



VILLAGE OF ALMA - AMALGAMATION UPDATE

Bulletin No. 1
February 7, 2022

INTRODUCTION

The amalgamation process has begun! Here is what we know so far:

- The incorporated Village of Alma and its Council will cease on January 1, 2023.
- Alma will become part of a larger local government entity (currently known as Entity 42) that will include Alma, Riverside-Albert, Hillsborough, Harvey, Hopewell, a portion of Lower Coverdale and all points in between.
- Municipal elections for Entity 42 will be held on November 28, 2022.
- The Facilitator managing the amalgamation process for our area, Chad Peters, has been appointed by the Province.
- The Province has determined that each amalgamating entity will form two advisory committees to provide advice to the Government on specific amalgamation issues faced by each entity. The two advisory committees being established are as follows:
 - An Elected Officials Advisory Committee composed of elected and other local government officials from within the entity. In total, we understand that there will be fourteen committee members on the Entity 42 committee.
 - An Administrative Advisory Committee composed of Chad Peters and the clerks from Alma, Hillsborough, and Riverside-Albert.
- Alma has been allocated two members on the Elected Officials Advisory Committee.
 - Mayor Andrew Casey is a mandatory member.
 - The Council of Alma has unanimously selected Councillor John Ereaux as the second member.

INITIAL CONCERNS

Of great concern to the Alma Council are the following points of protocol that have been decreed to us by the Province:

- The Advisory Committee meetings will not be open to the public nor will any of the other Councillors be permitted to attend. The Advisory Committees will work to reach a consensus on the crucial issues facing the amalgamating communities. HOWEVER, if consensus is not acquired on any given issue, the Facilitator (acting on behalf of the Province) will make the decision unilaterally. The first Elected Officials Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 9, 2022. Council was only made aware of this meeting on Friday, February 4, 2022, when they met with the facilitator for the first time. The agenda for this initial meeting includes reaching decisions on the following crucial points:
 - The number of councillor positions for the new entity and council compilation - i.e. Wards, Councillors-at-Large, or a combination of the two systems.
 - The geographical boundaries of the various Wards.

- The Province has imposed that these decisions be reached no later than Friday, February 11, 2022. As mentioned above, the decisions will be made via consensus but as also explained earlier, the facilitator will decide unilaterally on these important points if consensus is not reached.
- Council has no control over how the amalgamation process unfolds nor the timelines on the critical decision points. The process and the timelines are being established by the Province solely.
- We know that our existing by-laws will cease on January 1, 2023, to be replaced by a new set of by-laws which are being developed throughout 2022 by the Administrative Advisory Committee.
- We know that any debts and reserves held by the Village of Alma on December 31, 2022, will not be transferred to the new entity.
- We have been notified that village staff (i.e. Hanna and Andy) will still have a job within the new entity - and for this, we are very grateful to hear.

NEXT STEPS

Council is dedicated to providing village residents and/or taxpayers with information updates concerning amalgamation issues as they become available. As means of keeping you well-informed as the amalgamation unfolds, we will be posting future Amalgamation Update Bulletins on the Village website and Facebook Page.

If warranted, and Council determines this would benefit the community, Public Information Sessions and/or Public Meetings may be held to receive input directly from village residents and/or taxpayers.

Sincerely,
The Council and Clerk of the Village of Alma