

Mayor's Report – Sept 9, 2025

This afternoon, just before the start of this meeting, Council officially welcomed into service a new water tender by pushing it into the Fire Hall. This kind of “push-in” ceremony is a tradition dating back to the 1800s when horse-drawn fire equipment had to be unhitched and pushed into stations by hand.

The new water tender replaces a 1999 model that has served the community well for more than two decades but it has aged out with plumbing and mechanical issues leading to increasing downtime. The new tender is similar to old one in size and specs but it has improved performance and features like pullout shelves and side water delivery for incidents that require water to be dropped off in a hurry. It will allow firefighters to deliver large volumes of water to emergency scenes where fire hydrants are not available, which is critical in rural areas and for wildfire response.

On Sept 4, Councillor Barkwill and I attended the regular board meeting of the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen (RDOS) where the Board adopted a flood defence system deployment policy to guide the use of their recently purchased tiger dams. The policy sets out processes for when there are multiple requests for the tiger dams, and it also covers equipment maintenance, safety, training, quality assurance, and public notification processes.

Sitting as the Hospital District board, the RDOS board also heard a presentation from the South Okanagan Similkameen Division of Family Practice on efforts being made to recruit family doctors to the region. The delegation asked local governments to work with them on local solutions for housing and childcare for doctors, and requested financial support from the Hospital Board for its recruitment campaign. The Board will consider the request at its upcoming budget deliberations.

Back on August 27, I was joined by Deputy Mayor Trainer and Councillors Barkwill, Betts and Patan on a walk-through of the Wharton Street construction site. CAO Statt will be speaking about the project in his report but it was good for Council to hear from the contractor and see the progress being made on this important downtown infrastructure project.

September is a busy month in Summerland with a wide range of community events, including the Fall Fair, Endless Summer Car show and Terry Fox Run this coming weekend, and the Ryga Arts Festival next week. The downtown construction should not deter any of us from getting out to enjoy these great events.

- Mayor Doug Holmes