

ROSSLAND COUNCIL CONNECTS

April 2018

Issue #35

Message from Mayor Kathy:

After a nomadic few weeks, **City Hall now has a new home!** We have moved our offices to 2196 LeRoi Ave (across the highway from Mook Thai). The space is tight and there is no meeting area. You can drop in to pay bills and ask a quick question, but to sit down with any City Hall staff, please call 362-7396 and follow the menu prompts to make an appointment. We apologize for the inconvenience.

Unfortunately, the collapsed ceiling at the old City Hall exposed asbestos. Asbestos was a common material used in the construction of buildings of this vintage. While the contamination level is not alarming, it is sufficient to warrant the relocation of all employees and equipment for at least a year while we figure out the root cause of the collapse and rebuild. You can expect to see a new and improved City Hall in the future. Much of the expense will be covered by insurance. Council meetings will continue to be held in the Miners Hall.

Congratulations to the **Red Mountain Racers and Red Mountain Resort** for a very successful Sport Chek Canadian Nationals ski race event. Town was hopping with lots of athletes and visitors. Tons of thanks to the volunteers!

There is a super collaborative effort underway: The communities of Rossland, Trail, Nelson and Castlegar are joining forces to put together a proposal for the **Federal Smart Cities Challenge**. This project involves local governments, businesses, Chambers of Commerce, Community Futures offices and the Rural Development Institute. The question asked is "How can technology and connectivity improve the lives of residents?" Since we are stronger together, we decided to make a regional application and go after the \$10m prize. To learn more: <http://smarkootenays.cbrdi.ca/> To participate: <https://my.thoughtexchange.com/#974574534> (This is a second Thoughtexchange to determine the next step for our application). Help craft the challenge statement. Even if we aren't the ultimate winner, working together has highlighted areas that are ripe for collaboration and hopefully we can make progress together on some of the challenges that face our region with other funds and partnerships.

The Age Friendly program is starting to take shape. Building on the work that was done with a CBT grant, this project will create an action plan for Rossland. The steering committee includes several Rossland Seniors, representatives from local government, participants from Interior Health, an Affordable Housing Representative, Regional District of Kootenay Boundary Representative, Rossland Library Representative, Rossland Council for Arts and Culture Representative, Rossland Museum and Discovery Centre Representative, Rossland Legion Representative, Rossland Summit School Representative, and a Community Response Network Representative. We will be working collaboratively with Trail and Montrose as well and seeking your input.

We were happy to learn that the **Resort Municipality Initiative** (RMI) program will continue for another year in the Provincial budget. In this program \$10.5m is divided up among 14 designated resort communities to help fund various tourism related projects. Each of the 14 communities gets a portion of the funds based on the size of its tourism sector. We are one of the smallest communities and only get a tidbit per year, but every contribution helps.

Couple of reminders: It's that time of year where it's patently obvious that many people fail pick up after their dog. **Please do your part and clean up after your pet.** Or even pick up extra for those times you might have missed over the winter. ☺

There has been a lot of talk about **banning plastic bags** and how we really could live without them. The easiest way to rid ourselves of this problem is just to remember to take a reusable bag with you to the shops. It's a simple habit to adopt. The City of Victoria is trying to ban them completely. It will be interesting to see if they are successful. If so, perhaps Rossland can be next! There is an informal group of residents working on this topic. We made a great effort 10 years ago but many people have slid back into the old trashy habits.

Council News:

It was a good thing that our March 26th meeting was held in the Miners Hall as well over 100 people turned out to express their support for the arena. They were pleased to hear the **Draft Financial Plan** presentation that included Council's direction to add \$200k for the repairs needed to re-open for ice sports in the Fall. The important point to note is that this unexpected, additional \$200k has been added to budget with the understanding that the community will pull together to fundraise. The fundraising target is \$90k. This number was picked because with our reserves and other funds, the City can come up with \$110k. To keep the tax increase on the municipal portion of our taxes below 5% for this year, and a modest increase next year, we need robust fundraising. If this doesn't happen we will have to borrow from reserves and pay it back next year which will require taxes to increase more than we anticipate. Go on the website, under the March 26th agenda package to read the whole financial plan.

Council decided to **contact a professional to conduct our public consultation on recreation**. It's a big question with a lot of moving parts and large impacts. It's not just about the future of the arena, (maintain for ice sports and expand its usage or re-purpose the facility for other recreational activities without ice), we also want to hear your thoughts on regional recreation. Stay tuned for details.

In the meantime, Council made some improvements to our current **Financial Assistance for Use of Facilities, Pools and Parks** which provides a small subsidy for youth teams using Trail's facilities and programs. The available fund is still \$10k but now teams can get up to 50% reimbursement for the difference charged by Trail to Rosslanders (up from 25%) and people with disabilities have been included once again. In addition the requirement that a team have 5 members from Rossland has been dropped.

At our April 9th meeting Council approved the municipal auditor's report on our **2017 Financial Statements**. We are pleased to report that the auditor was very impressed with the quality of the reports and the significant improvements that have been made to our financial record keeping in the last several years. Many thanks to our finance department for a job very well done. By moving most of our records to the Cloud, even the collapsed roof did not interfere with the audit!

Council thanks you for **your input on recreational cannabis**. We had responses from 503 people. (Ironically, substantially more than participated in our survey about how we spend our tax dollars!) The results confirmed what we anticipated: The majority of respondents are not too concerned about the impact of a recreational retail outlet for cannabis in town.

Council gave 1st and 2nd readings to some exciting **development plans for the old Block Motel site**. If the bylaws are adopted, in addition to the refurbished apartments, the neglected site may now be zoned to allow space for a hostel, camp sites, and potential single family or multifamily dwellings. There will be a public hearing on the development on April 23rd at 6pm in the Miners Hall.

Council reviewed and re-confirmed several plans, policies and bylaws – Council was pleased to see the **Management Work Plan** for this year. This is the road map prepared by our Chief Administrative Officer to implement Council's Strategic Plan. It doesn't include all of the day-to-day work done by the City, but it captures the goals and objectives identified by Council. This month's policy review mostly dealt with **administrative matters** to ensure that our city is running efficiently, that employees have access to continued training, and that city equipment on loan is properly handled. We modernized an old 1962 bylaw to address **fireworks**. Council reviewed our **business licence bylaw** and reconfirmed the requirement that a business licence is required for every separate location where it operates. This enables the City to keep track of inspections and maintain an accurate list of businesses operating in our community. We continue to improve and strengthen our financial, administrative and operational departments.

We also have given a preliminary reading to our **2018-2022 Financial Plan**. It must be approved and submitted to the Province by May 15, 2018. The plan was developed based on our strategic plan, history and with direction from Council on some emergent issues. Public consultation is scheduled on April 23rd at the Miners Hall from 5pm to 6pm.

We approved two more **short term rental applications**. One had significant opposition from neighbors but the application complied with the standards we have set for accommodations of this type so there was no compelling reason to refuse it.

We also provided a **letter of support for the Golden City Lions Club** for their grant to modernize the campground by improving the electrical hookups for visitors. The campground is owned by the City but has been built, operated, and lovingly maintained by the Lions for over 30 years.

Did you know?

The Youth Action Network (YAN) space is now open for programming! Youth 12-18 can participate in after school drop in sessions for Makerlab, Dungeon & Dragons, art, cooking programs and more. For full details of current programs and program times go to <http://www.rosslandyan.ca/current-programs/> And Save the Date for the YAN Space Open House April 30 from 5-7pm. Everyone is welcome.

The Rossland Youth Action Network is also planning the **5th Annual Rossland Youth Week**. Back by popular demand: Red Talks, When Life Gives You Lemons Art Walk and the Youth Week Gala as well as other great events celebrating the unique and fantastic youth of Rossland. For the complete schedule: <http://www.rosslandyan.ca/youth-week-2018/> Interested in volunteering with YAN's super fun programs? Join the **YAN Squad** of impactful volunteers by emailing: rosslandyan@gmail.com

Celebrate Earth Day on Sunday April 22nd. Join the Sustainability Commission for the Annual Chicken and Compost Crawl between 1- 3 pm. Or drop by the Library and check out some electric bikes between 12 -2 pm.

"Bring Out Your Dead!" Saturday, May 12, 2018 is Community Wildfire Preparedness Day. Rossland's FireSmart Program wants to get all Rossland property owners to participate in a vegetation and yard debris cleanup day. Homeowners are encouraged to spend a few hours in their yards reducing accumulations of vegetation and debris that contribute to wildfire spread when fire danger climbs later in the summer. It's been a big winter and the snow has brought down lots of branches and damaged trees that can increase the wildfire hazard in your yard. **Rossland's FireSmart Program** will provide information on how to do your wildfire hazard cleanup (check your mailbox, poster sites and the City website). Rossland FireSmart is coordinating with Rossland Public Works to provide free curbside pick-up of your yard waste debris.

Heritage Commission members hosted an architectural historian, Christine Boucher, from Ottawa on April 4th to 6th to do an indepth study and report on the Miners' Hall for the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada. We hope this will be the final step in our efforts to have the Miners' Hall designated as a National Historic Site of Canada.

Reminder: If you have questions or issues with your **recycling service** at home or at your business, please call Alpine Disposal as this is not a City or Regional District service.

Be in touch! City Hall 362-7396. Contact Council through www.rossland.ca Next Council meeting: Monday April 23, at 6pm. Come join us! All are welcome! Public input starts at 6pm where you can briefly share your thoughts, concerns and ideas. For longer topics, get on the agenda as a delegation contact City Hall to learn how. **Meetings will be held at the Miner's Hall until further notice.**