

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2024

# COUNTY CURRENTS

Published December 22, 2023



Photo Credit: Harm Tjardes

Introducing our revamped newsletter format! We're excited to announce a fresh approach to keeping you informed about the latest happenings in the County. The newsletter will be published every two months, ensuring you stay apprized on those important topics. The majority of our articles will feature direct links to our website, allowing you to explore the topics that pique your interest.

To receive our newsletter delivered right to your inbox, visit the [subscribe](#) page on our website. Paper copies of the newsletter are available at the County of Vermilion River office and by request.

2024 is an exciting year in the County of Vermilion River as we celebrate 60 years. Many past experiences, challenges and successes have shaped the vibrant County it is today. Join us over the coming year as we reflect and celebrate the history of 60 Years of the County of Vermilion River.

Happy  
New Year

## Notable Dates

Office Closed

DECEMBER 25-26

JANUARY 1

FEBRUARY 19

Tax Penalty

JANUARY 16, 2024

Regular Meeting of  
Council

JANUARY 9 & 30

FEBRUARY 13 & 27

Policy & Priorities  
Committee Meeting

JANUARY 16 &

FEBRUARY 20

Public Meeting for  
Blackfoot Lagoon  
Upgrade & Discharge  
Plans

JANUARY 30

If you would like your community event highlighted in the newsletter, please email [communications@county24.com](mailto:communications@county24.com)

# Council Corner

## Greetings from the Reeve

Visit our website to view  
Council highlights and  
register for upcoming  
Council meetings



The fall of 2023, seen a change to Council with Councillor Marty Baker from Division 1 being elected, amongst their peers, as Reeve and Councillor Leslie Cusack from Division 7 being elected as Deputy Reeve. We certainly appreciate the work and effort former Reeve Stacey Hryciuk and Deputy Reeve Clinton Murray put into these positions over the past number of years.

Council would like to thank everyone who came out to attend the County of Vermilion River Open House on November 22, 2023. This was our second time with the new format where each department put up booths and Directors and staff were available to answer questions and receive suggestions.

We distributed our newly completed Corporate Plan for 2024 at the Open House as well. This plan will provide direction and strategies for our CAO, Director's and Staff moving forward into 2024. If you would like a copy, they are available at the Administration Office or, to view on our website, click [HERE](#).

Council continues to lobby the Provincial Government regarding the importance of accurate assessments and our concerns regarding the lack of inspection time spent in the County of Vermilion River. Council will be meeting with the Minister of Municipal Affairs on December 19, 2023 regarding this issue.

***On behalf of the County of Vermilion River Council - Reeve Marty Baker, Councillor Dale Swyripa, Councillor Stacey Hryciuk, Councillor George Kuneff, Councillor Jason Stelmaschuk, Councillor Clinton Murray and Deputy Reeve Leslie Cusack we wish you all the best for you and your families in 2024.***

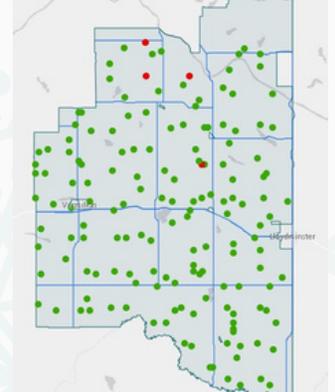
## Community Enhancement Funding

Each fall the County of Vermilion River invites community organizations to apply for funding to assist with operational funds for halls, facilities and community events. At the November 14th and December 12th Regular Meetings of Council \$385,200 was distributed to 43 community organizations for operational funding. Thank you to the organizations and their volunteers to keep halls and facilities going in our communities. Capital funding was distributed to Kitscoty Agricultural Society for the amount of \$75,000.00 to assist with their upgrades project, as well. To view a full list of the recipients visit our [Community Services page](#).



# County of Vermilion Clubroot Update 2023

- Three new clubroot positive fields were identified and confirmed, found in Division 6 and Division 7
- A total of 24 positive sites in the County
- The landowners and renters of these properties have agreed to a one in three year crop rotation and the use of clubroot resistant varieties on these sites
- County Pest Inspectors annually survey about 10% of canola fields in a random survey
- Six fields which had tested positive for clubroot in 2020 were able to come back into rotation with canola in the 2022 crop year and, no symptoms of clubroot were found during inspection.
- 12 positive fields in the County had no clubroot found after two years out of canola and 2 fields had no clubroot found after two 1-in-3 year rotations.



**[View the Clubroot Map on our website](#)**

**For the full 2023 Clubroot Update visit the [Agriculture and Environment page](#) on our website**

## **Best Management Practices to protect from yield loss to diseases:**

- Crop rotation (at least 2 years between Brassica crops)
- Use clubroot resistant, blackleg resistant canola varieties
- Control volunteer canola and cruciferous weeds between canola crops
- Clean equipment to reduce movement of soil and spores from field to field

*The County of Vermilion River and ALUS Vermilion River will work with ratepayers to help establish these “welcome mats” at field approaches, water runoff channels and low lying/wet areas and proactively manage clubroot. The County Agriculture Department can provide participating landowners with up to \$100 of perennial grass/legume seed (enough to seed about 3 acres), and access to small equipment to help with establishment. Participants may also be eligible for assistance with establishment costs from ALUS Vermilion River, and larger projects may even qualify for land payments for ecosystem services provided. Talk to the County Ag Team for more information (Chris Elder or Cathie Erichsen Arychuk).*

*Have a look at the [ALUS Tour - Five L Farms video](#) and see how their Clubroot “Welcome Mat” project worked.*

**Will you be away for an extended period of time this winter?**

County of Vermilion River Gas Utility requests that our customers keep their contact information current in the event of an emergency or day-to-day operations. Please contact us if your phone number has changed. If you are away for the winter, please provide us with your emergency contact information.



**ALUS Vermilion River** had a successful 2023, enrolling 7 new projects for a total of 381 acres. We were very happy to welcome 6 new participants to the program, growing our total to 55 producers across the County. Two significant milestones we surpassed this year were 4500 acres and \$1,000,000 invested on-the-ground to date. These impressive numbers mean that ALUS is not only improving the agricultural operations of local farmers and ranchers, but we are also supporting a much healthier environment for all our residents by providing cleaner water, cleaner air, carbon sequestration, erosion control, pollinator and wildlife habitat. To learn more about how you can be a part of the success of ALUS, contact Chris Elder at [celder@county24.com](mailto:celder@county24.com) or 780-853-7844.

# Contact Us

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## Agriculture & Environment

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## Taxes

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## Planning & Community Services

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## Chief Administrative Officer

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## After Hours Emergency

780.846.2929

## Notice of Public Meeting

A public meeting relating to the proposed design of the Hamlet of Blackfoot lagoon upgrades and discharge plans will be held on

**January 30, 2024**

**4pm to 7pm**

**Blackfoot Community Hall,  
5406 Railway Ave. Blackfoot, AB**

As part of providing sustainable wastewater treatment for the Hamlet of Blackfoot that can accommodate population increases within the Hamlet, the County of Vermilion River is planning upgrades to the current lagoon facility. Providing a sustainable wastewater system to the Hamlet of Blackfoot is paramount to the longevity of the community and the County is looking at the proposed design upgrades to further enhance the capabilities of the Community and surrounding area. If you have any questions, feel free to email Planning & Community Services Department at: [blackfootwwproject@county24.com](mailto:blackfootwwproject@county24.com) No later than January 15, 2024 at 12:00pm (noon) for review and follow-up prior to the Open House.

## What if **No One** Answered the Call?

Imagine a fire blazing or a loved one with a medical emergency and no one there to respond. It's a chilling thought, yet it's a reality faced by communities when there aren't enough hands to help.

## Answer the Call. Become a Volunteer Firefighter Today!

Your decision to volunteer could mean the world to someone in need, ensuring that no call for help goes unanswered. Join the County Fire Service and become a lifeline in your community.

### Did You Know?

- 71% of Canadian firefighters are volunteers.
- 12% of vital positions are vacant.
- 25% of firefighters are over 50.

## Ready to make a difference?

Email us at [fire@county24.com](mailto:fire@county24.com)

