



Office of the Reeve

August 15, 2023

The Honourable Jason Nixon
Minister of Seniors, Community and Social Services
Government of Alberta
404 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB
T5K 2B6

Subject: **Governance Concerns regarding Wheatland Housing Management Body**

Dear Minister Nixon,

I am writing on behalf of our Council, following a resolution passed to communicate our concerns regarding the governance of the Wheatland Housing Management Body.

To uphold transparency, accountability, and the best interests of our community, our Council believes it is imperative to ensure good governance practices within any public organization or entity. Upon our review and highlighted public events to our Council, several instances have been identified where the governance practices of Wheatland Housing Management Body (Board) have raised concerns. They include:

1. **Incomplete Board Information:** Pertinent data and documents are often missing from Board packages, undermining the potential for effective review and deliberation before meetings.
2. **Unauthorized Correspondence:** The Board has disseminated correspondence on its behalf without adequate review or the necessary approval through a Board vote.
3. **Disregarding Resolutions:** Resolutions passed by the Board have been either overlooked or inadequately implemented, compromising the Board's integrity and efficacy.
4. **Exceeding Authority:** There have been instances where the Board appears to have acted beyond its authorized scope. A particular concern is the Board's removal of an elected municipal official, which directly interferes with the duties that official was elected to perform.
5. **Contradictory Motions:** The Board has on occasion approved motions that conflict with established policies.
6. **Questionable Chair and Board Actions:** Some actions, while not definitively wrong, do not align with good governance principles.
7. **Perceived Conflict of Interest and Familial Ties:** Concerns arise from the composition of the Human Resources Committee and the evident family relationship between the Chief Administrative Officer and the Chair. These connections may lead to, or at the very least create perceptions of, potential conflicts of interest.





8. **Improper Conduct During Meetings:** The former Chair's behavior, including shouting, belittling, and stifling dialogue, undermines the purpose and decorum of these meetings.
9. **Adverse Public Image:** Actions and decisions of the Board have tarnished the reputation of Wheatland County, including disparaging remarks at recorded public meetings and community presentations.
10. **Suppression of Governance Concerns:** Board members are discouraged from raising issues or suggesting modifications to existing policies.
11. **Concerns about the Building Committee:** It appears the Building Committee doesn't seek requisite approvals from the Board. Additionally, the financial sustainability and transparency of the ongoing building projects, especially their dependence on CMHC and provincial funding, haven't been effectively communicated to the public.
12. **Member Compensation Concerns:** The decision to offer compensation to non-municipal board members seems conspicuously timed with the removal of a Board member by their municipality. This removal was a result of sanctions imposed following a code of conduct bylaw complaint.
13. **Non-compliance with Provincial Regulations:** The Board seems to be overlooking certain sections of the Alberta Housing Act and the Management Body Operation and Administrative Regulation. These contraventions have been highlighted to the Board on numerous occasions, yet no corrective actions have been undertaken to address these breaches.

The issues highlighted underscore an urgent need for an external review and, if necessary, an intervention to ensure that good governance principles are upheld. We trust in the commitment of the Government of Alberta to enhance the quality and effectiveness of governance across all public entities and eagerly await your response.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We believe that with your support and oversight, we can address these concerns and steer the Wheatland Housing Management Body back towards a path of responsible governance and transparent operations.

Sincerely,

Amber Link – Reeve
Wheatland County

cc: Wheatland County Council
Brian Henderson – Wheatland County CAO
WHMB CAO

