

ROSSLAND COUNCIL CONNECTS

October 2015

Issue #8

Note from Mayor Kathy

It's been a very busy time at City Hall. In late August and September we were deeply involved in reworking a deal for the sewer pipe crossing on Trail's pedestrian bridge. The previous agreement was based on unrealistic estimates. When the project was tendered, the true costs were much higher so all partners were required to pay more. Construction of the project is about to get underway and will take approximately 10 months.

Big changes in City Hall: We welcome Ms. Cecile Arnott back to the role of Chief Administrative Officer and Chief Financial Officer, (CAO/CFO). Ms. Arnott has been on leave since Oct 2013. She is looking forward to the challenges of returning to City Hall and taking up all of her important responsibilities.

City Council would like to thank Mr. Mike Maturo for the excellent job he has done as our Interim CAO. Mr. Maturo was able to step into the role and immediately implement some of the changes Council and the community wanted to see go forward. His prior experience with the City made him a natural choice for the role. We thank Mr. Maturo for his energy and dedication to the job. His vision for Rossland was well aligned with Council's priorities and he will be missed.

Another valued employee is moving on too. Our Acting Chief Financial Officer has taken a new position with a neighbouring municipality. Ms. Lois Hunter has been a terrific asset to the City. Under her leadership and quiet competency the City's financial department greatly improved reporting, efficiency and implementation of the suggested improvements from the Auditor General of Local Government. She has done a very good job for us and we are sorry to see her go.

The City of Rossland wishes to extend our thanks and appreciation to these two dedicated and hard working employees and wish them every success in their future endeavors.

Council News:

Business walk: In conjunction with the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training, and with help from the Lower Columbia Initiatives Corporation, Council is undertaking an outreach program to connect with our local business people. We want to hear their important priorities and how the City can help ensure that Rossland remains a resilient community. Mayor and Councillors will visit as many businesses as we can on Oct 20th between 10am-2pm. Watch for us at your door!

Public input sought and got: 1) Lots of people showed up for the design charrette to get a look at our plans for

Washington St. The water and sewer pipes represent the most expensive part of the project. The bike lanes, sidewalks and landscaping will make it match the appeal of our beautiful downtown. The re-design of the intersection at the top of Plewman follows the recommendations for improvements and safety we received from the traffic engineers and ICBC.

2) Many thanks to the more than 70 people who participated in our public engagement session for **Council's Strategic Plan** at the Miners' Hall. We received some terrific input and greatly appreciated the feedback that we are on the right path. The final plan will be released in November. Kudos to our facilitator Jennifer Ellis. She did a terrific job for Council at both the public session and the multi-day session attended by Council and city staff.

Water and Sewer rates will be increasing in January so that our utility systems can be self-supporting. Pricing for both services will now be based on the size of your meter and how much you consume. Currently we subsidize water and sewer services with funds from general revenue, which creates uncertainty and requires borrowing. We will be seeking grants and other ways to reduce expenses so the plan presented is a "worst case scenario" but we must address this situation and properly fund our utilities. We are planning to do outreach to the community through an online Thoughtexchange process and a public meeting to be held Nov 12th at the Seniors' Hall 1916 First Ave at 7pm. Emails will be sent out inviting your participation in the Thoughtexchange process or you can self register by going to this link: bit.ly/rosllandwatersewer. The material is voluminous and can be found on the City's website. A background sheet is available at City Hall and on the website too. Please take this opportunity to give feedback and ask questions.

Wood stove exchange program- Council approved providing an incentive of \$100 for any Rossland resident who takes advantage of the wood stove exchange program offered through the Regional District. To find out more, go to www.rdkb.com or call 250-368-9148

Other Council approvals: We approved a new dark sky lighting policy. Now staff will create a plan to help us reduce costs of lighting while continuing to ensure the safety of our streets. We intend to remove lights that are redundant and others that are just not needed. Eventually, we want to replace the old lights with more energy and cost efficient LED fixtures. Just removing some unnecessary lights will reduce our costs. Watch for more details and an opportunity to offer your comments.

Drought Conditions: Despite the cooler weather, our reservoirs are still below full capacity due to the

unusually dry season and low creek levels. **Stage 3** restrictions are still in place. Check www.rossland.ca for details

Food for thought: At future meetings Council might, consider changes to our Tax Exemption Revitalization bylaw, changes to our business licenses, updating our Design Guidelines, review of our fees and charges for recreation, comparing how other communities handle permissive tax exemptions and what types of organizations receive them, banning smoking in parks where children play, banning the cosmetic use of pesticides and herbicides, and permanently closing Nickleplate Park to traffic. It is always closed in the summer and we are keeping it closed on a trial basis this winter. These are just a few of the interesting topics we might be talking about in the future. We'd love to have you join the conversation.

What goes on at the UBCM?

The annual convention for all elected officials is called the Union of BC Municipalities and it is a very informative convention. Here are some highlights: The **Hwy#3 Mayors Coalition** meets with Provincial Ministers and staff to discuss priorities along this important corridor. By determining our priorities ahead of time and speaking with one voice, we get a lot done. All the improvements underway from Hope to Princeton and in other locations to the Alberta border are the result of this group's ongoing efforts.

The **Resort Municipality Initiative** represents 14 resort communities, working together with the Province to increase tourism in our area. The UBCM is a great opportunity to meet with the Minister in charge and the other RMI mayors and councillors.

Workshops and seminars covering everything from risk management, public engagement, resiliency in the face of climate change, bylaw enforcement, and a host of other topics relevant to municipal governance are offered. In addition, the **resolution sessions** cover every initiative municipalities want the Provincial or Federal governments to address. It's also a terrific opportunity to meet our peers and learn from their experiences.

Your Mayor and Councillors had **several interesting meetings** with Ministers and their staff to establish rapport and present Rossland's concerns and needs.

Did you know?

Broadband is being installed! The Columbia Basin Broadband Corporation is providing the fibre for high-speed internet in the downtown core. The installation work is underway and the network should be live in the New Year. Watch for more details on how to sign up.

The Rossland Museum & Discovery Centre is having a Silent Art Auction! The event runs to November 30th, to raise funds for the Museum Renewal Project. Help the museum achieve Phase I of their \$400k fundraising goal. The artwork will be on display at the Rossland Branch of the Nelson & District Credit Union (2071 Columbia Ave) and Salon Kula (2167 Washington St) where bid sheets are posted for the pieces. Online bidding can also be done by email. NDCU hours are Monday-Friday, 10am to 5pm. Salon Kula hours are Tuesday (12-8), Wednesday/Thursday (9-8), Friday (9-5), Saturday (9-3). Bidding closes at location and online 5pm on Monday, November 30th, 2015. Don't miss this event and many thanks to all the local artists who donated.

Heritage BC selected Rossland as the site of their annual conference and it was a huge success. Many of our Heritage Commission and Museum folks worked so hard volunteering for the event. The attendees were very impressed and many were visiting Rossland for the first time. Attendees loved our superb workshop locations: the Miners' Hall, the Old Firehall and the Bank of Montreal art gallery space. Credit goes to the local volunteer team who did an excellent job with this fabulous event.

New signage: Thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Heritage Commission, the Museum and Tourism Rossland, we have wonderful new signage at Esling Park and the events sign at St Paul and Columbia. The Arts Council's new event sign in Harry Lefevre square looks great too.

Jubilee Park Wetland has been planted with indigenous plants thanks to the hard work of Rachael Roussin and Eva Cameron. They successfully applied for grants, coordinated the construction, the planting volunteers from the community as well as school groups. Already the wetland is reverting to its natural state and will provide a wonderful learning environment.

Rossland Recreation's Fall brochure is available online now at www.rossland.ca. Check out all the fun and fabulous offerings for all ages.

Be in touch! City Hall 362-7396
Reach Council through www.rossland.ca

Newsletters could be electronic but we need more people to sign up to receive them that way. Please go to www.rossland.ca. 'E-Mail Updates'

Next Council meeting: Oct 26th at 6pm. Please join us! You can come to the public input session at the start of our meetings to speak briefly or for a longer presentation, sign up to come as a delegation.