

August 2013 News & Information Message

From M.D. of Foothills Div. 4 Councillor Suzanne Oel, August 26, 2013

Dear Residents,

This newsletter is intended to give you an update on current issues or projects I am working on:

- Some happy news! We have started the **first phase** of the **NW Foothills Recreation Board's site: Seaman Sports Park** with a Sod Turning Ceremony on August 13, which includes 2 baseball diamonds, road and parking (off Hwy 549 near the Millarville Racetrack). The first ball diamond will be called **Powell Field in memory of Tina Powell**. This site is intended to serve Divisions 3, 4 and 5. Funding for the purchase of the land has been provided by the M.D. of Foothills, \$250,000 donated by the Seaman family is being held in trust for a future building project, \$50,000 from the Millarville Sports Association will support the ball diamond construction and reduced rates from our contractor have helped get this project going. For more details ongoing, see our website: <http://www.nwfoothillsrec.com/> or follow us on Facebook. We will be looking for assistance with fundraising and other projects to support this project as it moves forward. A formal dedication will take be announced and take place when the ball diamond is ready for use.
- **Flood Recovery** continues to keep us all occupied and a bit tired and worn. We are working on our summer roads program as planned, but some projects may be delayed due to the amount of rain this summer and the extra work from the flood. Our Administration Offices are still temporarily relocated to: Mullen Trucking, 100 - 80079 Maple Leaf Road East, Hamlet of Aldersyde. Our High River mailing address remains the same. We are working with the province on determining our next steps and **assisting** our residents on an individual basis as they need help, and are working with our joint High River-Foothills Flood Management Committee to model and determine **mitigation strategies** which will also affect the outcome of the disaster recovery program.
- In the M.D. of Foothills, uninsured **flood damages to our municipal assets** are estimated at around \$21 Million in infrastructure damages, up to \$225,000 for differences between insured losses and replacement costs on vehicles and vehicle equipment, and up to \$100,000 on deductibles for building damages. We hope to recover these amounts through disaster recovery grants, which is a mix of provincial and federal dollars. A basic amount is provided by the province and federal funds are then dedicated. Some federal exemptions may apply and therefore amounts may have to be negotiated. Monies are supplied to the municipality with approximately half of the claim up front and then we have to start to work out the details.
- **Calgary Regional Partnership Mediation** update: I am pleased to have represented M.D. of Foothills residents and Council through the Mediation process with the Calgary Regional Partnership in May, June and July 2013, along with our Director of Planning Heather Hemmingway and our CAO Harry Riva Cambrin. We have no formal statement at this time, but I can say that we were successful in bringing our concerns forward and looking at creative measures to work as a region on future projects. I hope to have more details for you soon.
- In June, I participated in some fun & worthy community activities: joining in to play soccer for the Soccerathon event in support of our new **Fieldhouse** which is currently under construction - lots of fun with kids of all ages! ... and also participating in team "Foothills Fillies" for the **Grate Grown-up Spelling Bee**, a fundraising event for Literacy for Life.
- **High Country Rural Crime Watch Association** continues to offer Free Membership in 2013. For details on membership, please see: <http://www.hcrcwa.ca/>
- I continue to support and lobby for a **Rural Strategy for Ground Ambulance** that works and incorporates the Value of Stand-By services, work for measures **supporting our Foothills 911 call centre** as changes unfold and cell phone fees come into play, work on other strategies to address fragmented dispatch issues, and monitor the implementation of the Health Quality Council of Alberta Report on Ground Ambulance. Along with our Foothills 911 Executive Director, Brenda Fenwick, I participated in a Municipal Affairs planning session in July to inform a report to the Legislature, due this Fall. Also, I continue to communicate issues and ideas for solutions.
- Starting in September, I plan to participate in the **Municipal Government Act review**. There are many topics being considered. Briefly, they include: municipal autonomy and structures, sound planning (land-use planning, annexation) and services, revenue streams, and other.
- Just a heads up: please ensure that on your home or farm insurance policy that you have included **fire response insurance** in the amount of \$1500. You may be charged this fee should you have a fire department call to your property, depending on the circumstances. For more information, you can contact Lisa with our Foothills Fire Department at 403.603.3571. Also just a reminder: have you checked your fire extinguishers lately?

- We continue to work on addressing concerns about **trailer bill boards** – we have 2 new Bylaw Officers on board and hope to see progress on this issue.

- Our Foothills **Growth Management Strategy: Our Foothills Our Future** – Building on our past, a vision forward is complete. More detailed planning will continue, according to this outline. Please see the link to the document: http://mdfoothills.com/services/planning/planning_current_projects/growth_management_strategy.html

- In the next few months, we will continue with revising our Foothills **Land Use Bylaws** – our review is currently in process. Our next step will be to bring a draft version out to you (public consultation) for your input. We also will begin new **Inter-municipal Development Plan** processes with the City of Calgary.

- **Howdy Neighbour BBQ and Dark Sky Initiative** event at the Rothney Astrophysical Observatory: Thursday, October 3, 6pm - 9 pm. The event includes BBQ, tour of the facilities, telescopes set up for viewing the sky, a presentation about the observatory and DSI by Dr. Phil Langill from the University of Calgary, and viewing of the movie "The City Dark". Please **RSVP** by September 26 to: Jennifer Howse <jihowse@ucalgary.ca>

As always, your opinion on these matters is important to me. Please see my website for further topics and links as mentioned, or to contact me: <http://www.suzanneoel.com/>

Best Regards,

Suzanne Oel
Councillor Div. 4
M.D. of Foothills