



Newsletter January 2019

From the Mayor's Desk

Season's Greetings from Sun Peaks!

On behalf of your Council and Municipal staff, we wish all residents and property owners the very best of the Christmas season and a very Happy New Year. We trust that the Christmas holiday provided you with an opportunity to reach out to your friends and family.

The ski season has started well, in spite of the dry weather in November. The snowmaking and grooming crews at Sun Peaks pulled off a small miracle and the mountain was able to open with top to bottom skiing just in time for the mid-November opening. Ski teams from all across Canada and the Pacific Northwest have been actively training at Sun Peaks and the feedback from the teams is very positive. Due to Sun Peaks' snowmaking capabilities, our resort has clearly established itself as the snow safe early ski season place to be. Congratulations and thanks to all those who made it happen!

The new Orient lift towers have been flown into place and the new lift is ready for the coming season. With the arrival of the Orient lift, several new accommodation projects are taking shape in the eastern part of the resort. We are all looking forward to skiing a bit more on the Orient runs using the new lift.

Municipal Projects

Building permit values of \$158,500 for 2018 are considerable higher than last year's total of \$113,000 but well above the 2016 levels of \$21,600. There are still a number of larger projects working their way through the approval system for the 2019 construction year.

Utilities Takeover

The Municipal purchase of the water and waste water systems is fully completed. We have expanded the waste water treatment system. With the hook-up of the surface water treatment plant, we are now prepared for the worst case scenario of a major malfunction in our ground water supply system. We did hold a recent public meeting to explain the details of the surface water back-up system. Unfortunately, this back-up system has a big price tag with costs of \$1,419,000. We will borrow the funds which will require electoral approval. Due to the cost of a referendum, Council has chosen to seek elector approval via the Alternate Approval Process (AAP). This means that property owners who may have a concern about this borrowing can

request a referendum vote by submitting a petition form to the Municipality. Should more than 10% of electors request a full vote, Council will choose to proceed to a full referendum seeking a positive vote. Council believes that most voters understand that in order to prevent a possible interruption in the ground water supply system, we have little choice but to proceed with the back-up system. Holding a referendum, means setting up a municipal vote with costs of about \$4,000 to \$5,000 for the Municipality. Further information on the AAP will be available shortly. Please check the Municipal website and your emails if you are registered to receive email updates. If you have any questions, please call the

Municipality or email me at araine@sunpeaksmunicipality.ca.



Be advised that business license fees are due by January 31st 2019 in order to avoid late penalties. If you did not receive an invoice please contact us at 250-578-2020. All Businesses operating in Sun Peaks require a valid license.



Development Cost Charge

Council has given third reading to a Development Cost Charge bylaw (DCC). The purpose of a DCC bylaw is to recover most of the costs of expanding municipal infrastructure from the new development that requires expansion of the existing utility systems. DCC for a new single family residence is \$2,551.47/bed unit and for larger condominiums/townhouses \$2,545.62/bed unit (more than 4 bed units) and \$2,547.05 for smaller condominiums/townhouses and also specified rates per square meter for commercial/institutional developments. These DCCs, together with any successful grant applications will cover most of the costs for future expansion. Most of the fees cover water and waste water treatment however a small amount is also set aside for future road improvements.

Sun Peaks Centre

On December 13, 2018, the Municipality held a public meeting to bring residents up to date with the Sun Peaks Centre. The bad news is that with increased construction costs, we will not be able to fully complete this project with the grant funds that we were approved for. Council will take a very conservative approach with this project. We will proceed to put a roof structure over the rink and install a temporary wall system so that the facility can be used for off season events, concerts and other activities. The roof will also reduce skating rink costs for snow removal.

Costs rose due to increased construction costs and due to the poor soils located under the rink area. The project will need screw piles to make sure that the major footings are securely placed. Council has decided not to take on any debt for the project at this time, so we will complete the roof before thinking about how to fully complete the future phases of the project. Hopefully, there will be some new grant programs that we can apply for.

Budget 2019

Council is wrestling with the 2019 budget. Our goal is to keep any municipal property taxes at or below 2%. Council will approve the new preliminary budget in the next month and the final approval will be made in May after a presentation to the community at a public meeting in early April, 2019. We always have a good turnout for this meeting and we wish to encourage as many property owners as possible to attend. Many property owners believe that the Municipality sets the taxation rates for school taxes, regional district, hospital and policing costs which is not the case.

Senior level of government require us to collect these taxes each year so only about 40% of your tax bill covers municipal costs. The Municipality now collects the water and waste water fees which were previously billed by Sun Peaks Utilities Co. Ltd. Additionally, we are collecting the propane charges for the gas utility which is owned by Resort Gas Ltd., in this case we are just the collecting agency.

Cheers to a wonderful ski season and a successful 2019!

Al Raine, Mayor

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