



Mayor's Notes

January 2025 - *Happy New Year*



2024 was another busy year in Bow Island with lots of activities and events as well as continued growth and development. The support and turnout at many events was gratifying to volunteers and staff, and did a lot for community spirit. Local residents and visitors took part in a number of activities such as the annual Slo-pitch tournament, the Gospel Jamboree, the Harvest Festival and Pinto's Princess event. The Friday Market and Market in the Park continue to bring people together every week through the summer. These and other events were organized and run by various groups and volunteers who continue to work to make our community better and stronger. Area residents continued to utilize our various recreation and parks facilities, especially the pool, splash park and arena which have been upgraded and well maintained by Town staff. As always, the Library staff and volunteers continue to offer programs and activities for all ages, year round.

Bow Island will continue to grow in 2025. Our incentive plan and slogan: *Build Now in Bow Island*, seems to have gone over well so far with local builders and developers. Six of the seven single family lots in the new Parkview subdivision and five of the seven multi-family lots have been sold and construction has begun on one unit. The goal of Parkview is to provide a mixture of housing opportunities, from, ownership, to rentals and possibly senior-friendly units. I expect we will see quite a bit of construction activity this spring and summer. Work will continue on the new park and playground in Westview this year. The walking trail in the park was paved this fall and will soon provide a route to downtown and link south to Centennial Park. More waterline replacement, paving and sidewalk repairs will be part of the summer projects along with the usual summer maintenance and repairs. The Town currently expects the new Public Works building to be ready for occupancy this spring and since the lots in the Airport Industrial Park are all sold, work will begin this year on opening up more in that area as well. As the housing supply improves and we make more industrial land available, existing businesses will be able to expand and new businesses will be attracted to Bow Island.

This fall the Town launched its re-vamped website featuring a better layout, improved events calendars and an interactive map. We are now pleased to implement a Mass Notification system to reach Bow Island citizens through calls, texts, and/or emails, providing timely updates regarding emergencies such as water breaks, severe weather, and other critical information. You will have the option to sign up for notifications related to Community Events and Recreational Activities, as well as General Information. You must enroll to receive these notifications and can do so by going to the Town website and clicking on the Mass Notification icon. Follow the instructions and select the type of notices you wish to receive. Our goal is to provide good, timely information and not send you spam. If you have questions or any issues with enrollment, feel free to call the Town Office.

After 13 years with the Town of Bow Island, Community Peace Officer Jason Schrieber is moving on to a new opportunity at Cypress County. Council appreciates Jason's role in bylaw enforcement emergency management and safety. He is leaving us with a very comprehensive emergency plan and has helped lay the groundwork for a regional emergency management agency with the County and the Village. We thank Jason for his service and wish him all the best.

A few months ago I mentioned the thrift store being operated by volunteers at the United Church, every Tuesday and Saturday. These folks continue to provide the community with an affordable option for recirculating used clothing and other goods while at the same time raising money for local causes, such as the Food Bank and FCSS programs. Stop in for a coffee and check out what is on offer and, bring them items you would normally donate in the city.

Many people in the community have been dealing with severe colds, flu, COVID, RSV and so on. We are currently missing at least one doctor, and some of these illnesses have impacted other staff as well. The doctors are getting some help from locums and management is doing their best to keep the hospital staffed. As a result, wait times have increased at the hospital and clinic and at times, staff are under a lot of pressure. They are, without a doubt, doing the best they can, and we have to remember that challenges with the system are not their fault. Recruiting continues for additional doctors by AHS (or whatever they are going to be called), in the meantime it will take some patience.

There's a lot of bright spots in Bow Island's future but obviously there will be some challenges too. By cooperating and working together, I am sure our community will continue to grow and develop, especially in 2025.

I wish you all good health and happiness this year.

Mayor Gordon Reynolds