

Mayor's Report – September 24, 2024

Last week, five members of Council – myself, Deputy Mayor Trainer, and Councillors Barkwill, Betts, and Peake – attended the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) annual convention in Vancouver where a record 267 resolutions were put forward for delegates from local governments across the province to debate.

Resolutions provide the main forum for UBCM policy-making and when endorsed, they become a formal request from local government to other orders of government, usually the Province. Four resolutions sponsored by the District of Summerland were endorsed at the convention, including:

- for senior orders of government to establish and adhere to processing timelines for their grant programs to allow municipalities to plan with greater certainty and financial accuracy.
- for senior orders of governments to ban the use of non-compostable produce stickers, given that they hinder the organic composting process.
- for the provincial government to increase the maximum penalty (currently \$500) for Bylaw Offence Notices as it has not kept pace with inflation and is not enough of a financial disincentive for many bylaw infractions.
- for the UBCM and provincial government to develop a program to help local governments service land in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), the cost of which cannot be recovered from farm-class property taxes.

The problem of insufficient revenues to service farm land was also discussed by mayors and councillors from a dozen farming communities in the Interior, Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island at a meeting at the UBCM convention organized by the District of Summerland. It was agreed to co-ordinate our efforts and advocate together on this and other issues of common concern.

We also spoke about this concern, and infrastructure challenges in general, at a meeting with Municipal Affairs Minister Anne Kang.

We also met with Josie Osborne, the Minister of Energy and Mines, to discuss the province's decision to approve a gravel pit in Garnet Valley, and as a result senior ministry staff will be visiting Summerland tomorrow to meet with us about their approval process and hear our concerns.

And we had a meeting with Health Minister Adrian Dix to follow up on our meeting from last year where we requested government support for a primary care centre in Summerland. Minister Dix asked that we provide some additional information, which we did, however we received no response to our request before the writ was dropped on Saturday.

The UBCM convention was sandwiched between several community events here in Summerland. Beforehand, on September 14, I had the honour of officially opening the Fall Fair, where I was joined by Councillors Barkwill and Betts. I then made my way over to the Endless

Summer Show and Shine, and the next day, on September 15, I had the honour of addressing participants in the Terry Fox Run before we all set off in support of cancer research.

Returning from UBCM, this past Saturday (Sept 21) I had the honour of introducing the play Jake's Gift to the audience at Centre Stage Theatre. The play was this year's main stage event at the Ryga Arts Festival.

September is always a busy month in Summerland with a full calendar of events providing something for everyone. It was great seeing so many people out and about, and thank you to all the volunteers who make these events possible and contribute to the vibrancy of our community.

This morning, I was over at the Ryga Centre this morning to kick off the judging of the 'Holiday Magic' winter banner designs. Council will remember that we're each supposed to find time this week to put on our art critic's hat and go over to the arts centre to grade each of the designs. There are 16 designs from local youth, and the top 10 will be made into banners to be put up for this year's festive season. All artists whose work has been chosen will receive an honorarium.

And finally, I would like to mention that Council has just had lunch with our out-going MLA, Dan Ashton, and I would like to on behalf of all Council say a great big thank you to Dan for all his hard work and long service as MLA. He has always been helpful to this Council and with any issues we've had with the Province. I wish him good luck in his future endeavours.

Mayor Doug Holmes