



NEWS RELEASE
January 26, 2024

Positive Progress and Key Milestones Achieved by Amalgamation Committee

(Rocky Mountain House, AB) – The Amalgamation Committee, after productive meetings on January 25-26, 2024, successfully negotiated ten (10) mandatory topics and two (2) operational topics crucial for the final report to Municipal Affairs. Dedicated to ensuring a seamless transition, the Committee is actively working to maintain current service levels during the amalgamation process. Notably, the Committee's motions will not impact Clearwater County's approved 2024 budget.

Focused on community well-being, the Committee is diligently negotiating in the best interest of all residents. Importantly, budgetary decisions will be reserved for the Interim Council of the newly amalgamated municipality during the review of existing service levels.

Upon submission of the final report to the Minister, a comprehensive list of anticipated additional expenses for the Phase 2 Municipal Restructuring Study Stream Grant application will be included.

Key Outcomes from the Recent Meeting:

Proposed Amalgamation Formation Date - January 1, 2025, has been proposed for the formation of the new municipality.

Municipal Staffing - A Human Resources Change Management Plan will facilitate the integration of existing Village of Caroline employees into the new municipality.

Interim Council - The Interim Council, effective from the formation date to the next general municipal election, will consist of all existing Clearwater County and Village of Caroline Council members. The organizational meeting for the Interim Council will take place on January 7, 2025.

First Election After Amalgamation - The Committee recommended that a first election after amalgamation is not required, and the next general municipal election will be held on October 20, 2025.

General Municipal Election - No changes to the 2025 general municipal election timeline are required.

Appointment of Returning Officer - Tracy Haight will serve as the Returning Officer for the newly amalgamated municipality.

Library Services - A new municipal library board, allowed within the *Libraries Act and Regulations*, will be established by the newly formed municipality.

Bylaws and Resolutions of Existing Municipalities - No special actions are required for the existing bylaws and resolutions of Clearwater County and Village of Caroline, ensuring a smooth transition.

Continuation of Emergency Services - Current Regional Emergency Management Program and Plans, along with existing staff and bylaws, will carry over seamlessly to the new municipality.

Fire & Emergency Services Facility Future - The current status quo remains, including facility ownership, for both Clearwater County and Village of Caroline.

Fire Department (Operational) - All existing staff, bylaws, resolutions, and agreements related to these operations will carry over to the new municipality.



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Bylaws & Enforcement (Operational) - Clearwater County's current staff, bylaws, resolutions, agreements, and contracted services for municipal bylaw enforcement will continue seamlessly into the new municipality. Evaluations for potential service level adjustments will be considered during the transition.

The negotiation discussions will resume next month, with a commitment to transparency remaining a top priority for the Amalgamation Committee. Further details can be found by visiting the project website at www.clearwatercounty.ca/m/amalgamation. Meeting recordings are available on Clearwater County's YouTube Channel.

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For background information, please refer to the previous December 6, 2023 news release on the project website.

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