



5515 – 44 Avenue
Wetaskiwin, AB T9A 0C8
Ph: (780) 312-0928
Email: cao@extremesolutions.org
Web: www.itaska.ca

August 10, 2009

Honourable Ray Danyluk
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
#104 Legislature Building
Edmonton AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Danyluk,

Re: **S. V. of Itaska Beach – Residents Vote to keep Village Status**

At the Annual Meeting of the Summer Village of Itaska Beach on July 18, 2009 the Ratepayers made a motion from the floor, which was overwhelmingly supported, to not dissolve their 56 year old Summer Village and place it under the control of the County of Leduc or any other municipal infrastructure. In a nutshell the Summer Village of Itaska and other Summer Villages around Pigeon lake are an “Urban Community in a Rural Setting” with different needs as a Municipality.

As per my November 23, 2008 letter on Village viability, and now the direct feelings of its Ratepayers, the Council of the Summer Village of Itaska Beach requests that you reconsider the Provinces direction on this matter. A recap of my November 23, 2008 letter is as follows;

The Summer Village of Itaska Beach is viable and meets and exceeds the basic needs for its ratepayers as defined by your Ministry:

- 1) Basic infrastructure is in place
 - a. Our road is maintained each year to ensure the safety of all those that use the road
 - b. Wastewater treatment is maintained through a regional system (North East Pigeon Lake Sewer Commission)
 - c. Recreational facilities including a playground, tennis court, beach volleyball, basketball court and open park area

- 2) Resident's health and safety has never been at risk in Itaska:
 - a. Ambulance agreement with Parkland Agency
 - b. 9-1-1 Services agreement with Parkland County
 - c. Major Emergency Mutual Aid agreement with nearby municipalities and County
 - d. Peace Officer agreement with the Pigeon Lake Constabulary
 - e. Have an RCMP enhanced service, in addition to the RCMP protection as part of the rural allotment
 - f. Fire Protection Agreement with County of Wetaskiwin
 - g. Reserves in place for emergency and infrastructure sustainability

- h. Proactive in protecting the lake by educating ratepayers through newsletters, our website, annual meetings, and bylaws (recently passed a bylaw to ban all fertilizer use in Itaska); all ratepayers of Itaska Beach are members of the Pigeon Lake Watershed Association
- 3) Qualified staff is essential to run operations. We currently employ a Chief Administrative Officer that has completed the Municipal Internship Program offered through Municipal Affairs, and who received her Local Government Certificate – with distinction. As a recommendation, we would encourage the Government to require a minimum level of education for Chief Administrative Officers, such as the Local Government Certificate Program, which is already a requirement by the Society of Local Government Managers.

Summer villages provide services to residents in the most cost-effective manner. Where possible we ensure cooperation with neighbouring municipalities to deliver services such as garbage collection, policing and emergency services. Regional initiatives include:

- Association of Pigeon Lake Municipalities: interaction with Municipalities around the lake to address mutual concerns regarding protection of the lake and safety issues
- Pigeon Lake Watershed Association: to foster environmental change around the lake to improve water quality for all Albertans
- County of Leduc - cost sharing on roads

We are certainly willing to investigate further collaboration between municipalities.

The foregoing illustrates that not all Summer Villages and/or small communities are at risk. The municipalities that are well managed, working together and forming regional partnerships, play an important role in Alberta's future.

While urging you to preserve the basic mandate of summer villages, we are certainly willing to discuss ways in which we can be more effective and reflect your priorities for local government. To that end, we would be delighted to further this dialogue with you at your convenience.

The Council of the Summer Village of Itaska Beach wishes to thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Ralph B. Johnston, CMA
Mayor

CC Premier Ed Stelmach, of the Province of Alberta

Association of Summer Villages