



Council Newsletter

Fall 2023

On behalf of Council, we're pleased to provide you with our first newsletter. It's our hope that this newsletter will help to improve regular communication between Council and Residents about activities, topics, and other current interests occurring in the Summer Village. If there are topics you are interested in and would like to hear more, please do not hesitate contacting us. Our contact information is available on the Summer Village [website](#).

We would like to extend our appreciation to Greg Dreschler for his years of service as a Council member of the Summer Village of Larkspur! Greg has been a great resource in ensuring continuity between different councils and has been beneficial to the transition of new council members Blaine and Jason. If you see Greg walking about, perhaps enjoying a stroll through the Larkspur Natural Area, please pass along any kind words of appreciation for his public service over the past years!

Council also welcomes Scott Drazek as the newly appointed Councillor! Please join Council in congratulating Scott and thanking him for his willingness to contribute to our Summer Village.

On September 9, 2023 we held our annual Annual General Meeting. The meeting was well attended and thank you to everyone who attended! A special thank you to Gerry and Emily Keane for hosting at their property!. Typically the meeting is held in July, however with a number of activities being planned in the Summer Village, Council considered a September timeframe would allow for a more informed and thorough discussion with Residents. The key topics and points are covered in this newsletter.

IDP Bylaw - Progress Update

Summer Village Council has been receiving development application notice referrals from Westlock County relating to major activities within the 800m (½ mile) shoreline of entire Long Island Lake, per the approved IDP Bylaw. To date, the development notices have been primarily categorized as a "redevelopment of existing" (i.e. garage rebuild, deck rebuild, etc.) and nothing of particular note or concern.

Fire Management

Recent fire activities across the country, and locally here with the Bolloque Fire this past spring, have punctuated the need to be prepared. The following fire management activities have been occurring over the past year;

1. Tree clearing and foliage removal (ongoing)
2. Purchase of Fire Equipment and Training
3. Fire Drills and Preparedness with Fawcett Fire Department

Council anticipates more work is required over the next year to help in being better prepared in the hopefully unlikely event that a fire encroaches on or occurs within the Summer Village.

Operating Budget

The 2023 total operating budget is \$186k. This represents a 4% increase over 2022. This doesn't translate perfectly to everyone receiving a 4% increase as the amount of your taxes is also attributed to the assessed value of your property (up/down). For example, if your assessed value went down by 4% relative to other properties in the Summer Village, but the tax rate went up by 4% you would have a zero 0% change. The increase in the operating budget is primarily attributed to an increase in utility costs and tree removal costs. Council has also taken steps to create an operating reserve which is intended to be capped at 2 times the annual operating tax revenue (we currently exceed this). Council has also taken steps to invest these reserve amounts (\$350k) in GIC/short term investments to maximize any potential income.

Capital Budget

The 2023 total capital budget is \$180k. This is almost exclusively tied to funds made available through Provincial Infrastructure Grants (no direct Summer Village taxes). These capital grants are made available to all municipalities and are for exclusive use for infrastructure with strict timelines for their administration. The Summer Village currently has access to approximately \$450k of provincial grants in 2023 of which \$180k must be used by the end of 2023.

Infrastructure Projects

1. Larkspur Drive Gravel Walkway - this 6'1.8m wide gravel walkway is intended to extend along the entire Larkspur Drive (approximately 1000m) and will be open very soon.
2. Fire Hall Site Development - Council has been working on plans related to the development of a Community Shelter and Play Area. The Community Shelter would be a 3 season structure, similar to provincial park shelters, and the play area would hopefully consist of playground equipment and an area for team sports activities like pickleball or volleyball. The initial preparatory work to prepare the site for development includes tree clearing, grading, levelling the site. Initially it will look quite disruptive, however, over time we anticipate this will create a great amenity for the community to host planned or unplanned activities.

Road Maintenance

We have been conducting annual visual assessments and repairs of any potential problem areas to proactively ensure they do not become significant issues.

Drainage

This Council (and previous Councils) have heard routinely from residents related to legacy and historical drainage issues. From our records and understanding, the Summer Village original subdivision was created without the development of any formal drainage engineering or design. Similarly, the development of residential sites within the Summer Village have not included the preparation of any Lot Grading Plans. These two issues have contributed to drainage issues going back to when the Summer Village was created. Council has been discussing the potential need to conduct a broader drainage study of the Summer Village. The priority and cost for this work has not been assessed but could be extensive.



Reserve Public Walkways

Council has reviewed the current condition and state of reserve public walkways within the Summer Village with the following goals;

- a. Prioritize reserve public access through Crescents over above public access off Larkspur Drive
- b. Permanently mark / delineate public reserve access to reduce risk of possible encroachments and mitigate any potential for future disputes
- c. Minimize the amount of change to current use as much as possible (don't fix what's not broken)

In this context, there are no further activities planned at this time. If concerns or issues are brought forward identifying constraints or perceived restrictions, Council will review as required.

Temporary Seasonal Docks Bylaw

Summary of Alberta Environment and Parks AEP (Province of Alberta) Changes

1. Temporary Docks/Lifts Only (No permanent Docks allowed)
2. One dock, One Lift - AEP approval **NOT** required
3. Multiple docks, Multiple lifts - AEP approval **IS** required
4. AEP license applications that include municipal (community or lakefront) reserve, must include approval by Municipality (i.e. Summer Village)
5. AEP Mooring Disturbance Standard applies to both community reserves as well as reserves located at waterfront properties
6. Objective of 50% maximum encumbrance (does not include any encumbrance wholly contained within the Municipal Reserve)

Bylaw Highlights and Process

- a. Bylaw Effective Date - Spring 2024
- b. Temporary Seasonal Docks/Lifts - Seasonal Dates
Summer May 15-September 30
Winter October 1-May 14
- c. Seasonal Lifts/Docks located within/outside Community Reserves
(Depending on the proposed location of the seasonal dock and lift, there are different requirements governing use based upon Authorities having Jurisdiction)
 - Scenario 1 - If a dock and lift extend across or through a community reserve parcel into the designated waterbody , AEP and Summer Village requirements must be adhered to.
 - Scenario 2 - If a dock and lift do not protrude within the waterbody as defined by AEP and are wholly contained within the Community Reserve, the Summer Village is the sole Authority having Jurisdiction
 - Scenario 3 - If a dock and lift protrude directly from a private parcel into a designated waterbody (no frontage reserve exists), AEP is the sole Authority having Jurisdiction.

This Bylaw, focuses on Scenarios 1 and 2 only. Property owners under Scenario 3 are advised to contact AEP directly as the Summer Village has no jurisdiction.



d. Bylaw Process

- The AEP Disturbance Standard allows for 1 dock and 1 lift for each reserve (regardless of size or location) without the need of approval. Anything exceeding this does require a plan to be approved first by the Summer Village prior to being submitted for approval by AEP. A Community Dock Plan, ultimately approved by AEP, is anticipated to form the annual plan for seasonal dock and lift conformance within Community Reserves.
The DRAFT Community Dock Plans are available for viewing on the Summer Village [website](#). Please submit any comments or concerns to [Kim Bancroft, CAO](#).
- To assist with implementation and conformance of the Community Dock Plan, a “Community Reserve Captain” will be designated for each Community Reserve. The Captain will be a resident accepting of the responsibility to act in the capacity of the Summer Village in ensuring the Community Reserve Seasonal Dock Plan is being adhered to and communicate any issues or concerns as needed to the CAO.
If you have interest in filling the position for a Community Reserve Captain, please contact [Kim Bancroft, CAO](#) prior to March 31, 2024.

Animal Control Bylaw

Council has heard from a number of different residents on a regular basis relating to issues with Animal Control. In particular, problems with “dangerous” dogs. Council is exploring a Bylaw that would restrict dogs off leash to private property property or specific designated areas. The proposed Bylaw would also include information related to definitions for “dangerous” dogs and any possible fines or penalties.

“Good Neighbour Policy”

The Summer Village does not have a full time equipped Bylaw Officer position. These duties default to our CAO for enforcement which depending on the type of infraction can be difficult to enforce “in the moment”. Examples of this could include excessive or after-hours noise disturbance, public intoxication, use of drugs on public lands, etc. Council is exploring the development of a “Good Neighbour Policy” that although not enforceable, provides a blueprint for residents on how to behave and show care for your broader community.

Larkspur Natural Area Society

Council encourages all residents to obtain a membership with the Larkspur Natural Area Society. The annual fees are very small and these fees allow them to keep this area as natural as possible which is a great asset to the summer village.

If you have any comments, inquiries related to any of the information provided in this newsletter, please do not hesitate to contact any of the Councillors. Contact information is available on the Summer Village [website](#).