

## PRESS RELEASE

### TOWN OF MAYERTHORPE SEEKS FAIRNESS IN COST SHARING FOR RECREATION SERVICES

**Mayerthorpe, Alberta, June 14, 2021** – The Town of Mayerthorpe (the Town) has reviewed Lac Ste. Anne County (the County)'s most recent public statements regarding the ongoing Intermunicipal Collaboration Framework (ICF) process with disappointment and a measure of concern.

Town Council believes that, in speaking for our community, we must always seek to represent our ratepayers in a professional and even-handed manner. It is our sincere hope that the County will strive to adopt a tone more appropriate for a process ultimately intended to foster intermunicipal co-operation and future productive communications.

The Town has complied with all requirements of the Municipal Government Act regarding ICFs and will continue to do so. It will also continue to seek a fair approach to sharing costs for the services it provides to both its residents and its county neighbors. In the interests of ensuring the ICF arbitration proceeds in a professional and civil manner, the Town will reserve its responses to the County's recent misleading statements for the arbitrator.

The Town has every confidence in the abilities of the Minister of Municipal Affairs and his team to appoint an appropriate, unbiased arbitrator. With that appointment, the Town looks forward to the opportunity to move the ICF process forward in a more positive and productive manner.

While the Town will not dignify the recent statements from the County with specific responses, it is important for all ratepayers to have accurate information. See the following:

- The ICF mediation process was not "stalled". The County pulled out of mediation without notice or explanation to the Town.
- The Town was invested in negotiating the ICF through the mediation process. The County terminated that process.
- The County has not been "dragged into an arbitration process" nor is it something the Town triggered. The County's own actions created the need for binding arbitration to finalize the ICF thus ensuring compliance with the MGA.
- The Town has always been open to reasonable, fair solutions. It remains open to negotiations based on facts and figures rather than unsubstantiated, arbitrary positions.
- County ratepayers will, indeed, bear more than 95% of the cost for arbitration. The Town's portion of the costs will be lower, but the Town is not eager to expend public funds on the ICF arbitration process and is at a loss to explain why the County would rather assume an aggressive, argumentative posture than engage in constructive, fact-based discussions about the equitable sharing of costs for shared services.



Mayerthorpe

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- There is no basis for the County's statements suggesting the Town has not handled public funds responsibly. The statements are, at best, selectively misleading. At worst, they are false, and the Town will disprove these allegations in the course of the arbitration process.
- For over a decade, the Town has shouldered an inequitable portion of the costs for shared recreation services. Despite bearing this burden for years, the Town continues to fair well according to the metrics utilized by Alberta Municipal Affairs and has never been flagged as a municipality in need of a viability review.
- Since the Minister has yet to appoint an arbitrator, the County's recent statements suggesting bias or potential bias in the arbitration process are unjustified.
- The County's statement that the arbitration process "normally results in a matter being split down the middle to appear equitable" is inaccurate and confuses mediation with arbitration.
- The Town of Mayerthorpe does anticipate a successful result in the arbitration process not due to any unfairness in the process, but simply because the inequities in the current arrangements with Lac Ste. Anne County for recreation services are glaringly obvious.

"My Council colleagues and I remain steadfast in our commitment to secure an equitable outcome in the arbitration process for Mayerthorpe's ratepayers. We're confident in our facts and data and eager to present our position to the arbitrator appointed by Minister McIver." – Mayor Janet Jabush.

For questions or additional information please contact the Chief Administrative Officer at the Town Office.

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