

MAYOR'S REPORT

March 9, 2020

On February 27 I attended the sold-out Building Community Resiliency event at UBCO. The event included a presentation on the recently-released Okanagan Climate Projections report, followed by a panel discussion. Guest speaker was Sheila Watt-Cloutier, a Canadian Inuit activist who has worked on a range of social and environmental issues affecting the Inuit People. In particular, three statements Ms. Watt-Cloutier said really stood out for me:

- Inuit people deserve the Right to be Cold: their lives depend on it;
- The impact of the warming climate on the polar bear receives more attention than the impacts on the Inuit people;
- She rests her hopes for change on today's young people.

On Sunday March 1 I attended both the Philosophers' Cafe and the regional meeting of the B.C. Sustainable Energy Association. The Cafe featured Robert Massoud who spoke about the Israel-Palestine conflict and, to some degree, the parallels between that conflict with the Indian Act and its far-reaching impact on Indigenous Peoples here.

The District hosted the BCSEA meeting that saw Okanagan residents from Armstrong to Oliver come together to discuss how to increase the use of renewable energy in our communities and what role a Regional Task Force could play in advancing that use. Many interesting ideas and opportunities were brought forward for consideration as the Association looks to formalize their next steps. The District looks forward to continuing to work with organizations like the BCSEA to bring the benefits of low carbon technologies to the residents and businesses of Summerland. Thanks to the Association for inviting us to host their meeting, and to Tami Rothery for moderating the event.

On Monday evening, March 2, I participated in a Community Spoons event at Brodo Kitchen in Penticton. Formerly called Soup Sisters, this monthly soup-making event is now sponsored by Junior Chamber International (JCI). We made 130 servings of soup for South Okanagan Women in Need Society clients.

On March 3, I attended the Okanagan Basin Water Board meeting where we had an update, among other things on the snow pack.

On March 4, I attended a Sleep Awareness presentation at Centre Stage. This event was the next in a series of health events put on by Interior Health, School District 67, the District of Summerland, and the Summerland Healthy Community Initiative. Sleep awareness was a topic Summerland students asked to have addressed and the presenters held sessions earlier during the day with them. Similar to adults, most youth are not getting the amount of sleep they need to maintain optimum health.

Thursday, March 5 I attended the RDOS meeting in Penticton. Later that day, Council and much of the District staff celebrated with Karen Jones as she retires after 19 years of service. Thank you again, Karen, for your dedication and hard work through multiple positions and multiple Councils and CAO's. We are missing you, but appreciate that you've left us as prepared as

possible as we transition to “work without Karen Jones”. All the best in your retirement: You deserve it!

Later that evening, I took in the Wildfire Community Preparedness event held at Centre Stage. The event was well-attended with a robust Q&A session following presentations by host Frontline Operations Group, Summerland Fire Chief Glenn Noble, local ecologist Don Gayton, and fire scientist Dr. Kerry Anderson. This event was funded by a grant under the Community Resiliency Investment Program: the District received \$100,000 from this program to undertake fuel mitigation activities, update the Community Wildfire Protection Plan, and work with three Summerland neighbourhoods to become FireSmart Canada-certified FireSmart Communities.

On Saturday, I attended the Home Show at the Penticton Convention Centre. Both the District of Summerland and the RDOS exhibited there: the District on the upcoming Downtown Plan process and the Affordable Housing Forum; RDOS’ exhibit was about emergency preparedness. Similar to last Thursday’s FireSmart event, the best way to be prepared is to become aware of any potential hazards and, as homeowners and citizens, to do your part in reducing the risk and preparing for an emergency.

Yesterday I attended two International Women’s Day events. The first annual First Ladies Tea and Bannock Celebration was held in Peachland. This event, organized by the Peachland Watershed Protection Alliance, opened with the Okanagan song and included Indigenous speeches, dance and drumming, traditional and settler teas and food and a Syilx Water Ceremony. MLA Sonia Furstenau and I were included in the line-up of guest speakers. The entire event focused on women’s connection to the water and the responsibility we carry in protecting it for future generations.

In the evening I went to a fundraiser at Liquidity in the South Okanagan that celebrated women in the culinary and winemaking sectors. Proceeds went to The Foundry and Penticton and Kelowna, Slow Food Canada and the South Okanagan Women in Need Society.

And finally, this morning I attended the announcement by Parliamentary Secretary for FLINRORD, MLA Ravi Kavlon on \$9 million in funding for the Community Resiliency Investment Program. This funding, which used to require 25% in matching funding from local or First Nations governments, is now granted at 100%. The RDOS has received \$140,000 and Penticton Indian Band \$25,000.

Mayor Toni Boot

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