Seba Summer Summary – 2015

It has been another great summer at Seba Beach with Mother Nature cooperating and providing amazing weather throughout the summer, although the Labour Day weekend could have seen some improvement. We have also had our fair share of change and drama within the village over the summer as well as comments that we should provide more communication, so for that reason we have undertaken this summary.

One of the significant changes within the village was the closure of the 5th street south road allowance for the launching of boats. This decision was made by the Municipal Planning Committee comprised of Seba Village Council and ten Seba rate payers from various locations within the village. This change was necessitated for several reasons, including:

- the 5th street south lake access road allowance is just that, a road access, not a boat launch
- the public beach at 5th street has become increasingly busy in recent years and the safety of individuals using the beach and the pavilion area is seriously compromised by vehicles backing boat trailers into and removing them from the lake.
- the lake bottom plateaus at that location and vehicles launching boats have needed to back over 30 metres into the lake to launch, thereby introducing gas, oil, grease, tar and other contaminants from the underside of the vehicle into the lake. The two pictures below are a small sample of the activity at 5th street south over Labour Day weekend when it was opened for residents to remove their boats. Vehicles had to drive in a significant distance and many still had to use power to get onto the trailer. Some got stuck and had to be towed out.

- the transmission of Quagga and Zebra Mussels is a genuine threat (note the recent T.V. advertising by the Alberta Provincial government on this subject). Since 5th street is not a boat launch, there is no washing/cleaning facility to clean boats prior to launching.
- There is not adequate parking within the village for additional vehicle and trailers as is the case at official boat launches, including those in the town of Wabamun and Wabamun Provincial Park. The photo below shows a typical Saturday at 5th street; no place for extra vehicles and boat trailers.

When the closure of the 5th street access was announced in the spring newsletter, we indicated that if any Seba rate payer with property off the lake required access for their boat, we would endeavour to find a location for them to place a couple of pier sections and a hoist on one of the municipal lake access road allowances. We placed several individuals this summer, however if there are additional requirements, we have identified a couple of additional accesses that we could locate piers and hoists. Please contact the village office to discuss this further if this option interests or applies to you.

We had another very successful Regatta weekend. Events were well attended and according to feedback from the Peace Officer as well as the Evansburg RCMP who provided additional coverage, the residents and guests were very well behaved with little to no infractions or complaints. Regatta is always a busy weekend where many residents have extended family and guests at their cottages. It is important that we keep 1st Ave. clear for vehicle traffic so please ensure extra vehicles and R.V.'s are accommodated on your property and not parked along 1st Ave.

One disturbing note from the summer was the repeated vandalism and damage to the public washrooms at the Heritage Pavilion. The washrooms were trashed with cubicle doors ripped off and general damage and there was one occurrence of exterior damage to the building and equipment. Surveillance equipment has been installed on the perimeter of the pavilion in an attempt to secure the premises. If any residents have information pertaining to these occurrences we would appreciate feedback. Additionally, our surveillance cameras picked up images of individuals doing the damage. We have not identified the individuals, however the images are posted on our website so please have a look and drop us a note if you know who they are. They are damaging your property and we would like to identify them.

Most residents are aware of the pending Phase 3 development of the Pineridge Golf and RV Resort. This development, located immediately east of the current golf course, included an access off Range Road 55A. The concern was this would result in increased traffic down caution hill and along 1st Ave. Although this access has been approved by Parkland County, we have every hope that it will allow access only for traffic coming from highway 16, and traffic exiting the development would be permitted left turns only, and proceed back to highway 16. The owners of Pineridge have been very good to work with and we have discussed that through the education of the residents of the new Phase 3, the presence of on-site signage and enforcement as required, there will be minimal increased traffic along 1st Ave. We will continue to stay involved with this development as it takes shape.

This has been a difficult summer relative to relations between the Village Council and administration and Derby's General Store. The owners of the store have accused the Council of jeopardizing their business with the closure of the 5th St. access to launching boats. This is clearly not true and the closure was undertaken for the reasons outlined earlier in this letter. The store owners initiated a petition to have the undertakings of the Village Council and administration reviewed by Alberta Municipal Affairs. While we have absolutely nothing to hide relative to our operations, this process would be very labour intensive and a complete waste of our time and resources.

Council, in an attempt to mediate this situation, requested to meet with the store owners on several occasions. Unfortunately all requests were declined. In defence of the village, several members of the aforementioned Municipal Planning Committee circulated a Declaration of Support in an attempt to determine the level of support for council from Seba rate payers. There are over two hundred names on these lists and over a 97% support rate of those polled and asked to sign. We have also received many unsolicited positive comments from residents regarding actions taken by Council over the summer period.

Village Council and administration does support the store. We lobbied the Federal Government to allow the Post Office to relocate there when the previous location was closed. This has resulted in a positive financial impact for the store. The Council has also been supportive of the businesses within the village by not allowing the Seba Farmers Market to bring in vendors that would compete directly with the store or the mini-golf.

We are interested in protecting Seba Beach and maintaining it as it has been for several generations. We are interested in doing what is best for the residents/tax payers of Seba Beach and not taking care of the desires of those in surrounding developments. We do appreciate your feedback and comments so please direct these to the village administration office.

We will endeavour to place any newsworthy items on our website so we encourage you to bookmark www.sebabeach.ca and check in regularly for updates.

Seba Beach Council