

# Cremona council briefs

BY PATRICIA RILEY

*MVP Staff*

## Interac machine approved

Cremona residents will soon be able to pay their bills with their debit cards at the village office.

Council approved for village officials to enter into an agreement with First Data for a point of sale machine, to use for debit payments only, during the Oct. 20 meeting.

Officials originally requested council's approval for the machine at the Sept. 15 meeting, but not all councillors were in favour.

Joseph Shi, as a business owner himself, said he is against the idea because it's not necessary to have one and there are several hidden fees involved.

But Luana Smith, chief administrative officer for the village, said officials have had to turn people away when they go to the office to pay their bills.

Smith contacted other villages in Alberta following the meeting to see if they have point of sale machines. She said the villages that do have

machines only take debit payments and the cost is between \$58 and \$65 per month as well as a five-cent fee per use.

Council approved the request, but Shi voted against it.

## PRL budget presented

Officials of the Parkland Regional Library board requested council's approval of their 2016 budget at the Oct. 20 meeting.

The budget includes a two per cent per capita funding increase.

Council accepted the budget as presented.

## Franchise fee kept the same

A 10 per cent Fortis Alberta franchise fee has been set by council for 2016, which is the same as 2015, during the Oct. 20 meeting.

The franchise fee allows the village to receive funds from all electricity customers in the village including from properties that don't pay municipal

taxes, such as schools, churches and seniors' housing.

The money received from the franchise fees goes into reserves and the fee is collected by Fortis Alberta and then paid to the village.

The village's Fortis Alberta franchise fee has been 10 per cent since 2009.

Revenue collected in 2014 was \$23,959 and the projected revenue for 2015 is \$26,462. Officials are expecting to receive \$27,267 in 2016.

## Watershed alliance membership approved

Council has decided to continue to pay to be a member of the Red Deer River Watershed Alliance in 2016.

The cost is 50 cents per capita, which is based on the current population of 457, which amounts to \$228.50 a year, according to village officials.

The village became a member of the alliance this year, which gives council the authority to provide input on issues in the alliance's management plan.