



### Mayor's Report – June 5, 2023

On May 19th, Kelowna Mayor Tom Dyas hosted seven other Okanagan mayors at Kelowna City Hall for a meeting to discuss issues of common interest and to explore areas where we could be more effective working together as a region. It was decided to initially focus on four issues: infrastructure funding, housing, homelessness, and regional transportation.

The mayors will continue to meet periodically, with the goal of producing an advocacy paper on each topic for each of our councils to review and approve.

\*\*\*\*\*

The following week, most of us same mayors and a number of councillors from throughout the region boarded the same plane to Toronto to attend the Annual Convention of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), which ran from May 24 to 28. Councillor Barkwill and I were there to represent Summerland.

We attended a range of workshops, from inter-community transit to developing strategies for local climate resilience, and much of the talk was about the need for a new fiscal framework for municipalities.

The current fiscal framework, with its heavy reliance on property taxes, hasn't changed much since the 19th Century, when local government's role was primarily to service private property. The model wasn't designed to pay for emerging responsibilities like delivering recreation and social services, and it certainly wasn't designed to drive local solutions to national and provincial challenges, like housing, homelessness, healthcare, or addressing core infrastructure.

As one speaker at the Convention put it, "The federal government has the money, the provincial governments have the power, and local governments have the problems."

FCM delegates passed a resolution declaring the need for a modernized fiscal framework for municipalities that provides new sources of municipal revenue that take into account national population and economic growth, which property taxes usually do not. The FCM Board of Directors was elected with a mandate to negotiate a new framework.

\*\*\*\*\*

After Toronto, I went up to Ottawa for meetings with several members of Parliament and Government advisors to advocate for our federal grant applications for both the proposed Rec Centre and the Food Hub.

I would like to thank our Member of Parliament, Dan Albas, as well as Richard Cannings, MP for South Okanagan—West Kootenay, for their assistance in setting up these meetings. Also, thanks to MP Albas for treating me to lunch at the Parliamentary restaurant and for giving me a most interesting behind-the-scenes tour of the House of Commons.

\*\*\*\*\*

I returned home to attend RDOS meetings on Thursday, where the Board received a review of the Regional District's emergency management capabilities. It was agreed to establish a working group to review the recommendations in detail and to report back to the Board.

The Board also reviewed a new draft OCP for Rural Area 'E', which includes Naramata. The draft OCP includes growth containment boundaries to indicate where future types of growth is to be directed. Previously, Naramata was designated as a rural growth area in the Regional Growth Strategy but without any mapping boundaries.

\*\*\*\*\*

Thursday was also the first day of our 3-month trial allowing the consumption of alcohol at three of our local beaches. Councillors Betts, Barkwill and Peake joined me that evening at Peach Orchard Beach for a social gathering to mark the occasion organized by Bottleneck Drive.

\*\*\*\*\*

Finally, I hope everyone was able to get out and enjoy ActionFest. We lucked out with some amazing weather, and I'm sure the size of Summerland at least doubled over the weekend.

On Friday evening, I had the honour of joining Pat Bell and other members of the ActionFest board on the bandshell stage for the official opening. This was the 33rd year that Pat had declared the Festival officially open. By my calculation, that means I am the eighth mayor who has joined him in doing so... I'm not sure if that speaks more to the longevity of the chair of the ActionFest Board or to the average shelf life of a Summerland mayor!

Anyway, what makes ActionFest such a fun and vibrant weekend is that so many different people are able to get involved in so many different ways. There are a lot of people who need to be thanked, including:

- Pat and the ActionFest board and volunteers
- the musicians and food trucks and merchants and security people
- the Kinsmen for running the beverage garden
- the people who brought in all the family-friendly activities
- the organizers of the Slo-Pitch tournament, and of course the players and officials
- all the District staff involved in setting up for the event, and our Department of Community Services staff and volunteers for organizing another great Giant's Head Run, and the 463 people who ran/walked the circuit.

I'm sure there are many others who I've missed, but I do need to recognize all the sponsors of all the events. It's their on-going support that makes ActionFest possible year after year.

Doug Holmes  
Mayor of Summerland