



Highlands News

January 2008

The Official Newsletter of the District of Highlands Council
 RURAL LIFE NATURAL BEAUTY STRONG COMMUNITY

A message from Mayor Mark Cardinal

I extend my best wishes to you for a good year in 2008 and I hope this finds you having enjoyed a wonderful holiday season with family and friends.

It is with sadness that I report the sudden passing of a long-time Highlands resident and friend, Charlie Johnson. We extend our thoughts and best wishes to Sue Johnson and their family. Charlie was an exceptional resident who did much for the community. Council recognized this on January 21, 2008 in awarding Charlie a posthumous Highlands' Medal of Honour.

In other recent council business, Highlands Council confirmed a previous resolution to permit the City of Langford to place a "tight pipe" sewer line on Highlands' property on Hanington Road, tying into a CRD sewer line on Millstream Road.

Highlands Council passed a motion supporting the amendment to the Regional Urban Containment Servicing Policy Area. This matter will eventually be placed before the provincial government for final resolution. The CRD is expected to announce soon its intentions with respect to potential aquifer contamination in the south Highlands.

The Land Conservancy holds title to 65 Hectares (160 acres) of property near Third Lake in the Highlands; land acquired by the TLC in a private property transaction. The TLC requests Council's support for transfer of the property to the Capital Regional Park as an addition to Mount Work Park. This is a welcome addition to the Highlands parks land base, bringing the area of parks and green space in the Highlands to nearly 40% of the land base. The transfer has cost implications for Highlands' taxpayers in that it removes property from the taxable land base and there is a Highlands' taxpayer maintenance cost of park lands. Council therefore resolved that the CRD invite public comment prior to finalization of the transfer.

Bear Mountain has submitted a development permit variance application with respect to its first residential phase. The application was referred to municipal select & advisory committees for a site visitation and comment prior to final consideration by Council.

Council approved a Bell Mobility variance permit application to install a tower in the Highlands Industrial Park. This will improve cell phone transmission in the Highlands and is expected to be available to supplement regional emergency communications (CREST).

Warmest regards

Mayor Mark Cardinal

Highlands News available on email

If you would like an electronic copy of the *Highlands News*, Official Newsletter of the District of Highlands Council, please email June Cameron at the Municipal Hall at JCameron@highlands.ca.

Contacts

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Councillor Andrew Fall	Ph. 391-4801	andrew@gowlland.ca	Councillor Ken Williams	Ph. 479-7497	kgwmaya@shaw.ca
Councillor Joe Kadar	Ph. 391-1409	kadardev@shaw.ca	Fire Chief Barry Ford	Ph. 479-5741	b.v.ford@shaw.ca

Winter/Spring Youth Program



The Youth Program in the Old Schoolhouse basement this fall was enjoyed by the pre-teens who came for fun and games Friday evenings

October to December. A well attended swim outing on December 7 was the last event for 2007.

Juan de Fuca will provide staff to continue winter/spring 2008. First get-together is planned for Friday January 25, 6:30 to 8:30 pm in the Old Schoolhouse basement, 1589 Millstream Road. The cost includes a \$10 registration for approximately 12 evenings until mid April. For more information call Bob McMinn, (478-4403, bobmcminn@shaw.ca) or Sarah Fleming (478-0987, kwenstob@telus.net).

CRD Parks News

Two items of interest for Highlanders came out of this month's CRD Parks Committee meeting. The first being that the CRD has acquired the rights to a missing link in the Trans Canada Trail that allows the CRD trail system to connect with the Cowichan Valley Regional District system though Goldstream Heights on the Malahat.

The second interesting aspect of discussion arose from the fees currently levied on a per household basis throughout the CRD. In 2000 the CRD levied a \$10/average household (it is higher if your assessment is higher) to begin accumulating funds in the CRD Parks Acquisition Fund. The purpose of the fund was to try and accumulate funds to purchase future park land rather than borrowing the funds and paying interest. A great deal of discussion was had around the point that the \$10 fee has not increased since 2000, even though land costs have sky rocketed since then. It is anticipated that this discussion will come to the CRD Board at future meetings.

CRD Parks Winter Programs

The CRD Parks Winter Programs brochure is out. There are activities for all ages and an extensive program over Spring Break (March). You can access the program guide electronically at: www.crd.bc.ca/parks.

2008 - Municipal Election Year

2008 is the last year of the three year term of office for our current Mayor and Council. Municipal elections will be held on November 15, 2008. If you have any inclination to consider running in the fall elections you might want to come to Council meetings, Council committee of the whole meetings, or any of our standing committee meetings (Fiscal & Environment, Infrastructure and Services or the APC) to learn more about what Council does. Meeting schedules are available on the District website and in the Council newsletter.

February Meeting Schedule

All meetings at the Pike House or Schoolhouse:

Council Meetings – Monday February 4th & 18th
 Committee of the Whole (as needed) – Monday February 11th & 25th

Advisory Planning Committee (APC) – January 28th
 Fiscal & Environment Committee – February 6th
 Infrastructure and Services Committee – January 30th

City of Langford Intermunicipal Servicing Bylaw

At a council meeting held Monday December 3rd, council voted in favour of approving the City of Langford's request to construct a tight pipe sewer line along Millstream Road to service the Langford side of the Bear Mountain development. This request first came to council in 2002. The tight pipe does not allow residents of the Highlands to connect to it. Servicing for any Highlands properties would be a future consideration should the Regional Growth Strategy process result in an amendment to the Urban Containment Boundary to include a portion of the Highlands.

Following the meeting on December 3rd Council considered the logistics of the placement of that item on the agenda. It was decided that it should be replaced on the agenda again and was considered at the council meeting on Monday January 21st.

Conservation Tips



Water is the focus of our conservation tips this month:

If you're taking a shower, don't waste cold water while waiting for hot water to reach the shower head. Catch that water in a container to use on your outside plants or to flush your toilet. **Saves 200 to 300 gallons** a month.

Check toilet for leaks. Put dye tablets or food coloring into the tank. If color appears in the bowl without flushing, there's a leak that should be repaired. **Saves 400 gallons** a month.

Turn off the water while brushing your teeth. **Saves three gallons** each day.

Turn off the water while shaving. Fill the bottom of the sink with a few inches of water to rinse your razor. **Saves three gallons** each day.

Millstream Meadows Contaminated Site Update

The District of Highlands has been notified that all drinking water wells tested in December have resulted in no contaminants detected that are similar to the ones originating from the Millstream Meadows dump site.

Council received an update from the CRD staff regarding work at the site during the January 21st council meeting. In summary, the update included the following information:

- in January the CRD will be doing another round of sampling of resident's wells (residents are being asked if the CRD can sample their wells again - some are saying yes and some no)
- in January the CRD will be sampling groundwater on the Millstream Meadows site and will continue this monthly for at least the next 4 months
- the CRD plans to bring forward the following information to the February Environment committee - recommendations on site remediation (method, schedule, costs) accompanied by a report on the status of negotiation with the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands (MAL)
- the CRD continues to meet with the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Crown Contaminated Sites branch to work out details of a joint agreement on cost sharing to remediate the property

Select Committee, APC & Board of Variance Volunteers Needed

The District of Highlands requires volunteers for the following select Committee to serve a two year term.

- Fiscal and Environmental Select Committee (one person, two year term)

The District of Highlands requires volunteers for the following advisory Committee to serve a two year term.

- Advisory Planning Commission (APC) (3 people, two year term)

The District of Highlands requires volunteers for the Board of Variance (one person, three year term)

Select and Advisory committees receive information from council for consideration and input and may also bring forward matters to council for consideration. Terms of Reference and Bylaw are available at the District Office for viewing.

Persons interested in serving are invited to submit a letter and a resume outlining details of residency, community activities, qualifications, experience or relevant background information. All submissions should be forwarded to the following no later than **February 28th, 2008.**

The District of Highlands

Chris Coates, CAO
1980 Millstream Road
Victoria, BC V9B 6H1

Telephone: 250-474-1773

Fax: 250-474-3677

Email: tneurauter@highlands.ca

TLC Proposing Park Donation to CRD

At the January 21st council meeting, CRD Parks representative, Mr. Jeff Ward presented information pertaining to a 165 acre section of parks that the Land Conservancy (TLC) is proposing to donate to the CRD. The land is known to many local residents as the Barer property having been acquired by the TLC some years ago from the Barer family. The parcel of land is located west of Mount Work Regional Park, and is appropriately suggested to be a continuation of that same park area. The park would be maintained by the CRD. Council raised some concerns regarding provisions for proper fire access, public washroom facilities, parking and litter control. In general there was support around the table for the CRD acquiring this land, however council supported a public consultation process to get more feedback from the community on the parks acquisition. Residents are encouraged to provide feedback to the District office prior to February 28th regarding the donation of park to the CRD. Comments can be sent to the DOH office (see contact information above, under committee volunteers).

Property Assessments

By now you should have received property assessments in the mail from the province. January 31st, 2008 is the last date to file any concerns regarding your property tax notice with the province. Council will be considering setting the mill rate for property taxes as part of budget considerations over the next few months. Property tax notices are normally mailed in early June, with taxes due July 2nd, 2008.

Community Centre Task Force

At the January 21st council meeting, council supported the Community Centre Task Force with their recommendation that the District apply for a provincial grant under the 2008 Towns for Tomorrow Ministry of Community Services grant process. The grant offers a maximum contribution of \$400,000 at an 80/20 cost sharing initiative (80% from the province/20% from the District). The application deadline is March 15th, 2008.

2008 Highlands Community Service Medal

Council considered a recommendation from local residents to support awarding the Highlands Community Service Medal to residents Sue Johnson and her late husband Charlie Johnson for their outstanding contributions to community spirit and values. Council voted unanimously in favour of this recommendation.

More information on the award will be forthcoming. Council also supported a recommendation that a formal application and evaluation process be developed for future community service recognition methods. This matter will be considered by the select committees to council in the near future.

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