

ROSSLAND COUNCIL CONNECTS March 2018

Issue #34

Message from Mayor Kathy:

The partial collapse of City Hall's roof in late February was an unwelcome surprise. The snow load on the building was calculated to be 65lbs per square foot but the building was engineered to hold far more weight. A structural engineer is investigating the cause of the incident. Unfortunately, the collapsed ceiling 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.

City Hall is currently operating out of the 4th floor of the Miners Hall. While all of our city hall staff have been temporarily relocated, and we will do our best to meet your needs, please be patient as it is quite complicated to carry on with our normal functions outside of our usual facility. We apologize for the inconvenience. Please contact City Hall at 362-7396 and follow the menu prompts to make an appointment with any of our staff. We will keep the community informed of any new developments in this situation. Thanks for your understanding.

IMPORTANT ISSUE: Based on a recent inspection, we need approximately \$200k for repairs and improvements to the Rossland Arena just to open the facility for ice sports in the fall of 2018. These improvements were not contemplated in the initial draft of the 2018 budget. The City is working with the Arena Task Force on creative ways to fund these repairs. Over the next few years, the investment needed is estimated to be about \$3m. Council has heard from numerous groups who are passionate about recreation. It's been ten years since we did any public outreach on the subject. Our population has changed and grown. We have more children and young families in town and more seniors too. We want your input on issues such as using Trail's recreational facilities & programs as well your thoughts on Rossland's facilities. It all comes down to what the community wants, balanced with what we can afford. Watch in the upcoming weeks for a survey and please express your views.

On March 19th and 21st I participated in the launch of the **Highway #3 Destination Development Strategy**. This is a 10 year plan created by stakeholders along Highway 3, 3A and 3B from Hope to the Alberta border designed to bring more visitors to our region, improve the travel conditions, attractions and amenities along the corridor. This is a collaborative effort that has brought lots of different people and organizations together to benefit our area. It's been a terrific project and a multitude of good ideas came out of the stakeholder working sessions to create this strategy. Watch for next steps!

I enjoyed hosting the **grade 1 & 2 class from Ecole des Sept Sommets**. It's wonderful to see teachers motivating young students to learn about local government and civic matters. I encourage any class to come visit (once City Hall is reopened).

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. Watch for opportunities to participate as we 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.

Council News:

Council is asking for **your input on recreational cannabis**. With new legislation about marijuana coming this summer we want to get ahead of any potential issues this will create. The survey is open until the end of March. Please participate. <http://www.rossland.ca/cannabis-survey>. You can pick up a hard copy at the Miners Hall (our temporary City Hall). So far over 435 people have responded.

Council supported an application for a **Heritage Management grant from the Columbia Basin Trust**. If successful, this process will unite the Heritage Commission, the Museum & Discovery Centre, the City as well as private property owners to work together to create a strategy for the long-term preservation and conservation of our very valuable heritage buildings and history. This is a new and very exciting program from the Columbia Basin Trust.

There was a lively and well attended public hearing to discuss **two development proposals put forth by Red Mountain**. Red wants to build a **88 bed hostel** at the base of the hill on a lot zoned for multi-family development but currently used as employee parking. This project prompted a lot of concern about the already tight parking at the ski hill. Don Thompson, General Manager of the resort assured the attendees that 150 more parking slots are planned for this summer and those will more than make up for any lost to the hostel project.

The other project that attracted a lot of attention was the plan to build up to **10 tourist accommodation cabins and a clubhouse with a caretaker suite** in the Paradise basin area. The plans, while not yet finalized, anticipate the cabins to be placed on the flat terrain along Silver Sheep. Concerns about elite preference were addressed by Red. There will be an advance reservation window for winter overnights available to investors who have contributed over \$10k to the "Fight the Man" campaign but otherwise the cabins will be available for booking by the general public. Concerns about dogs interfering with wildlife were voiced and no decision about pooches being allowed was communicated. General environmental concerns were voiced because the area is a known bear habitat. There will be an environmental impact report required prior to any final approvals and an environmental monitor will be on site to insure the project meets all environmental standards.

Other concerns about emergency access and crowd abatement at the base area were addressed by Red. There will be helicopter access to the cabin area but only in case of emergencies. There will be some type of a new connector from

Silverlode to the Grey chair. Lots happening at Red this summer. After the public hearing and a discussion of the points raised, Council approved the zoning amendments as presented.

Terry Van Horn from the **Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation (LCIC)** gave a presentation to Council about the good work that is being done on regional economic development. For a region with a limited population, our area is doing very well. With the TechMetalAlley initiative and the opening of the I4C building, new technology sector businesses are setting up shop in our affordable and beautiful area. With broadband technology these firms can work anywhere.

The City submitted an application for grant funding for a **workforce housing project on the EMCON lot**. If successful, we hope to create a multifamily building with affordable rental units targeted at our service workers in town. The City is looking at potentially owning the building but the rentals would be managed by the Lower Columbia Affordable Housing Society.

We also submitted **letters of support for the St Andrew's Church** to make some important improvements to the iconic red roof church and a small request from the **Heritage Commission for a Ross Thompson plaque** to be installed in Harry Lefevre square. Rossland has lots of wonderful heritage opportunities for the CBT to support.

Council reviewed and re-confirmed several policies and bylaws – this month's review mostly dealt with administrative matters to ensure that our city is running efficiently, that expenses are tracked transparently and that our election bylaws are up to date. We continue to improve and strengthen our financial and administrative departments.

Council reviewed and discussed the results of the online Citizen Budget Tool. The process was well received and we heard from 121 respondents. Hopefully next year more people will participate so we can be confident that we are hearing from a significant segment of our population. Highlights: Most people were happy with the competency of our staff and appreciated our public engagement. Some people wanted more money spent on snow clearing, but over all most were happy with the level of service provided by our Public Works crew. Surprisingly, some people now want LESS bylaw enforcement (after years of hearing from people that they wanted MORE bylaw enforcement). Council was pleased to learn that our message that we need to invest more in our infrastructure has been heard by most people. Many suggested that we need to invest more to modernize our old pipes, roads and facilities. A number of people thought we should spend less money on the museum and the arena while a significant cohort wants more investment in our trail network.

Did you know?

Red Mountain Racers are absolutely thrilled with the number of athletes registered to compete in this year's **Sport Chek Canadian National Championships**. There are over 260 Alpine athletes and 60 ski cross athletes registered. There will be athletes competing from 12 different countries! Two years ago at Whistler under 100 athletes in total competed.

In addition, Canada's gold and silver medalist from the Olympics in Korea will be competing in the ski cross events. There is a large number of alumni coming from all over the globe! Olympic gold medalist, Kerrin Lee-Gartner will be here and will be emceeing the Alpine Canada Gala on Saturday night.

Opening Ceremonies will take place on Thursday March 23rd, and will be a lot of fun on both Columbia and Washington Streets. Come for the live music, great shopping specials and a parade of the athletes past and present. Events start at 4pm, parade at 5:30 and opening ceremonies at 6pm.

Saturday is the day to be at the hill! In addition to the Slalom, GS and Ski Cross races there will be a team event which pits ski cross and alpine athletes against one another in a dual slalom on the Face of RED. Red Mountain Racers are able to run this event with a HUGE thanks to Columbia Basin Trust who provided the funds to purchase a dual start gate system. This gate system is one of only three World Cup Level dual gates in all of Canada and will be a tremendous legacy item for both the racers and the region as it will allow us to host events we could not previously consider.

It takes 160 volunteers a day to run these races and there are still opportunities to help! To volunteer please contact christine.andison@redmountainventures.com Big thanks to everyone for their support!

Museum news: Red Mountain Resort sponsored two new ski exhibits opening March 19 in the reception area and in the conference area at the ski hill. One focuses on Nancy Greene's ski career while the other is on the history of skiing at Red. Thanks to Red for partnering with the museum. Red generously paid for the cases and installation while the museum donated time and resources for the exhibit.

4th Annual Easter Egg Hunt on March 31 from 12 noon - 2pm at the museum. Free (donations accepted!) Little kids will be inside while "big" kids outside. Spring Break Camps beginning March 19 at the museum. A few spots are available.

More good news for the Rossland library! They got a Federal Gas Tax grant for nearly \$81k for renovations to their facility. They will be going to tender soon and making some fantastic improvements to our well-used and well-loved library.

Congratulations to Black Jack Cross Country Ski Club! They received \$32k from the Columbia Basin Trust Recreation Infrastructure Fund to build the "Around the Knoll" trail at the biathlon trail network. This project also got other grants valued at \$25k and ATCO made an in-kind donation for the labour and construction of the new trail.

Be in touch! City Hall 362-7396. Contact Council through www.rossland.ca Next Council meeting: **Monday March 26th, at 6pm**. Come join us! All are welcome! **Meetings will be held at the Miner's Hall until further notice.**