



Town of Athabasca

Gateway to the Great New North

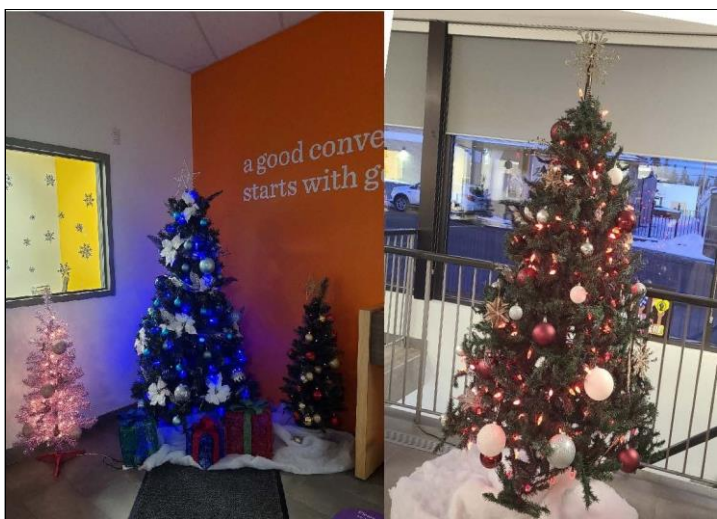
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Town of Athabasca 2021 Christmas Decorating Contest Winners **Introducing: New Town Council!**

The Town of Athabasca thanks everybody who participated in the 2021 Christmas Decorating Contest. Once again, you helped make it a great community event! Huge **CONGRATULATIONS** go out to the winners in each of the categories! (Sample photos below)



One of several photos submitted by **Residential Winners Claire and Brett Phillips**, located on 41st Ave & 52nd Street.



Two of the photos submitted by **Non-Residential Winner ATB Financial**, located on 50th Street, downtown Athabasca.

Municipal elections are held every four years in municipalities throughout Alberta. This gives interested individuals an opportunity to vie for a spot on their local municipal council, and provides residents with the opportunity to have a say in who gets elected.

When the results were announced following the 2021 Municipal Election this past October, a few new members were elected to the Athabasca Town Council team, replacing a few former councillors who chose not to run in this election.

With immediate past Mayor Colleen Powell announcing her retirement from Council, 2017-2021 Councillor Rob Balay threw his hat into the ring for the Mayor's chair and successfully won the seat for the 2021-2025 term.

Returning to Council for another term are Councillors Ida Edwards and David (Dave) Pacholok.

Newly welcomed to Council for this term are Councillors Sara Graling, Jon LeMessurier, Loretta Prosser and Edith (Edie) Yuill.

Brief biographies of each councillor are included in this edition of the Town newsletter and will be posted on the Town website. Read on to get to know your new Town Council a little better . . .



Mayor Robert Balay

In 2017 Robert ran for Council, serving his first term as Councillor. He then successfully campaigned for the Mayor's position in 2021.

Coming from a farming background, Robert is a lifelong resident of the region. He and his family moved to Athabasca in 1999.

Robert has over 34 years experience in public service working for the Town of Athabasca. He served as Public Works and Utilities Foreman, Superintendent of Public Works and Utilities, and as Manager and CAO of the Athabasca Regional Multiplex Society. During those years he served under 13 different Town and County Councils. Robert has attained a vast amount of valuable experience in those positions and with this unique combination of experience and proven community leadership he will serve the town well as Mayor.

Robert's goals as Mayor are to help make Athabasca a great place to live, raise a family, own a business or retire!

Contact Robert at mayorbalay@athabasca.ca

Councillor Biographies continued on Page 2 ...

Reminder to Residents: Snowmobiles

Snowmobiles are only permitted within town limits on approved routes. Visit www.athabascariverrunners.com/trail-map for the snowmobile routes.



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Councillor Ida Edwards: Ida has lived in the greater Athabasca area throughout her life, most recently within the town of Athabasca. Professionally, she has a Bachelor of Music degree in Voice from the University of Alberta. In the arts, a high level of precision and execution is expected in performance, and Ida brings this level of commitment to her service on Council.

She has a Business Administration Management certificate from Northern Lakes College and is working towards a diploma from Portage College. She participates

in Toastmasters International communication and leadership programs, and earned her Distinguished Toastmaster designation in 2021.

Ida has worked in the community as a music teacher and performer for many decades and is a small business owner. She has experience with event planning and program development and is active as a volunteer with a variety of local groups. She is an enthusiastic promoter of the Athabasca Communities in Bloom program.

Contact Ida at councilloredwards@athabasca.ca



Councillor Sara Graling: Sara was born in Athabasca. In fact, both she and her father were delivered by Dr. Josephine Brown! Sara grew up in small towns around Alberta and returned to Athabasca to graduate from Edwin Parr Composite School in 1997. She went on to the University of Alberta to obtain a Bachelor of Commerce degree, with an Accounting major, before returning to Athabasca in 2009.

Sara works for Athabasca County, where she was introduced to municipal governance and administration and

learned of the central role that the Municipal Government Act plays in guiding the operation, planning and growth of municipalities.

Sara loves her community for many reasons, including the beauty of the location and access to natural spaces. She is grateful for a strong volunteer community, something she considers to be the core of a community. She encourages everyone to find ways to stay connected during these challenging COVID times.

Contact Sara at councillorgraling@athabasca.ca



Councillor Jonathan LeMessurier: A lifelong resident of Athabasca, Jon believes in giving back to the community that has provided him with so much.

Having made many connections here, he believes that, through collaboration with others, he can help bring the community together to ensure that it is continually growing.

Jon works for Aspen Primary Care Network as an exercise professional, in addition to running his own personal fitness training business. He works with all ages

to help educate, motivate, and support his clients to live an overall healthy lifestyle.

As a member of Town Council, Jon wants to do his part to ensure that the Town is moving forward with new ideas to attract a variety of individuals to come and reside in this beautiful community.

He desires to become an effective councillor and is passionate about serving the residents of Athabasca responsibly and with energy and integrity.

Contact Jon at councillorlemessurier@athabasca.ca



Councillor David Pacholok: This is David's second consecutive term serving as a Town Councillor for the Town of Athabasca.

The previous four years on Town Council have given him valuable insight and knowledge into the scope of time and effort required to effectively fulfil the duties of a Councillor.

A lifelong resident of Athabasca, he has developed a sincere appreciation for the many features and qualities that the town and the region have to offer to both residents and

visitors.

Recently retired from business, David brings to Council an extensive background in private business and community volunteering.

Equipped with this comprehensive experience, he is dedicated to working hard to represent the Town of Athabasca and is committed to applying his skills and abilities towards the betterment of the community as a whole.

Contact David at councillorpacholok@athabasca.ca



Councillor Loretta Prosser: Having been a resident of the Athabasca region for about 33 years, with the last 10 being in Athabasca, Loretta is familiar with the area and the concerns of the municipality. She has worked in the oil and gas sector and has a good understanding of the industry.

She currently works for Athabasca University (AU) as an Administrative Operations Assistant, Office of the Vice President Information Technology and Chief Information Officer. She is a member of the AU Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee.

Loretta ran for Council because she wants to make a positive difference in the community. She recognizes that serving through local government is a good way to make a beneficial, ground-level contribution. Her focus is on ensuring economic growth for the community.

She considers Athabasca to be a fantastic location and she believes we need to nurture our community and our community members right now. Her top priority is to focus on small businesses and help them succeed.

Contact Loretta at councillorprosser@athabasca.ca



Councillor Edith (Edie) Yuill: Edie moved to Athabasca in 2013 to finish a 40-year career with Alberta Transportation; she retired on June 30, 2021.

Over the course of her career, she received prestigious awards such as two *Premiers Awards of Excellence* plus an *Above and Beyond the Call of Duty* award and many certificate awards of excellence. Additionally, she has a certificate in Business Administration and various other certificates for training achievements.

Prior to coming here, she served two terms on Barrhead

Town Council and she gained valuable experience serving on a variety of groups and organizations in that community and provincially.

Before moving to Athabasca, Edie passed through the community many times and became enamoured with the scenery, the wildlife and the people she met.

Edie looks forward to working with Mayor Balay and fellow councillors to create a cohesive team and serve the community to the best of her ability.

Contact Edie at councilloryuill@athabasca.ca