

VILLAGE REPORT

By Mayor Stephen White

Due to the amount of information to be provided and the word limit on articles submitted to the Salmo Valley Newsletter, this Village Report has required an insert.

Salmo hosted the Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) Board of Directors Annual General Meeting (AGM) at the Salmo Valley Youth and Recreation Centre on September 22nd. Salmo and Area G have benefitted greatly from the work of the CBT. They are important sponsors of many of the municipal and community initiatives Salmo has undertaken since 2014.

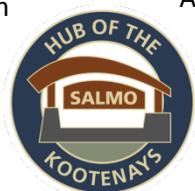
From our new playground structure in KP Park to this year's opening of the 6th Street covered pedestrian bridge, the Columbia Basin Trust has been a key ally for our Village.

The Village of Salmo was pleased that Salmo was selected for the location of this year's Columbia Basin Trust's Annual General Meeting. Following the meeting, CBT hosted a community BBQ and over two hundred people in Salmo attended. This gave community members the opportunity to meet with CBT representatives, both the Board itself and senior staff. The initiative of CBT to meet in communities both large and small throughout the Columbia Basin was truly welcome and we look forward to CBT's continued support in projects throughout the Village, Area G and the Columbia Basin.

We were especially honoured that CBT produced a Limited Edition of their "Our Trust" magazine with the cover featuring the historic photo of Jordan Bakken, the first person across the new 6th Street Pedestrian bridge at the grand opening on July 1st this year.

The Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) annual convention was held in Vancouver from September 25th to the 29th. This was the first opportunity for municipal officials to meet with cabinet ministers in the new Provincial Government. Together with Councillor/Deputy Mayor Steve Dimock and Chief Administrative Officer Diane Kalen- Sukra we were able to meet Minister Michelle Mungall, Minister of Energy, Mines & Petroleum Resources and our local MLA to discuss both hopes and concerns with mining activity in the area. Minister Selina Robinson, Minister of Municipal Affairs & Housing met with us to discuss the need for both continued and expanded provincial financial support for small rural communities. Minister George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy met with us to discuss ongoing concerns we have in Salmo with Recycle BC. CAO Kalen-Sukra had further meetings with provincial staff.

It's vital that municipal officials have an opportunity to meet directly with Ministers and their senior staff. Our community petition



for curbside recycling had already been sent to Minister Heyman, however it became readily apparent during the meeting that communication between the Minister and his staff had been unclear with regard to Salmo's requirements or history with the problematic depot in the Village. Salmo has been on the list since May of 2015 for curbside recycling pickup through Recycle BC (formerly Multi Materials BC). The Provincial Government's decision to have the producers of recyclable material pay to ensure it does not end up in landfills was excellent public policy but means little if Recycle BC does not follow through.

As already reported through various news outlets and social media in the Kootenays the Village of Salmo was recognized for an unprecedented second year by the Union of BC Municipalities with a Community Excellence award. All municipalities are eligible for these awards, and since they are competitive, they are typically awarded to large municipalities with significant financial and staff resources. Salmo is now being dubbed "the little Village that could" by the media. This year's award was for the successful public-private partnership with Heritage Hub Inc. This initiative turned an empty, unused and decrepit building into a vibrant and revitalized 'hub' that includes both commercial space and public space for local artists.

The second award the Village of Salmo received was from the BC Wood Council. This award was for our beautiful new 6th street pedestrian bridge and its use of local quality wood products.

While Council sets direction for the Village, ultimately it's up to our dedicated and hard-working staff to bring these projects to fruition. All staff should take great pride in the Village of Salmo being recognized for their work, skill and efforts on not only these award winning projects but on all the improvements in the Village.

We are also grateful that Village staff have volunteered their time this year to host the first Village Christmas Outdoor Market from 5pm to 8pm on December 1, 2017, located along Davies Street between Main and 4th Street. Local businesses have been asked to stay open to welcome residents and visitors and over a dozen vendors have already signed up. If you are also interested in either vending or in volunteering for this event, please contact the Village office. We are looking for carolers, someone to roast chestnuts on an open fire and many other holiday activities.

MAYOR'S SPECIAL REPORT

An issue has arisen in the community about the cancellation of the Regular Council meeting of October 10, 2017 and it's important that residents understand what happened. All Council meetings are important but this one had two delegations of residents who wished to

present to Council on matters. In total, 45 residents came to the meeting. While Salmo always has very good attendance at Council meetings this was an unusually high number.

Council meetings require significant preparation by staff and are held at the Salmo Valley Youth and Community Centre to accommodate the public.

Council is governed by the *Community Charter*, by our own bylaws and protocols which the majority of Council has adopted. A minority of Council takes the position that where they disagree with an adopted bylaw, protocol or policy, such as the WorkSafeBC mandated *Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy*, they do not need to abide by it. This, of course, is nonsense.

Council by a majority vote suspended providing the accounts payable listing at each meeting. The purpose of providing vendor listings is to allow Council to review the listing and ask pertinent questions regarding, especially, large expenditures.

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IMPLEMENT SECURITY MEASURES IN THE
VILLAGE OFFICE TO ENSURE STAFF ARE NOT
INTERRUPTED, YELLED AT OR HARASSED BY
A MINORITY OF COUNCIL MEMBERS.

Over a period of months a minority of Council members' conduct in asking these questions became hostile, sarcastic, accusatory and demeaning for staff and other Councillors. Despite numerous warnings that they were violating the *Council-Staff Protocol Policy* and WorkSafeBC's regulations, it was not Council's role to conduct an audit at every meeting the behavior continued and increased with wild unfounded allegations of secret accounts and unspecified malfeasance. Not satisfied with the regular reports of our Chief Financial Officer, a professional and certified accountant of many years for Salmo, Nelson and other municipalities and further not satisfied with yet another clean audit from Grant Thornton, the Village auditors, the attacks continued. Council should have reasoned debate, it would be unusual if all of Council agreed all the time. However that debate should be calm and reasonable, without raised voices and certainly without hurling outlandish accusations and insults at other Council members or staff.

Council's decision to suspend the vendor listings was appropriate but more importantly it was approved by the majority. Majority decisions that are not agreed to by some Council members are dismissed as a "rubber stamp". Dismissing a democratic process as a "rubber stamp" is disappointing. No Council member is on the prevailing side in every vote. That is no reason to lash out at other Council members or encourage the public to do so. If there was any indication that these behaviours would be changed, the suspension could be lifted.

Despite the delegations and huge public attendance, two Councillors took advantage of the illness and absence of the fifth Council member. Before Council can conduct its meeting it must approve the agenda for that meeting. Stating that they didn't agree with the majority decision of Council to suspend the vendor listing these same two Council members refused to support the agenda. With no majority support for the agenda the meeting could not continue. The two Councillors knew full well that all the work and resources of the meeting would be for nought, they still decided that their minority view was more important. If they could not have their way, then the Village could not have its meeting.

Council members are elected to conduct the business of the Village, not to belittle and hurl insults at other Council members or, in particular, their staff. The Village has already had to implement security measures in the Village Office to ensure staff are not interrupted, yelled at or harassed by a minority of Council members. It is not only the right thing to do it is the law and the Village (taxpayers ultimately) risk financial penalties for failing to protect staff.

The agenda items from the failed October 10th meeting were moved to the October 24th meeting.

Supporting this type of conduct by Council members is counter-productive and ultimately costs all of us in wasted resources. Residents should encourage Councillors to behave in a dignified and respectful manner. Residents should not lose control of themselves and rise during a Council meeting with wild outbursts and theatrics.

The Village has done very well since the last election, financial house in order, clean audits, projects planned and completed - in short we cannot let the very few ruin it for the majority.

NOTIFICATION OF 2018 COUNCIL MEETINGS

In accordance with Sections 94 and 127 of the *Community Charter*, the public is hereby notified that Regular Council meetings of the Village of Salmo Council are scheduled as follows:

Tuesday, January 9	Tuesday, June 12
Tuesday, January 23	Tuesday, July 10
Tuesday, February 13	Tuesday, August 14
Tuesday, February 27	Tuesday, September 25
Tuesday, March 13	Tuesday, October 9
Tuesday, March 27	Tuesday, October 23
Tuesday, April 10	Tuesday, November 13
Tuesday, April 24	Tuesday, November 27
Tuesday, May 8	Tuesday, December 11
Tuesday, May 22	

Meetings begin at **7:00 p.m.** and are held at the Village Office in **Council Chambers** at 423 Davies Avenue in Salmo, B.C. unless otherwise specified by notice at the Public Notice posting places. Note that in addition to this Schedule, Special Meetings may be called to address extraordinary or urgent business as per Section 126 of the *Community Charter*. Any of the above noted meetings may be cancelled or postponed at the discretion of Council.