

Blackfalds Enacts Council Code of Conduct

Blackfalds, Alberta (August 26, 2021) – The Town of Blackfalds, pursuant to the Municipal Government Act (MGA), has enacted a Council Code of Conduct Bylaw 1226.18. This bylaw ensures that members of Council share a common understanding about how Council members conduct themselves while also meeting the principles of transparent and accountable government.

A series of formal complaints were lodged as a result of various municipal administrative activities, including a Council meeting that took place on March 9, 2021. Due to the nature of these complaints, Council elected to initiate a third-party investigation. The investigation was conducted using the formal complaint process outlined in Part 14 of the Council Code of Conduct Bylaw.

The resulting Investigation Report was received as a confidential document and was accepted by Council through a formal resolution at the August 24th Regular Council Meeting. The recommendations from this report were formally adopted and the information will be shared with the public.

These recommendations will be implemented into official municipal proceedings and protocols over the coming months and will result in the development of procedures that aim to improve cooperation and communication between Councillors, equip Council members with conflict management skills, and enhance the interaction between elected officials and municipal employees.

Recommendations are attached

The Council Code of Conduct Bylaw 1226.18 can be found under Government & Services > Bylaws & Policies at blackfalds.ca.

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Recommendations of the Investigator Pursuant to the Town of Blackfalds Investigative Report:

August 2, 2021

- 1) That Council review and more closely follow the Town of Blackfalds Procedural Bylaw, that is included in the annual Organizational Meeting Agenda. Further, that it is examined annually, outside of the Annual Organizational Meeting.
- 2) That Council review and update the Town of Blackfalds Code of Conduct for Elected Officials to include best practices and clear expectations. Items include but are not limited to: protocols pertaining to disputes, complaints, appeals, and procedures involving all Council members, and the CAO, their interactions with each other and their interactions with municipal employees.
- 3) That Council be provided with the Town of Blackfalds Code of Conduct for Municipal Employees.
- 4) That Council become more familiar with Parliamentary Procedure and Roberts Rules of Order.
- 5) That the Town of Blackfalds develop an expedited process for procuring mediation. Issuing an RFP for qualified mediation firms to be on a Town of Blackfalds 'roster', whereby any mediator on that roster can be called on short notice without going through a separate RFP.
- 6) That Council, upon being elected, receive comprehensive training. Examples of training include: advanced communication, teambuilding initiatives, leadership skills, diversity, gender issues, communicating with difficult people, communicating under fire, as well as in sensitivity training. Further, that all Council members receive a presentation on the 'gender divide'.
- 7) That ██████ engage in advanced leadership training, benefitting of the offices they hold, if re-elected.
- 8) That ██████ receive sensitivity training as well as training on the 'gender divide'.
- 9) That ██████ consider supplementary conflict management training.
- 10) That ██████ refresh their leadership and communications skills with enhanced training opportunities currently available.
- 11) That the effectiveness of implementing these recommendations be formally reviewed no later than April 2022.
- 12) That under no circumstances this report be made public.