

TOWN OF BLACKFALDS
Blackfalds & District Family & Community Support Services Board
Thursday, April 9, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.
MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Ryan Brown	Town of Blackfalds Councillor
Dena Thomas	Public at Large
Kimberly Burrell	Public at Large
Michelle Meadows	Public at Large
Glenda Brown	Public at Large
Jessalyn Parsons	Public at Large

ATTENDING

Sawyer Hick	Town of Blackfalds FCSS Manager
Sue Penner	Town of Blackfalds FCSS Admin Assistant

OTHERS ATTENDING

REGRETS

Cory Twerdoclib	Town of Blackfalds Councillor
Heather Johnson	Public at Large
Auralei Agrey	Public at Large

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

The Blackfalds & District Family & Community Support Services Board Meeting was called to order at 7:01 pm. Member Brown moved that the Blackfalds & District Family & Community Support Services Board approved the agenda.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

DELETIONS TO AGENDA

N/A

TREATY SIX LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

A Land Acknowledgement was read to recognize that the Town of Blackfalds is on Treaty Six territory.

PRESENTATIONS

N/A

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BUSINESS

Approval of Amended Minutes of January 8, 2026

Member Meadows moved that the Blackfalds & District Family & Community Support Services Board recommends to Council to adopt the amended minutes from January 8, 2026, as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Approval of Minutes from February 19, 2026

Member Parsons moved that the Blackfalds & District Family & Community Support Services Board recommends to Council to adopt the amended minutes from February 19, 2026, as presented

CARRIED

UNANIMOUSLY

Resignation of Glorice Cayago

Councillor Brown moved that the Blackfalds & District Family & Community Support Services Board recommends Council reviewed and formally acknowledged the resignation submitted by Glorice Cayago.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

FCSS 2025 Grant Requests

- Members discussed each of the 4 grant submissions.
 - o **Iron Ridge Elementary Campus \$8,000** – to facilitate the Connection Club.
The Board feels that this program aligns well with the FCSS mandate.
 - o **Big Brothers Big Sisters Association of Lacombe and District \$16,825** in support of their program.
 - o **BGC Wolf Creek Blackfalds \$17,000** in support of their program.
 - o **Association of Central Alberta Youth for Christ \$16,740**
Unable to accept this application as their programs do not fall under our mandate.

Member Brown moved that the Blackfalds & District Family and Community Support Services Board recommend to Council that grant funding in the amount of \$7,925 be allocated to Iron Ridge Elementary Campus, \$7,925 to Brothers Big Sisters Association of Lacombe and District and \$7,925 to BGC of Wolf Creek Blackfalds.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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FCSS MANAGERS VERBAL UPDATE

An FCSS Housing Needs Assessment has been approved for \$30,000 and the next step is for Administration to advertise for Request for Proposals.

A FCSS Temporary .5fte Seniors Programmer position has been approved for a one-year contract based on 5 hrs per day and a 4-day work week.

Manager Sawyer advised the FCSS Board that she has given notice and her last day will be April 23, 2026.

ACTION ITEMS

N/A

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMMER REPORT

January 2026

Volunteer Recognition Planning

- **National Volunteer Week:** April 19–25, 2026.
 - **Colouring Contest:** Residents will be invited to submit their masterpieces to the FCSS Office
 - **JustServe** Promote ways nonprofits can promote themselves and how you can look for ways to volunteer on the JustServe website
 - **Staff Volunteer Spotlights** Showcase staff who volunteer in their personal time and why it matters to them.
 - **Earth Day & Clean Up Blackfalds** Promote Earth Day and Clean Up Blackfalds
 - **Snow Angel Milestone Recognition** Acknowledge 4 longtime Snow Angel volunteers
 - **Local Volunteer Opportunities:** Promote ways to volunteer and get involved
 - **Appreciation for Volunteer Award Nominees** Build excitement for the May recognition event by spotlighting nominees.
- **Blackfalds Volunteer Gala:** May 7, 2026, at the Eagle Builders Centre during Youth Week. FCSS Board members were asked to RSVP as soon as possible if they plan to attend this event.
- **Snow Angel Program:** We ended this year with 27 Snow Angels including individuals and family members, paired with one of the 21 residents and 2 residents on the waitlist to be paired with a Snow Angel. Resident support and volunteer engagement remained steady.
 - *Feedback from participants: I am pleased to report that 92% (11 participants) in the Snow Angel Program who responded indicated that the program significantly contributed to their ability to remain in their homes. This positive feedback highlights the program's effectiveness in providing essential support and assistance to our community members.*

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- **Town of Blackfalds volunteers were utilized at the following programs and events:**

- Easter Egg-Stravaganza: 10 volunteers
- Leaders in Training volunteers
- Cooking Club: 3 volunteers

ONGOING INITIATIVES:

1. Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities:

- a. Bike Rodeo ~ June 6
- b. Blackfalds Days ~ June 19-21

2. The monthly FCSS Volunteer Newsletter

- a. In March, the newsletter was emailed to 295 contacts with the 'Open Rate' of 59%

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMMER REPORT

January 2026

Social Media Reach

- **Facebook:** 1,686 followers
- **Instagram:** 277 followers

Community Volunteer Income Tax Program

- 50 tax returns have been filed in March!
- We have three highly skilled and dedicated volunteers who continue to support this program
- Community members call the office and are pre-screened for CRA eligibility by the wonderful front-desk admin. Eligible clients are then booked for a tax intake appointment. This process works great! I am very thankful for the strong admin support – it is deeply appreciated.
- I meet one-on-one with each client to complete the CRA and FCSS intake forms, ensuring all sensitive information is handled with respect and confidentiality
- A trained CRA volunteer comes in every week and E-files the tax returns
- Once filed, I contact the client/community member to let them know their return has been successfully E-filed and is ready for pick-up.
- Admin completes a satisfaction and outcome survey question with the community member at the point of pick up.

Interagency Meeting – January 7

- Held at the Eagle Builders Centre.

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- **20 attendees** representing **13 organizations**.

“Hot Seat” spotlight: **Lacombe & District Chamber of Commerce**, showcasing their upcoming trade show and a few of the free opportunities available to Blackfalds Chamber members! The Lacombe and Blackfalds Chambers have joined together to create a stronger Chamber.

50+ Walk & Talk Club

- **Average weekly walkers:** 30
- **Unique walkers in January:** 51 (13 walkers had perfect attendance)
- **Age representation:** 6 regular walkers are 75+
- **Where participants live:**
 - 59% Town of Blackfalds
 - 22% City of Lacombe
 - 19% Lacombe County
- This program continues to create an opportunity for older adults to build social connections.

More Than a Movie

- **19 attendees** watched *Captain Phillips*
- Attendance breakdown:
 - 19 from Blackfalds
 - 2 from Lacombe
 - 2 from Lacombe County
- This movie sparked lively and “spirited” discussions! The intense themes of piracy, US rescue ships, and global conflicts felt very relevant given the current US-Israeli war with Iran. The post-movie discussion time is a safe and respectful space for older adults to express their thoughts and feelings. This connection strengthens the social connection among participants and increases their sense of belonging.
- Before the movie begins, I highlight community events and ensure the most current Community Guide is available. In March, I promoted upcoming programs such as the Blackfalds Community Clean-Up, the Community Income Tax Program, the De-Cluttering Workshop, and the Family Easter Event. I love seeing guests jotting down pen & paper notes and tucking them into their purses or pockets. People like to stay informed and connected.

Clean-Up Blackfalds

- Coordinated with TOB parks to learn the areas that need the most cleaning attention.
- Created a “pick-up map” for community members to choose their preferred location.
- Updated waiver

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- Updated poster
- Promote on social media, Blackfalds Community Guide, Volunteer and Vibrant living newsletter, also hand out posters at 50+ Walk & Talk, 50+ More than a Movie and a poster is displayed on the Community Center Bulletin board.

Abbey Center Membership Assistance Program:

- **3 applications were received and screened**
 - All three applications were approved.
 - Total: 3 adults have gained access to the Abbey Center amenities for two months.

Camp Curios Champion

- Two applications received and screened

In-Office Support

- Assisted one local senior with creating sign-in sheets, prize table materials, and game rules (typing and document support).

YOUTH PROGRAMMER REPORT

Blackfalds Youth Crew (BYC)

BYC continues to support youth in building friendships, leadership, and confidence through safe, engaging activities. Each session accommodates up to 15 participants.

Program Attendance

Activity	Gr. 4–6	Gr. 7–12	Homeschool	Total
Glow Up	15	4	13	32
Forts & Fries	15	0	10	25
Fries & Friends	0	4	13	4
St. Patty's Shenanigans	16		11	27
Tye Dye T-shirts		5		5
March 24 & 26 No BYC due to school break				
Desserts & Duct Tape Art		5		5

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Child Safe Canada – Home Alone Safety Course

- **Instructor:** Annette
- **Date:** March 16, 5:00–7:00 PM
- **Participants:** 14
- Monthly safety training for youth in Grades 4–6 continues to be in high demand.

Teen Test Cooking Club

- **Grades:** 8-10
- **Dates:** Wednesday, April 1, 8 and 15
- **Time:** 5:00–7:15 PM
- **Registered:** 5

Youth Cooking Club

- **Grades:** 5-7
- **Dates:** January 21-March 18
- **Registered:** 10

Life Literacy Series: More than a Resume

- **Grades:** 8-10
- **Dates:** February 23, March 2 & 9
- **Registered:** 6

Youth Programmer Initiatives

Positive Ticketing Program	Constable Hewitt continues to distribute Positive Tickets to youth in the community and local schools for demonstrating positive or improved behaviour. The program remains popular, especially because the tickets can be redeemed for a Slurpee for the youth and a friend at the Blackfalds Convenience Store, adding a fun and motivating incentive.
Youth Week May 2-8	I'm putting the final touches on our Youth Week activities, including developing agendas, planning each event, organizing to-do lists, purchasing supplies, and coordinating all the details to make the week run smoothly.
Blackfalds Days Youth Night Out	Currently, I am working toward facilitating the Blackfalds Youth Night Out event, focusing on planning activities, organizing logistics, and coordinating the details needed to make the night a fun and successful experience for local youth.

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Working with Carolyn from FRN	I'm currently working with Carolyn from FRN Lacombe to explore future preventative programs, workshops, and/or resources that we can offer to support youth and families in our community.
Youth Cooking Club Waitlist	I spoke with Sawyer about the high demand for Cooking Club and the ongoing waitlist. With Grade 7+ programming shifting to once a month, I'll have more capacity to run the program more often. This fall, Cooking Club will run from September 23 to November 11, and in 2027 it will be offered twice a week from January 18 to March 8. These changes will help ensure all interested youth can participate in this popular free program.
Continued program planning is underway for both the upcoming summer season, fall and into 2027	Admin time to explore what types of programming will genuinely interest Blackfalds youth. Life Literacy was a great concept, but attendance showed a clear pattern—youth often registered but chose other activities instead. And honestly, if it's a choice between learning sessions in the summer or swimming at the Abbey Centre, I can't blame them for picking the Abbey. I'm reviewing trends and feedback to help shape programs that youth are excited to show up for.
After School Program Times	Blackfalds is a unique community where many youths are bused to schools outside of town. To remove barriers and ensure all local youth can participate, most out-of-school programs have been adjusted to start at 5:00 p.m. This timing helps make FCSS's free youth programs fully accessible to every young person in the community, regardless of where they attend school.

Monthly Newsletters in April

Vibrant Living 50+ 290 sends with an open rate of 70%
Interagency 143 sends and an open rate of 52%
Beyond Lunchbox Program 294 sends with an open rate of 47%
Volunteer Newsletter 295 sends with an open rate of 59%
In-person visits & calls to FCSS 159

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The Blackfalds & District Family & Community Support Services Board Meeting ended at 8:14 p.m.

-Original Signed-

Glenda Brown, Vice Chair

-Original Signed-

Sue Penner, Admin Staff