

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

In our May 2017 newsletter, I wrote about a longstanding community need that is the responsibility of federal and provincial governments and is increasingly a concern at the regional and local level. This is the need of so many residents for housing that they can afford and which leaves them sufficient income for other requirements.

By supporting regional initiatives, local municipalities can achieve considerable success in providing such housing. Recognizing the limited resources of individual municipalities, the funding commitment and policy support of the provincial and federal governments is critical in addressing housing affordability needs.

During the time I have held the mayor's office two other pressing needs have increasingly demanded the attention of local governments.

One of them is the shortage of family medical practitioners. Various efforts have been made to address this need. The province has provided funding to some rural areas to help to attract doctors to those places. This has been met with limited success.

Council recently received a presentation from Dr. Leanne Rowand, a nurse practitioner, whose profession can possibly assist in addressing this need. Those practitioners have been organized for some time in other provinces and are beginning to formalize their qualifications through British Columbia programs and accreditation.

They have the ability to diagnose, prescribe medications, make referrals, and generally provide primary care services. Interested residents can find extensive information in the January 8, 2018 agenda of the Committee of the Whole.

While accreditation and funding of nurse practitioners is a provincial responsibility, local councils can inform the public of this emerging medical service and can lobby provincial efforts to expand services.

The other major concern is the aging and diminishing population of farmers. The troubling state of our farming population was highlighted in a presentation by Ann Eastman to the Committee of the Whole on October 23, 2017.

Ms. Eastman serves as a volunteer



Director on the Board of Haliburton Community Organic Farm in Saanich, and supports the development of the EcoFarm School at Haliburton Farm. The farm provides teaching and hands on work for people wanting to farm, helps

them to develop skills, establish markets and transition on to their own farms, with a financially viable business plan. There are provincial grant sources to assist with advancing this work.

In an age of climate change and geopolitical uncertainty, protecting and preserving our sources of food production, now and in the future, is both prudent and necessary. Only a limited proportion of agricultural land is in production in North Saanich and this is true throughout the region.

Consequently, efforts to encourage and increase the number of new local farmers is crucial.

Local governments can provide effective assistance by encouragement measures as have already been undertaken in North Saanich, such as our Agricultural Area Plan and zoning provisions. Working with regional initiatives to provide positive support for new farmers is more effective than efforts by individual communities.

Our municipality has just gained title to 83 acres of Agricultural Land Reserve land (the Sandown property). Council is actively working with our community and regional farming agencies to determine next steps in how best to use these agricultural lands for advancing and encouraging local farming.

2018 ASSESSMENT NOTICES

BC Assessment released their 2018 assessment notices at the beginning of January. BC Assessment is responsible for all property assessment in British Columbia.

In North Saanich, BC Assessment has reported that a typical residential home has risen approximately 13.6% in assessed value. This does not mean that property taxes will be increasing at the same rate as the assessments. The municipal property tax increase is determined by Council as part of the budget deliberation process. Changes in the property assessment determine how an overall tax increase is distributed to each property owner. Only properties with assessments that go up by the average assessment

will experience the average tax increase determined by Council. For example, a property owner with a 30% increase in their assessed value will experience a higher than average tax increase, while a property owner with a 5% increase in their assessed value will experience a lower than average tax increase.

Property owners with questions about their assessment notice should refer to the BC Assessment's website at www.bcassessment.ca or contact BC Assessment as indicated on their notice.

2018 BUDGET PROCESS



The 2018 Budget will be presented and reviewed by Council's Budget Committee in late February. The tax rates and the Five Year Financial Plan will be reviewed and adopted by Council in early May. All meetings are open to the public. Information on the dates will be posted under Notices on the District website www.northsaanich.ca.

BUSINESS AND DOG LICENCE RENEWALS

A reminder that that licence renewals are due by February 28, 2018.

Business Licence Renewal:

Businesses that do not intend to renew your business licence are asked to please advise the Planning and Community Services Department at 250-655-5470. A Business Licence Guide is available at the Municipal Hall or upon request to admin@northsaanich.ca.

COMING UP

2018 Council and Committee of the Whole Meetings 7:00 p.m.

February 5 - Council
February 19 - Council
February 26 - COW

March 5 - Council
March 12 - COW
March 19 - Council
March 26 - COW

April 9 - COW
April 16 - Council
April 23 - COW

May 7 - Council
May 14 - COW
May 28 - COW

North Saanich Farm Market

Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Beginning June 2, 2018
St. John's United Church
10990 West Saanich Road

Dog Licence Renewal: A \$5.00 late fee will be applied to any dog licence purchased after February 28, 2018.



SANDOWN UPDATE

In October 2017 the Agricultural Land Commission approved the agricultural reclamation and drainage plan for the Sandown site. Following this the outstanding conditions of the Phased Development Agreement were completed and the subdivision of the lands occurred. The subdivision finalized the inclusion of 12.05 acres of District owned land into the Agricultural Land Reserve and the exclusion of the 12 acres of commercially zoned land from the Sandown site. Reclamation and servicing works are commencing and are expected to continue over the course of this year. The District is pleased to see this phase of the Sandown project completed and looks forward to the upcoming process which will determine the future uses on the Sandown lands. For more information, residents can contact the Planning and Community Services Department at 250-655-5470.

DUNSMUIR PROPERTY

In December 2017 the subdivision of the Dunsmuir property was approved and finalized. The subdivision has enabled the creation of one 25 acre parcel for Homewood Heath to operate a rehabilitation facility out of the old Dunsmuir Lodge, and allowed for the transfer of the remaining 75 acres of land to the Pauquachin First Nation. As a condition of the rezoning and subdivision of the lands, a new District trail will be constructed, leading to a view point overlooking the north end of the District, ensuring trail access remains available to the public. The building permit process for renovations to the lodge is currently underway. For more information, residents can contact the Planning and Community Services Department 250-655-5470.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

The District of North Saanich Emergency Program has united with Sidney and Central Saanich to run a joint emergency notification system. Visit our website, www.northsaanichfire.ca for updates

BURNING SEASON UNDERWAY

The burning season is well underway. A reminder for all residents:

- All fires require a permit which can be obtained by calling the Fire Department 250-656-1931
- There is a complete ban in effect in the Dean Park area west of East Saanich Road with the exception of approved manufactured outdoor fireplaces used for cooking and social activities.

Burning of household and yard waste in these appliances is prohibited.

- Burn your fires hot to avoid producing noxious smoke that can be harmful and disturb your neighbours. Burning of leaves, wet or green material is strictly prohibited. Use of a tarp between burns is recommended.

Please consider alternatives to burning such as composting, recycling, chipping, or for a fee, you can drop off material at the Municipal Green Waste Drop-off on Littlewood Road.

GREEN WASTE SCHEDULE

The 2018 Green Waste schedule is available in hard copy at the District of North Saanich Municipal office or through the District website at www.northsaanich.ca/documentlibrary



WATERMAIN FLUSHING

District of North Saanich Utility Operators will be flushing water mains from February 12, 2018 to May 31, 2018.

Watermain flushing occurs annually throughout the District to remove sediment and maintain satisfactory water quality within the distribution system.

Temporary water discoloration and/or low water pressure may occur as a result of this activity. This water discoloration is not a health hazard and may require you to clear your water lines by turning on your cold water tap until the water runs clear.

Upon request, the District will provide advance warning of flushing in your vicinity for persons with special requirements for water clarity. Please contact the Public Works department at 250-655-5480 if you require advance notification.

The District does not accept responsibility for damages caused by low water volume or the use of discoloured water. We therefore advise consumers to be on the alert for reduced water volume and/or temporary discoloration of water.

NORTH SAANICH SHINES

North Saanich residents can be proud of their community; Maclean’s Magazine ranked North Saanich the least most dangerous place to live in BC and Money Sense ranked it the 4th best place in Canada to live.

Least Dangerous Community in BC

In Maclean’s ranking of 229 communities, with a population of 10,000 or

more, the District of North Saanich ranked the 5th least dangerous place in Canada. Maclean’s rankings are based on specific crime statistics reported by various police forces: homicide, assault and bodily harm, theft and property crime, drug offences and youth crime.

Fourth Most Desirable Community in Canada

North Saanich ranked 4th out of 417 cities in Money Sense’s 2017 Best Places to Live in Canada. Other Districts on the Peninsula ranked 14th for Central Saanich, 114th for Town of Sidney, while Oak Bay ranked 3rd and Victoria 83rd.

The methodology used by Money Sense is measured by finding cities that give residents tools they need to thrive and give new residents a reason to move there. Cities are measured across 36 separate categories and ranked by Demographics, Unemployment, Income & wealth, Affordability, Taxation, Mobility, Crime, Weather, Health care, Amenities, and Culture & community.

FRIENDS OF NORTH SAANICH PARKS

Friends of North Saanich parks are holding Invasive Plant Removal Work Parties. All persons are welcome and training is provided. Please help keep North Saanich parks healthy.

- Jan 29 - R.O. Bull Park 10-2
- Feb 24 - Denham Till Park 10-2
- Feb 28 - Denham Till Park 10:30-2
- Mar 3 - Nymph Point Park 10-2
- Apr 7 - Lillian Hoffar Park 10-2
- May 12 - Quarry Park 10-2

Visit www.fnsp.ca for further details.

EMERGENCY Police, Fire, Ambulance	9 1 1
Non-emergency POLICE (i.e. traffic issues)	250-656-3931
Non-emergency FIRE (after hours)	250-475-6111
MAIN SWITCHBOARD	250-656-0781
Corporate Services	250-655-5458
Finance	250-656-0781
Planning and Community Services	250-655-5470
Engineering	250-655-5460
Public Works	250-655-5480
After Hours Public Works	250-360-8285
Fire Department	250-656-1931
MAYOR AND COUNCIL	
Mayor Alice Finall	250-656-6668
Councillor Heather Gartshore	250-656-0974
Councillor Jack McClintock	250-888-4890
Councillor Geoff Orr	250-656-4562
Councillor Celia Stock	250-655-3437
Councillor Jack Thornburgh	250-665-6314
Councillor Murray Weisenberger	778-351-2213