

Good day. I am writing this newsletter on a bright sunny morning, it's dry and windy with an expected high of seventeen degrees. This is why we have implemented a full fire ban for the RM of Blucher. The fire ban will be in place until we receive significant moisture, or the countryside greens up. Historically these conditions have caused many fires to get out of control. This decision, by bylaw, is the call of the Reeve and a majority of council so, keep those matches in your pockets and save our firefighters and potentially yourself, some grief.

A quick word on RM taxes; SAMA (Sask Assessment Management Agency), as usual, has been slow getting the information to the administration that we need to set the mill rate. We had a surplus in the budget last year, so I believe the worst-case scenario, this year, would be a small tax increase. As this is a reassessment year, we will do our best to mitigate the variation in values.

We have received some Covid assistance money from the Federal and Provincial Government and we have decided to allocate some of those funds to community groups to help them through these tough times brought about by the Pandemic. We also allocated some funds from our Public Reserve. A full list will be in the approved minutes of the April regular meeting.

Our road surface grinding test was finished recently. If you are interested in seeing the finished project you can find it in two locations. One mile east of Pit road to the old Hunt farm driveway, on Mine Road, and in front of Rocky Acres on cement plant road. (Hank Epp's old Place) the Rocky Acres location also has 300 meters of a new dust control product we are trying out. I would be interested in some feedback.

Another major project coming up is the new Elstow sewage lift station. It has needed replacement for a long time and this project will be funded by the Communities in Transition Grant. This is a Provincial program that the RM received funds from when we were required to take over the administration of Elstow. Other major project coming this summer are the building two Provincially funded road projects. Blucher Road and Bradwell south should commence in July. The councillors related to these project areas are currently working on obtaining easements.

I have had discussions with MHI (Highways), and Stantec (Engineers), regarding the Hwy 5 project. Work on completing phase will commence in mid-May. We have been strongly advocating for dust control in front of all residences that would be affected by the upcoming detours. Councilors Bohem, Wilson, and I met with MHI on 5 Hwy to discuss some deficiencies that had been identified with the work done already. Highways are taking these deficiencies under consideration and we are hopeful of a satisfactory resolution. If you want to stay updated with progress on Hwy 5 the project manager for the phase that is being completed this summer, Janine Danderfer, sends out an update to whoever is interested. If you would like to receive this

update contact, Janine at janine.danderfer@gov.sk.ca

We have also had consultations with Highways regarding the planning of phase 3 on Hwy 5. This is the twinning portion of the project. A public forum, (likely by way of Zoom), is scheduled for early May. Watch our website for info. MHI is planning on having land agents working to obtain land by late June. I feel this is the critical time for input from concerned citizens and the Municipal councils involved. That's all I have for this month. As usual, feel free to contact me with any concerns you might have. Reeve Blair Cummins