

2018 TAX NOTICES—THE RE-DO

BULYEA, SK.—After 3.5 months, termination of the administrator, a government inspection, ignoring a legal challenge from a large group of ratepayers on 2018 tax notices, installation of a government appointed Supervisor to oversee Council activities, an election and boundary change referendum, and five, day-long, secret meetings on the budget, RM of McKillop Council has FINALLY presented a new tax bylaw.

In a public meeting on November 23rd, Council reduced the significant tax increase on the residential class and distributed the tax burden more fairly across all ratepayers in the RM. The tax increase in 2018 is still, by normal standards, outrageously high—between 14-31% increase—but given that we're at month 11 of 12, it's as our Gram used to say, 'better than a kick in the head' (which is what Council gave us in August with the first round of tax notices).

Dashboard Changes to November Tax Notices

- DECREASE of effective residential mill rate from 9.89 to 5.63 (property with a taxable assessment at \$300,000 was taxed \$1,287 in 2017, \$2,967 in August 2018, now \$1,689).
- REMOVAL of the \$850 base tax on properties with residential improvements (e.g. land with house or garage).
- INCREASE of effective agricultural mill rate from 8.58 to 9.75 (increase of approx. \$103 per quarter section crop land valued at \$160,000).
- INCREASE of minimum base tax on vacant property to \$525 (was \$420 in 2017, \$300/acre in August 2018).
- INCREASE of effective commercial mill rate from 7.72 to 11.58.
- Garbage tax remains at \$250 per property with an improvement.

Additional Notes

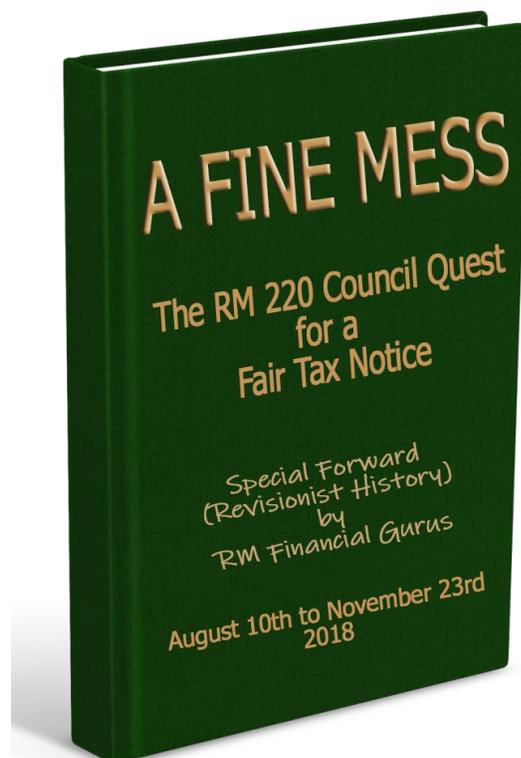
- Council again passed the 2018 budget without opportunity for public scrutiny.
- Council again improperly passed the new tax bylaw giving 3 readings in the space of hours without opportunity for public feedback.
- Council intends on collecting 2.75 million in tax revenue in 2018.
- 2018 Budget items of greatest cost? Legal & consulting fees, Sundale utility costs and administrative costs.
- Interim Administrator Jane Laich's last day is November 30th (this is an early departure). There have been no qualified applicants found for this advertised position.
- Taxes due by December 31st, 2018 (Late penalty 1% per month in 2019).

Hold the Celebration

Although most RM 220 ratepayers may feel a sense of financial and emotional relief when opening the new November RM 220 tax notices, let's not forget why the 2nd tax notice was necessary.

If Council had not mismanaged the RM, and if (over 400) ratepayers had not initiated a legal challenge of the tax bylaws, we have NO DOUBT Council would have done nothing to fix the outrageous residential tax increase. RM Council resisted all attempts to come to an early resolution and waited 2.5 months before trying to fix the MESS they created.

The result is a significantly higher tax burden that is somewhat more fairly distributed (Why does the RM need a huge increase in taxes collected in 2018 compared to last year?). RM 220 taxes are still substantially higher than other RMs. Let's not forget that GOOD GOVERNANCE by our publicly elected Council would never have created this tax nightmare in the first place.



The Rural Municipality of McKillop No. 220 lies along the east shore of Last Mountain Lake, north of Lumsden. There are 732 permanent residents and approximately 2,000 ratepayers in the RM. The RM 220 RPA is a citizen's group dedicated to ensuring fair taxes, minimizing waste, reducing spending, and holding RM Council accountable.

If you have any questions or can help please contact us at rm220rpa@gmail.com, www.rpa220.ca or visit us on Facebook