



NEWS RELEASE

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Fall 2017 Business Planning Announcements

Hinton, AB...

Coming out of the Fall 2017 Evergreens Foundation Business Planning Meetings held on October 5-6 in Jasper, the outgoing Board made a number of very significant decisions that will further support and strengthen the supports for seniors in the region.

Firstly, the Board and Administration decided to immediately begin working with Alberta Health Services (AHS) to source the maximum level of home care support available for Pine Valley Lodge in Hinton. Due to the increasing healthcare requirements of the current residents, and the town not having a facility that provides Level 3 care, Pine Valley Lodge has been reaching a crisis situation. Due to the lodge being built to C building code levels (due to age of building), AHS is not able to provide a contract for higher levels of care at that site. Therefore, the Board of Directors has made the decision to see how we can maximize our existing AHS Homecare supports or at the very last resort look at contracting healthcare services to private organizations that can come in and support the unscheduled care needs of our residents.

“This is a very positive and timely decision for our residents and for the staff at Pine Valley Lodge”, states Mayor Rob Mackin. “In all of our other lodges, AHS is able to come in and contract directly with the Foundation to provide on-site 24/7 healthcare services, however due to the fire code issues, this contract is not possible in Hinton. I am proud of the work by the Board and Administration to make this decision at this time so we can provide the supports needed wherever we have to source them from.”

Secondly, the Board of Directors made the decision to design and build commercial kitchen facilities within the Alpine Summit Seniors Lodge in Jasper. When the lodge was originally built, all the necessary rough-ins were installed for a future kitchen at the site. However at that time, the decision was made to contract out food services to Alberta Health Services at the Seton Healthcare Centre. Since that time, we have worked diligently with our partners at AHS to try to match the food experience that we give our residents at our other sites.

“Year after year, the dining experience and meal variety offered to our residents at Alpine Summit, has been significantly different to our other lodges across the region. Our residents miss the smell of the home cooked meals and the ability to be involved in the cooking process. This new kitchen which we anticipate to be completed in late 2018, will now offer greater variety and quality,” according to Gilbert Wall, Evergreens Board member from Jasper.

Finally, the Board of Directors of The Evergreens Foundation, made a monumental decision to advance the construction of two new lodges in the region due to the ever-increasing demands and wait lists. These efforts will be funded through existing capital reserve funds and the annual requisitions the Foundation makes with its member municipalities each year.

“The Foundation has received direction from the Board to move forward with the Pine Valley Lodge expansion and lodge construction in the east end of Yellowhead County. We believe that the funding for these two new projects along with the completion of the Parkland Lodge project can be done with no increase to the capital requisition amounts for 2018. If we continue the annual capital requisition at the levels of 2016 and 2017 we will be in a good position to take on these projects and see them to completion ” according to Kristen Chambers, the CAO of The Evergreens Foundation.

Since 2014, the Foundation has annually submitted the Pine Valley Lodge expansion program in its business plan to the Province. Now, after three years and no commitment for new lodge funding, the Board made the decision to begin the construction planning process in 2018. The Province has not recently put money into the region other than the Parkland Lodge expansion in Edson, and there were no further allocation of funds to Hinton after the GSS Mountainview Centre expansion was cancelled.

Immediately, The Evergreens Foundation is going to initiate a comprehensive gaps and needs analysis that will determine the total number of ‘lodge’ units required in Hinton as well as the eastern section of Yellowhead County, where the demographics are significantly highlighting the need for a new lodge to support the aging population in that area. These numbers will confirm the needs and the overall scope of both a Hinton Pine Valley expansion as well as a lodge in the eastern part of Yellowhead County.

“Our seniors cannot continue to wait for funding announcements that can change, get pushed out, or get cancelled. Almost every lodge in our area has a waiting list and even with the construction of the Parkland Lodge in Edson, Evergreens Foundation will continue to have nearly 100 residents on a wait list. With the already under-construction Edson project and by adding the Hinton and East Yellowhead projects, we hope that we will be able to support the needs of our seniors for the years to come,” stated Mayor Greg Pasychny, Chair of the Evergreens Foundation Board.

The Evergreens Foundation has committed the necessary funding to finish the needs and gaps analysis, as well as to develop construction-ready drawings for both lodges by Fall 2018. This will include the necessary geo-technical assessments, site work and servicing needs. It is hoped that the Province will come out with funding programs for such lodge projects in the coming year and that we are able to access some of these funds, but the time to act is now. We need to be moving ahead and addressing these needs in our regions. Both of these projects will be included in the Evergreens Foundations annual business plan submission to the Province.

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