



**Mayor's Report
January 25, 2021**

Council has been spending many hours discussing various aspects of the District of Summerland budget and financial plan. Since our last Council meetings on January 11, we have spent two and one-half days: January 13 on the operational budget (a proposed 1.65% property tax increase); the afternoon of January 19 on debts and reserves and the impact on the capital budget; and January 20 on the District's capital budget. The January 20th meeting also included a look at the five-year financial plan, specifically proposed capital expenditures in 2021 and over the next four years. A budget open house is scheduled for 4 pm on February 10. Due to COVID, it will be held virtually.

I feel it is important for all of Council to engage in these meetings; my thanks to each of you for your insights and discussions during the recent budget sessions.

On the evening of January 13, I participated in the panel discussion for the launch of the Feminist Campaign School. This event, and the courses that form the program, have been developed by Nadine Nakagawa, a sitting New Westminster Councillor and Trudy Goels, an advocate, activist, mentor and workshop facilitator. According to the School's website, "the program is intentionally designed to provide knowledge and skills to people who have been historically excluded from civic leadership". It includes training for potential candidates and for campaign managers.

Tuesday morning, January 19, I spoke at the Penticton Sunrise Rotary Club. My presentation, "Building Resilience for the Challenges Ahead", highlighted the District's work in this area including the asset management plan and annually allocating funds to reserves; increasing the housing stock, including affordable housing projects; diverting organics from the landfill; and strengthening our relationship with the syilx People. None of us knows what lies ahead, but careful planning and strategic use of resources will make us better prepared. The overall message is that Council's decisions today contribute to a population of healthy and resilient citizens who, in turn, create a healthy and resilient community.

Last Thursday, January 21, I attended the first meeting of the South Okanagan-Similkameen Respect Network (SOSRN). The Province, through Resilience BC, has created and funded networks throughout BC. Local networks develop a coordinated process for responding to incidents of racism and hate crime, as well as organize educational events and projects to raise public awareness about the issues and celebrate diversity in the community. The Conversations About Racism are part of SOSRN's work.

And finally, congratulations to Summerland's Justin Kripps for another excellent showing at the World Cup Championships in Switzerland mid-month. Justin and his team won two bronze medals—one each in two- and four-man bobsleigh—for their efforts.

Respectfully submitted,

Mayor Toni Boot