RESTORATION

MOVED BY DARYL SWENSON AND SECONDED BY LAURIE FERENGE THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD ADD \$200,000 FOR THE DOROTHY ELEVATOR RESTORATION INTO THE 2025 BUDGET. CARRIED 2 OPPOSED.

Mr. Jones returned to the Budget In/Out page and discussed water projects. There is a plan to upgrade the distribution system in Wardlow as the system will need more capacity with added users.

Moving onto Ag Services, there are plans to heli-spray Tordon on leafy spurge in Buffalo Atlee Community Pasture and for brush control in SA4. There was discussion on using a drone to spray, however the licensing does not include drones at this time.

In Recreation, there is Rec Advance funding in the amount of \$75,000 for each Special Area. Comfort Camping will be investigated for possible inclusion in 2026.

MOTION AC06-28-24: 2025 SAB BUDGET

MOVED BY JUSTIN GRIFFITH AND SECONDED BY KEVIN WILSON THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD APPROVE THE 2025 BUDGET AS PRESENTED. CARRIED.

Mr. Christianson thanked Mr. Jones for the in-depth review of the 2025 budget.

Mr. Osadczuk brought forward a question on hamlet cleanup in Iddesleigh. Ms. Richards noted Special Areas took the piece of property back in 2023, however the previous owner came in and paid everything in full prior to November 15th, 2024. The previous owner is working on getting the property cleaned up, if the title reverts back there will be a clean up order issued.

Mr. Long brought forward a similar issue in Veteran, the property is partially in the Village of Veteran and partially in Special Areas.

BREAK

Mr. Nolan Ball came forward to present the rangeland management update. The work completed in summer 2024 was reviewed noting the SAB grazing rate is now lower than the provincial grazing rate. With the increase in feeder cattle, the SAB GL rate will increase.

Mr. Ball reviewed the precipitation across Special Areas from May through October 2024. There were big changes in the early part of summer with moisture and heat. Collections were taken in every township in SAB – each collection takes about 15 minutes with six collections attempted each day. The conditions for health ranges, healthy with problems and unhealthy ranges were reviewed. It was concluded that 85% of SA GLs contain grassland plant community cover. Approximately 750,000 acres (40%) of SA GLs have optimum range condition.

Mr. Christianson thanked Mr. Ball for the good information and noted the Board wants to be informed if full GLs move into the unhealthy range.

There was discussion on the difference in rates between Community Pasture rates and Grazing Lease rates.

Mr. Caskey presented information on First Nations Consultation (FNC) related to the approved TRLS Policy. WMU 200 requires FNC east of Hwy 41 and north of Hwy 12. Frog Lake First Nations has demonstrated interest in the lands around Sounding Lake.

There are three phases of consultation: pre-consultation assessment, consultation, and determination of adequacy. The current practice is to request letters for every parcel SAB intends to sell via the policy.

There are still questions to be answered such as the cost of the consultation process or what happens if the applicant decides not to purchase after the process has completed.

MOTION AC06-29-24: FIRST NATIONS CONSULTATION ON TRLS

MOVED BY MARK BLAIR AND SECONDED BY ERIKA TESSIER THAT THE SPECIAL AREAS ADVISORY COUNCIL RECOMMEND THE SPECIAL AREAS BOARD DIRECT TRLS APPLICANTS PAY FOR FIRST NATIONS CONSULTATION IF THE APPLICATION IS APPROVED, AND SPECIAL AREAS PAYS IF THE APPLICATION FOR TRLS IS DENIED. CARRIED.

Mr. Christianson directed Council to the Issues Binder.

Mr. Kovitch began with Private Lane Ways Maintenance – portions of private roadways that are not on public road allowances, that Special Areas built. A policy has been put in place to adjust the pricing of snow plowing rates and operators were given direction to plow to the blue address sign. Some ratepayers are concerned that Special Areas is responsible for maintaining all the roadways they have constructed. There are a considerable number of kilometres that fall into this category – if Special Areas constructed a road, there should be a survey and have the road added to the road network and registered on a road plan.

School bus drivers are expressing frustration – operators snowplow down to the yard but not into the driveway. Inconsistency is an issue. Existing residents should have the same access as new residents. There needs to be a clear distinction between what is a public roadway and what is a private driveway. It was suggested this issue be included in Resolutions.

Mr. Kovitch moved onto Parks noting the Parks Survey had almost 900 respondents.

Mr. Caskey noted Community Pasture engagement was sought in summer 2024 with the general public and patrons about transitioning to a cooperative. The report is included in the Issues Binder and a public version will be distributed in Spring 2025.

A federal lawsuit brought forward by Siksika Nation names Directors Trent Caskey, Darcy Ferguson and Shaune Kovitch for restricting use of traditional lands. The lawsuit is vague but does mention the cumulative effects of development stating the defendants have allowed development on lands that impacted their rights. At this point, all records pertaining to the lawsuit will be kept on file.

Mr. Caskey noted the SA LUO was signed off by Ministerial Order and is now in effect.

Mr. Caskey provided a quick update on the Ardley Dam project. The province has secured a contract with Hatch for pre-engineering and feasibility work.

On the Westmoreland Reclamation, there have been discussion on what the road network is going to be when the mining is complete. There are haul roads in place. Representatives will be attending on Friday and this can be discussed.

There was a question on 14 quarters of a solar project in the mined area. Administration was not aware of the project.

Ms. Chostner provided an update on the Sheerness Industrial Park (SHIP) noting not all scheduled work was completed in 2024, the clay liner is scheduled to be completed in early 2025. Federal funding expires March 31, 2025. Capital purchases have been planned to maximize the grant funds. Clinton Yake and his crew have done an amazing job at the site. Three of the eight lots have options to purchase; however, ownership of the lots can't be transferred until the funding agreement ends. The lots are optioned at \$2,000/acre – from this point forward the price will likely be adjusted to reflect the services available at the lots.

Mr. Caskey reviewed the Carolside South Irrigation season noting 9.5M m3 of water went down the Blowdown Canal. There is a continued request for more water and the province has stepped up to pay the additional pumping costs. 2024 did not see a lot of run-off but there was moisture, and the season was better than the previous year. Electrical work is needed at the Deadfish pumphouse. The operators on the system are doing a very good job. There are still issues with irrigators pumping when those below

have called for water. Meetings have occurred to set up a Part 9 Company to assist with expansion and management of the system.

The TRLS summary was reviewed noting the policy is the same as previous with no lands in river breaks, if there's more than eight wells on a quarter, gravel resources present or if the lands are adjacent to a named water body.

ADJOURNMENT AT 5:35PM

DECEMBER 6, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: 9:00 AM

Mr. Christianson welcomed everyone to the final day of Advisory Council and reminded everyone that the Special Areas Christmas gathering is scheduled for December 17th at the Youngstown Community Hall from 11am – 3:30pm for those interested in attending.

The agenda for the day was reviewed. Mr. Christianson presented Mr. Daryl Swenson with a statue to commemorate his 10 years on the Board. Travelling from Bindloss twice a month is a big commitment, and the Board appreciates the time and effort put in.

Mr. Christianson welcomed representatives from WestMET Ag: Mr. Jeffrey Kukura, President, Mr. Kyle Hobbs, Mr. Clay Williams, and Ms. Cora Skelding.

Mr. Kukura thanked the Council for the opportunity to provide an update and reviewed some of the history starting in 2019. Westmoreland was coming out of restructuring and the new CEO had a vision for coal winding down as there was access to water, power, gas and infrastructure at the site. A decision was made to invest in humalite and perfect the earth restoration of the mined lands. As of May 2023 separate companies were created with the same investors as Westmoreland. The new companies include WestMET Ag, WestMET ERS and WestMET RE.

Mr. Williams presented on the advancements made with humalite and the work done on reclaiming the previously mined lands. A line of compost humic products has been developed with the highest quality humic source in the world. The area has low ash and low heavy metals in the large deposit.

The WestMET Earth Reclamation Services (ERS) has been working on lands at the Sheerness mine and has planned to reclaim 17,000 acres in a 4-5 year timeframe. That is a very accelerated rate as others would reclaim that size of land in 20 years or more. The reclamation process can be used across north America for copper mines, underground mines and forestry along with quarry's that have legislated reclamation requirements. A drone seeder is used that holds 55kg of product and is GPS programmed.

The WestMET Renewable Energy (RE) division is working on a solar project for a 12.5MW field constructed by 2025. 110 acres are leased to PACE with future considerations for more land. This group has developed a community fund with the intent of adding \$40k/year for the next 25 years.

There was talk of the customer base and how it may shift in the next 3-5 years, the growing market in the USA will cause the export market to explode.

Mr. Christianson thanked the group for the interesting presentation and the tour in summer 2024, the openness is appreciated. It's commendable what the mine has done to shift operations after the coal era ended.

The Issues Binder topics on financial targets and mill rates, including the mill rates of municipal neighbours, were reviewed. A consultant has been retained to gather information from municipal neighbours and create benchmarks.

The Medical Fund tracking sheet outlines the levy each year, there are projects in Consort and Oyen; Hanna hasn't had a big ask in a few years.

The Oyen Medical Clinic site has property, and work is being done on the subdivision. It is hoped the RFP for the new building will be advertised in early 2025 so construction can begin. The capital split is SAB 80, Town of Oyen 10, MD of Acadia 10.

The Acadia Foundation expansion project is moving forward with framing started on the facility. Construction is anticipated in 2025. There is a provincial grant and Special Areas is funding as this is an important project in the region. It is hoped the province will keep the funding 50/50 and provide an additional \$1.5M as the other two projects funded are not moving forward.

The Consort and District Medical Centre Board has brought in a Nurse Practitioner (NP) who is doing well in the area. The hope was for the NP to have a panel of 900 and she is already at 700 and climbing. Another NP or a doctor is needed in the area. There has been talk of a NP lead Clinic – this would be a new model for rural Alberta. The province has announced additional funding for NPs so there may be opportunities to recruit additional NPs to the area.

Mr. Christianson noted he recently attended a meeting with MLA Horner in Red Deer to discuss the East Central Regional Assessment group's plan to take stock of health care in the eastern part of the province. An environmental scan will be completed on the primary care, clinics, physicians, emergency services, and ambulance services available in the area.

Mr. Mike Damberger and Mr. Jon Lee from Alberta Transportation joined the meeting to provide a summary of work that happened in 2024, and projects planned for 2025. Mr. Lee is the new operations manager based in Hanna. Mr. Damberger thanked the Special Areas Board for the partnership. The bridges in Acadia Valley and Hwy 570 at Carolside are now open. The bridge on Hwy 886 is still restricted as there was a setback with wildlife. The ongoing funding agreement has been updated to reimburse SAB for surface maintenance work. The agreement is beneficial to both parties. A new contractor, Le Prairie, will be responsible for maintenance of highways beginning August 2025.

Mr. Damberger reviewed upcoming projects for the next three years. It was noted local priority includes Hwy 899 and Hwy 862.

There was a question on the process for bridge inspections – how does a bridge go from having overweight permits in spring to being closed in the fall? Simple answer is the bridge broke – there is an inspection cycle and as deterioration occurs the frequency of inspections increases. When the restrictions were added to the Hwy 570 bridge, many did not follow the restrictions and further damage occurred. The bypass was also an issue – it was not built to accommodate large load trucks.

Other areas of concern were brought forward such as Hwy 862 south of Hwy 570, this is a school bus route and is not in good shape. Also concerns on Hwy 899 and Hwy 561.

Mr. Kovitch thanked Mr. Damberger for the partnership and support working through the paving contract on Hwy 855.

Mr. Damberger and Mr. Lee departed.

The Council returned to discuss Issues Binder topics.

Grants: the Local Government Fiscal Framework has replaced MSI and appears to be a more stable line of funding.

The capital summary and equipment plans are available for interested Council to review.

The SA Oyen Development Corporation has a federal grant to develop sidings and continue to investigate taking the rail west from the Oyen Rail Yard.

Mr. Ferguson noted the Future Budget Considerations is a catch-all to consolidate projects on the horizon that will require funding, Council are invited to review.

The Special Areas Long Term Account has been updated to include the proceeds from TRLS2. The 4th TRLS can generate considerable cash flow, and a decision should be made on what to do with the proceeds from the current sale. As the Board is selling an appreciation asset, it may be prudent to create an endowment fund to support mill rates. Currently the proceeds from TRLS 4 are going into reserves and financing operations. There is going to be a strong demand for cash in the next few years with the scraper replacement plans. As GBC work finishes, more paving will come due. Water service delivery is being enhanced, which requires funds. Special Areas is starting to step into the health care arena. An endowment fund would be a good tool to invest in as cash flow needs are met.

BREAK

Ms. Jesse Williams, Mr. Don Hogan, and Ms. Justine Comeau from the Ag Service Boards in Special Areas came forward to provide an overview of services provided and update on current projects.

The ASBs receive grant funding along with funding from Special Areas – the grants cover 50% of costs which require detailed reporting. There are legislated duties assigned to ASBs. Animal health, soil and water conservation along with the recycling of ag plastics are some of the programs the ASB operate each year. Nuisance and pests may be controlled, such as raccoons. Weeds and noxious weeds are governed by the *Weed Control Act* and the landowner has responsibility to manage. Most are pretty good on their own lands, some contractors coming in don't have industry standards and are not aware of the restrictions of moving soil from place to place.

Mr. Hogan provided an update on the Red Deer River Crew and the work they do each summer. A fan boat is used with a staff of three to keep weeds from getting farther away from the river.

The 2024 Special Projects were reviewed noting there are large scale noxious weed infestations which are high risk to municipal infrastructure. There are 109,223 acres designated as special projects. There are not enough resources or time in the summer to cover all.

There is a lot of time and effort put into deeded or leased lands and a policy is requested to be developed as weeds are a large contentious issue. A consistent framework for weed control should be developed.

Mr. Christianson thanked the group for the good work and mentoring done with summer staff.

The Council presented Resolutions.

RESOLUTION 1: DOROTHY CAMP KITCHEN

WHEREAS the Dorothy Camp Kitchen, in the Dorothy rest area on Special Areas Land, has no fire pits or outside stoves

WHEREAS the kitchen chimney has a spark arrestor certified insulated chimney, good stove, and a cement floor

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED (Give timelines) that the Dorothy Camp Kitchen be exempt from a fire ban.

MOVED BY Neal Roes

SECONDED BY Erika Tessier

Discussion: The intent is to make the Dorothy Camp Kitchen the same as Parks Camp Kitchens. Better to avoid special exemptions. The current fire status options are clear.

DEFEATED

RESOLUTION #2: DEVELOPMENT PERMIT FEES

WHEREAS current development permit for all projects is \$50

WHEREAS there has been an increase in the requests of development permits for large scale industrial projects

WHEREAS they require a much greater time commitment for administration.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED (Give timelines) that the Administration develop an updated fee structure that would better provide a development permit fee that was inline with the expected costs of the project.

MOVED BY Erika Tessier

SECONDED BY Laurie Ferrance

CARRIED

RESOLUTION #3: SAB INVESTMENT DIRECTION

WHEREAS AIMCO is our intended company for investing

WHEREAS the goal is to create a protected endowment fund

WHEREAS AIMCo provided recommendations

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED (give timelines) that Advisory Council recommends that Special Areas Board takes the recommended 30% Equity, diversified between Canadian and Global equities.

MOVED BY Laurie Ference

SECONDED BY Erika Tessier

CARRIED

RESOLUTION #4: POLICY NEW RESIDENCE ROAD

WHEREAS there is no current written policy regarding new residence roads

WHEREAS it has been standard operating practice to build on the road allowance of the adjacent quarter section

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED (give timelines) that Special Areas Administration develop a policy framework for the construction of new residence roads.

MOVED BY John Kimber

SECONDED BY Erika Tessier

CARRIED

RESOLUTION #5: MAINTENANCE ON PRIVATE DRIVEWAYS/PUBLIC ROADWAYS

WHEREAS there are inconsistencies to how maintenance is being carried out on private driveways versus public roadways

WHEREAS there are differences experienced by ratepayers in different areas of Special Areas

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED (give timelines) that Administration develop options or policy recommendations regarding maintenance of private driveways,

And FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED that administration research the historical significance of some of these roads how they have been handled in the past.

MOVED BY Erika Tessier

SECONDED BY John Kimber

Discussion: This is a complex conversation – the decision needs to be fair across the region. A policy should be developed to ensure consistency. Clear direction is needed on how to operate, what was done in the past may need to shift. A policy will be developed and brought back to the Council and Board for approval.

CARRIED

RESOLUTION #6: BUFFALO ATLEE COMMUNITY PASTURE

WHEREAS The Buffalo-Atlee Community Pasture Association has requested the Special Areas Board allow them to operate the Buffalo Atlee Community Pasture as a Grazing Coop

WHEREAS The Buffalo-Atlee Community Pasture Breeding Association has developed policy and procedures to operate the Buffalo Atlee pasture as a grazing coop.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Special Areas Advisory Council recommend to the Special Areas Board that the Buffalo-Atlee Community Pasture Association be given that opportunity and to formalize a 3-year operational agreement with them.

MOVED BY Erika Tessier

SECONDED BY Laurie Ference

Discussion: There has been talk that not all in this pasture want to move to a different management style. All of the items are not finalized on how the operational agreement will work, it was suggested there be a term of three years. The agreement needs to be formalized and will likely not be in effect until 2026.

CARRIED

RESOLUTION #7: COMMUNITY FOUNDATION PRAIRIE CROCUS FUND

WHEREAS the Community Foundation of Southeastern Alberta, Prairie Crocus Fund provides support to all of Special Areas and MD of Acadia

WHEREAS investment to this fund is providing a long-term contribution for community endowment

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Special Areas provide a \$100 000 donation to the Community Foundation Prairie Crocus Fund.

MOVED BY Erika Tessier

SECONDED BY Laurie Ference

Discussion: The Foundation is highly active in the community and supports several diverse groups. Locals did start the Prairie Crocus Fund and there are locals involved in selecting recipients. There was a question on cost to create a fund and subsequent administration costs, that answer will be provided before the Board makes a decision.

CARRIED

RESOLUTION #8: POLICY 04-04A – RATES IN EFFECT

WHEREAS Policy 04-04A was presented to Advisory Council with amendments

THEREFORE Special Areas Advisory Council recommends that Policy 04-04A be approved as presented.

MOVED BY Erika Tessier

SECONDED By John Kimber

CARRIED

That concludes the Fall Advisory Council agenda, Mr. Christianson thanked Council for their time, Ms. Herzog for the excellent hospitality, Ms. Jones for the organization and all staff for the work they do day in and day out.

Mr. Ferguson has announced his retirement at the end of January 2025 after more than 35 years of service. A special note, Mr. Darran Dick also received a certificate for 35 years of service.

Mr. Christianson thanked the Council for the privilege of leading over the past 10 years and the support they have shown. It has been a pleasure.

Merry Christmas everyone.

MR. CHRISTIANSON MOVED FOR ADJOURNMENT AT 12:35PM.

APPENDIX A: 2025 ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND SURFACING PLAN

