

ROSSLAND COUNCIL CONNECTS

September 2016

Issue #18

Message from Mayor Kathy

I just missed the last newsletter with a really sweet event: The culmination of **the library's reading club**. A number of avid young readers showed up outside the library to receive their certificates of accomplishment, some stickers, a fine medal AND the free book of their choice. They each had committed to regularly reading at least 20 minutes a day. Our library program is a great way to get kids hooked on books and it was wonderful to see so many participants. Our MP Richard Cannings, an accomplished author of a number of books himself, was on hand to present the goodies to all.

Golden City Days and the Fall Fair were super successful this year. Many thanks to the hard working volunteers who make it happen every year. Over 1200 people visited the Fall Fair and that wasn't even counting the kids!

Grant news: **The Hwy #3 Mayors and Chairs Coalition** has successfully worked with the Provincial government for a number of years to make improvements to the road infrastructure along the Crownsnest Highway from the Alberta border to Hope, BC. The group is now looking at an economic development strategy to improve visitor experiences and promote the route to entice more travellers to come to our piece of paradise. We recently got several grants to get the project off the ground and DestinationBC has agreed to participate.

CBT has recently agreed to fund a pilot project to create age friendly programming in the entire Lower Columbia region, similar to what currently exists in the Beaver Valley. This will be a wonderful program to encourage socialization and reduce the isolation of some seniors in our communities.

Councillors Greene, Cosby and I will be attending the **Union of British Columbia Municipalities annual conference** in Victoria next week. It's always a very educational and exhausting event.

Many thanks to everyone who turned out for the **Community Fruit Pick and Press day**. Despite the drizzly day, 15 hardy volunteers, including 5 members of council, showed up to pick lots of fruit. The press, owned by Rossland Real Foods was busy both days of the weekend making delicious juice. Some of the money donated will go towards maintenance for the press. Having scheduled times worked well and next year those who haven't made a reservation will have to wait until

the end of the day to press so, in fairness to those with reservations, we can maintain our schedule.

Council News:

Rossland City Council is inviting all local citizens to participate in our 2017 budget consultation in partnership with Thoughtexchange! We want to get your ideas and feedback on what you value and how much you are willing to pay for it.

The City needs to make some tough decisions on our tax rates and the budget that will affect Rossland residents in the years to come. These decisions directly impact you so we want to hear your creative ideas, and your reaction to other locals' ideas for the City's future.

We are also excited for Rosslanders to be some of the first stakeholders to use the beta version of Thoughtexchange's new app! Enjoy a sneak peak of this product but please be patient with the new program as this is a very early version that will be available to the general public early next year. It does require you to register but your thoughts and reactions will not be associated with your name or email address. The City thanks Thoughtexchange for once again running the consultations free of charge as a public service.

Please take a few minutes out of your day to have your say for Rossland's 2017 budget. **Deadline to participate is September 28th.**

Go to <http://bit.ly/rosslandmoonwalk> to read background information, share thoughts and react to others' comments, all from the comfort of your home. Please encourage everyone to participate.

While we are talking about the Thoughtexchange process, **some clarification is required for some of the information in the background material.** Various facilities listed show some very large numbers. These numbers represent an estimated "worst case scenario" that includes operating expenses as well as future capital requirements. Consider the tennis courts for example: The tennis society only gets, on average, \$2k per year of taxpayer money. The larger number in the background material assumes that the courts are being completely rebuilt with no grant funding. The true story is more nuanced: The money from the City is set aside by the group and combined with the user fees each year. This fund builds up and is then used to resurface the courts about every seven years. The larger number in the background material represents rebuilding the courts entirely. But a complete rebuild of the courts would rely

on grant funding, which would reduce the contribution from taxpayers. And this should actually be amortized over the lifespan of the courts which would be about 80 years. Like many of our facilities; the Library, museum and Miners Hall, the tennis courts are maintained by volunteers. Over 120 kids use the courts through programs that are volunteer driven and taught. Many more adults also enjoy the facility. Without the dedication of these volunteers the City of Rossland would not be able to offer this healthy amenity to our community.

The City received a grant for \$75k to create a **comprehensive asset management plan**. This plan will examine our infrastructure and create a capital plan as well as a financial plan that will enable us to maintain and improve our infrastructure over time. The contract was awarded to Urban Systems who has become a leading expert in the field.

In an ongoing effort to make our community and our facilities sustainable into the future, Council gave 3rd reading to a bylaw that will **increase the fees and charges at the arena** for the upcoming season. Our rates have not been adjusted since 2010 but of course the costs continue to rise. Increasing fees is one step in working towards the arena's continued viability for future generations. Our fees, which are significantly below what other arenas in the area charge, will increase to reflect local pricing and feedback from a sampling of users who have indicated they would be willing to pay more. Our cost recovery on the arena is very low. To further improve the financial performance of the arena, the ice season will be shortened this year as well, eliminating some under-utilized ice time expense to the City. The new rates will go into effect in January 2017.

AMENDED Wildlife Attractant Bylaw. Council adopted an amended bylaw that requires residents to put trash in enclosed containers (a tight lid will do) on pick-up day, (not the night before), requires wildlife proof containers for longer term storage, and increases fines for violations. Minimum fine: \$100. Did you know that fruit fallen from your trees is required to be picked up within 3 days? Bears are again visiting town, please help make 2016 a year without a single bear fatality.

Rossland is transitioning to LED streetlights. LEDs save up to 60% of electricity costs compared to normal lights, and save labour costs since they need replacing much less frequently. Also they can be tilted and hooded so that they shine on the street rather than in people's windows. All of Pinewood has now been transitioned to LED as a pilot project, and we'll convert

the rest of the City over the next two years after assessing the lessons from the pilot project.

Council recently approved the purchase of some **new computer software** that will increase the efficiency of our finance and recreation departments by reducing the amount of money we spend on our annual audit and streamlining both our finance procedures and our recreation services. An upgrade to Recreation software is underway which will give the public direct access to online registration and payment for recreation programs, online booking and payment for private arena rentals, private pool rentals and Miners Hall rentals. This is scheduled to be available to the public January 2, 2017. The City continues to look for improvements in all of our operations.

Did you know?

Due to a technical glitch, the City was unable to get the **quarterly utility bills** out on time so we have extended the penalty deadline from Sept 30th to October 31st. Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience.

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 Library is celebrating it's 77th birthday on 4 October from 4 - 8pm. Lily will be there from 4pm to 6pm if people want to bring a t-shirt and \$5 for her to screen. She'll also have some pre-screened shirts for sale. And, there will be cake!

Don't miss **Rossland Reads**: Local author Jennifer Ellis is returning for her fourth year as moderator.

All My Punny Sorrows by Miriam Toews defended by Veronique Darwin, *Nod* by Adrian Barnes defended by Kathleen Hill, *Indian Horse* by Richard Wagamese defended by Nicola Kuhn, *Sweetland* by Michael Crummey defended by Nicole Tigchelaar. Debates will be held at the library on October 20th, October 27th and November 3rd at 7:00pm. Door prizes from Rossland Beer Co. and Mountain Nugget Chocolate Company

Be in touch! City Hall 362-7396

Contact Council through www.rossland.ca

Next Council meeting: Tuesday October 11th at 6pm.

Come join us! All are welcome! Public input starts at 6pm- Briefly share your thoughts and concerns. For longer topics, get on the agenda as a delegation. Contact City Hall to learn how.