

ROSSLAND COUNCIL CONNECTS

July 2016

Issue #16

Note from Mayor Kathy

Many thanks to the Rossland Museum and Discovery Centre for once again hosting our Canada Day festivities. The board, museum, city employees and other volunteers did a great job. Music, food, beer, “touch-a-truck” and games provided fun for all. Doug Halladay, accompanied by the Golden City Fiddlers, ably led a robust rendition of O Canada. Many thanks to Constable Matthew Oliver for showing up in the serge and helping Councillor John Greene and I serve the cake. Congrats to everyone who made it to the top of Mt Roberts for the raising of the flag with proper ceremony and many thanks to Councillor Aaron Cosby for leading the hike. A great day was had by all.

I am happy to welcome our new financial manager Ms. Elma Hamming and her family to Rossland. She is already hard at work at City Hall. Our staff team is now complete and firing on all cylinders.

Unfortunately the City server and telephone system were out of commission for several days right at our tax payment deadline. I apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused. The good news is that we have awarded a contract for a complete review of our system and are optimistic that upgrades will increase our efficiency, productivity and customer service. City staff did a great job coping with this wretched cyber-disaster.

It's a bit quieter for Council during the summer; we only have one meeting in July and one meeting in August but City staff is working as hard as ever.

Enjoy the lovely summer weather (once it arrives!)

Council News:

AMENDED Wildlife Attractant Bylaw. In an effort to reduce bear fatalities (9 shot in Rossland in 2015) Council intends to adopt an amended bylaw that will require residents to put trash in enclosed containers on pick up day, require wildlife proof containers for longer term storage, and increase fines for violations. Minimum fine: \$100. Did you know that fruit fallen from your trees is required to be picked up within 3 days? Please help make 2016 a year without a single bear fatality.

Council approved a guarantee of up to \$30k for the **Rossland Skate Park's** contingency fund. Any money used will be paid back to the City from funds raised by

the Skate Park Association. Many thanks to our Washington Street contractor, **Copcan Civil Ltd.** for offering to donate the excavation of the site as a community service. Justin from DJM will be the project manager. This long awaited project will soon be underway.

Council amended our **3rd Party Call-Out Policy** to make it more affordable for residents needing Public Works' employees to assist with an issue. We are always looking for ways to improve our customer service.

Focus groups led by Terry Miller and Steve Ash were held on July 5th and 6th to explore community attitudes about our financial plan and priorities in the future. Participants were randomly selected from the rolls of homeowner grant holders. The results will help Council make the best decisions going forward. Watch for more info on the results after we conclude our upcoming online **Thoughtexchange** process. We are looking forward to the results of this process that will gather feedback from a larger, diverse group of stakeholders. Everyone is encouraged to participate. Watch for details coming soon.

The **Fire Service Review Task Force** is wrapping up its work and will be presenting its recommendations to Council at our August meeting. Thanks to the volunteers and Councillor McLellan for all their work.

Council is forming two **new task forces** to create recommendations on regional cooperation and how to address unlicensed short-term rentals. Councillors Cosby and Zwicker will be participating. Interested? More information is available at www.rossland.ca.

Council hears lots of complaints about our lack of **bylaw enforcement**. Hiring a dedicated bylaw enforcement officer would be expensive but we are currently using regular staff and employees on light duty for the job.

Washington Street update: Here's exciting news: We got a BikeBC grant for \$236k. This will cover the cost of the bike lane, the multi-use portion and the sidewalk up Washington. These enhancements will increase safety as well as slow traffic. Extra bonus: Installing bike lanes and sidewalks is *less expensive* than constructing a roadway so this is a double win! The Washington Street project is progressing on budget but is currently about 2 weeks behind schedule due to water testing issues. The contractor is optimistic that the lost time will be made up. Check our website for regular updates and traffic conditions. Please **DO NOT** drive the wrong way up Spokane, **DO NOT** speed and **DO** stop at stop signs. Don't forget to support our local businesses on

Washington Street, Idgies, The Shovel and Salon Kula are all eagerly waiting to serve you.

Did you know?

Curious about **how to prevent mosquitos**? Tires, tire tracks, tiny ponds in back yards and bird baths are common breeding places. Water standing for just a week, not large enough to support mosquito predators, is the best place for the nasty little bugs. Drain and dry!

Canada's 150th birthday is coming up in 2017. All community groups interested in planning celebrations please contact mayor@rossland.ca. Let's do something fun to celebrate! Check out <https://150alliance.ca/home>

The Rossland News has started a "Volunteer of the Month" feature. Please nominate inspirational folks!

Reminder: Please do not ride bikes on the sidewalks downtown. It's a real hazard to yourself and pedestrians. Several very near collisions have been reported lately.

Rossland Carshare now has two vehicles: An automatic Ford Ranger 4x4 truck and a manual Toyota Matrix hatchback. New businesses or individual members welcome! The City has joined. www.carsharecoop.ca

The Rossland Mountain Market: Thursdays on Queen Street beside the Credit Union, from 3pm to 6pm. Enjoy local fresh produce, treats, music, all kinds of wonderful local creations and camaraderie! Membership has its privileges; come learn more at the market.

Interesting tips: Composting at home!

Composting is an important community service to put food scraps and other organic "waste" back in the soil. The alternative is to put it in the trash to attract bears on trash day and then fester in the landfill.

Here are five simple guidelines to help ensure the process makes great soil without creating a smell or attracting wildlife. In short, to make good compost have lots of browns in contact with the scraps, lots of air and water and protect your pile with physical barriers for dogs and, if you're in a bear area, an electric fence.

1) **Balance "browns" and "greens"**. Balance carbon-heavy things: sawdust, straw, mowed-up leaves, or woodchips with nitrogen-heavy things: all kitchen waste.

TIP: Grass clippings, green garden cuttings, and hay aren't "browns." They are already balanced and just need the right moisture levels to compost quickly.

TIP: Collect browns (woodchips, sawdust etc) ahead of time and keep lots on hand, the more variety the better.

TIP: Maintain the outer edge of the compost with mostly browns, including a thick mat of brown at the bottom.

2) **Balance air and water.** If your compost is too dry, it won't decompose. If your compost is too wet (not enough air) your compost will ferment and stink. Turning a pile adds air and speeds up composting,

TIP: If you're just piling and walking away, add browns as you go (sticks, woodchips) to make small air pockets.

TIP: Black plastic compost bins don't get enough air unless they are turned regularly to keep them aerated.

3) **Chop up the scraps.** Chunky scraps decompose slowly, chopped up scraps deteriorate quickly. Make sure to stir up the browns and greens.

TIP: If you've got a blender use it. This goes a long way to speeding up the compost process.

TIP: Un-chopped leaves make an airless mat, so chop them up. A lawnmower works well. For example, mowed leaves will decompose quickly right into your lawn while un-mowed leaves smother grass.

4) **Pay attention.** Monitor your pile. Even "walk away and leave it" piles need you to nudge them back into balance from time to time. If it stinks, turn it to add air and mix in some browns. If it's dry, add water.

TIP: Sawdust quickly smothers odours. For example, after turning a stinky, unbalanced pile, a half-inch layer of sawdust does wonders to alleviate earthy smells.

TIP: Add watering your compost pile to your regular garden routine.

5) **Protect your 'post.** Fresh food scraps are an attractant, period, even mixed up with browns. A strong compost container (e.g. good pallets, or heavy gauge metal fence) does the trick for dogs and usually for bears. If you are particularly prone to bears in your area, nothing beats a well-installed electric fence.

TIP: Coffee grounds, tealeaves, and other gritty or bitter things turn off most animals, most of the time.

TIP: A good, plug-in electric fence charger costs about \$100 or \$150 and lasts for decades. Electric fencing and insulators are relatively inexpensive. After you've protected your compost, it's easy enough to run extra lines to keep bears out of your garden in the summer and out of your fruit trees in the fall.

Thanks to local farmer Andrew Bennett for providing this helpful info. Contact him at 250-521-2500

Be in touch! City Hall 362-7396

Reach Council through www.rossland.ca

Next Council meeting: Monday 15th August at 6pm.
Come join us! All are welcome!