

ANNUAL RATEPAYER MEETING
Special Area No. 2, Subdivisions No. 1 & 5
Hanna Legion Hall
June 30, 2026

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. with six ratepayers in attendance.

Mike Hart nominated Mark Blair as the meeting Chair. Seconded by Don Viste.

Jean Pattinson moved the 2025 minutes be adopted as presented. Seconded by Mike Hart.
Carried.

ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORTS

Kevin Bossert – Subdivision 1:

- Medical – working on recruitment

Mark Blair – Subdivision 5:

- Southern Alberta Energy from Waste Association (SAEWA) – group of Municipalities looking for solution for waste other than landfill, pyrolysis ordered for Newell, we are still member from SAEWA, looking for other options
- Big Country Waste – fire at the landfill in new cell, waste transfer stations are needing replacement, solutions are being identified, Cereal is a one-year trial with roll off bins. Recycling program in Hanna and silage pit

SPECIAL AREAS BOARD REPORTS

Shaune Kovitch, Chair, Special Areas Board:

Commented on:

- Jordon Christianson, now director of Regional Initiatives.
- Ryley Girlitz new director of Municipal Services
- Advisory Council and Board composition
- Strategic Planning, including Business Plan and a review of service standards
- Empress Viability Review, ongoing with Municipal Affairs
- Municipal Partnerships, partnership projects, industrial tax transfer
- Tax Recovery Land Sale Policy, expires July 16, 2026, applications must be submitted
- Resident Satisfaction Survey, intended to help guide long term planning.

Ryley Girlitz, Director of Municipal Services:

Commented on:

- 2026 Priorities: focus on service standards, to ensure alignment with Advisory Council
- Road Program, including construction, surfacing, recrowning
- Water Services, programs and possible expansion lines
- Emergency Services, Regional Fire switched to Alberta First Responders Radio Communications System, recent Emergency Management Mock Exercise was successful.
- Parks and Campgrounds, improvements planned, push button showers installed included fee
- Facilities Management, new manager recruitment underway, Blood Indian new spillway and Bartman Dam repairs
- Big County Waste Transfer Sites – cost to rebuild transfer sites is not economical, plan to replace with roll off bins, with little doors to open no dumping from a hydraulic truck bin.

Mr. Girletz also presented the Path to Pavement Strategy regarding surfaced roads in Special Areas and a current update on what is proposed for the next 10 years.

Trent Caskey, Director of Property Administration:

Commented on:

- Annual Rate Review: cultivation leases (no change) and grazing leases (41% increase from 2025)
- Community Pastures: Rate at 1.15/head/day, close to full allotment, Nolan Ball overseeing Special Areas Community Pasture program, Buffalo-Atlee managed by Grazing Cooperative for three-year trial, Dustin Aebly is the contact, Special Areas charges the cooperative rental and taxes, and capital agreement
- Tax Recovery Land Sale, applications due July 16th, 2026, process will continue after the date but with timelines
- Sheerness Industrial Park and Reservoir: three lots sold, two under option, interested parties on the other lots. No development permits have been issued.

Jordon Christianson, Director of Regional Initiatives

Commented on:

- Regional Support for Local Health Services: recruitment and retention, new clinic buildings in Oyen and Consort
- Consort Nurse Practitioner Pilot Program
- Oyen Assisted Living/Demetia Care Facility, nearly complete
- MD of Acadia & Special Areas Joint Irrigation Project; phase 2 complete, \$2.6B cost to build, creating a municipally controlled corporation is next step
- Regional Economic Development: Palliser Economic Partnership, Special Areas and Oyen Development Corporation.

Darren Jones, Director of Finance and Administration:

Commented on:

- Taxation and Assessment Notices: have been mailed, assessment appeal deadline is July 21, 2026
- Assessment Trends: up to \$5B of assessment
- Mill Rate Trends: 2026 mill rates increased 3% (largely provincial school portion)
- 2025 Financial Statements: \$85.2M in revenues, \$89M in expenses, with planned deficit spending
- 2026 Planned Budget: revenue \$94M, \$96.3M in expenses, with planned deficit spending of \$2.3M to draw down accumulated surplus (included paving on SH 899, which is now deferred to 2027)

Discussion:

- Timing of Ratepayer meetings, time of year and time of day
- Kilometers of road planned for this year as opposed to previous years with construction in Sheerness Industrial Park
- Carp population in Blood Indian
- Public Hearing to close the Robinson Bridge is on July 28th
- Newspapers in the area - Brooks Bulletin is read in the area
- Rumours abound regarding what is moving into Sheerness Industrial Park, nothing has a development permit, and no applications have been received
- TRLS Policy Section 3.2 and eligibility in the sale
- Rail and the business case for compressed garbage
- Funding and promissory notes to Special Areas and Oyen Development Corporation

2026 RATEPAYER MEETING

SA2-SD1&5

June 30, 2026

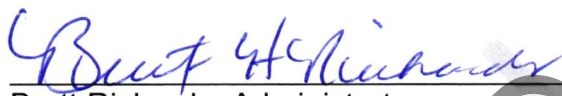
- Special Areas funding corporations that channel public money away for private investment
- Special Areas reach is getting bigger by investing in corporations; it could get smaller by selling Tax Recovery Land and stop investing in corporations
- Funding of small schools below provincial thresholds decreases, stop sending school tax to province
- AER adding teeth to oil and gas bad debt
- Currently no authorization for renewables on public land
- Tax rebates to renewables
- What is the rural population in Special Areas and where is that information available, Statistic Canada, and this census subdivision is the only subdivision - the only one in Alberta that is projecting population decline.

SA2SUB1&5 – Motion 1: Mike Hart moved the interpretation of TRLS Policy Section 3.2 be extended to all ratepayers that held lease land in Special Areas prior to Jan 1, 2023. Seconded by Carol Lenfesty. **Defeated.**

SA2SUB1&5 – Motion 2: Mike Hart moved that be it resolved that the promissory note of 2.5M available to the Special Areas and Oyen Development Corporation be made available to the Clearview Public Schools for the Byemoor School. Seconded by Carol Lenfesty. **Defeated.**

SA2SUB1&5 - Motion 3: Mike Hart moved that the Special Area Board increase the set back from wind towers/turbines to a residence to 1,600m. Seconded by Carol Lenfesty. **Carried.**

Mike Hart moved to adjourn at 5:18 p.m.



Brett Richards, Administrator
Special Area No. 2

Motion to approve minutes to occur at the next annual ratepayer meeting.