



Town of

# Athabasca

Gateway to the Great New North

February 2023 Town News and Views Volume 18, Issue 1

*The Town of Athabasca respectfully acknowledges that we are meeting on Treaty 6 and Treaty 8 territory, home to the First People living on Turtle Island, and we honour all of the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples who have lived, traveled, and gathered on these lands for thousands of years. We commit to sharing a path forward of respect, learning, and opportunity.*

## Town CAO Rachel Ramey Earns CLGM Designation



Town CAO Rachel Ramey

Town of Athabasca Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Rachel Ramey now has one more feather of distinction to add to her professional cap. The Society of Local Government Managers of Alberta (SLGMA) has officially recognized Rachel as a *Certified Local Government Manager*.

A letter from the Society, received by Mayor Rob Balay in October, states in part,

“Rachel Ramey has been successful in her application for designation as a Certified Local Government Manager. The CLGM designation is awarded to senior managers in Alberta recognizing the successful completion of the Society’s professional education program combined with a minimum of five years of experience as a senior manager in local government.” A professional certificate and CLGM pin will be presented at an awards ceremony in May in Kananaskis.

Rachel began working with the Town in 2005 as the Municipal Information Services Officer. In 2013, she took on the role of Development Officer, and in 2017, the role of Assistant CAO. In 2020, she was appointed to the role of Town CAO.

The letter from the SLGMA also states, “We would like to take the opportunity to congratulate your municipality for employing a staff member who conscientiously wishes to improve her professional knowledge and competence. Rachel’s commitment to continuing education will benefit your community.”

Members of Town Council congratulate Rachel and applaud her for both her dedication to her job and her community, and for achieving the CLGM distinction.

## Newsletter Reader Contest

Read through the items in this newsletter and you might be rewarded! Several random Town utility bill account numbers have been embedded into some of the articles and the first reader to find their utility bill number and contact the Town Office wins a prize! Winner’s name will be posted on the Town website and Facebook.

## By-Election for One Council Seat

A by-election will be held in Athabasca to fill one Town Council seat, vacated by Loretta Prosser after she resigned from council last fall. Eligible voters can choose to vote in an Advance Poll on February 2, or on Election Day, February 13. The polling station will be in the Town administration building.

- The Advance Poll on Feb. 2 will run 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- The Election Day poll on Feb. 13 will run 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- Two candidates are running: Darlene Reimer and Stephan Splinter

Proof of identity and current residence is required to vote. Check the Town website for [voter identification requirements](#) and a list of acceptable documents for identification purposes. (1078.001)

Town residents are encouraged to consider the candidates and attend one of the polling dates to have their say in the results.

## Budget Open House

You are invited to a Budget Open House meeting to be hosted at the Athabasca Regional Multiplex on February 22, 7:00 p.m. The Town’s 2023 Budget will be presented, followed by a question-and-answer period intended to provide additional insight into some of the budget items. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

## Water Rate Change

Athabasca Town Council has passed Utility Amendment Bylaw 013-2022 to increase the current water rates in town.

Residential water rates will be increasing from a minimum charge of \$23.81 per billing (every two months), to \$25.60 per billing (5m3). As outlined in Section 6.2, a charge shall be levied on all metered water in excess of minimum usages as follows:

- 18 m3 or less \$5.1201/m3 from \$4.7629/m3
- 18.1 - 45 m3 \$5.2697/m3 from \$4.9020/m3
- Over 45 m3 \$5.8021/m3 from \$5.3973/m3

The rate for bulk water, referred to in Section 4.15, and water that is for resale shall be set at \$10.00 per cubic meter.

A utility distribution charge of \$25.00 per billing (every two months) will be charged on all water service meters. (0657.002)

The increases for bulk water were effective as of Feb. 1, 2023. All other rate changes were effective as of Dec. 1, 2022 and will be reflected on the February 2023 Utility Bills.



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## Christmas Decorating Contest Winners

Winners of the 2022 Town Christmas Decorating Contest were announced in December. Congratulations go to Claire and Brett Phillips on winning in the Residential category (third year in a row!), and to Pleasant Valley Lodge on winning Non-Residential.

The winners absolutely deserve the recognition. The displays put up by Claire and Brett around their residence seem to get more spectacular each year! And the effort and care put into decorating Pleasant Valley Lodge was clearly apparent: the variety and quality and number of decorations was amazing! Well done, everyone!



Sample photos from the winning entries: (top) Residential Winner: Claire and Brett Phillips; (bottom) Non-Residential Winner: Pleasant Valley Lodge

## Changes to the 2023 Edition of the Decorating Contest

For the past three years, to be eligible for the Town decorating contest, participants were required to submit an official entry to the Town Office. Judging was based on the entries received. This year, although numerous residents and non-residential property owners did a fantastic job of decorating, not many of them submitted an official entry.

As a result, the Town is reviewing the contest procedures and will consider making changes to the 2023 edition. Your thoughts and ideas are welcome and encouraged! (2512.004) What do you think about including a "Nominate your Neighbour" element to the contest? What other ideas do you have?

Please submit your suggestions to the Town Office and help us make the 2023 edition of the Town Christmas Decorating Contest an even more exciting event for the community!

## Brick School Restoration

If all goes as planned, the Brick School restoration project will get a big funding boost this year.

Athabasca Mayor Rob Balay noted in his 2022 year-end comments that the Town has applied for a \$2.99 million grant to go towards the much-anticipated project. The grant is 80 per cent funded, meaning the Town of Athabasca must come up with the matching 20 per cent.

Many in the community appreciate the Brick School as one of the town's most recognizable historic resources.

## Dr. Brown Scholarship

The Dr. Josephine M. Brown Memorial Scholarship is an award of excellence in honour of Dr. Josephine M. Brown, a long-time resident of the Town of Athabasca, and her many years of service, both as a physician and a Town Councillor. This scholarship is an annual award, which acknowledges academic excellence and personal achievement.

The scholarship is open to current students and past graduates of Athabasca's Edwin Parr Composite High School (EPCHS) who intend to continue their post-secondary education in the medical field at an accredited two- or four-year college or university, vocational school, or technical training program.

In the case of students accepted into Medical or Dental School, the applicant must be a graduate of EPCHS.

One scholarship in the amount of \$2000.00 will be awarded per each calendar year. The deadline for submissions is May 1 of the current year. (1698.001) Application forms are available from the Town of Athabasca, 4705 – 49 Ave., Athabasca.

Please review the application form for detailed eligibility requirements. Contact the Town Office for more information.

## Library Board Seeks Members

The [Alice B. Donahue Library & Archives](#) in Athabasca has provided a variety of beneficial services to area residents for many years. Now, there is an opportunity to get involved in the governance of the organization and help contribute to the ongoing value that the library and archives offer to the region.

"The Athabasca Library Board is looking for four additional board members for three-year appointments," notes board chair Nadine Byers. "Interested parties can be from the town, county or summer villages." Board meetings are open and the public and anyone interested in joining the board are welcome to attend.

Board members meet about 10 times a year and assist with the governance aspects of the organization. (0058.010) Additional committee involvement is possible. "While experience with the running of organizations is helpful," says Nadine, "diverse members of the community who have a passion for literacy and community development are welcome." Training opportunities to learn various roles are available. Questions or applications of interest can be directed to Nadine at [chair@athabascalibrary.ab.ca](mailto:chair@athabascalibrary.ab.ca).

"In the coming months, we will be entering into our Plan of Service process where we consult the community to determine what the library will be focusing on for the next 5 years," Nadine explains. "Short-term volunteers are welcome to put their names forward to assist with this process."

The library has been active this past year! "In 2022, we had 28,286 books circulated, not including 4,760 e-books, and welcomed 810 computer users," says Nadine. "Members of the community are welcome to visit the library (next to the Brick School)." Follow the [Library & Archives on Facebook](#), too!

## CEIP Reminder to Residents

The [Clean Energy Improvement Program](#) (CEIP) is still available to property owners in the Town of Athabasca. CEIP offers a new way to finance energy efficient renovations and upgrades. Read more about CEIP in the [October 2022 edition of the Town newsletter](#), available on the Town Website.