

2017.10.16 Update from M.D. of Foothills, Div. 4 Councillor Suzanne Oel

Dear Residents, Sharing an update with you...

Next Steps for your new 2017 Foothills Council: Congrats to the 3 newly-elected and 4 returning councillors, as of October 16, who will now be brought into the processes of representing you. During the week following the election, we will be advised on legal matters related to conduct, jurisdiction and procedure of council and municipal staff. Then we will get acquainted with the departments and scope of operations within the MD of Foothills. Following orientation, council will make their choice for Reeve/Mayor, Deputy R/M and then designate the 7 councillors to the many committees and boards, where they will serve residents and partner with our neighbouring communities. You'll be able to see a list of all results up on our website, <http://mdfoothills.com/>, under "council" in the next couple of weeks - thanks to our talented communications specialist, who takes care of our website, designs, news updates, promotions and our MD newsletter (Fall edition coming your way soon).

Public Hearing Communications: At the last council meeting before the election, October 11, I requested that our planning staff investigate the forms of communications we can legally accept for residents to provide input into public hearings. To participate in a Public Hearing, currently we allow a letter to be faxed in, hand-delivered or for a resident to appear in person at a hearing and bring in a letter and comments. I would like to see if we can accept emails with letters as attachments. We have to consider legal requirements, municipal processes under the Municipal Government Act, etc. I look forward to hearing what this investigation will bring about.

Bear Spray Training & Wildlife Workshop Recap: Thank you to our MD of Foothills Ag Services staff, AB Gov guest speakers and non-lethal options supplier, who coordinated and presented a variety of topics, on October 12, in order for us to understand what is currently in place in law and process to manage human-wildlife conflict. I hope that those who attended will be inspired to employ coexistence and mitigation strategies. We should take responsibility for the things we do to attract wildlife to our properties, which bring in the large carnivores and critters of all sizes. For example, we can stop feeding the elk via unrestricted access to hay or stop feeding the birds, which spills over to the deer and then attracts bears, cougars and more. Being aware, changing some of our habits or attitudes, installing fence, remove attractants, or just realizing that we are in an area known to be beautiful for its wildlife content – can help solve some of the conflicts. A very lively part of our evening was having about 150 people trained in using bear spray. When we sprayed off the inert material, we were able to see how the product works and will hopefully be more prepared and comfortable with carrying it with us while working in our yards or hiking. Next year, I hope to work with you on setting up a follow-up event to explore more ideas on non-lethal strategies for living along side of wildlife.

HCRCWA meeting with RCMP in September 2017: On September 25, we had the opportunity to meet our new Turner Valley RCMP Staff Sergeant Dwayne Helgeson. Many residents from Divisions 3, 4 and 5 came out to share their interests and concerns. The top issues mentioned were concern about crime, cyclist-motorist safety, the increasing effects of target shooting on neighbouring private properties. There is interest to follow up with a couple of events in the next year or so, on: self-defense/preparedness and learning more about target shooting ranges on private properties. Please considering joining our High Country Rural Crime Watch Association to receive more updates via email or phone about the goings-on in our area: <http://hcrwa.ca/>

Potable Water – North Distribution Study Update: In an effort to determine the feasibility of piped potable water servicing to the Hwy 22 area in the NW of Division 4, we are conducting a high-level study to compile the results of the previous recent studies for the Hwy 762 area with information in the Hwy 22 area. The study will refine the service area directly near Fish Creek Ranch and explore an expanded service area to the north and

east up to the Hamlet of Priddis. You can see the engineering letter regarding the scope of the study being performed to determine viability of options and phasing along the proposed route, which is divided into 3 areas. If you are interested to see more about this, please see my website for a copy of the engineering-scope letter and map of the proposed service area to be evaluated.

Highway 762 Construction Update - 2017.10 Summary of news from Alberta Transportation: As you may have already noticed, the paving crews are currently finishing the final lift at the southern section of Hwy 762. Following the completion of the southern section, the Contractor plans to go back to the northern section to finish the final lift, which includes paving the Burby Bridge, and to complete the remainder of the paving job. Of course this work is weather dependent and if we can get a few more weeks of decent weather, the job may be completed this year.

Dark Sky Country Signage Project: Our 2017 Dark Sky Country signs are now up in Div. 4! We hope to place a few more along Highway 22, but await permission from Alberta Transportation. With our partners Rothney Astrophysical Observatory & Cross Conservation Area, we want to create awareness about Dark Skies in a friendly manner and lead people to more information. We hope they will see the value of preserving the operations of these world-class organizations and participate in reducing light pollution, which will also help with the over-all health of our own connected neighboring landscapes and allow us to continue to view the stars from our own back yards, which is part of the enjoyment of country living! When more people are made aware through this Dark Sky Country initiative, we can take action together to preserve our night skies.

Website: <http://suzanneoel.com/>

FaceBook: For updates and event info: <https://www.facebook.com/CouncillorSuzanneOel/>

All the Best! Suzanne Oel