

SUMMER VILLAGE OF SILVER SANDS

ADDITIONS AGENDA

Friday, July 25th, 2025 at the Fallis Hall (located at 53303 Range Road 52)
and via Zoom commencing at 9:00 a.m.

(As per bylaw 349-2025 Council and/or Council Committee meetings may not be
filmed or voice recorded.)

8. Business:

- a) 2025 Municipal Election with respect to Special Ballots – Council is familiar with the option to have special ballots (mail-in ballots) as part of their municipal election. In order to do this, the municipality must have a permanent elector register, which would be a cost to the municipality to have someone go around and confirm all potential voters. While this has been a consideration, because of the additional cost of same, the opportunity for special ballots has not been something the Summer Village has incorporated into their election process. On July 23rd, 2025 administration received two emails from an upset resident advising that he and his wife are unable to vote in the advance vote (which has now passed) and the upcoming municipal election because they can not physically be present on either day.

In following up on this complaint with the Returning Officer, I can confirm this individual did also reach out to her (Angela Duncan is the Returning Officer) and that she did receive other concerns from residents regarding their inability to be present and vote in person on either the advance vote day or election day.

It is too late to provide for special ballot now for the 2025 municipal election as this needed to be set prior to nomination day and we would need GIS mapping in place, but administration encourages all of us to inquire with municipal colleagues as to what voting options they grant to their residents and if they do provide special ballot to inquire a little further into how that worked, how many took advantage of that and what their costs were for that service and then this can all be discussed again prior to the 2029 Municipal Election and the Council at that time can determine what voting options will be made available to residents. Attached is Administration's response to this ratepayer. While we have not had time to fully research, we were able to determine at this time that the listed Summer Village's also did not provide for Special Ballots:

SUMMER VILLAGE OF SILVER SANDS

ADDITIONS AGENDA

Friday, July 25th, 2025 at the Fallis Hall (located at 53303 Range Road 52)
and via Zoom commencing at 9:00 a.m.

(As per bylaw 349-2025 Council and/or Council Committee meetings may not be
filmed or voice recorded.)

Sylvan Lake Summer Villages

Birchcliff
Half Moon Bay
Jarvis Bay
Sunbreaker Cove
Norglenwold

Website Statement Reads:

"The Summer Villages will not be offering voting by special ballot for the upcoming 2025 general election. In accordance with recent amendments to the Local Authorities Election Act (Section 77.1(1)), municipalities must maintain a permanent electors register to facilitate special ballot voting. As the Summer Villages do not have permanent electors' registers, and given the administrative complexities involved in establishing and maintaining such a system, special ballots will not be available. Furthermore, historical data indicates that special ballots have been underutilized in previous elections. To ensure accessibility for residents unable to vote on election day, Council will be providing an advance voting opportunity on the Saturday prior to election day."

Pigeon Lake Summer Villages:

Argentina Beach
Crystal Springs
Golden Days
Grandview
Ma-me-o Beach
Norris Beach
Poplar Bay

Other Summer Villages:

South View
Nakamun Park
West Cove
Sunrise Beach
Birch Cove
Castle Island
Spring Lake
Seba Beach
Kapasiwin

SUMMER VILLAGE OF SILVER SANDS

ADDITIONS AGENDA

Friday, July 25th, 2025 at the Fallis Hall (located at 53303 Range Road 52)
and via Zoom commencing at 9:00 a.m.

(As per bylaw 349-2025 Council and/or Council Committee meetings may not be
filmed or voice recorded.)

Lakeview
Betula Beach
Sandy Beach
Val Quentin
Sunset Point

(accept the discussion on complaints/concerns received with respect to the inability of voters to vote in the 2025 municipal election if they can not be present on either advance vote day or election day, and that consideration be given to having a voters registry and special ballots in place for the 2029 municipal election (or any bi-election that occurs prior)

Emailed response to resident – July 24-2025

Thank you for letting me know about your concerns. Let me begin by saying that I will ensure the current Council and the next Council are made aware of concerns around lack of special ballots in the 2025 Municipal Election so that they have an opportunity to consider changes to the election process for the next election.

Local elections are governed by the [Local Authorities Election Act \(the LAEA\)](#). The Summer Village of Silver Sands has ensured that all requirements under the LAEA have been adhered to. As outlined below, we have not only met but have gone above and beyond advertising requirements and voting opportunities as required by the LAEA.

ADVERTISING AND COMMUNICATIONS WITH RESIDENTS AND PROPERTY OWNERS

- Silver Sands has had an [Election 2025](#) page active on the municipal website since early in 2025 where we have been sharing election information as it becomes available. Nomination Day, Election Day, and voting opportunities were posted on this page shortly after they were set by Council via resolution.
- On April 23, 2025, the Returning Officer (Angela Duncan) ensured that “Notice of Nomination Day” was mailed to residences ensuring electors were informed of the upcoming election and nomination day. While we didn’t outline voting opportunities in this letter, we do mention that information can be found on the above-mentioned election page. We also encouraged electors to reach out to the Returning Officer if they had any questions. This was an opportunity for you to reach out and ask about voting opportunities so that you would be aware of the requirement to vote in person. Section 26(1) of the LAEA states:

The returning officer shall give notice of nomination day in the prescribed form by publishing a notice at least once a week in each of the 2 weeks before nomination day in a newspaper or other publication circulating in the area, or by mailing or delivering a notice to every residence in the local jurisdiction at least one week before nomination day.

The Summer Village recognizes that publishing the notice in the paper didn’t allow our seasonal residents acceptable access to information and therefore opted to have a mailout.

- In our annual newsletter that was mailed with assessment and tax notices we had a section outlining that 2025 is an election year. While we didn’t outline voting opportunities in this newsletter, we do mention that information can be found on the above-mentioned election page.
- On July 4, 2025, the Returning Officer ensured that the “Notice of Election” was mailed to all residences which outlined the voting opportunities in the election. The letter clearly states that there are two (2) voting opportunities – Advance Poll and Election Day. Section 35(2) of the LAEA outlines the required notice of election which states:

Subject to subsection (2.1), if an election is required, the returning officer shall give notice of it in the prescribed form by publishing a notice at least once a week in each of the 2 weeks before election day in a newspaper or other publication circulating in the area, or by mailing or delivering a notice to every residence in the local jurisdiction at least one week before election day.

Again, we opted for the mailout to ensure all property owners including seasonal residents were aware of the election and their voting opportunities.

I agree with you that the municipal website and other communications do not explicitly outline that you must be present to vote. However, our election communications clearly state the dates that are set for the municipal election and that there will be an advance vote and election day. Had special ballots been an option, that information would have been provided. The absence of special ballots is not new to this election as the Summer Village of Silver Sands has not allowed special ballots in the past.

PERMANENT ELECTOR REGISTERS, SPECIAL BALLOTS, & VOTING OPPORTUNITIES

With changes to the LAEA that came into effect for this election, all municipalities except summer villages are required to develop a permanent electors register. LAEA section 49 details permanent elector registers. While Section 49 requires municipalities in Alberta to have a permanent elector's register, Summer Villages are excluded by section 49(3.3) which states "Notwithstanding this section, a summer village may, but is not required to, prepare a permanent electors register and enter into an agreement with the Chief Electoral Officer for the purposes of this section.". Silver Sands has opted not to have a permanent electors register for this election.

To develop a permanent elector's register, we would need to enter into an agreement with Elections Alberta and exchange a significant amount of information with them, including GIS information for all properties in the summer village. While Silver Sands does not currently have GIS information for our properties, we are working with other summer villages in the region to apply for a grant to create a GIS system which would better allow us to develop a permanent electors register for future elections, should Council choose to do so.

As per section 77.1 of the LAEA, a municipality must have a permanent electors register to allow special ballots. Further, section 77.1(2) makes it clear that, even with a permanent elector's register, there is no requirement for any municipality in Alberta to allow for special ballots. The allowance of special ballots is done via Council Resolution.

Section 77.1(2): An elected authority may, by resolution passed prior to nomination day, provide for special ballots and provide that the application for special ballots may be made by any one or more of the following methods...

Further, section 73(3) of the LAEA outlines that municipalities with a population under 5000 are not required to hold an advance vote – meaning that the only voting opportunity required in our election is Election Day. Council recognizes that not all people can make it to the polls on election day and therefore carried a resolution to have an Advance Vote, thus again exceeding the requirements of the LAEA.

While I have not had time to fully research, I was able to determine at this time that the listed Summer Village's also did not provide for Special Ballots:

Sylvan Lake Summer Villages

Birchcliff

Half Moon Bay

Jarvis Bay

Sunbreaker Cove

Norglenwold

Website Statement Reads:

"The Summer Villages will not be offering voting by special ballot for the upcoming 2025 general election. In accordance with recent amendments to the Local Authorities Election Act (Section 77.1(1)), municipalities must maintain a permanent electors register to facilitate special ballot voting. As the Summer Villages do not have permanent electors' registers, and given the administrative complexities involved in establishing and maintaining such a system, special ballots will not be available. Furthermore, historical data indicates that special ballots have been underutilized in previous elections. To ensure accessibility for residents unable to vote on election day, Council will be providing an advance voting opportunity on the Saturday prior to election day."

Pigeon Lake Summer Villages:

Argentina Beach

Crystal Springs

Golden Days

Grandview

Ma-me-o Beach

Norris Beach

6

Poplar Bay

Other Summer Villages:

South View

Nakamun Park

West Cove

Sunrise Beach

Birch Cove

Castle Island

Spring Lake

Seba Beach

Kapasiwin

Lakeview

Betula Beach

Sandy Beach

Val Quentin

Sunset Point

I trust that you have found this information helpful. The Government of Alberta and Municipal Affairs set the rules that we must follow during an election. As you can see above, we have not only met but exceeded these rules. I encourage you to reach out to your MLA and the Minister of Municipal Affairs to ensure they are aware of your concerns with the legislated election requirements.

Regards,

Wendy Wildman,

Chief Administrative Officer

Summer Village of Silver Sands - www.summervillageofsilversands.com

7

Email: administration@wildwillowenterprises.com

Phone: 587-873-5765 Fax: 780-967-0431

Mailing Address: Box 8, Alberta Beach, AB T0E 0A0