

Introduce yourself:

Dallas Massey

I was born and raised on the family farm just outside Eston. After Graduation from School here I left to pursue my post-secondary education in Edmonton in accounting. In my last year of school, I started my first small private investment fund. I also invested personally in a couple residential development projects which became a property management company. I have always been involved in multiple ventures at once, as most blue-collar Entrepreneurs are. Currently most of what I do day to day, is with my project management company. We offer and facilitate a full range of services including management, purchasing, logistics, brokerage services, transportation, Architectural Design and Engineering services as well as General contracting construction services. I am very interested in the future of housing design and community design (infrastructure), which has led to, over the past four years, developing a modulated building system for constructing buildings. I don't want to go on to long so will leave it at that :):)

Question 1

Protecting what we have is the goal. 100% growth is the solution. We have so many significant expenses ahead that we have never had before. The only way not to tax people and business's out of the community is to spread that upcoming expense over more people. We need to clearly lay out on paper what our future financial liabilities are moving forward. We need to create actual on paper plans on how to address all significant infrastructure issues we have. These things need to be presentable in a way that all councilors, staff and community members can quickly understand them so that the community can truly direct council on how it should proceed. This includes a comprehensive paving plan including curbs and drainage issues, Plans for sewer lifts and water treatment facilities, pipelines, Landfill business plan/feasibility study and many more asset management plans and policies. Also, Visions and realist paths forward for tangible developments and growth through zoning, our official community plan and economic development programs.

I have traveled a lot through the US and spent time in different communities. Also living in a large city like Edmonton for 12 years makes one appreciate how very unique this community of Eston is. So much has changed in large communities, so many values, traditions and freedoms have been lost. I feel like many that have lived here consistently or never left may not fully appreciate how much we have here that just doesn't exist anymore in larger centers.

The thing that really kills small towns is financial mismanagement, especially when it comes to lack of planning to sustain fundamental infrastructure and community facilities. Never before in these small western Canada towns have communities had to deal with the

reality of replacing its entire Basic Water and sanitary and storm sewer/drainage systems. And usually all of its main buildings and facilities. Luckily, we have as the core of our community the Great AGT Arena and Rec center and great community support for it beyond taxes. This is one of the tangible things that gives this community a path to survival, as so many other small towns are quickly dying away. We can thank the courageous leaders of the past that we have the rec center, and therefore opportunity for a future for our community. Rec centers and schools, I believe is what can draw young people to these communities. Health Care and Community support can draw older folks in.

To keep these Facilities funded long term, as well as budget for the huge basic infrastructure needs we have, we need help. We can't afford it alone. We need to see the actual numbers and what we will need in the next 10-20 years so we can understand that we need to spread that cost over more people. Growth is essentially to not tax the majority of people out of the town over the next 20 years as well as control cost of utilities.

Question 2

I just want to say first, I think we are really lucky right now, we have excellent staff all the way through. Its encouraging to see. I think we have a good team in place to do everything we need to do going forward to serve the town effectively.

With staff training it's a delicate balance to find what's realistic. It has to be sustainable. Educating/training staff that leaves is expensive. Turnover is very expensive especially at higher levels of an operation. The things that fall through the cracks in management and in operations without proper succession planning is incredibly expensive. Proper Succession planning and training is extremely worth it. (especially in government where the board of directors can be changed wholesale and the highest level of oversight is lost.) I think only business operations and management experience on council can really make the constant calls about when it makes practical sense to train an employee or hire the work/task out. For example: Mechanical work never seems to get cheaper and to keep on top of the preventative maintenance for all our equipment would be clearly beneficial. If someone is trained to truly do it effectively it will pay for itself multiple times.

Instead of management training, we need management systems, for operations and admin, to be implemented. For instance, creating effective Maintenance schedules and reporting procedures is crucial for all equipment and infrastructure. I have seen over 100,000 in damages in recreation alone due to the lack of proper maintenance reporting and oversight. These systems could be set up by a professional in a way that is easy for staff to implement. Don't pay all new staff for management training pay a professional once to set up a management system that any new employee can follow/implement. There are many many areas like this that can be addressed case by case.

I may just add too, we need to, as a council, be open to looking at the past short falls, and mistakes, and be willing to learn from the past to learn how to do better in the future.

Question 3

All these items should be presented to all new councils and high level staff as part of an initiation package. and be available on the website in reasonable form for the public. When complete. These are things I think are essential that we need to do:

1. Clearly identifying all assets and their parts. (we need a comprehensive review of the items on our asset register, or more importantly, all the things that aren't on it)
2. We need to have, on paper, what expected replacement values are for all those assets. Or in other words what our future financial liability is to make each of those parts viable for 20 years+ (for example the unrealized debt we have accounted for in something like the water treatment plant doesn't even come to close to indicating what the cost is we are looking at now for a new/expanded Water Treatment Plant.)
3. We need to understand how much "debt" we truly already have and therefore how much true financial pressure we already have. We need to account for that, on top of our financial requirements for NEW capital projects. Loans are a relatively small part of our current "debt". The amount of accounted for unrealized debt plus unaccounted for unrealized debt is what worries me.
4. From that information we need detailed plans. Financial plans/implementation plans/timelines and targeted reserves set up. which must involve significant public consultation. (town halls etc.) We need the community to determine priorities and we need the community to decide how much they want to put away for the future as far as reserves.
5. Its just about responsibility/reality and not ignoring problems that seem too big, and not mortgaging the future because acting fiscally responsible in the present seems too hard. For example water rates shouldn't be so high. Rates should have been raised 15 years ago in anticipation for all the inevitable/foreseeable capital projects we are up against now. I would rather charge the same amount for water for 15 years than jack prices up in desperation as your assets literally crumble. We are in the same position now we must not put this community at risk for the next generation.

- 6.** I think there are many types of people with different things they can bring to council. I think in our current state we need at least a few dedicated young individuals to do the above necessary work who like financial analysis, accounting, and asset management. I think there are a few that are running and its encouraging to see so many young people running who seem to be truly engaged in our community and protecting it.