

Seba Spring News

Summer Village of Seba Beach

The Mayor's Message *(continued Page 2)*

It was 24 years ago almost to the day that I wrote my first "Councillors Message" for inclusion in the spring newsletter. How time flies when you are having fun! I can express with complete sincerity that I have thoroughly enjoyed representing the residents of Seba Beach since 1997 as a councillor and then as your Mayor. Thankfully, my job was made significantly easier through the dedication and commitment of the fantastic people who have been employed by the village over those years, but no one was more dedicated and committed than Sue Evans in her capacity as Chief Administration Officer.

It was bittersweet to see her retire at the end of December 2020, but it is a retirement that was well deserved and one that I am sure she will embrace.

As most of you already know, Martino Verhaeghe has assumed the role of CAO effective January 1, 2021. He has exceptionally large shoes to fill but from what we have seen thus far, his skills and qualifications are already paying huge dividends by creating efficiencies and effective change to the administration of our community.

Martino's most recent accomplishment has been to make some very worthwhile changes to the village budgeting and tax assessment. You will notice that your tax notices have a slightly different look to them.

These changes have been implemented to allow you, the taxpayer, a better understanding of what is included in your annual property tax assessment.

"I am extremely proud to inform you [the Pavilion] was completed on time and under the \$1.2M budget promised in 2018." – page 2

Martino has also completed a comprehensive cost benefit analysis of the Community Peace Officer program.

The CPO program has been a part of Seba Beach for as long as most of us can remember.

2021 Newsletter Spring Issue

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From the Desk of the CAO *(continued Page 2)*

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge my predecessor, Sue Evans. Over 30 years in service to Seba Beach, I appreciate coming into a role where someone lived and breathed public service ethic, working tirelessly to see a community succeed with the guidance of a dedicated Council.

To introduce myself I have placed a message and profile at the end of the newsletter for those interested in my background and experience which shaped my work in public service.

As Council's only employee, my role has two purposes. First is to provide Council the details they require to make informed evidence-based decisions on bylaws,

policies, and budgetary matters.

Second is to lead the municipal administration to implement those decisions and meet the service levels established by Council through the allocation of budgets resources and staff.

A new factor of the CAO role is also to address Covid and other inherent risks, political or physical, to our operations.

The Mayor's Message *(continued)*

Unfortunately, as a result of significant changes in the regulation of this program by the Solicitor General and an increase in the costs that we are required to pay to the Provincial Government for Police Services our ability to fund a separate dedicated Peace Office for the Village became unsustainable. We were forced to close down the program. The RCMP detachment in Evansburg will have a much larger presence in the village and surrounding area.

"Martino has calculated savings to the village is a minimum of \$200,000 using current lender rates and over \$500,000 using stress test rates."

Our new Pavilion is now officially complete and ready for occupancy. I am extremely proud to inform you that it was completed on time and just under the \$1.2M budget that had been promised by your council back in 2018.

Martino was successful in applying for and securing a mortgage in the amount of \$800,000 through the Alberta Government. Our first payment will be in September 2021. This mortgage has a 20-year term at a fixed rate of 2.55%. That means the interest and therefore the monthly payments will never

change. When we prepared the initial budget for the construction of the pavilion, we projected an \$800,000 mortgage with a 30-year amortization and a traditional fixed rate term.

That would typically mean 5-year terms, where the interest rate would change each time, a term expired. As interest rates increased, the village would have needed to collect more money to pay the interest on the mortgage. Since it is impossible to know exactly what the future interest rates will be, we cannot compute an exact calculation, but Martino has calculated interest savings to the village is a minimum of \$200,000 using current lender rates and over \$500,000 in interest if we used the CMHC stress test interest rate as a prediction over the term.

You will notice that your property tax notice includes an additional line item of \$150 for "Pavilion Levy." As we promised prior to starting construction of the Pavilion, \$150 per year over the next 20 years is your cost to repay the mortgage. I am extremely pleased to say that future annual budgets for the Summer Village of Seba Beach will never have to include any increase over and above the \$150 that is currently being assessed for the construction of the Pavilion.

"Seba Beach built those courts and have maintained them for the benefit of everyone around the lake."

social media banter regarding the future of the Seba Beach School and its land. For complete transparency I can tell you that there was an informal discussion with The County of Parkland regarding the possible acquisition of the property by the Summer Village. As part of our due diligence, we looked at the cost of ownership, which in the short term, would mean operating costs of up to \$10,000 per month.

As well, it was determined the demolition of the building could be as high as \$500,000 accounting for removal and disposal of dangerous materials within the School. These costs made it financially impossible for us to afford the purchase, so we graciously declined the opportunity. Over the last three years we tried desperately to convince the Public-School Division of the County of Parkland to allow us to acquire the tennis courts situated on this property.

Seba Beach built those courts and have maintained them for the benefit of everyone around the lake.

From the Desk of the CAO *(continued)*

In efforts to increase efficiency and security, we have moved our hardcopy systems, such as payroll and finance, to digital web-based systems so working from home orders, potential information or data loss from targeted hacking or any unforeseen disaster at the administrative building is a reduced risk. Although initially considerable effort, these changes provide an

excellent return on time to allow staff to focus on other work.

Working with Council we have built stability in the financial future by developing our first 3-year Operating Plan and 5 Year Capital Plan. Reflected in the Financial Plan are phased in programs changes and service costs, reserve dedications, infrastructure upgrades, municipal debt

repayments and inflation expectations.

I look forward to the election this summer and working with the new Council members to continue improving our community now and in the future.

Martino Verhaeghe *BSc CMML*
RPP/MCIP
Chief Administrative Officer
Summer Village of Seba Beach

The Mayor's Message *(continued)*

Unfortunately, County of Parkland believes that the entire property is more valuable with the tennis courts included. Given that they own the property, this is their right.

With an election date of July 10, 2021, each residential property owner within the municipality will be entitled to vote. Please make every effort to cast your ballot. In my experience it is especially important to vote for candidates who understand that they are elected to represent the views of the people who pay property taxes within the summer village. Having leaders

who have a solid understanding of finance and fiscal responsibility is integral to a successful Summer Village. Understanding where the village revenues come from and committing to receiving good value for the expenses that are incurred is the key to the future of this community.

The last item I want to talk about before I complete my last newsletter, is what I like to refer to as the "Considerate Neighbor" discussion. As either seasonal visitors or permanent residents, we all enjoy the escape to Seba Beach.

This escape is made that much more enjoyable when we feel that our neighbors are equally as considerate for us as we are for them.

Over the last 24 years the greatest number of complaints that I have had to deal with as an elected official, deal with those instances when people are not being quite as "considerate" as they should be. A few examples are those loud and obnoxious parties that happen during weekends of the summer, or the inconsiderate dog owners who refuse to keep their dogs on a leash or who refuse to clean up after them. Picking up your dog poop and leaving the bag in someone else's garbage or on the side of the road is not very considerate, so please, for the sake of everyone who comes to enjoy this small piece of paradise, please make an extra effort to be a considerate neighbor.

Thank you for allowing me to be your elected Official. Have a safe and Healthy Summer.

Doug Thomas,

Mayor of Seba Beach



Heritage Highlights 2021

"Plenty of Affordable Choices" available at the Museum Gift shop this summer. Be assured there will be premium, locally sourced giftware at great prices.

Find an item marked with a Happy Face and receive 50% off the indicated price.

Summer brings the needed energy to awaken each of us from our Covid winter slumber. Entering the summer of 2021, we hope this brings everyone forward into brighter days ahead. The Museum will open weekends in June and throughout the summer.

We welcome everyone to enjoy the museum displays, browse in the Gift Shop and if interested volunteer time and new ideas.

Necessary Covid precautions will be in place at all times.

We believe this little patch of earth and water known as Seba Beach is one of the best places on Earth and we are proud to have served this local community for over 40 years. The Board Members are passionate, hardworking and dedicated. Every decision made reflects pride of place.

The Museum sincerely appreciates your support and looks forward to seeing you this summer.

Memberships are \$20.00 and tax deductible.

The Museum continues to receive requests for new plaques for the Heritage Wall. If interested, please contact Renee Bliss. (reneebliss@shaw.ca)

From the Board Members and Volunteers of the Seba Heritage Museum, have a wonderful summer.

Fresh Start at the Pavilion for Seba Farmers Market

Seba Beach Farmers' Market is excited for the 2021 season as we are back at the newly completed Seba Beach Pavilion.

The Market runs weekly on Saturdays starting Mother's Day weekend May 8th – Sept. 11th 2021 from 10:30am to 12:30pm.

July 10th are the Seba Beach Elections so the Farmers Market is hosting a new "Evening Market" Friday, July 9th from 4:30pm to 6:30pm.

As expected, the Farmers Market is required to operating under Covid

In order to ensure access to our customers we ask patrons you to "Shop with Purpose" ...



Farmers' Market

Restrictions for social distance, facemasks and other mandatory requirements for customer safety. In addition, we required to have one entrance into the market to manage the number of people in the market at one time.

In order to ensure access to our customers we ask patrons you to "Shop with Purpose" and refrain from visiting socially in the market area so everyone may participate in the market.

Thank you for helping us make this "The Best Little Farmers' Market" in the Province of Alberta and we can't wait to see everyone! **Website:** Sebabeachfarmersmarket.weebly.com

Paulette Sparks, Seba Beach Farmers' Market Chairperson



Renewed Seba Beach Fire Service

The Seba Beach Fire Agreement with Parkland County expired this year and service costs have increased substantially, phasing costs in over 3 years. One visible impact is the relocation of the Fire Station supporting Seba Beach to a new hall being constructed in Wabamun. The Fire Hall is expected to remain here for the 2021 Summer Season. The contract with Seba Beach still protects residents with the same response time and fire services remain a service provided to residents through their municipal taxes.

www.parklandcounty.com/en/live-and-play/Fire-Hazard.aspx

Community Policing and Cost-Effective Service

Seba Beach has provided community - based policing through a shared Community Peace Officer program for many years. Although a desirable program, a review of this program and its benefit to Seba Beach overall was undertaken by the new CAO.

We have experienced changes over the past 5 years, including the loss of Wabamun as a program partner, increased equipment costs and training for officer safety, and decreased revenues from the Province. With an average net cost

of almost 15% of our municipal budget, Council felt it was necessary to review other options in the 3-year operating plan.

After this review, we have decided to eliminate our current policing program and are moving forward

"...decreasing ticket revenues from the Province and average net cost of almost 15% of Municipal Taxation, had Council explore other options..."

with an Enhanced Community Policing (ECP) Agreement with the RCMP. This will allow for flexibility in the amount of policing the community feels is needed during peak and off-seasons.

The ECP allows Seba Beach to increase support from the local RCMP detachment during periods where additional policing is most desired such as long weekends, Regatta, or other priority periods. In 2022 we have the option of nearly doubling ECP hours, while still saving 50% on previous program costs.

Taxation changes in 2021 explained

Many changes have occurred to how the village shows you tax related information and to the tax rates and base levies on property, but here are the big ones:

- 1. **Split Residential and Non-Residential Taxation Rates** – the General Mill Rate in 2020 was 2.66 for homes and businesses. Most communities charge significantly more for Non-Residential taxes. This change makes the Residential Mill Rate 2.56 and Non-Residential 5.27 (still the lowest in the region).
- 2. **General Lot Levy** – Every Residential Property is charged a General Municipal Levy to address base services such as emergency response, administration, and public works.
- 3. **Pavilion Levy** – Every Residential Property is assessed a \$150 special levy for payment of the Pavilion mortgage. This levy will conclude within 20 years in the absence of any lump sum payments.
- 4. **Non-Residential Lots are not assessed the Pavilion or General Lot Levy** – This reflects different service needs and reflects their different tax structure.
- 5. **School Under-levy** – Over the tax years of 2019 and 2020 the Village under collected the school requisition from ratepayers. This under-levy is a onetime correction the Village must assess for general accounting purposes; however, we have softened the impact to ratepayers through our municipal taxation rate by lowering it a comparable amount.

Additional Details – In addition to the above items the Village has increased the amount of information you receive on your tax notice by showing you land and building/ improvement values independently.

Seba Beach Library: Here, Online and @Home

TRACpac App lets you order items with your library card. We have 31 eResource apps that you can get for free with your library card. Please check out our website for the full list. We also get 10 Best Seller books each month so come check them out.

We are working hard getting ready for the July start of the Summer Reading Club for 2021. We are mindful of covid restrictions and are hopeful that our children's summer

reading program will take place this year. We will have activity bags to take home if we can't meet in person.

Current hours are
Tuesdays 11 AM – 4 PM,
Thursdays 11 AM – 4 PM&
Saturdays 10 AM – 2 PM

The Theme is Game On! The TD summer Reading Club kids website will be open around June 15th.

Phone: 780-797-3940

FB: Summer Village of Seba Beach Public Library

Instagram & Twitter: Seba Beach Public Library

Email: sebabeachlibrary@yrl.ab.ca

2021 Elections for Seba Beach and Alberta Elections

2021 is an election year for municipal government in Alberta. The general election is in October and will have School Trustee, referendum and senate candidate elections at the same time.

However, Summer Villages have a special election period with a date set by Council to accommodate the summer resident population.

For 2021 Council selected a nomination date of June 11 which sets the election date for Saturday July 10. As such the returning officer, Martino Verhaeghe, will be accepting nominations until Noon on June 11th at the Seba Beach municipal offices.

Those intending on running for Council should contact Mr.

Verhaeghe for nominations paperwork and guides to running for office.

The 2021 referendum and Senate candidate votes must be held at the same time as the October elections, so a separate polling station will be established in or near Seba Beach for permanent residents by Alberta Elections.

Wabamun Watershed Management Council

Water Testing

Winter water testing at Wabamun was completed at four locations on one day in each of December, January, February and March. Water testing will continue this summer, one day a month. In addition, we will have three days of special testing that will be used to validate models that convert satellite data into photos of algae concentrations within the lake. Once properly configured, this satellite imagery will provide near continuous monitoring of the algae situation (both blue-green algae and "real" algae) within Wabamun.

We will be sending out a request to WWMC members for assistance in completing this testing through the

summer. If you have a decent sized boat and would like to spend a day on the lake, we'll be looking for you.

You may have been following the controversy around coal mining in



the mountains and the effect of the resultant release of selenium into nearby waterways. A metals analysis was conducted on our September 2020 water sample. The concentration of selenium within Wabamun was determined to be 0.3 ug/L.

This compares favorably to the Government of Alberta Guideline of 2.0 ug/L and Alert Concentration of 1.0 ug/L. In other words, despite being sandwiched between two coal mines for decades, selenium does not appear to be an issue in Wabamun.

David Ball, WWMC Chair

New Dock Requirements

New dock requirements, the Alberta Environment & Parks Mooring Disturbance Standards, now define the specifications of a reasonable dock setup that does not require approval by AEP. This does not prevent approval from being required under the Seba Beach Dock Policy, and dock owners must comply with both.

My understanding is AEP will not be on the water with their tape measures actively looking for non-

compliant docks, however they will respond to complaints. The new standards allow the majority of us with reasonable dock setups to be "legal" without having to obtain approval.

<https://www.alberta.ca/mooring-standards-engagement.aspx>

I see the biggest advantage of the new standards to be a way to deal with those few bad actors who place docks and boat lifts where they are not allowed and impede the enjoyment of the lake for others.

The Mooring Disturbance Standards can be found at:

<https://www.alberta.ca/mooring-standards-engagement.aspx>

David Ball, WWMC Chair

Edmonton Yacht Club: 98th Year, 73 in Seba Beach

We are proud to be active members of the Community; hosting Sailing lessons for Children and Adults from Seba Beach and beyond throughout the Summer. hosting the Volleyball tournament during Regatta Weekend. EYC offers Members an affordable Lakefront experience where they can beach or dock their Sail Boat (Keel Boat, Dingy, Catamaran, Windsurfer etc.) for the season

and have access to Clubhouse, Beach and Grounds.

Sailboat Races, Training, informal assistance and Comradery are also accessible to Members.

If you are interested in learning how to Sail or Seasonal Membership, please check us out!

Tim Bowles commodore@edmontonyachtclub.ca

Olly Romanowski membership@edmontonyachtclub.ca

Michael Morris (sailing school) fleetcaptain@edmontonyachtclub.ca

Wabamun Watershed Management Council Updates

Fisheries

Following fish test netting last fall, the fishing regulations at Wabamun have changed for whitefish and burbot. In addition, 3275 Special Walleye Harvest licenses are available, by draw, for the harvest of two walleye under 43 cm. I have thrown my name in the hat for a license and hope to have a fish fry sometime this summer.

Dr. Stephen Spencer, Senior Fisheries Biologist with Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) will speak about the Wabamun fishery at the beginning of our Zoom Board meeting on May 19. The presentation will be open to all WWMC members (it's free to join).

Details on access will be posted to the WWMC website and our Facebook page

In 2021 3275 Special Walleye Harvest licenses are available, by draw, for the harvest of two walleye under 43 cm

Lake Water Level

What a difference a year makes. For most of last summer we were dealing with a high lake water level. This year, it seems low. Actually, the current lake level is roughly at the level of the weir, and only 10cm

(4") below the water level this time last year. Precipitation through May/June last year increased the lake level by 20 cm (8").

Mother Nature controls the lake level. We have little influence. 85% of the lake level is driven by precipitation, evaporation and ground water movement. And, at any given level, some lake users think that it is too high, some too low, and some just right.

Visit our Website for Details at:

[WWMC.CA](http://www.wabamun.ca)

David Ball, WWMC Chair

- Update continued on page ...

Seba Seniors and Thrift Shop

Our Centre has been closed for a while during Covid, but magical things have been happening behind closed doors. However, the people working inside would probably not agree that it is 'magic'.

Our Thrift Shop has been 'refreshed' by many, many hours of hard work by many, many dedicated volunteers. What a huge project, not just doing the painting, the carpet installation, the carpentry, etc. but moving all the merchandise.

Follow us on Facebook at
[Seba Seniors](#) and
[Seba Seniors Thrift Shop](#)

A huge thank you to everyone who is making this transformation possible. What great volunteers we have at the Seba Seniors. For increased comfort we have also purchased new chairs and have improved the sound in May Hall.

We invite you to visit us again when we re-open. Watch our sign for a

date - probably the middle of May. All Covid protocols will be in effect.

Stay Safe. Follow Covid protocol - get vaccinated, wear a mask (even after having vaccine), social distance, wash hands, and be kind to each other. We are all in this together, and together we will see the end of Covid.

Diane Coulthard,
Communications

- Seba Seniors

Winter Snow Clearing and Service Level Adjustments

The Summer Village of Seba Beach commonly maintains a winter population of nearly 200 residents. In the past our practice has been to maintain a list of residents who sought to have their driveways cleared by our Public Works staff following significant snowfall once other priorities for road clearing, sanding, and solid waste collection were completed.

Past practice had been to clear based on the intensity of snowfall events and on a request for service basis. Seniors were free; however, this was not easily tracked or fairly applied.

Seeing this service may be relied upon by some residents, but also requested only because it is free and convenient for others, Seba Beach will be re-establishing an access clearing list for the 2021 Fall season. **Private access clearing**

will remain \$25 per request, but will be charged to all residential parcels requesting the service upon each request. Priority for clearing will be established based on a standing service list, and individual requests can be supported as a second priority. Please contact the municipal offices for further information or to be placed on the Fall service list for 2021.



Reading your Tax Notice

We're on the Web!
www.sebabeach.ca

| <i>ASSESSMENT INFORMATION:</i> | | | | |
|---|---|--------------|-------|-------------------|
| | LAND VALUE | IMPROVEMENTS | OTHER | TOTAL |
| | 224,900 | 141,100 | 0 | 366,000 |
| <i>PROPERTY TAX LEVY:</i> | | | | |
| | | MILL RATE | | TAX LEVY |
| Municipal Tax Rate | Tax for General Municipal Purposes | 2.56 | | \$936.96 |
| School Tax Rate | Alberta School Foundation Fund | 2.56 | | \$936.96 |
| Reconciliation of under or over collected School taxes from previous year | Alberta School Foundation Fund Under Levy | 0.17 | | \$62.22 |
| Pavilion Debt Payment | Pavilion Levy | --- | | \$150.00 |
| General Levy for basic services | General Municipal Services | --- | | \$350.00 |
| | Current Mill Rate | 5.29 | | |
| | Current Tax Levy | | | 2,436.14 |
| | Balance Carried Forward | | | |
| | Total Balance Due | | | \$2,436.14 |

Assessment Component based on Land

Assessment Component based on Buildings and tangible land change (eg paved parking lot)

Assessed Value used to determine variable School and Municipal taxation

Individual Components of Tax

- Municipal Tax Rate
- School Tax Rate
- Reconciliation of under or over collected School taxes from previous year
- Pavilion Debt Payment
- General Levy for basic services

Combined tax rate

Your Total Bill

CAO Profile and Background

Martino is a Resident of Yellowhead County where he lives with his wife Deb and 2 young children.

Martino has a Degree in Physical Geography from the Univ. of Lethbridge and a Certificate in Municipal Management and Leadership of the Univ. of Alberta. Further he is a Registered Professional Planner with designation under both the Provincial and National Planning Institutes.

Martino has been in Senior Leadership roles with municipal government since 2012 with the City of Weyburn, Brazeau County, and Town of Edson.

Previous to this, a decade of experience with the Saskatchewan and Alberta governments in survey planning & legal document approval, policy research, development of legislation, and advisory services focused on municipal governance and growth.

Background involves extensive land development and inter-municipal collaboration projects.

Martino's bias towards action and public service background has allowed him to make significant in-roads in moving forward Council's agenda for the community.



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