

COUNTY OF ST. PAUL

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Our Mission - To create desirable rural experiences

Council Meeting - Highlights December 12, 2023

The meetings are live streamed on YouTube under 'County of St. Paul No. 19'.
The public is welcome to observe the Council proceedings from the Public Gallery in the
Council Chambers located in the Administration Building.

December 12 Council Meeting

Council passed the **2024 Interim Municipal Budget**. Council cut the majority of capital equipment purchases that do not have Reserves associated with them, deferring purchasing decisions to final budget discussion that will take place in March. The estimated increase in the Municipal Tax rate of 5% will fund the increased costs included in the Operational Budget and Capital items remaining in the budget. The Interim 2024 Interim Municipal Budget is:

Operating and Capital Revenues	\$37,009,306
Net Book Value of Disposed capital assets	\$735,615
Funding from Reserves	\$2,934,808
Funding from Restricted Surplus	\$0
Operations Expenditures	\$30,301,149
Operating Reserves	\$55,514
Replacement Reserves	\$747,100
Capital Debenture Repayment	\$809,840
Capital Expenditures	\$8,762,471
Surplus	\$3,655

Council has directed Administration to look for further budget efficiencies before the final budget that may reduce the tax increase and/or allow for the purchase of needed capital equipment.

Bylaws & Policies can be viewed on County's 'Bylaws & Policies' webpage.

Council passed **Bylaw 2023-20 Utility Bylaw** that will amend the rates effective January 1, 2024 as follows:

- an increase in the rates by Elk Point/ St. Paul Regional Water Commission from \$1.26 to \$1.50.

- increased rates for the Hamlets of Lottie Lake, Ashmont and Mallaig and rural users:

Lottie Lake, Ashmont, Mallaig: Fixed Service Charge Water \$70.00; Capital Replacement Contribution – Water \$15.00; Water Supply Charge per m3 \$2.88; Water Distribution Charge per m3 \$2.39; Fixed Service Charge – Wastewater \$12.25; Capital Replacement Contribution – Wastewater \$10.00; Mallaig Wastewater Collection Charge per m3 \$2.40. Ashmont - Wastewater Collection Charge per m3 \$1.00

Elk Point Regional System: Fixed Service Charge – Water \$51.65; Water Supply Charge per m3 \$1.50.

County of St. Paul Regional System (Outside Hamlet Boundaries: Fixed Service Charge – Water \$38.50; Water Supply Charge per m3 \$3.82

Ashmont and Mallaig Truck fill Stations: \$7.50/m3.

Residents in Ashmont, Lottie Lake and Mallaig will receive a letter detailing the changes to their rates. Open Houses will be held in the spring to provide residents will information about the future replacement and renewal of the water mains and services. Details on the Open Houses will be forthcoming.

The Utility Bylaw also has changes for Septic Haulers. The annual fee for Septic Haulers to utilize County lagoons or the wastewater transfer station in Lafond will increase from \$250/year to \$500/year. Additionally, there will no longer be a fee associated with dumping trucked sewage at the Lafond Wastewater Transfer Station, the Ashmont Lagoon, or the Whitney Lake Lagoon.

Council passed **Bylaw 2023-25 Penalties** which increases the penalties for Dogs at Large, Vicious Dogs at Large and Off Highway Vehicle offences. The Bylaw can be found under 'Protective Services'.

Council passed **Bylaw 2023-21 Borrowing Bylaw – Current Expenditures** to authorize borrowings of up to \$7,000,000 (seven million) from Servus Credit Union to finance the short-term operations of the County for the fiscal year commencing January 1. This bylaw is approved annually.

Council gave 1st Reading to **Bylaw 2023-26 which would amend Land Use Bylaw 2021-13**. Council scheduled a Public Hearing for January 23 that will be advertised. The proposed changes and the Bylaw can be found on the County's 'Planning & Development' webpage.

Council passed **Bylaw 2023-23 Elk Point Regional Allied Arts Loan Guarantee**. This loan guarantee must be done through bylaw and is renewed annually.

Council approved a contribution of \$108,000 for the **County Library Board** for the 2024 Budget.

Council approved Dean Smith as a voting Member-at-Large on the **Agricultural Services Board** for a three-year term commencing January 1.

Council approved to submit a proposal to the **Alberta Government** asking the Province to develop/reinstate a grant program to assist municipalities with the cost of replacing aging water distribution/wastewater collection systems. Further, the County will include a two-fold request asking the province to assist municipalities with costs associated with fire services. This assistance is aimed at funding the medical assistance provided through our volunteer fire services and to urge the Province to implement a program for renewal/replacement of fire equipment.

Council approved the **Contract Services with Sheila Kitz** commencing January 1, 2024 to assist with the transition to the new CAO, Jason Wallsmith, who begins on January 8.

Council approved a Request for Proposals on Alberta Purchasing Connection for a new **Financial Software Program** for 2024. The County's current financial software with Serenic is coming to end of life in December 2024.

Council approved to extend the **Municipal Planning Services (2009) Ltd.** contract to December 31, 2026 with evaluation of services to take place in fall 2025. MPS is the subdivision authority for the County.

Council approved the allocation of the **2023 Recreational Facilities Grants**. The allocations can be viewed on the County's 'Budgets' webpage.

Council approved the following **Elk Point Recreation Grants** for 2023: Curling Rink \$6,000; C.G. Baker Arena \$10,000; A.G. Ross Arena \$50,000.

Council approved the **St. Paul & District Arts Foundation**, Community Organization Grant in the amount of \$500.

November 28 Public Works meeting

Council gave 1st Reading to **Bylaw 2023-19, a bylaw that would rezone part SE-25-58-10-W4** from Agriculture (A) District to a Direct Control (DC) District. A public hearing is scheduled for January 9 at 11:00 a.m. See complete information on the County's website under 'News'.

Council passed **Bylaw 2023-18 Non-Profit Community Organizations Tax Exemption Bylaw** to remove the Elk Point Trailriders Snowmobile Club as the club is no longer active. The bylaw was amended to include the St. Paul Fish and Game Association as it is a non-profit organization.

Council opened sealed bids for approximately 2.00 acres on **NE 14-57-6-W4** and accepted the tender offer of \$15,000.

Council approved an application be submitted by **STEP** to the Northern and Regional Economic Development Program on behalf of the STEP partner municipalities including the Town of St. Paul, Town of Elk Point, Summer Village of Horseshoe Bay and the County of St. Paul. Further that the County of St. Paul be the managing partner.

Additional Information

County Hours over Christmas The County Administration and Public Works Offices will be closed to the public from December 25 to January 1, inclusive. Payments made to the County will be processed by year end. See the County's website under 'Payment Options' for ways to make payments.

County Transfer Stations Hours over Christmas The Transfer Stations will operate on regular hours of 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, December 23. The *Ashmont Transfer Station* will operate on reduced hours of 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 24 (Christmas Eve) and Sunday, December 31 (New Year's Eve). *All Transfer Stations will be closed* on Tuesday, December 26 (Boxing Day).

Small Business Property Sub-class County of St. Paul Bylaw 2022-20 allows small business property owners who run a business (fewer than 10 full time employees across Canada) or who have a business leasing their property ***to apply for a reduced property tax rate for the 2024 Tax Year.*** See the County's webpage 'Tax & Assessment' for information and the application form. The bylaw can be viewed on the County's webpage 'Governance/Bylaws & Policies/Taxes'. The deadline to submit applications is December 31st, 2023. Eligibility requirements must be met for an application to be approved.

For more information contact:
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