



Mayor's Report

March 22, 2021

Happy Spring and Happy World Water Day!

On March 9 I attended a special meeting of the Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust (SIDIT). Established in 2006 through a one-time \$50 million allocation from the provincial government, SIDIT's objective is to help grow and diversify the economy of the Southern Interior region by providing funding support for economic development initiatives. In addition to the board, there are two regional advisory committees within SIDIT made up of mayors, regional district chairs and MLAs within the region.

CEO Laurel Douglas announced that, effective April 1, 2021, SIDIT will be known as ETSI-BC or Economic Trust of the Southern Interior, a name that more clearly reflects the organization's work. Ms. Douglas also unveiled their new strategic plan. SIDIT, with financial support from the Province, is offering up to \$1.5M in grant funding to support rural communities and their business support organizations as they take on the challenging task of assisting with COVID-19 economic recovery. The District is supporting the Summerland Chamber of Commerce in their application to this grant.

March 11, I attended the South Okanagan-Similkameen Local Immigration Partnership Council meeting as their newest Council member. SOSLIP implements the settlement and integration strategy for newcomers to the region. The project is led by the South Okanagan Immigrant and Community Services (SOICS) and is funded by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).

In the afternoon of March 11, I attended the Summerland Healthy Community Initiative meeting. Much of the discussion was about planning for Mental Health Week coming up in early May.

Friday March 12 the executive of the South Interior Local Government Association (SILGA) met to discuss the upcoming annual general meeting. A day of virtual activities are being planned, including breakout sessions, resolutions debate, and 2021/22 elections. Final details are being made for the remaining guest speakers.

March 17 I attended the national Climate Caucus call for elected officials, the SILGA Speaker Series, and a Climate Solutions Council meeting. The SILGA speaker, Dr. Will Garrett-Petts, is a professor and Associate Vice-President of Research and Graduate Studies at Thompson Rivers University. Dr. Garrett-Petts spoke about the value of University partnerships with community organizations and reported on two initiatives: Cultural mapping of the opioid crisis, and a researcher-in-residence agreement with the City of Kamloops.

March 18 I attended the weekly update on the COVID-19 vaccination rollout presented by Interior Health. This was occurring during Premier Horgan's announcement about the increased eligibility under the current Phase 2 of the immunization program. Details are available at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/plan>.

And finally, on Saturday, March 20 I attend the virtual AGM of the Summerland Community Arts Council. The Board had a very successful Season Sparkles fundraising event at the end of the year. The Board has been working closely with Abhi Lekhi and has put out a call for art submissions for the 2021 banner program. This year the theme is Inclusion and Diversity. The Arts and Culture Centre renovations will be underway by April.

Respectfully submitted,

Mayor Toni Boot