

## **Mayor's Report, January 13, 2020**

On behalf of District of Summerland Council and Staff, Happy New Year, Summerland! We are looking forward to an exciting and productive year.

It has been just over a month since Council met for a regular council meeting and, while I enjoyed the time with family and friends over the Christmas break, staff has ensured that we are back to reality with two full regular council meeting agendas today.

At our December meeting Council adopted a few changes to our procedures bylaw. We still have two monthly meetings on the second and fourth Monday (or Tuesday, following a holiday), and two meetings on each of the Mondays - one in the afternoon and one in the evening. The changes are that both meetings are now regular council meetings. Public hearings and Council discussions on development items will be on the evening meeting agenda and most other items on the agenda for the meeting earlier in the day. Another change is that the afternoon meeting (formerly a Committee of the Whole meeting) begins at 1 pm (from 1:30); the evening meeting begins at 6 pm (from 7 pm). This information is in the January 2020 District newsletter and a schedule of all 2020 meetings is posted on the District website. As a further measure of transparency, these afternoon meetings will now be recorded, the same way the evening meetings are.

In addition to every Mayor's Report, a column called Mayor's Minute is also posted on the District website. I write this column for the Thursday edition of the Penticton Herald following Monday Council meetings. Mayor's Minute is usually about an agenda item or something that Council is currently engaged in. For example, the last column was about why Council proposed then adopted an increase in utility rates; the next one is about this week's upcoming budget discussions.

Last month, on December 12, most of Council and I attended the Chamber's last Business After Business of the year. The event was hosted by Remax Realty at their beautiful new office on Main Street. Thursday, December 19, was the final RDOS Board meeting of the year; after the meeting Councillor Holmes and I attended MLA Ashton's Christmas open house as well as one hosted by MP Richard Cannings.

Thursday was the first RDOS meeting of the year, postponed from January 2. The RDOS begins their budget deliberations before Christmas and the Board has spent many additional hours to get to the first reading on January 9. John Kurvink, the RD's Manager of Finance, will be presenting the proposed tax rates at the District's January 27 meeting. Councillor Holmes' full RDOS report is available on the back table and will be posted on the website.

As I mentioned earlier, we have three general fund budget discussions scheduled this week: Tuesday from 4 to 7 pm, and Wednesday and Thursday from 10 am to 4 pm. The decisions made at general fund discussions result in the proposed mill rate that will come forward at the budget open house next month. Budget discussions are open to the general public and we encourage you to attend. A full schedule of budget session can be found on the District website.

In closing, I am so grateful that I live where I do. However, living in Canada does not mean we are protected from the horror, fear, and grief being experienced by thousands of Canadians, particularly those of Iranian descent. Nor does it protect us from the wildland fires causing massive devastation in Australia. Let us all be thankful.

Mayor Toni Boot