



Summer Village of Ma-Me-O Beach

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August 28, 2023

To the residents of Ma-Me-O Beach,

The last several months have been extremely active as Council and Administration continue to source options and plausible solutions to the unique issue, we as a community are facing. Some of this work began prior to the Annual Information Session (AIM) in July, however, the bulk of our political correspondence has occurred in the last 60 days. For awareness, here is the list of individuals we have connected verbally in addition to sending letters to solicit support and increase awareness:

- Premier Smith
- Minister Ric McIver, Minister of Municipal Affairs
- Minister Rick Wilson, Wetaskiwin MLA and Minister of Indigenous Relations
- Alberta Counsel Lobbyists and Legal Counsel
- Upcoming: Minister Dreeshen, Minister of Transportation and Economic Corridors

At this time, the responses to our request for either a debt bailout or a low-rate long-term loan have been unfavorable. This is not to say these requests are completely off the table, however, as our correspondence with the majority of those listed above is ongoing. A few things to note from the exchanges to date:

- Minister McIver made it abundantly clear that his ministry cannot assist with our debt burden beyond supporting our application for a loan through the Treasury;
- While we can apply for low-rate, long term loan through the Treasury, funds received cannot be used to pay our arbitration loss to PME (\$1.1M) or to pursue further legal action;
- Minister McIver, in an early letter of correspondence, relayed that ratepayers would not be absolved of the debt burden should the village dissolve or declare bankruptcy (two processes we have explored, both of which remain options noting the process to enact either is not quick);
- Premier Smith was aware of our situation and asked that the village work with Ministers McIver and Wilson to explore options;
- Minister Wilson has been supportive of our efforts and was the first to suggest we connect with Minister Dreeshen as wastewater falls within his Ministry.

It should be noted that Council has prioritized the scenario as follows:

1. Address the debt: This includes sourcing public or private funding, lower-interest loans, and any other options available to offset the \$5.5M;
2. Investigate the current wastewater line: Assess whether any portion of the current line can be salvaged and to what degree including a definitive answer as to whether the pipeline (non-CSA approved for our environment) must be replaced.

At the AIM meeting, many attendees spoke of a desire to work with Council in lobbying the various levels of government for support. A letter template was requested as well as contact information for the various ministries. This request has not been fulfilled as we have learned through our efforts that the impact of our letters is minimal. Alberta Counsel relayed that unless we have a very strategic angle, there was little value in a letter-writing campaign. However, Ma-Me-O Beach Council appreciates our ratepayers' desire to be active in this process, and should you wish to submit a letter we believe the best recipients are Minister Wilson and Minister Dreeshen.

Letters should be focused on requesting debt assistance solely, noting the impact on you the ratepayers should taxes increase or a one-time debt repayment fee be imposed.

In addition, it was noted in all our meetings that having a unified voice was very important. Forming a Steering Committee comprised of ratepayers and a couple of members of Council would allow us to be even more effective, a suggestion that has come to us not only from community members but was also recommended by the lobbyists we've engaged. As members of the committee must be appointed, we are now gathering the names of those who would like to be considered. If you would like to apply for a position, please send an email outlining your name, credentials, and any additional relevant information to Sylvia Roy (sylvia.roy@svofficepl.com) by September 7, 2023. The Steering Committee will be formed at the September 8, 2023, Council Meeting, and those selected will be notified at that time.

There is a small group of ratepayers who have been sending letters to and meeting with government bodies to gain support for a three-season sewer system. At this point, we politely request that the focus remain on the debt load and request that these individuals consider applying for the Steering Committee vs. working on their own. However, if residents still feel compelled to write to the government, there is government contact information posted on the Ma-Me-O Beach website.

And lastly, we have been approached by the original contractor of the wastewater project who wishes to work with us to litigate against the project designers. Based on the arbitration decision, the design of the system was deemed the cause of failure. By working together, the village would gain access to the contractor's information, project knowledge, and industry expertise. There are two key factors necessary to proceed down this path, the first is to gain funds to support the litigation process and the second is to ensure we have the right legal counsel and a strong case. This option could provide the most positive outcome in terms of financial gain and allow Ma-Me-O to grow and evolve in the future.

One aspect that is essential as we build our case is to gain a summary of the financial impact of each ratepayer who hooked up to the system. If you have hooked up, please provide Council with a comprehensive list of all expenses including: septic tank cost (if downsized or replaced), landscaping, ground work, etc...). Do note, all expenses must be accompanied by receipts or invoices.

In closing, Council would like to reinforce our dedication to the village and its future. We will not rest until we find viable solutions to our current situation, and we look forward to working alongside our ratepayers throughout this arduous journey.

Kind regards,

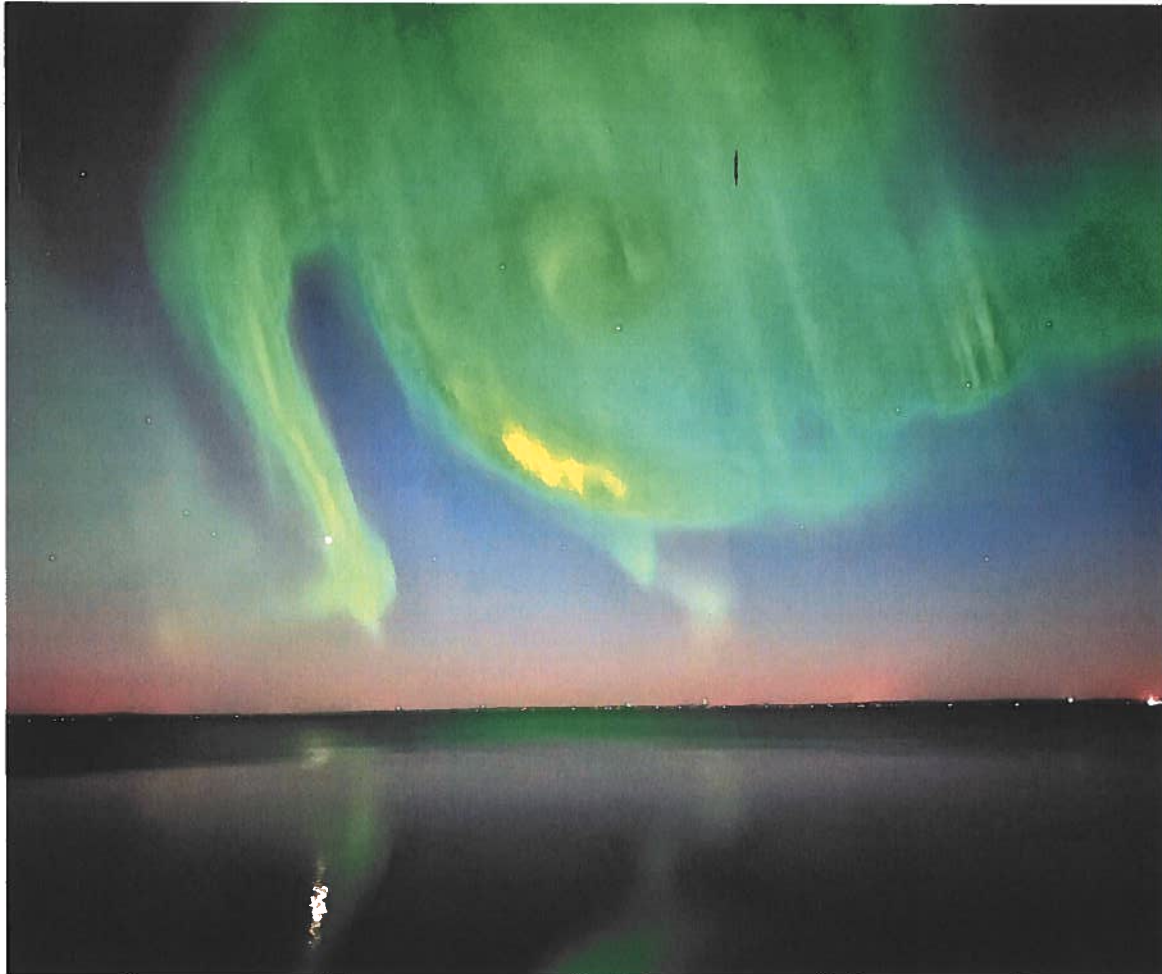
Ma-Me-O Beach Council



JULY/AUGUST 2023 | VOLUME 11

BEACH BULLETIN

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR THE
SUMMER VILLAGE OF MA-ME-O BEACH



Message from Council

As the temperatures begin to drop and the leaves turn from green to golden, there is no denying Autumn is around the corner. While we still have couple more weeks before school commences, it is a great time to reflect on the past two months and the memories formed. From Bingo to the Playground Program, Ma-Me-O Days to Karaoke, it was wonderful to see our community come together. Thanks to all who participated and those who volunteered to make each event a success.

In spite of the beach time and sunny days, the past few months have not been without issue. Namely the financial burden we are currently facing has been a dark cloud hanging over many, a situation that continues to require our focus and dedication moving forward. We thank the numerous residents who took the time to send in letters with suggestions and ideas to help the village attain additional funds to offset the debt, as well as proposing and volunteering to participate in a steering committee. There is some additional information on the Wastewater project on page 4 of this newsletter, as well as a separate letter sent to each ratepayer. Our goal is to communicate as thoroughly and often as possible. If your questions have not been addressed by either, please feel free to reach out to Council at your earliest convenience.

Ma-Me-O Community Builder Award Winner

A big CONGRATULATIONS to Jim Duggan, Ma-Me-O's 2023 Community Builder Award Winner. For those who do not know Jim, his family started coming here years before they bought their home in 1992. From the Lakedell Fair, volunteer Fire Department and junior golf to hockey and the Pigeon Lake Library, Jim has been involved in almost every aspect of our community. Bottle runs or watering the plants outside the hall, Jim was always there to lend a hand. He is a true community builder, spirit lifter and mentor. Thank you to the individuals who took the time to nominate Jim, and a huge thank you to Jim (and family) for your invaluable commitment to Ma-Me-O over the years.

With several solid and compelling nominations, choosing a winner for the 2023 Community Builder Award was not an easy task. All nominees have made considerable contributions to the community, volunteering their time and their skills to support not only Ma-Me-O but our surrounding community. It was truly inspiring to read each nomination and it reinforced how fortunate we are to have such dedicated and caring individuals in our village.

Shout Out to Our Fabulous Volunteers

The events held throughout the summer could not happen without our crew of volunteers that selflessly dedicate their time and resources to bring ideas to life. From covering shifts to cleaning, we would like to recognize all of those who helped out this summer:

Volunteers:

- Recreation Board: Erin McAuley, Katherine Pike, Audra Duncan and Christine Holmes
- Vi Konkolus (Our resident Bingo Queen)
- Greg Adams
- Barb Bistriz
- Brad Bistriz
- Len Bistriz
- Kristine Cleland
- Trinity Cleland
- Lesley Duncan
- Sandy Duncan
- Russ Duncan
- Patsy Egan-Adams
- Nancy Fedun
- Sydney Fedun
- Amy Fransen
- Ben Fransen
- Calum Fransen
- MaryEllen Herman
- Al Hilgartner
- Alex Holmes
- Eric Johnson
- Warren Johnson
- Glen Kenealey
- Ruth Kenealy
- Trish Knoll
- George Lord
- Kirsty Lloyd
- Sylvia Mahoney
- Tim Mahoney
- Lori Mann
- Mike Mann
- Addy McAuley
- Dennis McAuley
- Hudsynn McAuley
- Karolyn McAuley
- Pat McLarney
- JP Michalski
- Michael Michalski
- Dave Meads
- Libby Meads
- Bonny Mieske
- Maxine Paton
- Sheilagh Pittman
- Rick Roder
- Debbie Rowley
- Jay Russell
- Shannon Russell
- Julie Sommerville
- Sandy Wright

Donation of Services and Equipment:

- South Pigeon Lake Fire Department (Ma-Me-O Days Pancake Breakfast and water fight)
- Ruth Saunders and Larrie Thompson (Karaoke Night)
- Chris Holmes (Movie Night)
- David Assaly, Paul Rousseau with equipment support from Miles Jackson (Ma-Me-O Family Dance)
- Treats at the Beach and Pier 6 Ice Cream (Sand Sculpture Contest prizes)
- All those who participated in the Ma-Me-O Days Parade

Programs through the Pigeon Lake Library

For an up-to-date listing check out:
<https://www.facebook.com/pigeonlakelibrary>

The Pigeon Lake Library always has exciting programs and courses on the go. Check out the Friends of Ma-Me-O Page on Facebook, use the web address above or call the library directly to learn what is on the agenda in the upcoming months.



RCMP Want to Hear From You

To ensure Ma-Me-O receives the most appropriate and relevant support from the RCMP through our enhanced policing agreement, reporting all crime and suspicious activities is vital. To date, the call volume and reports filed from the village is quite low. For clarity, here are the numbers to call:

- **For immediate threats and crimes in action - 911**
- To report **suspicious activities, crimes after they have occurred** or **non-emergent complaints 24/7- 780-312-7267** (RCMP Non-Emergency Line) or online at rcmp-grc.gc.ca.

In addition, an Alberta RCMP app was recently launched to allow reporting via your smartphone. Do note that the app does pose some limitations at this time. Depending on the urgency, choose the method that best suits your situation and makes you feel most comfortable. If we are diligent with our reporting, we will receive the support and service we require to keep our village safe and secure.



History Book Update

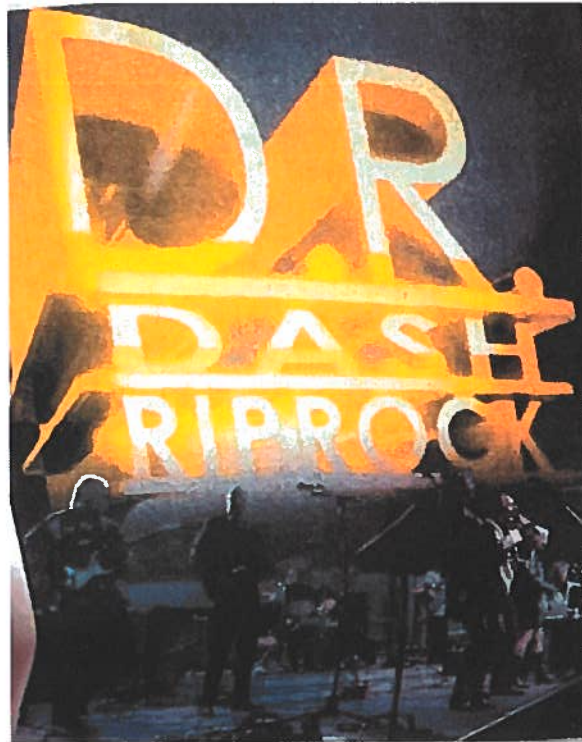
Due to the current state of the Wastewater project, production of the History Book has been temporarily paused. Updates will be provided via email, in the September/October newsletter and on the village website when the project resumes.

Reminder to Realtors, Sellers and Buyers

Throughout the last few years, and more so in the last two months, there has been confusion regarding the Wastewater Bylaw. We would like to clarify, the Summer of Village of Ma-Me-O amended the Wastewater Bylaw in September 2021, removing the clause that required new residents to hook up to the Wastewater system within one year of purchasing their property. The current Bylaw only applies if there is an active system in the village, and at this time the Wastewater project is on hold indefinitely. In addition, some individuals have reported that their Realtor informed them of a debt repayment plan, requiring each property owner to pay a one time fee. This information is also false as is any plan to significantly raise property taxes. In an effort to dispel the dissemination of misinformation, the Administration has crafted and will distribute a letter to area realtors. Any additional questions can be directed to Council or CAO, Sylvia Roy.

Dance to the Music of
DASH RIPROCK

September 2, 2023
Ma-Me-O Community Hall
Dancing begins at 8 p.m.



Tickets: \$30 in advance, or \$35 at door
To purchase tickets, contact
Al Greenslade: (780)983-5879
Proceeds support the Ma-Me-O Recreation
Committee

Wastewater Update

Following the Annual Information Meeting (AIM) in July, the outpouring of support and suggestions to Council was incredible. The true collaborative and united spirit of our community is evident as we come together to face the current challenge before us. Thank you to everyone who attended the AIM, to those who voiced concerns, questions and comments at the meeting and to those who followed up with emails, calls and letters. As Council has an obligation and duty to act in the best interests of the municipality, hearing from the ratepayers directly is essential to appreciate and consider a variety of perspectives.

Of the suggestions offered to help generate additional funds for the village, our administration explored the most popular in terms of viability. Here is a brief summary of their findings:

1. **Sell the Day Park/divide Day Park into lots:** There is an agreement registered on title for the Day Park which restricts the Summer Village from a number of actions being performed to this property including the sale of the land. Information for this response was garnered from the Alberta Government Services Land Titles Office.
2. **Sell the beach accesses as lots:** All streets, avenues and lanes in the Summer Village are part of the Registered Plan. There is an official Road Closure process that requires a great deal of consultation and Ministerial approval. Further, as the village's subdivision was created from Reserve 138A, there may be additional considerations. The information provided in this response was gained from Municipal Planning Services in response to our CAO's email of inquiry.
3. **Install parking meters/Implement pay for parking:** Information obtained from the Town of Sylvan Lake regarding the purchase and installation, enforcement and signage related to a pay-for-parking program provided an initial start up cost of \$161,000. The start up costs were primarily related to the purchase of equipment, with additional costs including signage (\$20,000 - \$25,000) and enforcement. Sylvan Lake employs 4 full-time Community Peace Officers, 2 full-time Bylaw Officers, and 4 seasonal Bylaw Officers which is a stark contrast from our single, shared Bylaw Officer.
4. **Charge the public for access to the beach:** The Summer Village cannot charge access to the beach because the municipality does not own the lake or the beach, both are public.

In terms of lowering our current operating costs, Grant funding is actively being explored to offset the costs of beach maintenance/cleaning, garbage removal, and other impacts uniquely associated with the influx seasonal visitors. The Council has requested government support repeatedly in the past with no success, therefore, we are hopeful to achieve a Grant.

While more details will be provided in a separate letter sent to rate payers this month, Council would like to share that they have been in contact with (and will continue to meet with) Premier Smith, Minister Wilson, Minister McIvor, Minister Dreeschen and members of the Alberta Council to solicit support and steer. In addition, Council has been contacted by the original contractor of the wastewater system who has proposed a collaborative approach to future litigation, should we gain the funds to take action.

Summer Village of Ma-Me-O Beach

HELP US SERVE YOU BETTER!

The Summer Village of Ma-Me-O Beach would like to serve our residents as best as possible. Difficulties are sometimes encountered by the Summer Village Administration attempting to contact residents with time-sensitive information. Please fill out the following form and indicate how you wish to receive correspondence from the Summer Villages Office.

As such, the Summer Village is requesting your email/mailling address so that we may contact you directly for time-sensitive events/ information such as newsletters, updates, events, fish pick-up, etc.

Please complete and return this form to the Summer Villages Office, check off which method of correspondence you prefer and fill out the indicated information.

Please mail it back to Box 100, Ma-Me-O Beach, AB T0C 1X0 or scan your completed form and email it to information@svofficepl.com

Only information necessary for the provision of Summer Village services is collected.

I Wish to receive updates via email

Name (Please print):

Cabin Number:

Email address:

Signature:

Only information necessary for the provision of Summer Village services is collected.

I Wish to receive updates via regular mail

Name (Please print):

Cabin Number:

Mailing address:

Signature:



The personal information on this form is collected under the authority of the Municipal Government Act, section 3, and is protected under the provisions of the Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act. If you have any questions about the collection, use or disclosure of this information please contact the FOIP Officer at (780) 586-2494.

Council Meetings & Other Important Dates:

- Ma-Me-O Beach Regular **Council Meetings will take place every second Friday of the month at 1:30 pm at the Summer Villages Office.** Meeting dates for the next three months are: September 8 at 1:30 pm, October 13 at 1:30, and November 10 at 1:30 pm.
- Adult Dance Featuring Dash RipRock on September 2, 2023 at 8pm in the Hall.
- Community Gathering in recognition of the Day of Truth and Reconciliation in Alberta in Jubilee Park on September 30, 2023 at sunset.

NUMBERS TO CALL IN CASE OF EMERGENCY:

- FOR **POWER ISSUES** (DAMAGED OR DOWNED LINES, IMPACTED TRANSFORMER BOXES, POWER OUTAGES, ETC...): CALL FORTIS AT 310-WIRE (9473), FORTIS IS THERE FOR YOU 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK.
- FOR **NATURAL GAS** RELATED ISSUES (SMELL DETECTED, SUSPECTED LEAK, DISRUPTION IN SERVICE, ETC...): CALL 911 OR APEX AT 1-866-222-2068 TO REPORT A GAS ODOUR, NATURAL GAS FIRE, OR DAMAGED GAS LINE 24 HOURS A DAY, 7 DAYS A WEEK.
- FOR **TREE RELATED** ISSUES THAT IMPEDE ACCESS OR POSE A THREAT TO SAFETY (FALLEN TREES, BROKEN BRANCHES, ETC...) CALL THE SUMMER VILLAGES OFFICE @ 780-586-2494 OR EMAIL INFORMATION@SVOFFICEPL.COM
- TO REPORT **BYLAW** INFRACTIONS: CALL BYLAW OFFICER, DORIS MCALLISTER AT 780-719-6447
- FOR **WILDLIFE** ISSUES (INJURED, POPULATION CONTROL, HABITATION): CALL THE ALBERTA FISH AND GAME ASSOCIATION OFFICE @ 780-437-2342 DURING OFFICE HOURS, MONDAY TO FRIDAY, 9:00 AM TO 5:00 PM, OR SEND AN EMAIL TO OFFICE@AFGA.ORG THEY MAY OFFER ADVICE OR SUGGESTIONS.

Emergency Call Out - Contact Information

To ensure the Village is able to contact you with **timely and critical information** during a **crisis event**, please contact the Village office (780) 586- 2494 to verify the details on file.

Have a question, suggestion or need additional information?

CONTACT YOUR ADMINISTRATION & COUNCIL :

MAYOR: CHRISTINE HOLMES

780-619-4460, SVMHOLMES@GMAIL.COM

DEPUTY MAYOR: TIMOTHY MAHONEY

780-361-9405, MAHONEY.MAMEO@GMAIL.COM

COUNCILLOR: AL HILGARTNER

780-352-1508, COUNCILLERHILGARTNER@GMAIL.COM

ADMINISTRATION: SUMMER VILLAGES OFFICE

780-586-2494, INFORMATION@SVOFFICEPL.COM

CAO: SYLVIA ROY, 780-586-2494

INFORMATION@SVOFFICEPL.COM

EMERGENCY NUMBERS: 911,

RCMP NON-EMERGENCY LINE: 780-312-7267

[HTTPS://MAMEOBEACH.CA](https://mameobeach.ca)

