



## **Agenda**

### **Summer Village of Rochon Sands Ratepayers Annual General Meeting August 23, 2025, at 9:00 AM Rochon Sands Public Works Shop (Shady Drive)**

1. Appointment of a Chairperson
2. Appointment of a Recording Secretary
3. Approval of the Agenda
4. Approval of the Minutes from the August 3, 2024, Summer Village of Rochon Sands Ratepayers Annual General Meeting
5. Financial
  - i. 2024 Audited Financial Statements Report  
– Justin Tanner, CPA, CA - Gitzel & Company
  - ii. 2025 Financial Summary for the Summer Village of Rochon Sands
6. Report from the Mayor
7. Report from Rochon Sands Hall & Recreation Association
8. S/Sgt. Cam Russell (Stettler RCMP Detachment Commander)
9. Ratepayers Questions
10. Adjourn

#### **Summer Village of Rochon Sands Council & Staff**

Dan Hiller - Mayor

Darren Benson - Councillor

Jim Blaney - Councillor

John Jacobson - Chief Administrative Officer

Holly Chappell Benoit - Office/Parks Manager

Lorne Schmidek - Public Works Supervisor



## Ratepayer Annual General Meeting – Rules of Order

### Introduction

1. **Welcome** – Thank you for attending today’s Ratepayer Information Meeting.
2. **Legislative Context** – Summer Villages are municipalities under Alberta’s *Municipal Government Act (MGA)*. They must follow the same legislative requirements as other municipalities unless otherwise specified.
3. **Meeting Requirement** – The MGA does **not** require municipalities, including Summer Villages, to hold Annual General Meetings (AGMs) or Ratepayer Meetings. While not mandatory, the Summer Village of Rochon Sands chooses to hold this meeting to provide information and hear from residents.
4. **Respectful Participation** – Open discussion and respectful debate are encouraged.
5. **Scope of Discussion** – Comments and questions should focus on topics affecting the community as a whole. Personal concerns or grievances should be submitted in writing to Council for consideration at a future Council meeting.
6. **Respect and Courtesy** – All attendees and presenters must treat one another with respect at all times.
7. **Regular Council Meetings** – Council meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at the Council Chambers, Summer Village Office.

### Procedure

1. **Call to Order** – The Mayor calls the meeting to order.
2. **Chairperson Appointment** – A Chairperson is appointed by motion from the floor.
3. **Recording Secretary Appointment** – A Recording Secretary is appointed by motion from the floor.
4. **Adopt Agenda** – The agenda is adopted by motion from the floor.
5. **Follow Agenda** – All discussion proceeds according to the adopted agenda.

**Thank you for your participation and commitment to our community.**



**RATEPAYERS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
MINUTES FOR AUGUST 3RD, 2024, 10:00 AM**

**Call to Order:** Mayor Dan Hiller called the meeting to order @ 10:04 a.m. He welcomed those in attendance and presented the Meeting Rules of Order.

**Chairperson:** Carol Dyck was appointed Chairperson.

**Secretary:** Laurene Black was appointed Recording Secretary.

**Agenda Approved:** Kerry Kuefler moved to approve the agenda as presented. CARRIED

**Approval of 2023 Minutes:** Rob Brennan moved the minutes from 2023 (included in pkg and posted on SVRS website), be approved. CARRIED

**Financial Report:**

- The 2023 Financial Statements Report from Gitzel & Company was included in the AGM meeting package. It was also posted on the SVRS Website since the end of April 2024. The Statement indicates a balanced budget for 2023, with \$5,841 surplus.
- A summary of the 2024 SVRS budget/financials was included in the meeting package. The complete 2024 Financial Summary is available on the SVRS website - [www.rochonsands.net](http://www.rochonsands.net)
- Mayor Hiller reported that there were no representatives from the auditors to make a presentation but that the auditor's report had been approved by the Council at the April 27, 2024, Special Meeting of Council. He highlighted that the Provincial Park was doing well and that money was transferred to the Summer Village accounts in addition to the 65% left in for future park improvement.

**Report from Mayor:**

- Review of administration changes over past year including the separation of operations between Rochon Sands and White Sands administration under the same CAO and staff.
- John Jacobson was hired in Sept 2023 and has been a great asset for the operations management. Holly Chappell Benoit was hired in the spring as the Office/Parks Manager. She has been doing a great job, especially with grant funding applications.
- A **Canada Summer Jobs Grant** was received to fund 25% of summer staff salaries required to support both the Provincial Park management and SVRS maintenance.
- The **Bucket Fill Station** has been open for access to potable water provided by the Shirley McLellan Waterline. There are 2 options for expansion which would include adding a reservoir and a pump station or a low-pressure system where each resident would require a cistern. The first is preferred, however it is much more expensive, and we need to wait for government funding.
- **Buffalo Lake Stabilization** the pumps are not projected to be back online until 2028 due to carp in the Red Deer River.
- **Boat Launch repairs & dredging** – The Park boat launch dock was replaced by the aluminum dock that was at the main boat launch. The Rochon Bay Marina Society has lent some of their

dock to the main boat launch for this year. This has worked well so the Village will be purchasing some more. The bay boat launch cannot be dredged without government approval, however, the administrator explained that representatives from the Land Office were out and took pictures, so the province is aware of the problems in the bay. A suggestion was made that other communities and outside users pay to use our launch which would help cover repair costs. The suggestion will be discussed with other surrounding communities. The Donation box at the main boat launch has raised \$35.00. Question about other boats bringing in Carp and reported we are unable to monitor thoroughly enough.

- **Snak Shack:** It has been verified that the building is owned by Kaz, and the property is leased on an annual basis. Kaz made a commitment at the May 14, 2024, Council Meeting to make the necessary changes and upgrades to comply with AHS requirements. With this work completed, Kaz will proceed with the yearly lease agreement with the SVRS. There is no reason to believe that Kaz will not continue to operate for years to come.
- The administrator met with Christine from the Alberta Parks Land Office and is working on a **Shoreline Lease** that will accommodate an expansion.
- Report on the **East Beach Street** road construction, which is contingent upon finalizing the Government of Alberta funding agreement. The SVRS has been working with WSP Engineering and the Province.
- **Ambulance Authority** is locally managed by a private contractor unlike other municipalities. There will be upcoming renegotiations for a new funding contract with AHS related to this service.
- **Doctor Retention and Recruitment Program** – an intermunicipal plan is in place to recruit much needed doctors to this area. This will result in increased costs to pay remuneration to attract new physicians. We will also be lobbying the government to properly compensate doctors, especially in rural areas.
- **Waste Management** – as the dumpsters are being stretched, work is being done in relation to a South Shore Transfer Station. In collaboration with White Sands and the County of Stettler, we are hoping to purchase land in the next year. Several options are being investigated.
- **Hwy 835 Paving** - Construction on the repaving (not widening) of HW 835 to commence during August. The construction will begin at Erskine and carry through to the Provincial Park. Additional attention and work will be conducted on Sands Street adjacent to Charlotte's lake due to the sink hole trouble spots including the placement of culverts. The guard rail will be added at the corner of Bay View and Sands Street at the top of the hill.
- **Permanent Washroom Structure** – now that the Snak Shak has been addressed and a new building by the Summer Village is not in the plans at this time, plans will continue with for a 3-season washroom that is easily cleanable. Grant funding had been received previously.
- A question was raised about **Sewer management issues**. Septic disposal is still an issue everywhere due to transport costs. The Red Willow Lagoon is still not suitable for sewage and hauling is being taken to Bashaw. This might be open in the spring of 2025.
- **Speed bumps on Sand Street** were requested due to the high risk of injury as the traffic is still way too fast on this road. The struggle is that it is a provincial highway, and they are not open to speed bumps. There was discussion regarding a speed trap or better signage. Speed traps are very expensive and once again, rumble strips would have to be presented to Alberta Transportation.
- **Walking Path up Sand Street** had been in the plans but it was discovered that it would require crosswalk and lights to go across the provincial highway, which became cost prohibitive. There is still an option at 4 Bay View Street that has been considered.

### **Rochon Sands Hall and Recreation Association Update – Celene Rajewski:**

- Busy year with many successful events, both with rentals and community events.
- Pickle ball tournament followed by a supper and dance with music by the Boss Hill Band on August 24, 2024
- We have hosted Christmas in the Village, Spring Fling, membership drive, Canada Day breakfast where over 400 were fed, Highly successful Big Jack Classic -with 380 entries, Summer Library Program, Community Coffee parties on Wednesday mornings through the winter, Kim Donaghey's fitness program where all monies are donated to our beautiful flowers at the hall and entrance to the lake, Darren Benson and Jeff Hagel held a Texas Hold'em Poker night that was sold out and raised funds for the fireworks and another local charity, hosted Erskine School's cross country run with other county schools.
- We had 7 wedding rentals and 8 other one day event rentals.
- Our dedicated Treasurer is leaving us, so we are looking for someone else to help us out in this area or any other capacity on the 9-person board. Or if you want to volunteer it takes lots of volunteers to make these events successful.
- Some local youths are organizing "Movie Nights" on Wednesdays for the rest of the summer. These are being sponsored by local businesses – Remax Realtors, Fresh Wives, Allied Vessel, Nixon Projects and WoodHill Instrumentation. Thanks to all of them.
- The Hall Association continues to be a place of connection for our community, and we have had a successful fun filled year.

### **"Coffee With the Cops"**

Staff/Sergeant Cam Russell from the RCMP, Clint Slime, Manager of Protective Services and Director of Emergency Management with the County of Stettler and a representative from Provincial Conservation Services were in attendance and answered questions from the community.

A presentation was made on creating a safe environment around your property by using the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). These include Natural Surveillance, Access Control, Territorial reinforcement and Maintenance. Major points were:

1. cut all shrubs to 2 feet in height and trees to 6 feet, this allows for better surveillance so that thieves cannot hide and access our cabins easily without being detected by others.
2. control access by planting thorny bushes, adding gates and fencing, and organizing someone to monitor your cabin when not there such as use of cameras, neighbours or security guards.
3. Place signs and lights to create barriers for the perpetrators.
4. Maintenance -ensure that your lawn is cut, or snow is cleared to appear that someone is home, fix broken windows, and anything else that would make it appear that no one is around or cares about the property.

All members of Protective Services are CPTED certified and can conduct a free assessment of your home or business. For more information you can contact County of Stettler Protective Services (403-741-6133)

Staff Sergeant Russell commended the area on low crime rate and neighbors who care about each other and their community. He provided information on some of the current issues related to traffic concerns and bylaws affecting the SVRS. He discussed the status of the laws related to golf carts

utilization on the roads. Without a specific bylaw addressing this, it is illegal to drive on roads. He discussed other jurisdictions that have created certain bylaws to address this, Lacombe County being an example. He did state that the officers were not ticketing at this time as it appears to be something that the Council will address this next year. A coordinated plan is being developed with the Summer Village of White Sands and the County. Mayor Hiller explained that if this proceeds then any resident with a golf cart who can produce proof of insurance will be able to apply for a permit to drive within our roadways. There will be a cost to this and rules as per Alberta Transportation and only driven by operators with a driver's permit or license (i.e. age 14 and above).

In relation to traffic violations like speeding, he indicated that enforcement has increased, working in collaboration with County of Stettler Protective Services. He said that speed bumps were a definite deterrent even though people complain about them. Questions were asked regarding placing speed bumps on 835 into village to the Provincial Park, but it would be unlikely that would ever be approved since it is a provincial Highway.

**Questions from Rate Payers:**

- Questions regarding the Lake depth in the Bay and access to Boat Launches. Councilor Jay Buyer reported that he attends The Buffalo Lake Water Management Committee that meets "every couple of months". Further questioning related to the Boat Launch in the Bay being able to charge for day use access like other lakes in Alberta do. Mayor Hiller stated that it is provincial property due to the road right of way, so that would not be possible.
- Questions related to the ongoing hazard presented with the lack of adherence to speed limits. 30km. into the Summer Village, through to Provincial Park on Bayview and uphill into Buffalo Estates. Choke Cherry Lane is 20 km, the provincial park is 15 km. discussion included liability, speed bumps and enforcement.

The council and staff were thanked for all their hard work as well as our appreciation in relation to inviting the RCMP, Protective Services and Fish and Wildlife to the meeting and for discussion.

**Meeting Adjourned @ 11:13 a.m. moved my Geraldine Dennis**

2024 Summer Village of Rochon Sands Ratepayer AGM - August 3, 2024 – Attendance Sheet

	NAME	ADDRESS
1.	Carol Isaman	# 1 Bay View Street
2.	Joan Durand	#15 Marina Cres
3.	Barb Fricisz	#20 Beach Street
4.	Jay Byler	1 Bay View St.
5.	Judith & Barb Grollmuss	71 Sands Street.
6.	Sheldon Grollmuss	63 Sand Street.
7.	Brian Buck	61 SAND STREET.
8.	John & Debi Jacobson	35 Sands ST
9.	Shane Menard	2 Choke Cherry Ln.
10.	Mechild Brennan	21 Shady Drive
11.	Hannah Hudson	11 Sands St
12.	Darlene Helmer	27 Beach St. W.
13.	Dixie Billings	26 Beach St West
14.	Rob Brennan	21 Shady Drive.
15.	Mel Dyck	17 Bayview st
16.	Daine Brinson	31 Lakeview Drive.
17.	Wayne Miller	8 SANDS CRESC.
18.	Brian Hawkins	7 Choke Cherry Lane.
19.	AL TREMMER	20 ✓ — —
20.	Jessie Walker	4 Beach St. East
21.	Casey Yousph	33 Bayview St
22.	Meraldine Dennis	5 Bandy Dr.
23.	Alexia * Camie Kuyler	#3 Choke cherry lane
24.	LORNA & RAY O'HARA	#39 BEAVIER ST.
25.	LORNE SCHMIDTKE	PUBLIC WORK
26.	Laurene Black & Jim Blaney	15 chokecherry lane
27.	Dave Nelson	#1 Chokecherry lane
28.	Paul [Signature]	19 SAND ST
29.	Don Norman	10 Choke Cherry Lane

NAME	ADDRESS
30. <del>ROSEMARY BURRIS</del>	#A BUFFALO WAY
31. Dave Johnson	57 Sands St.
32. KEN Reedkopf	11 LAKE VIEW Drive
33. Betty Layton	# 5 Sands Street
34. Gregg Nixon	32 Beach Street East
35. Noel Nixon	2 Shady Drive
36. Carol Dyck	17 Bay View St.
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# **Financial Summary**

## **2025 Annual Ratepayers Meeting**

### **Budget Introduction**

#### **Why do municipalities have to develop budgets?**

Under Alberta's Municipal Government Act (MGA), every municipality is required to develop a three-year operating budget and five-year capital budget to allocate revenues and expenditures for their municipality.

#### **What is an operating budget?**

An operating budget is a financial plan that balances the expected costs Administration believes the Summer Village will incur in the general day-to-day activities which is primarily funded through taxation and grants. The operating budget makes up the day-to-day costs needed to provide the services and programs.

#### **What is a capital budget?**

The Summer Village's capital budget is like purchasing a home or vehicle – it funds major fixed assets for the future. At home, capital costs include your home, vehicles and renovations. The capital budget also funds the repayment of debt. At the Summer Village, capital purchases include machinery, vehicles, buildings, and parks.

#### **How does the municipality fund budgets?**

Council and Administration work diligently to calculate exactly how much money is necessary to fund the programs and services in the operating and capital budgets and then generate the funds from multiple sources including taxable property assessments, net transfers from reserve, federal and provincial grants and user fees and sale of goods.

Everything the Summer Village does has an associated cost, whether it is a direct service such as snow removal and the purchasing of a vehicle to use for road maintenance or an indirect cost such as maintaining our facilities and operating the municipality.

#### **What is a reserve?**

A reserve is like a savings account. Every year, the Summer Village puts funds into reserves. Money is only taken out of a reserve when needed and used for critical capital and operational budget items. The advantage of putting money into reserves is that interest accrues on a large portion of the balance.

#### **How are property values assessed?**

Residential property values are based on the home's market value, which is the price a property is reasonably expected to sell for if sold by a willing seller to a willing buyer. Municipal Assessors, independent of the municipality, gather information on ranges of sale prices in the marketplace and use these sales to determine the assessed values. In setting the values on a property, assessors complete the valuation using mass appraisal techniques and statistical data as part of the process for calculating market value assessments.

Some types of property such as farmland, machinery & equipment, and linear are assessed using provincially regulated values and therefore have different valuation standards than market value.

## 2025 Budget Overview

### Factors affecting the 2025 Budget:

- The Operating Budget reflects the costs of operating a municipal office and two provincial campgrounds, equipment and staffing, and inflationary increases in all categories. The Municipal Office staff consist of a permanent full-time CAO and a permanent full-time Office/Parks Manager. The full-time Office/ Park Manager was hired mid-year in 2024 – this budget will account for the entire year. A Public Works Supervisor works full-time 6 months of the year while a part-time public works employee is employed to operate the snow removal equipment and manage minor public works duties in the off-season. Four summer students are hired for 4 months in the summer to perform duties throughout the municipality and the 2 provincial campgrounds.
- **Requisitions increased significantly in 2025.** Listed below are the **mandatory requisition payments** that the Summer Village incurs:
  - the Alberta Education requisition
  - the County of Stettler Housing Authority requisition
  - the Provincial Policing
  - the Stettler Fire Department
  - Stettler Regional Emergency Management Authority
  - the Stettler Waste Management Authority
  - Regional Assessment Review Board
  - Subdivision Development Appeal Board
  - Parkland Regional Library Board
- An increase in Assessment revenues.
- The fire bans in 2024 contributed to a decrease in Provincial Park attendance over the previous year.
- Equipment repairs will increase based on service inflation and the age of some of the equipment.
- The municipality maintains 10 kms of roadway and ditches, must maintain drainage, signage, trees, beach area, garbage, municipal public properties, and maintenance of etc.
- The Municipality has applied for the annual Canada Summer Student Grants for the municipality to hire summer students to work in the municipal office, RSPP office, and to assist with municipal and campground grass cutting, outhouse maintenance, garbage, and beach cleanup. This grant helps offset approximately a quarter of the wages for the summer staff.
- The capital grant funding through the Local Government Fiscal Framework (LGFF) continues in 2025. The funding allocation for 2025 is \$73,893, this is a small increase from the \$71,938 allocation in 2024.
- The Summer Village of Rochon Sands Municipal Election takes place this year, 2025. There will be additional expenses in 2025 of approximately \$5,000 for the general election and Administration is budgeting \$3,000 for mandatory elected official training as per the MGA following the election.

### External Factors:

- Originally, economic growth in Canada is projected to rise to around 1.8% in 2025 and 2026, outpacing potential output, and excess supply is gradually absorbed. Inflation is expected to remain close to the Bank of Canada's 2% target. - Bank of Canada
  - The economic outlook depended on several key assumptions. **Importantly, the projection did not incorporate any wide-ranging US tariffs.** New tariffs will significantly affect the outlooks for growth and inflation. Reflecting an increase in uncertainty about US trade policy, there will be a negative impact on Canadian business investment.

## Requisitions and the Summer Village Budget

Each year, the Summer Village of Rochon Sands is required by the Province of Alberta and other governing bodies to collect and remit funds known as **requisitions**. These amounts are **not controlled or set by Council** but are mandated by external authorities.

### Alberta School Foundation Requisition

- Every Alberta municipality must collect taxes to fund the public education system.
- In 2025, the Province announced an 8.42% increase from 2024 as part of the Alberta Government's budget.
- The Summer Village is required to collect this amount from our taxpayers and forward it quarterly to the Province.
- Council has no ability to adjust, reduce, or defer these amounts.

### County of Stettler Housing Authority Requisition

- This amount is set by the County of Stettler Housing Authority.
- The Summer Village collects these funds and remits them directly to the County Housing Authority.

### Other Requisitions

- Other organizations also provide essential services to the Summer Village under the Municipal Government Act (MGA).
- These requisitioned amounts are paid directly from the Summer Village's general operating budget and are not itemized separately on your tax notice as per the MGA.
- Many of these services are mandatory for the Summer Village to operate legally and safely.

### Impact on the Summer Village Budget

- Requisitions make up a **significant portion of the total taxes collected**.
- Because these amounts are **legally mandated and set by outside organizations, Council cannot control or change them**.
- When requisitions increase (such as the 8.42% increase for education), this directly impacts the taxes we must collect from residents.

While the Summer Village Council is responsible for managing and budgeting the local municipal portion of taxes, a large share of your total property tax bill goes to requisitions that the Summer Village is simply required to collect and forward on your behalf.

Alberta School Foundation Requisition	\$177,925.00
County of Stettler Housing Authority Requisition	\$ 28,339.00
Capital Regional Assessment Review Board Agency	\$ 960.00
County of Stettler Recreation Board	\$ 3,600.00
Municipal Property Consultants – Assessment Services	\$ 9,000.00
Parkland Regional Library Board	\$ 952.00
Parkland Regional Subdivision Development Appeal Board	\$ 1,250.00
Provincial Policing	\$ 11,350.00
Shirley McClellan Regional Water Service Commission	\$ 6,800.00
Stettler Regional Emergency Management Authority	\$ 10,140.00
Stettler Regional Fire Department	\$ 21,000.00
Stettler Regional Waste Management Authority	\$ 11,622.00
<b>TOTAL REQUISITIONS</b>	<b>\$ 282,938.00</b>

## 2025 Operating Budget Summary

### 2025 Operating Budget

<b>General Ledger</b>	<b>2024 Budget</b>	<b>2024 Actual</b>	<b>2025 Budget</b>
<b><u>REVENUES</u></b>			
Administration	\$ 18,092	\$ 20,528	\$ 21,992
Protective Services	\$ 480	\$ 476	\$ 3,273
Common Services	\$ 3,200	\$ 3,200	\$ 7,200
Planning & Development	\$ 5,100	\$ 4,704	\$ 6,700
Parks & Recreation	\$ -	\$ 936	\$ 936
Provincial Parks	\$ 202,900	\$ 177,303	\$ 188,950
Culture	\$ 7,000	\$ 5,360	\$ 5,360
Excess Collection of Requisitions	\$ 9,710	\$ 9,773	-\$ 65
Taxes	\$ 480,970	\$ 480,508	\$ 523,370
Other	\$ 16,000	\$ 19,760	\$ 12,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ 743,452</b>	<b>\$ 722,549</b>	<b>\$ 769,716</b>
<b><u>EXPENSES</u></b>			
Council & Legislative	\$ 10,700	\$ 9,215	\$ 10,700
Administrative Services	\$ 160,320	\$ 165,268	\$ 185,320
Common Office	\$ 14,300	\$ 12,317	\$ 12,500
Assessor	\$ 13,360	\$ 9,341	\$ 9,960
Municipal Election	\$ 200	\$ -	\$ 5,000
Municipal Protective Service	\$ 38,964	\$ 41,947	\$ 40,950
Transportation	\$ 83,000	\$ 73,661	\$ 81,050
Water Supply	\$ 6,780	\$ 1,903	\$ 6,800
Landfill & Recycling	\$ 14,324	\$ 14,394	\$ 14,822
Subdivision & Development	\$ 13,100	\$ 8,373	\$ 10,850
Parks & Rec	\$ 25,627	\$ 20,676	\$ 18,650
Prov Parks	\$ 160,551	\$ 147,105	\$ 159,736
Culture Expense	\$ 8,735	\$ 6,673	\$ 7,112
Contingency	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Non-Municipal Requisition	\$ 193,486	\$ 193,486	\$ 206,265
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 743,447</b>	<b>\$ 704,360</b>	<b>\$ 769,715</b>
<b>SURPLUS/DEFICIT</b>	<b>\$ 5</b>	<b>\$ 18,190</b>	<b>\$ 1</b>

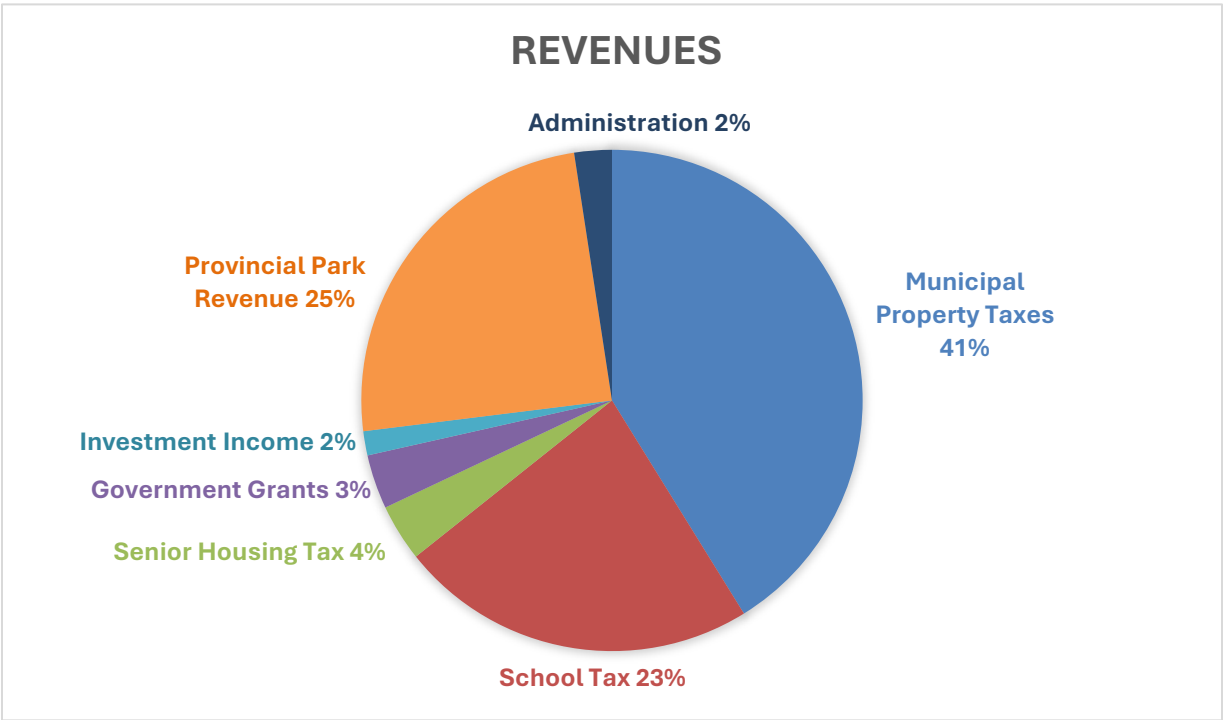
### GICs

The Summer Village of Rochon Sands will require approximately \$250,000 in operating costs prior to receiving tax revenues in July of 2025. Reserves and surpluses are invested in GICs which will generate approximately \$12,000 in revenues in 2025. The 1-year Cashable GICs may be used to offset the 2025 January to July cash flow requirements. Received grant moneys also make up a portion of GIC funds.

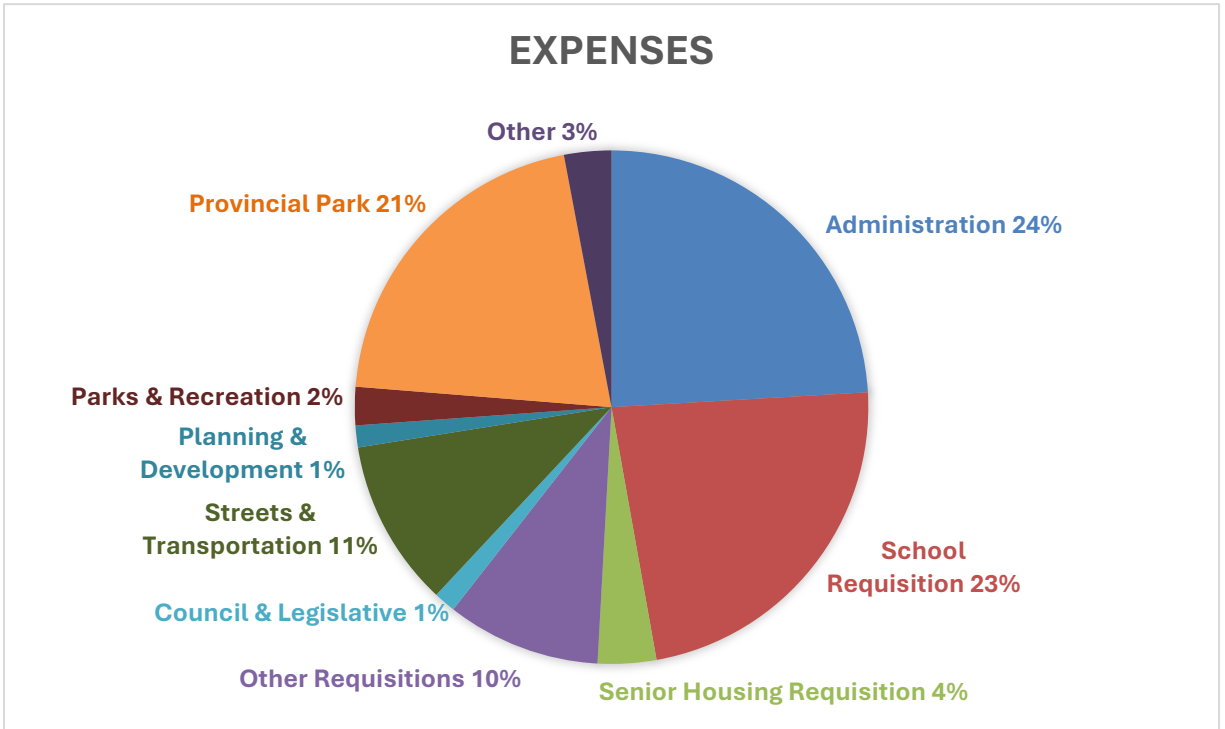
The following are the Summer Village of Rochon Sands' GIC investments based on investment opportunities and cash-flow requirements in 2025.

- 1-year Cashable GIC at 3.0% (\$100,000)
- 1-year Cashable GIC at 3.0% (\$200,000)
- 1-year Non-Redeemable GIC at 3.58% (\$350,000)

**Revenues**



**Expenses**

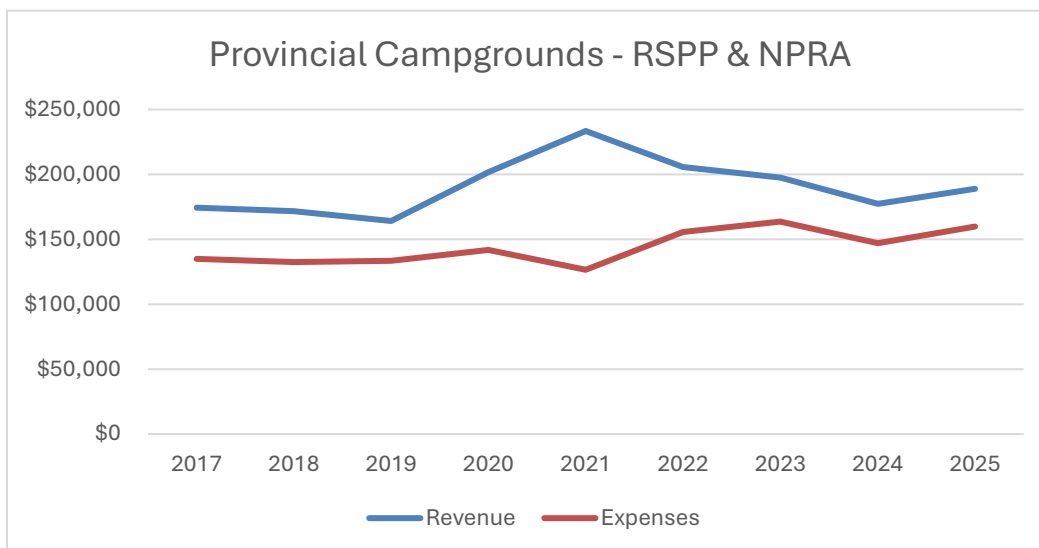


## Rochon Sands Provincial Park Budget Summary

The Summer Village of Rochon Sands holds the Operating Leases for the Rochon Sands Provincial Park (RSPP) and The Narrows Provincial Recreation Area (NPRA). Revenues and expenses for RSPP and NPRA are included within the Operating Budget of the Summer Village of Rochon Sands.

- The fire bans during the 2024 camping season negatively affected campground revenues.
- Even with reduced revenues, the Provincial Parks realized a profit of \$30,198.
- The Provincial Parks 2024 profit/surplus of \$30,198 was split \$7,549 (25%) to Provincial Parks Reserves, and \$22,649 (75%) to Summer Village General Revenue as per Council Resolution RES 24-04-18.
- The 2025 camping rates will be maintained at the same rates as 2024, for both NPRA and RSPP campgrounds.
- The cost of online reservations will be borne by campers at the time of booking reservations.
- Estimated revenue and expense levels for 2025 will resemble actual revenue numbers for the 2024 season.
- As part of the Provincial Park agreement, any replacement of signage, benches, tables, etc. will be approved through Council resolution as required, and costs allocated through the provincial park capital reserve account.

Year	Revenue	Expenses	Surplus
2017	\$174,340	\$134,992	\$39,348
2018	\$171,691	\$132,392	\$39,299
2019	\$164,151	\$133,514	\$30,637
2020	\$201,857	\$141,969	\$59,888
2021	\$233,492	\$126,547	\$106,945
2022	\$205,824	\$155,604	\$50,220
2023	\$197,621	\$163,666	\$33,955
2024	\$177,303	\$147,105	\$30,198
2025	\$188,950	\$159,736	\$29,214



# Financial Impact of Provincial Park Campgrounds for the *Summer Village of Rochon Sands*

Operating the Rochon Sands Provincial Park and Narrows Recreation Area campgrounds is a significant undertaking for Summer Village staff. This work continues because it delivers direct and meaningful benefits to the ratepayers of the Summer Village of Rochon Sands. The campgrounds consistently generate a profit, offsetting municipal operating costs and helping to maintain a lower tax rate for residents.

## Historical Financial Performance

Over the past five years, the campgrounds have generated an average net revenue of \$48,947.41 annually.

An analysis of the past three years' average operating income shows that, without operating the parks, the Village would have faced an average annual operating deficit of approximately \$45,000. Addressing this shortfall would have required significant budget reductions, or, to put it in perspective, this would be equivalent to a 16% yearly increase in property taxes.

## Additional Tangible & Intangible Benefits

### 1. Investment Income

- The Provincial Park Reserve, currently \$102,503.66, can be invested in higher-interest options such as GICs, generating additional revenue for the Summer Village.
- Since 2021, investment income from the reserve has totaled approximately \$8,500.

### 2. Cash Flow Advantages

- Campground reservation income is received early in the year, prior to property tax collection.
- This improves cash flow, allowing funds to remain invested longer and earn higher returns.

### 3. Storage and Facilities

- The Summer Village's main Public Works Shop and equipment storage are located within the Provincial Park.
- Discontinuing Park operations would require securing and funding alternative storage—likely at substantial cost.

### 4. Shared Equipment Costs

- Equipment such as the tractor, dump trailer, ride-on lawn mowers, and fire trailer are used for both municipal and park operations.
- Shared maintenance costs reduce overall equipment expenses. Without the parks, the Village would bear the full cost of upkeep.

## Conclusion

Continuing to operate the park campgrounds strengthens the Summer Village's overall financial position. In addition to generating positive net revenue, the campgrounds provide valuable indirect benefits, including improved cash flow, additional investment income, and reduced infrastructure costs.

These advantages help keep property taxes lower for residents while sustaining a high level of municipal service and infrastructure. As long as operations remain profitable and continue delivering both tangible and intangible benefits, the campgrounds should remain a vital part of the Summer Village's financial strategy and long-term sustainability.

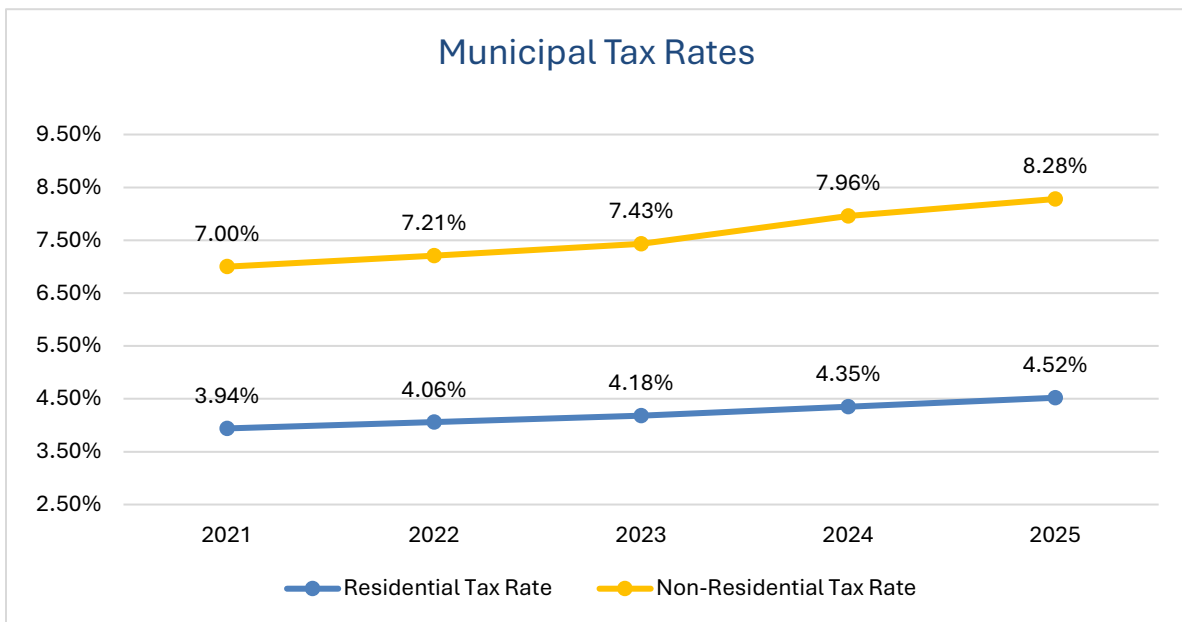
## Assessment Values

The total assessment value of property in the Summer Village of Rochon Sands has increased by 2.78% from the previous year. Assessment values used for the current tax year are based on the previous year. As per the Municipal Government Act, assessments for all property in a municipality, must be prepared by a provincially accredited assessor who is independent of the municipality.

## Property Tax Bylaw No. 271-25

As per Property Tax Bylaw No. 271-25, property taxes increased by 4% and include a Municipal Minimum tax of \$800. (The minimum tax of \$800 affects 14 tax rolls with the majority of those residential property owners realizing a difference of less than \$100.)

- 2025 - 4.52 residential tax rate (mill rate) and a 8.28 non-residential tax rate (mill rate).



## Franchise Fees

Rochon Sands Council has historically decided **not to implement franchise fees** for APEX Utilities or ATCO Electric as additional revenues for the Summer Village. Both remain at 0%. Implementing Franchise Fees would increase costs to the Summer Village of Rochon Sands ratepayer.

### Understanding Franchise Fees – And Why Rochon Sands Doesn't Charge Them

As part of Council's commitment to transparent governance and fiscal responsibility, the Summer Village of Rochon Sands would like to explain a little-known cost that affects many municipalities in Alberta—**franchise fees**—and why the Summer Village of Rochon Sands Council has made a conscious decision **not to collect them**.

## What Is a Franchise Fee?

A **franchise fee**, sometimes called a *local access fee*, is a charge that a municipality can apply to utility companies (like ATCO or Apex) in exchange for allowing those companies to operate within municipal boundaries and use public land (e.g., for poles, lines, or pipes).

Although the fee is technically charged to the utility company, **it is passed directly to the resident — on their monthly utility bill**, usually under a line titled “Municipal Franchise Fee” or “Local Access Fee.”

## How Much Are Franchise Fees?

Municipalities in Alberta can charge up to:

- **20%** of electricity distribution costs
- **35%** of natural gas distribution costs

In real terms, this can add **hundreds of dollars per year** to a household’s utility bills. Many municipalities see this as an easy way to raise revenue **without directly increasing property taxes**. Thus, the fees add up to tens of thousands of dollars for small municipalities and hundreds of millions of dollars for large municipalities.

## A “Hidden” Tax

While technically not a tax, franchise fees **function like one**. They are not tied to a resident’s property value, their income, or their service usage—they’re just added on top of a resident’s regular utility charges. And because they appear on utility bills rather than property tax notices, **many residents don’t even realize their municipality is collecting this money**.

This **lack of transparency** is one of the reasons the Summer Village of Rochon Sands **chooses not to impose franchise fees**.

## Why Rochon Sands Council Says No

Council has taken a firm position against implementing franchise fees for several reasons:

- **Transparency** – Council believes in clear, visible taxation where residents know exactly how much they’re contributing to the municipality.
- **Fairness** – Franchise fees disproportionately impact residents based on energy usage rather than property value or ability to pay.
- **Affordability** – With rising costs of living, Council strives to keep utility bills as low as possible for residents.

When residents look at their utility bills in Rochon Sands, they will **not** see an added franchise fee line—and that’s intentional. It’s part of Council’s commitment to transparent and fair municipal funding.

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**The full Summer Village of Rochon Sands 2024 audited financial statements and the budget/assessment/requisition/tax financial document is available on the SVRS website.**