



PARCS UPDATE #101

July 12/2019

Looking at some current issues

1. Camper Trailers on Residential Lots – What is the Answer? (Submitted by PARCS President Garry Dixon)

For many years, rural municipalities (RM's), villages, towns, and even city councils have been faced with making decisions regarding use, parking and storage of recreation vehicles (RV's) such as trailers, tent trailers, motorhomes, truck campers, etc.

This matter has become more evident in recent years due to several reasons, such as, the increase in:

- the price of resort residences,
- the fees in provincial and regional campgrounds,
- the cost of fuel to move campers between locations, and
- the storage fees for campers.

Resort villages and resort hamlets are now faced with vacant lots being purchased and a vacation type vehicle, or two or three, being placed on the property. In some instances these RV's are only there short term while in other cases the RV's remain year round. So what, if anything, is wrong with this?

There are several views one may take.

- People that spent significant dollars to build, or purchase, an expensive home do not want to have a campground, trailer park, or trailer home located next door to them. They feel that their property value is being decreased.  #1.
- Lots with RV's are seldom occupied full time and hence the property may not be well maintained.  #2.
- RV's, often used primarily on weekends, are there for the purpose of escape from city life and hence may turn into party places.
- Occasionally these RV's are rented out by the owners and neighbors feel uneasy about perfect strangers entering the community.

Some resort communities, however, recognize the need to have RV's migrate into their community. They realize that not all people, especially younger couples, wishing to enjoy an experience outside of a city, can afford to purchase a resort residence. Sometimes people want to get a feel for living in a smaller community prior to investing in a residence.

Editor's Note:

During the past month, I have had the opportunity to speak with two different folks from the RM of Mervin.

The first spoke to me about the pressure that was being put on the RM Council by ratepayers who own **cottages that are worth considerable dollars** (see example photo #1) and that are located adjacent to **camper trailers that have been set up to serve as cottages** (see example photo #2).

The second caller was a ratepayer from the OH of Sunset View in the RM of Mervin calling to defend the practice of allowing trailers on residential lots in cottage communities. He strongly advocated the need for less expensive ways for young families to afford to own property at the lake.

President Garry has indeed hit upon the salient points of the differing arguments that were put forward to me by the spokespersons from each of the ratepayer groups whose representative called me.

Some Councils believe that allowing RV's on unoccupied properties within the village or hamlet is a starting point for development, that these recreation vehicle owners will eventually build more permanent structures.

Many communities are not opposed to allowing RV's to be used as a temporary residence when a development or building permit has been issued.

Several communities feel that RV's are not paying their fair share of financial obligation to operate the village or RM. It is felt the RV's are not subject to enough taxation, if any, to support policing, fire protection, garbage collection, infrastructure maintenance, administration, etc., all services which are available to RV owners. These are services that all other ratepayers, full-time and seasonal, pay for through their taxes.

Often RV owners are willing to pay a permit or licensing fee. However, councils have to abide by the Municipalities Act and regulations which currently restrict the amount of fees that can be charged. These charges are usually significantly less than even a small residential assessment and taxation. There is no clear cut solution, and councils remain with very difficult decision to make as to what they determine is in the best interest of all ratepayers in the entire community.

Perhaps a good compromise is to allow RV's, under an annual permit for 3 to 5 years, and then require the owner to apply for a development permit. This allows the RV owner to look at options to relocate, sell their property, or save money for construction. But while they are doing this, how do they pay their "fair share"?

Editor's additional note: In reference to this issue, I referred back to *the Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw* for the RV of Mistusinne, where I used to live, and noted in that document:

- A maximum of one camper trailer is allowed on a residential lot and that lot must already have a regular residence on it (the assumption being that the camper functions as a guest house and users have access to the bathroom in the cottage, if needed.) - and -
- A permit for a camper trailer alone on a lot can be issued for up to one year during the period when the lot owner is building a regular residence on the lot.

2. Rep by Pop – Prospects for the 2020 elections? (Reprint from PARCS Update #97)

Subsequent to the PARCS' October Convention and annual meeting, on November 7th Parcs forwarded resolutions (*A through J, passed by convention delegates*) to Allan Laird, Senior Legislative Analyst, Policy and Planning Services, Ministry of Government Relations. Resolution H stated: *Be it resolved that PARCS lobby the provincial government to review rural municipal division boundaries every 10 years.*

On November 30, 2018, the Policy Planning Branch of the Ministry of Government Relations issued a 56-page document titled **DRAFTING INSTRUCTIONS FOR *The Municipalities Act***.

- Page 16 proposes to add section 49.1 with 3 subsections explaining that: *"These amendments will require RMs to establish a policy to review their division boundaries at least once every 12 years (or 3 election terms) to ensure divisions have the same population as nearly as is practicable."*

Editor's Note:

On July 8th, I received an email from a cottage owner at Crystal Lake who stated:

"We are discussing representational voting out here at Crystal Lake. I remember at the PARCS convention it was said that was one of the proposed changes being looked at for the election process for 2020. Are you just starting that discussion with government or is farther along?"

In reply, I am re-printing the information from our January, 2019 newsletter, in which we applaud the proposals currently being proposed for the 2020 elections.

- *"If RMs do not choose to review division boundaries, there is also the option to hold elections at large, so that disparity in division populations do not affect the election results. In this case, regulations would be needed to determine if all council members are elected at once every four years or if staggered elections continue by electing half of the council every two years." [...]*
- ***"The key requirements are that a review be done and the results be made public. Council must apply to the Minister to alter division boundaries if the population variance is shown to be greater 25%. This will be mandatory for RMs with a population greater than 1,000 people."***

3. The Municipalities Act AMENDMENTS – What are the main changes being proposed?

(Submitted by PARCS President Garry Dixon)

Over the past several months the Government Relations branch of the Provincial Government has been conducting numerous consultation sessions to review the Municipalities Act (MA), the Northern Municipalities Act (NMA), and the Cities Act (CA). A representative from the PARCS board of directors has attended these meetings and put forth recommendations that pertain to PARCS members.

The purpose of the consultation meetings is to propose amendments to the MA, NMA and CA should the Ministry open the Acts in the fall of 2019. Key areas of amendment, and some possible changes are:

1. Administrative efficiencies for municipalities, for example, accommodating parental and other leaves of absence policies for council members.
2. Protection from reprisal for municipal employees, for example, new provisions providing protection from reprisal for municipal employees who report wrong-doing to a person or authority that has the power to investigate.
3. Strengthening local governance and accountability, for example, making the disqualification period for unauthorized expenditures the same as for other disqualification matters – 12 years.
4. Road Maintenance Agreements (RMA's), for example, ensuring regulation-making authority to set out cancellation and dispute resolution terms.
5. Property Assessment and Taxation improvements, for example, requiring boards of revision be appointed when the assessment roll is prepared.
6. Adding regulation-making authority for future flexibility, for example, simplified appeals.
7. Strengthening Ministerial authority, for example, explicit authority for the Minister to disallow, cancel or amend a decision, resolution, bylaw, fee or charge or agreement of council if not appropriately authorized or not compliant.
8. Strengthening dangerous dog/dangerous animal provisions.
9. Removing the population threshold for a qualified administration in an urban municipality.
10. Removing the farm dwelling exemption in unorganized hamlets.
11. Establishing conflict-of-interest requirements for Organized Hamlet Board members.

Remember, these are only proposed amendments and only a few examples are shown.

Editor's Note:

A 56-page document poses a daunting challenge to read and to respond to.

Our PARCS Board asked president Garry Dixon to summarize the main implications of the proposed changes.

4. A personal recollection that led to sharing some PARCS HISTORY with you

(Submitted by PARCS Coordinator of Member Service, Lynne Saas)

In 1976, my husband and I, and our two young daughters, moved to Moose Jaw to assume new teaching positions. The following year we purchased a lot in the RV of Mistusinne, obtained a 1200 sq. ft. loft of a barn, moved it onto the lake property, added a 'loft within that loft' and began a 42-year love affair with cottage living.

In 2014, after almost a decade of retirement living at the cottage, a stroke left my husband a hemiplegic and he was forced to relocate to a nearby nursing home - but I was able to bring him home to the cottage every weekend in a special handicapped van. For the past 5 years, I have also commuted each week-day to the care home to lead a group of card-playing residents.

This past spring, we decided that the time had come to move closer to family and doctors in the city of Moose Jaw. We put up the *For Sale* sign on the long weekend in May and accepted an offer 10 days later. The offer was conditional to the new owners having possession before the July 1st long weekend. You can well imagine that June was a hectic month. I was fortunate to find a newly built half of a cottage duplex (specially built for handicapped occupants) and located across the street from the care home to which Al will transfer (and continue to have weekends at this new home).

Needless to say, I didn't get a PARCS newsletter out in June. One of my jobs was packing and moving the PARCS office - during which I **re-discovered a box of PARCS plaques**, most of which had been set up around 1990, but which unfortunately were not continued after about 2002. I took photos of each plaque and I share them you, below:



NEWSLETTER AWARD

1990 – Regina Beach (Cottage Owners Editor)
 1991 – RM of Lakeland (Bob Carter, Ed.)
 1992 – RM of Lakeland (Bob Carter, Ed.)
 1993 – RVs of Thode, Shields (Jessie Williams, Ed.)
 1994 – Regina Beach (Cottage Owners, Ed.)
 1995 – Regina Beach (Cottage Owners, Ed.)
 1995 – Emma / Christopher Lakes (E. McNeil, Ed.)
 1996 - Emma / Christopher Lakes (E. McNeil, Ed.)
 1997 – Regina Beach (Cottage Owners, Ed.)
 1998 – Big Shell Lake (Watershed Stewards, Ed.)
 1999 – Emma / Christopher Lakes (Merv Benson, Ed.)
 2000 – Emma / Christopher Lakes (Merv Benson, Ed.)
 2000 – RV of South Lake
 2001 – Emma / Christopher Lakes (Merv Benson, Ed.)
 2002 – RV of South Lake



OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AWARD

1993 – Jim Christie, RV of Echo Bay
 1994 – Jean Lazar, Sask Municipal Government
 1995 – Carol Carson, Minister, Sask Municipal Gov't
 1996 – Edward Dean, Sask Environment, Fisheries Branch
 1997 – Brian Abrahamson, Regional Director, PFRA, Saskatoon
 1998 – Wayne Miner, Mgr, Security & Special Investigations
 1999 – Don Dill, Sask Water
 1999 – Carol Teichrob, Minister of Municipal Affairs
 2000 – Doug Wilson, Big Shell Lake Watershed Stewards
 2001 – Russ Krywulak, Exec. Dir., Sask Municipal Affairs
 2002 – Merv Swanson, Sask Environment
 2003 – Bob Ruggles, Assoc. Deputy Minister, Sask Environment



CLERK/ADMINISTRATOR RECOGNITION

1988 – Marg Sitavanc, RV of Mistusinne
 1989 – Vern Gabriel, RV of Tobin Lake
 1989 – Sandra MacArthur, RV of Wee-Too Beach
 1990 – Beatrice, Malach, RV of Melville Beach
 1990 – Mark Fedak, RV of Manitou Beach
 1991 – William G Kindrachuk, SRV of Wakaw Lake
 1992 – Jean Lazar, Advisory Service, SK Community Services
 1992 – Heather Lawson, RV of North Grove
 1993 – Betty Johnson, RM of Mervin
 1993 – Jessie Williams, RVs of Thode & Shields
 1994 – Terry Lofstrom, RVs of Big Shell & Echo Bay
 1994 – Gladys Wasmann, RV of Wee-Too Beach
 1994 – Beatrice Malach, RV of B-Say-Tah
 1995 – Ryan Domotor & Pam Rivard, RM of Mervin
 1996 – C. Mazurkewich & L. Wedewer, RM of Hoodoo
 1996 – H. Patterson & D. Rowe, RM of Lakeland
 1997 – W. Doug Hunter, RM of McKillop
 1998 – Clinton Mauthe, RV of Candle Lake
 1998 – Jim Little, RM of Grayson
 1999 – Peter A. Quiring, RV of Sunset Cove
 1999 – Colleen Digness, RV of Tobin Lake
 1999 – Maryann Germann, RM of Meota
 2000 – Juliane Berkan, RVs of South Lake & North Grove
 2000 – Beverly Van Der Breggen, RM of North Qu'Appelle
 2001 – Darren D. Elder, RM of Loon Lake
 2001 – Judy Fisher, RV of Island View
 2002 – Pam Rivard, RM of Mervin



THE LESTER HUNT "EXTRA MILE" AWARD

1993 – Lester Hunt
 1998 to 2000 – Richard Eberts, PARCS Director
 1994 to 2001 – John Cameron, Chair PARCS Director
 1998 to 2002 – David Field.



SASKATCHEWAN PRESIDENTS' CIRCLE

1986 – Dorothy Hovdebo, RV of Candle Lake
 1987 – Karen Keller, Village of Buena Vista
 1988 to 1990 – Bob Carter, RM of Luseland
 1991 to 1992 – Richard Ebert, RV of Wee-Too-Beach
 1993 – Vern Noble, RV of North Grove
 1994 – David McDonald, RV of Cochin
 1995 – Ted James, RV of South Lake
 1996 – John Panio, OH of Ottman-Murray Beach
 1997 - Richard Ebert, RV of Wee-Too-Beach
 1998 to 2001 – David Field, RV of South Lake
 2002 to 2006 – Dale McLeod,
 2007 to 2009 – Bob Taylor, RV of Tobin Lake

PARCS' MAILING ADDRESS has changed to:

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My phone and email remain unchanged:

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