

## What's the deal about becoming a Resort Village?

Where are we now?

Over the past few weeks and months, information has come to you regarding the possibility of Crystal Lake leaving the Rural Municipality of Keys (RM of Keys) and becoming a Resort Village (RV). So far, the information we have gleaned has led to many questions. Why should we even consider this? Will this cost me more? Are there other options? Is status quo the best option? How would this affect the average cabin owner? Why should I care? So many questions!

Over the next few months, we will endeavor to provide you with the information necessary to answer these and other questions.

### How does governance of an Organized Hamlet actually work?

As an Organized Hamlet, Crystal Lake functions fairly independently but not autonomously. The Hamlet Board is in reality only an advisory board to the RM Council and cannot make independent decisions. Let's look at the recent road paving as an example. At the 2017 AGM, the attendees agreed and voted on the project. Some may have assumed that it's then a done deal and the project will go ahead. But that is not the case. From the AGM, the request goes to the RM who in turn decides if they support the initiative. If they don't, the initiative would not happen. In our case, the RM charged the Hamlet an additional 5% administration fee. In fact, regulations allow the administration fee for a special levy within an Organized Hamlet to be as high as 15%. This fee does not apply to a special levy for an RM project.

Every decision that is made at Crystal Lake must go through the RM. Every purchase goes through the RM, every bill payment, every project, every initiative, every employment, the list goes on and on. All of our tax dollars, all of funds, all of our reserve accounts lie within the coffers of the RM.

Is it better to have the RM Reeve and councillors make decisions for Crystal Lake or is it better to have RV Councillors who are cabin owners that have a vested interest in the well-being of Crystal Lake and resort life? Currently, we are fortunate that we have a very good relationship with the Reeve and Council but that may not always be the case.

Did you know?

The PARCS (Provincial Association of Resort Communities of Saskatchewan) recently held their annual meeting. All of the presentations can be viewed online under the 'What's New' tab at:

<https://www.skparcs.com/>

Even if Crystal Lake can maintain a good working relationship with the RM, it does not and will not change the cumbersome governance of an OH working under the control of a RM. A good example is bylaws. The RM can enact bylaws which only pertain to the Organized Hamlet however the HB must first convince the RM council of the need of the bylaw and then the council must follow the process of 3 readings and subsequent votes for an issue that might mean little to them or their division ratepayers. For instance, golf cart use is important to lake dwellers but is a complete non-issue for most if not all rural residents. Consequently, some RM councillors might find themselves spending time on issues which are completely inapplicable to them.

The RM has focus on agricultural issues and understandably so. This is not a slight against the RM; it functions as it should. However, it doesn't necessarily lend itself to protect the interests of a recreational community. Lake life is not farm life!

Stay tuned for the next installment of 'What's the deal about becoming a RV' where we will explore why other recreational communities have chosen to become a resort village.

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