

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Town of Birch Hills

September 2016

2016 Municipal Election

Nomination Day—Nominations can be filed at the municipal administration office any time during regular office hours on September 6th to September 21st, 2016 and from **9:00 am to 4:00pm on September 21, 2016**.

Nomination papers must be signed by at least 5 voters of the municipality. **For eligible nominations, a criminal record check must be included with your Nomination Papers.**

Running for Municipal Office

As a member of council, you will have the opportunity to shape the future of your municipality. Any ideas or proposed changes you have in mind cannot be achieved without the support of other council members.

Many, if not most, council members have full-time jobs outside of municipal council. It's important not to underestimate the amount of dedication required to be an effective member of council. You will be elected to a four year term of office and are expected to participate in bi-weekly council meetings, council committee meetings; meetings of boards and agencies in which you are appointed as council's representative, etc. You may also need to spend a significant amount of time talking to the public, business, colleagues in other municipalities, municipal staff and your administrator. Continuing interaction with these groups is an essential part of making an informed decision as a council member.

Municipal council derives their authority from *The Municipalities Act*. Individual members of council are not permitted to make decisions on their own on behalf of the municipality. Any election promise you make during your campaign can only be carried out if you can convince a majority of council that it is in the best interest of the municipality.

WHO CAN RUN?

Persons eligible for nomination as a candidate in an urban municipality must:

- *Be at least 18 years of age on Election Day; and*
- *At the time of submission of the nomination paper, is a Canadian citizen; and*
- *Has resided in the municipality for at least 3 consecutive months and in Saskatchewan for at least 6 consecutive months.*

In This Issue

- 2016 Municipal Election
- Utility & Tax e-notices
- Pre-authorized payments
- Birch Hills Memorial Cemetery
- Tree Trimming
- Council Procedures
- Website



Municipal Election

Voting In Your Municipal Election

Your vote in a municipal election will impact the quality of life in your community. Municipal councils make decisions about things that are crucial elements of daily life. Your vote will impact the current and future sustainability of your community. Your vote is your opportunity to send a message on how you want your community governed. The more votes cast, the more powerful the message. Every vote counts. Your vote is your voice.....don't let others speak for you.

What to Look for in a Candidate—As a voter, you may or may not know which candidate(s) to vote for. If an election is required and depending on the issues facing your municipality, there may be a meet the candidates evening (candidates' forum) held. You may want to attend to see where candidates stand on a particular issue.

If an election is required.....

Vote on October 26, 2016

Who can Vote?—To Vote in a Saskatchewan Urban Municipal Election, you must be:

- a Canadian Citizen
- at least 18 years of age on Election Day
- A resident of Saskatchewan for at least 6 consecutive months,
- Either:
 - a) A resident of the municipality for at least 3 consecutive months immediately preceding the day of the elections, or
 - b) An owner of assessable land for at least 3 consecutive months immediately preceding the day of the election.

Please watch for further information regarding the Notice of Poll or the Notice of Abandonment of Poll after the Nomination Period closes.

Water Treatment Plant Maintenance

Thank you to all the residents and water consumers for everyone's understanding and co-operation during the week of construction. Fortunately the work ran smoothly and we didn't face any major up-sets. Thank you for all the kind words and encouragement to our Town Council, office staff and public works staff. Encouraging feedback goes a long way!



Water Treatment Plant

2016 Taxes have been coming in reasonably well. The Town has accumulated approximately 80% of the current years taxes.

Reminder that your 2016 taxes are due December 31st and are considered arrears if they are not paid by the end of the year. Year end reminder letters will be sent.

Back to School!

We wish the best of luck to all the students returning to the 2016/2017 school year; and welcome all new families to our community.

Please remember to obey all traffic signs and school zones signs to ensure a safe community for the children returning to school.



Pre-Authorized Payment

E-mail Utility & Tax Bills — Pre-Authorized Payments

Please Remember—

Anyone that is making a payment to the Town Office by Internet Banking must allow a few business days for the Town Office to receive and process the payment. Utility Bills are processed on the 1st of each month with interest applied to unpaid accounts on the last day of the month. For further information please contact your banking institution to clarify the length of time to process payments .

We are still receiving payments dated for the prior month several days into the new billing month that has already been charged interest

Town Office Invoicing and Payments Utility and Tax Accounts

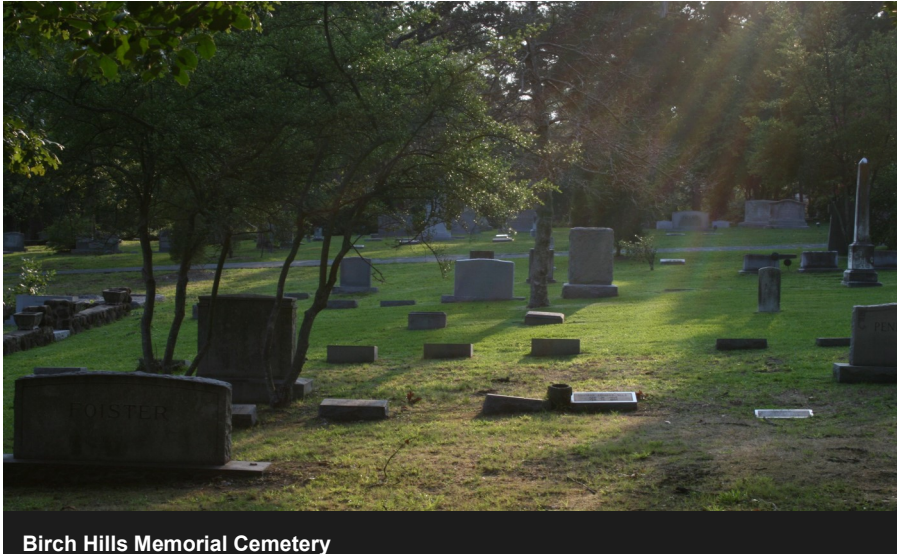
The Town has been working very hard to develop convenient services for all our ratepayers and consumers.

If you would rather receive your utility and tax notice by email, please fill out an email consent form and return it to the Town Office. An email consent form can be obtained on the Town website or at the Town Office.

NEW—PREAUTHORIZED DEBITS

The Town of Birch Hills is now offering pre-authorized debits for utility accounts and tax accounts! Contact the Town Office for more information or to fill out the PAD agreement.

We also accept online bill payments through any Credit Union affiliate, CIBC, and Scotia Bank. We are actively looking into offering further bank options, please help by mentioning your interest in adding the Town of Birch Hills as a vendor to your banking institution.



Birch Hills Memorial Cemetery

Birch Hills Memorial Cemetery

The Birch Hills Cemetery Board consist of eight (8) board members. These members are appointed by Town Council at the first meeting of council each year.

The Birch Hills Memorial Cemetery employs a cemetery caretaker and the Board strives to keep the cemetery well maintained with ongoing care of the cemetery. An annual "Visitation Day" is held each summer for families to clean up and/or decorate their plots. Please remember the Town of Birch Hills or the Cemetery Board is not responsible for the loss or damage to any flower holders or any portable objected placed on any plots. However, the caretaker, or authorized representative shall have the authority to remove any articles or objects, that in their opinion, are unsightly or have become a nuisance.

The Birch Hills Memorial Cemetery fund the operation and maintenance of the cemetery through donations, memorials and the sale of cemetery plots. The Birch Hills Cemetery Board would like to thank the families that have left generous memorials to the cemetery in the past and would like to ask that families keep the cemetery in mind in the future as the operation and maintenance is crucial to maintain a beautiful cemetery for everyone.

Please see the Town Office for the purchase of cemetery plots or if you have any question regarding the rules and regulations of the cemetery.

Garbage & Recycling Bins

Please ensure your garbage and recycling bins are removed from the street the same day as collection day. This has been an issue for street maintenance (street sweeping, grading, snow removal) and parking.

A Bylaw is currently being drafted to enforce this problem.

Fall Clean Up Week

The Town has declared October 8 through October 15 as Fall Clean Up Week.

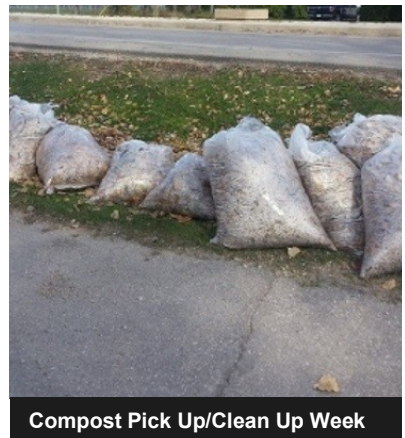
Please have your compostable material bundled and available for pick-up in you back alley where back alley access is available. Loose material will not be picked up.

The Town Compost Site will be open free of charge on:

Saturday, October 8, 2016

Saturday, October 15, 2016

The Compost Site is available to be opened during business hours at a fee of \$15. Please contact the Town office to arrange a time.



Compost Pick Up/Clean Up Week

The Town asks that nobody dispose of their grass clippings onto town streets, easements, ditches, or swales. This causes town culverts and storm sewers to become plugged during runoff.

Tree Trimming

The Town of Birch Hills is making an effort to ensure that the trees on all private property are not encroaching onto public areas. All property owners are requested to please check their property to ensure that all trees and shrubs are contained within their property and are not encroaching onto public property, including sidewalks and alleyways. If you require assistance in determining what areas, if any, may need attention, please contact the Town Office.

It is requested that you, please, trim back the branches of any trees to ensure that they do not overhang onto any municipal or private property including streets, alleyways, sidewalks and neighboring yards. The cut line of your branches should be flush to the property line.

Any trees that interfere with power lines may have to be trimmed by SaskPower. Please contact them at 1-888-757-6937 with any questions.



Municipal Council Meeting

Council Procedures

Back in 2015, there were a few amendments to *The Municipalities Act* that strengthen conflict of interest and conduct rules for municipal governments which include amendments for conflict of interest, public disclosure, procedural bylaws, code of conduct, code of ethics, and oath of office.

The Town of Birch Hills have passed the required council procedure bylaw, revised and updated the required code of ethics for members of council, and filed the required public disclosure statements of council.

Members of Council shall be truthful and open in their role as a council member and as a member of the community they serve. Members of Council shall make decisions carefully, fairly and impartially. Members of Council are expected to perform their duties in a manner that will bear close public scrutiny and must not provide the potential for or an opportunity for personal benefit, wrongdoing, or unethical conduct. This includes disclosing actual or potential conflicts of interest, either financial or otherwise relating to the responsibilities as a Member of Council, following policies and procedures of the municipality, and exercising all conferred power strictly for the purpose for which the powers have been conferred. Every Member of Council is individually responsible for preventing potential and actual conflicts of interest.

The Town of Birch Hills is currently in compliance with all the previous amendments to *The Municipalities Act*.

Website

As most of you are aware, the Town's website has not been updated in quite some time as we have been in a very lengthy process of updating a new site. Some information can still be accessed on our old website.

Our goal is to have the revamped website more user friendly with more accessible information and forms. One item that has been requested is an updated business directory. We would like to ask everyone to register your business with the Town of Birch Hills in order for the site to have the most up to date and accurate information.

We appreciate your patience during the development and we ask for any suggestions, ideas or pictures that would be useful during the construction of our new website.



The Town Office would like to update their customer contact information. As many homeowners may have discontinued land lines and are utilizing cell phones as their main contact, we do not have up to date information for some of our customers.

This will help the office contact you regarding any localized advisories, short notice water shut offs, leak reports, etc.

We are now able to generate leak reports and have had some difficulties contacting customers to make them aware of the situation.

Please ensure the Town Office has your most up-to-date contact information.

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information or if you have any questions.

Town of Birch Hills

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Box 206
Birch Hills, SK S0J 0G0

(306) 749-2232

birchhills.town@sasktel.net

Visit us on the web at
www.birchhills.ca

Regular Town Council meetings are held every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm. Agenda items should be brought to the attention of the Administrator no later than Friday before the meeting.

Elected Town Council

Mayor Shirley Ulvild
Councillor Barry Evans
Councillor Dale Pratt
Councillor Sharon Rolfes
Councillor John Herd
Councillor Owen Stubbs
Councillor Tyler Cochrane