

February 2023

To the property owners of the Village of Lytton

It has now been three months since you elected us to represent you as Mayor and Council. It took a good month just to get our feet under us, learn our roles and responsibilities, and understand the various procedures and legal obligations of governing a municipality.

Last March, nearly a year ago, a major announcement was made through the media that clean-up of the Village would begin and rebuilding could be started by September. It is now February and we all know that didn't happen.

On your behalf, we have been working hard to move the progress of rebuilding Lytton forward, and for the current work in the Village to end. We have asked for timelines and dates, but it has been extremely challenging.

Below are some key pieces of information that we want to share with you. If you have any questions, please reach out to us and we will do our best to get you the information or put you in contact with those who can.

Debris Removal/ Soil Remediation

Matcon is the contractor that was hired to remove the fire debris and the contaminated soil. They are due

to complete nearly all of this work on February 10. They will have to return to complete final work sometime in the next few months.

Archaeology

The Village contracted AEW to do the necessary archaeology work. To save costs for each property owner, the Village applied for and received a blanket Heritage Permit from the province to cover all properties.

Although Matcon is demobilizing temporarily on Feb. 10, archaeology work will continue. The provincial Heritage Branch is expecting a final report from AEW at the end of February.

We have been advised that the report will contain information regarding which properties contained archeological artifacts, and recommendations for property owners moving forward with rebuilding or developing their lot. It is our understanding that each property owner will be individually contacted regarding these recommendations. (With this in mind, please ensure that your contact information is at the Village Office by calling during business hours: 250-455-2355)

Backfilling

Once archaeology work and soil remediation are complete on a lot, the next step is to have Matcon return to backfill, which means they will

replace and compact the soil that was removed to bring the property back to grade. (If you prefer to leave the excavation in place for rebuilding, advise the Village Site Supervisor, Owen Collings at 778-254-2483)

Water and Sewer

We have been told that there are only minor repairs that need to be made on our water and sewer. Water pipes have been tested for leaks and pressure, but repairs are still to be done as well as some other testing.

Sewer lines have yet to be flushed, cleaned by hydrovac and inspected with a camera to determine their condition. It's anticipated that water and sewer will be ready to go once the backfilling is complete, but it will depend on how things go with repair and further testing.

Rebuilding/Building Permits

We know some of you have already started the process of selecting house plans and working with a builder. We ask that if you are at this stage, please contact Owen Collings at 778-254-2483 or email him at sitesupport@lytton.ca and so that you are placed on a prioritized list.

The application process for building permits will be online and from what we've been told, it should be up soon. We know it's important that people know the steps and the process for applying, and so that information will also become available.

Your Mayor & Council

Regular Council meetings are held every 2nd and 4th Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. and are broadcast live and archived on the Village of Lytton's YouTube channel.

Mayor

Denise O'Connor – mayor@lytton.ca

Councillors

Jessoa Lightfoot – jlightfoot@lytton.ca

Nonie McCann – nmccann@lytton.ca

Melissa Michell – mmichell@lytton.ca

Jennifer Thoss – jthoss@lytton.ca

Access to property

People want to know, “When can we access our properties to start rebuilding?” We know the end is in sight, but Council still can’t give a firm date as it all depends on the result of the archaeological report, when your lot is backfilled, and when water and sewer are operational.

We have heard that this could be any time from April to June.

SOLE (State of Local Emergency)

Through provincial legislation, SOLE is the mechanism for us to ensure that the Village clean-up and other work continues without interruption. The intention was to never have the SOLE extended for this long, as it was designed for emergencies/ disasters that may last just a few weeks.

It is the Mayor who requests the extension for SOLE. As a Council, we continually talk about when it make sense to remove or reduce the SOLE area. We will keep you updated.

Bylaw 711

At the December 14 Regular Council Meeting, Council reviewed Building Amendment Bylaw 711 and asked staff to bring back changes based on what we heard from community. We recognize that

this bylaw is important to have in place for the building permit application and we anticipate seeing it return to Council on the February 22 Council Meeting.

Federal Funding

Last June, the Federal Government announced funding for insured home and business owners who are rebuilding. Unfortunately, the programs that this funding flows through have not yet been developed.

As a Council we are meeting with the Pacific Economic Development Canada (PacifiCan), to sort out the programs, and provide them with information regarding the needs of Lytton. We know that the grants for home rebuilding are to support net zero and fire-resistant building.

Council is advocating for both the insured and uninsured who are rebuilding, as well as the simplest process possible to access the grants.

Funds for businesses that are rebuilding appear to be in the form of “repayable support,” but as a Council we are asking for non-repayable support. Our meetings with PacifiCan are ongoing. Nothing has been finalized and that is all the information we have to share at this time.

Donations to the Village

Over the past year and a half various donations have come into the Village. Those that came as gift cards were distributed to residents by the previous Council. Most cash donations were targeted: i.e. to the swimming pool, Fire Department, Unmet Needs Committee, etc. Other donations will be managed at future Council Meetings through resolution.

As a Council, we have requested to see a breakdown of donations received.

February 23 Community Meeting: Insurance

We thank those who provided us with positive feedback on the format of our January 18 Community Meeting, where we provided time for focussed questions on archaeology.

Our next meeting is on February 23 at 6:30 pm and we plan to focus this meeting on insurance. Our hope is to have some of your questions or concerns addressed.

Please be sure to submit questions ahead of time, you can phone them in to 250-455-2355, or email them to communication@lytton.ca, or you can ask during the meeting. T

These monthly meetings are held via Zoom. The link will be posted on the Village website, lytton.ca.