



Director's Corner

Wells Gray Country-Electoral Area 'A'

TNRD

TNRD BOD's Meeting Highlights March 26th, 2009

Thompson Regional Hospital District started off the morning. Harry Danyluk, Mayor of Chase, was acclaimed Chairman. This will be Mayor Danyluk's second term as chair of the hospital board. Director Ronaye Elliot of Electoral Area "J" (Copper Desert Country) was acclaimed as the Vice Chair. Following that the hospital board business was undertaken. This included adoption of the capital funding bylaws. Of significance is 4.6 million dollars that the Thompson Regional Hospital District will contribute towards renovation of the intensive care unit at Royal Inland Hospital. Part of this renovation will include much needed quiet areas for families to utilize during visits. Regarding the budget, I did raise the point of having a larger one time increase in order to establish rate stabilization for taxpayers. The intent is that by doing this the overall projected increases would be lower with some capital reserves being established, lower borrowing costs would be incurred. Unfortunately, the ongoing RIH Master Plan project is not yet complete and until that happens we do not have financial targets that would allow this to be calculated.

TNRD taxpayer participation in the "Community Wildfire Protection Plan" will be limited to assisting third parties in obtaining grants to undertake the required fuel reduction work. The work required to do fuel management is extremely costly and in my opinion, given the current economic climate, it would be an unreasonable burden to the taxpayer to go any further with this project. Various grant programs, such as the "Job opportunities Program" can be accessed by those wishing to undertake the required work.

The TNRD 2009-2013 Financial Plan was adopted. Wells Gray Country's financial commitment in services involving all electoral areas required us to maintain current taxation levels. Specific services within Wells Gray Country have required minimal inflation increases in most functions. Blackpool residents will see a small increase in taxation due to the addition of the Blackpool Community Hall grant that was approved via counter petition.

The board authorized an increase to library hours at many locations in the TNRD. Clearwater will benefit from this with an increase of 5 hours per week, with the library soon scheduled to be open 30 hours per week.

The TNRD audited financial statements for 2008 were approved and will be sent off to the Inspector of Municipalities as required by the Local Government Act. On behalf of the taxpayer the TNRD staff have done an excellent job managing our money, the auditors report has confirmed this.

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Disclaimer: These comments are personal comments of Wells Gray Country Electoral Area 'A' Director Tim Pennell and in no way reflect the comments, opinion or position of the Thompson Nicola Regional District Board of Directors