



Town absorbs huge requisition surges but keeps tax hike to 2.2%

May 23th, 2023, saw the passing of the Town of Tofield's 2023 Mill Rate Bylaw, for the purposes of taxation. Council voted unanimously to implement a two point two (2.2%) increase to the Municipal portion of property taxes.

Now, it is important to note that there are other requirements built into the taxes which will receive their own mill rate and are outside of the Town's control. These further requirements are Beaver Emergency Services Commission (BESC), Beaver Foundation, Alberta Policing, and the School Foundation Fund. Each of the aforementioned must be paid and built into the total combined mill rate each year.

Beaver Emergency Services (BESC) may be an unknown service to many. Therefore, Council felt it important to provide a descriptor. BESC provides fire protection services to Tofield and Beaver County as a whole. These services include the operation of fire halls, as well as the maintenance, upkeep and purchasing of buildings and equipment, such as firetrucks and tankers to provide this essential service to the communities they support. Emergency Management for the entire Beaver County Region is a service requirement for BESC. As we can see the hardship and strain throughout our province from the presence of wildfires, this is an exceptionally critical com-

ponent for our region's protection and well-being.

To provide further clarity on these additional, necessary areas, a break down will be provided below:

1. BESC – The BESC requisition for 2023 will see an amount of \$358,274. (42.67% increase from 2022).
2. The Town is required to levy taxes to pay the School Foundation Fund, this is \$489,038 (8.48% decrease from 2022).
3. The Town is also required to levy taxes to pay the requisition to the Beaver Foundation (seniors housing). The Foundation requisition is \$121,593 (15.95% increase from 2022).
4. Alberta Policing – This amount will be \$76,446 for 2023 (22.66% increase from 2022). This fee is being charged to all municipalities, as the former threshold for pay, was municipalities 5,000 and higher. This amount will continue to increase throughout the province for the next two years at least.

As one can see in the above breakdown, requisitions from other agencies contributed to an increase outside of the Town's control.

Therefore, overall, the total combined Mill Rate (Municipal, School, Seniors Foundation, Policing and BESC) will see varying increases on individual properties. Council felt it important for property owners to be aware of the breakdowns which are required outside of

simply the municipal component.

Further, the assessed value of a property is a direct correlation to an increase in taxation amounts. Assessment is the valuation placed upon a property by the Municipal Assessor. There are varying factors which contribute to the assessed value, however, some of these can be directly tied to sales of similar homes in your neighbourhood, and the final sales price.

For example, should your neighbour's home be sold, your home will be reassessed based upon the sales value of this property. Also, upgrades performed to your home, which have a direct result in a change of value for the overall property.

As you can see, there are a variety of components which must be taken into consideration for the total assessed value, which results in the final amount required for taxation purposes on each property in Tofield.

Council remains committed to the citizens of Tofield and felt that an increase to Municipal Taxes, for the purposes of Municipal Operations was necessary.

Your voices have been heard and Council will continue to remain fiscally prudent.

*Respectfully submitted,
Tofield Mayor and Council*