

LETTER B



Newsletter for CRD Electoral Area "B"

Serving the Communities of Ahbau Creek, Baker Creek, Bouchie Lake, Cinema, Dunkley, Milburn Lake, Moose Heights, Parkland, Quesnel-Hixon Rd., Stathnaver, Ten Mile Lake, lower Cottonwood River, & many areas in between!

Written by Heloise Dixon-Warren, Director Area B

Greetings from me to you!

March, 2012

Letter B, Volume 1, Issue 3

Greetings. Time flies... this is the 3rd issue of "Letter B" already! I hope you are all finding it informative and an easy read.

Recently, I attended the **ELECTED OFFICIAL SEMINAR** in Prince George which was hosted by the Local Government Leadership Academy. It proved to be a great way to be introduced to the many different components of local government and meet other elected officials from other jurisdictions, both Regional

Districts & Municipalities. Many local governments are dealing with very similar issues... engagement of the public, economic diversification, aging infrastructure, declining industrial tax base, etc. In British Columbia, there are two forms of local government—Municipalities and Regional Districts. Although the two are similar in many ways, they are also quite different. The legislation that both are governed by is the LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT and COMMUNITY CHARTER. I am

familiarizing myself with both of these pieces of legislation.

I attend a CRD Board of Directors Meeting every 3 weeks in Williams Lake and once a month, the 4 Northern Directors (Areas A, B, C & I) have a Northern Caucus Meeting typically prior to the Joint Planning Meeting with the City of Quesnel.

I am more than willing to meet with residents and look forward to doing some exploring throughout Area B once the snow is gone.

Online Links

BLOG



[heloisedixon-warren/
blogspot.com](http://heloisedixon-warren.blogspot.com)



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ENGAGEMENT OF THE PUBLIC... IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

One issue that seems to be a common challenge for most local governments is engagement of the public. This is confirmed from the results of the **2011 Election**. In **Quesnel**, **40%** of eligible voters voted, in **Williams Lake**, **50%**, in **100 Mile House**, **30%**, where as for the entire Cariboo Regional District, it was **6%**. This low number for the CRD is partially due to the fact that of the 12 Electoral Areas, only 4 Directors had to actually run a campaign. The other 8 Directors were all acclaimed. This includes all 4 Directors in the North (EA A, B, C & I). These numbers are based upon the 2011 Election

Results reported on www.civicinfo.bc.ca

The CRD has a great website (www.cariboord.bc.ca) which is kept current and up to date. Minutes of all Board meetings are posted along with Board Highlights. The email addresses for all CRD Directors can be found on this website. The CRD is also on FACEBOOK. I encourage all residents to check out the website and familiar themselves with the services the CRD offers.

I AM TRULY HOPING THAT THROUGH THIS NEWSLETTER, FACEBOOK, BLOGGING, MY BROCHURE (which will soon be available) and by being avail-

able and open to residents contacting me, I am increasing the level of engagement within Area B. If you have any other suggestions, as to how this can be improved even more, please let me know!

I have included an article on page 2 which deals specifically with engagement and expectations of local government.

Local Government is **YOUR** government. There are few services local government is legislated to provide. Most that are provided are based upon the demand for them. **Please consider getting involved by participating.**

DATES TO NOTE!

March 9, 2012— CRD Board of Directors Meeting, Williams Lake

March 12, 2012—Bouchie Lake Recreation Commission Meeting

March 13, 2012—Northern Directors Caucus Meeting / Jt. Planning Committee Meeting

March 19, 2012—30th Annual Community Senior's Luncheon, Bouchie Lake Hall

March 28, 2012—Parkland Recreation Commission Meeting

March 29, 2012—CRD Board Meeting, Williams Lake

To be added to the electronic distribution list for "Letter B", please email hdixon-warren@cariboord.bc.ca

LETTER *B*, VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

Please support the
**30th Annual
Community
Seniors
Luncheon**

**Monday, March 19, 2012
Bouchie Lake Hall**

Hosted by the Bouchie Lake
Recreation Commission & the
Volunteer Women of Bouchie
Lake.

Plans are well underway for the **30th Annual Senior's Luncheon** scheduled for **March 19th** at the **Bouchie Lake Hall**. The fundraising committee of the Bouchie Lake Recreation Commission have been working hard, behind the scenes, raising funds which will support the luncheon. Thank you to every individual and business that have donated... the support received to date have been incredible!

If you are interested in volunteering your time and /or donating to the event, please contact **Jennifer Linegar-Johnston (250.249.5845)** or **Angela Mezzatesta (250.249.5445)**. All financial contributions can be sent to the:

Bouchie Lake Recreation Commission, 1975 Centennial Road, Quesnel, BC V2J 7G6

or dropped off at **Bouchie Lake Farm & Feed, 2338 Bonny Rd. (old Bouchie Lake Store)**.

Cheques payable to the BLRC

The future of Local Government: serving customers or engaging citizens?

In researching ways of engaging people in local government I found an interesting article on <http://www.vcn.bc.ca/citizens-handbook/benest.html> written by Frank Benest. He compares two analogies in evaluating the future of local government; the “**vending machine**” vs. “**barn raising**” approach. The “**vending machine**” is the traditional concept as a service provider.

The “**vending machine**” is somewhat mysterious: people don't really know precisely how it works. You drop in a \$0.25 in taxes or fees and expect the machine to dispense at least \$0.25 in services. When the machine does not work to everyone's expectations, people begin cussing at it and kicking it. Even when local government does in fact provide excellent customer service, there is a fundamental problem. Local government becomes just another service provider among many. The “**vending machine**” contributes to passive consumerism. Nothing is demanded other than customers drop their quarters into the vending machine slot.

Customers (as opposed to true citizens) care more about their needs and the services they consume. In short, local governments have turned citizens into mere consumers.

As opposed to the “**vending-machine**” idea, the “**barn-raising**” concept suggests other possibilities for government. In an agrarian society, no one family can raise a barn. So they call on their neighbours from miles around. To raise the barn, someone hammers; another holds the ladder; and someone else brings the food. Everyone has his or her contribution to make. The “**barn-raising**” approach promotes citizen responsibility as opposed to the passive consumption of services. When confronted with a problem, people do not ask, “*What is government going to do for us?*” Rather, they focus on “*What are we going to do?*”

I found these two analogies interesting. Ultimately, local government is here to represent the people... so whether these are right or not, something to think about is what type of government do you want?

So Many Ways to Lend a Hand in YOUR Community!



The Parkland & Bouchie Lake Recreation Commissions, and associated community based associations, need YOU! Both Commissions meet monthly & although their main mandate is to manage the recreational properties and lands owned by the CRD there are many ways for community members to be involved. Volunteering within YOUR OWN community can reap many rewards & benefits. In the April issue of “Letter B”, I will provide an update on each of the Commissions, what activities / events are being planned, and how individuals can become involved. For more information, please contact me.

LETTER *B*, VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN PLANNING? Consider being a member of the ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION for Area B!

An Advisory Planning Commission has been established for Area B and to date 6 community minded volunteers have been appointed of which 5 reside in the Bouchie Lake area and 1 from the Ten Mile Lake.

The maximum number of persons on an APC is 10. Ideally the commission should be representative of the area. As such, *I invite other interested residents of Area B to put their names forward to join this Advisory Planning Commission. It would be wonderful to have some residents from the eastern and northern reaches of the Electoral Area (Barkerville Hwy., Strathnaver, Cinema, Quesnel-Hixon, lower Cottonwood, Ten Mile Lake) although people from the other areas will be welcome!*

The purpose of the APC is to be an advisory body that considers and reports on matters, such as rezoning and Agricultural Land Commission applications (http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/alr/application_process.htm), referred to it by the Regional Board.

The APC is designed to represent the

Community viewpoint and to evaluate individual development proposals to determine whether or not they conform to community objectives. The recommendations made by an APC should take account of background knowledge of how the community as a whole is developing and should develop in the future.

A detailed description of the responsibility of APC members can be viewed on my Dec. 9, 2011 BLOG posting (<http://heloisedixon-arren.blogspot.com>)

Training for Area B APC Members is set for **March 15, 2012**. All members will be receiving specifics on the training session which will include an Agenda, a copy of the APC guide, and for those APC members who have previously not received it, a Planning Services Manual.

If you are interested in additional information on the APC of Area B and /or possibly being a member, please contact me ASAP at **250.249.5329** or hdixon-warren@cariboord.bc.ca

BYLAW ENFORCEMENT

Bylaw Enforcement was implemented in 1992 to investigate complaints and regulate violations of CRD bylaws. This is a public service function.

Bylaw Enforcement actively enforces the following bylaws:

Cariboo Regional District Zoning and Rural Land Use Bylaws

Cariboo Regional District Untidy and Unightly Premises [Bylaw No. 1665](#)

Assistance is also provided in enforcement of:

Cariboo Regional District Solid Waste Disposal Regulation [Bylaw No. 2898](#)

Cariboo Regional District Building [Bylaw No. 4636](#)
Cariboo Regional District Noise [Bylaw No. 4461](#)

Additional info. Can be found at www.cariboord.bc.ca

CRD Donates \$200,000 to the QUESNEL COMMUNITY FOUNDATION on behalf of Area A, B, C & I Residents

In July, 2010 the 4 Northern Directors voted to donate \$100,000 / year for 2 years (2011, 2012) to the Quesnel Community Foundation / QCF. These funds were raised through taxation and replaced the monies typically distributed through the Grants for Assistance program. Of the \$100,000 donated in 2011, **Area B** contributed **38% (\$38,175.00)**. In the 2012 Budget, it is proposed that Area B will con-

tribute another **\$37,598.00**. These funds have been leveraged to receive **\$200,000** from Northern Development Initiative through their Community Foundation Funding Program.

4 Electoral Area Funds have been established within the QCF and the interest accrued from these funds will be available to charitable groups. The 1st \$200,000 was invested in QCF in April, 2011. These funds have accrued **\$7500.00**

which QCF will be giving away at their Gala on March 24th.

To access these funds, groups must:

(i) apply to the QCF as per the QCF process &

(ii) must be a charitable organization or partner with a compatible charitable organization.

Although the QCF provides a valuable service and I support

the endowment fund concept, I have some concerns. I believe the process in place creates challenges for small, rural based groups to access funds so they can provide a service to their local community.

A detailed account of this donation is available on my BLOG:

<http://heloisedixon-warren.blogspot.com>

LETTER *B*, VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3

IS IT TIME TO MOVE BEYOND RATES, RECREATION & RUBBISH?? An opportunity for local governments to develop public health policy!

Since taking on the role of being an elected representative of the CRD I find myself surprised and interested to learn what services local government has taken on as their responsibility to provide, manage and tax for. In regards to the CRD, it provides the following services (budget allocation in parenthesis):

Recreation (32%), Environmental (16%), Protective Services (14%), General / Admin (12%), Water (6%), Sewer (3%), Development (6%), Airports (3%), Municipal Debt (6%), Other (2%). For a complete description of each of these services, refer to the CRD Town Hall Budget Booklet which can be accessed at www.cariboord.bc.ca

The CRD had a budget in 2011 of **\$41,031,413** and a population of **62,392** (based upon the 2011 Canada Census results). As such, the average cost per person for the services offered was **\$657.00**. Fortunately for residents, the CRD has several sources of funds other than just tax requisition. The sources (with percentages in parentheses) are: *Tax Requisition (54%), Operating Surpluse (22%), User Fees (4%), Grants (7%), Municipal Debt (6%), Capitol Reserve (2%) and Other (5%)*.

As you will note the largest budgeted item is Recreation (**32% / \$ 13,130,052.16**) which primarily focuses on the management and maintenance of numerous recreational services within the Region. This includes major facilities (ice rinks, swimming pools, multi-purpose spaces) and rural community recreational services (e.g. halls, sport fields, green spaces).

One discussion I had recently is the linkage between Health and Recreation. The CRD currently does not develop policy pertaining to health. It could be argued (and it is) that Health and Recreation are quite separate whereas I believe that they are linked. As such, local government could take a more active role in policy setting which embraces the creation of local healthy communities.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defined health in its broader sense in 1946 as *"a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity"*. It is known that better health is central to human happiness and well-being. It also makes an important contribution to economic progress, as healthy populations live longer, are more productive, and save more. There are many ways our society could achieve greater "health". Access to recreation is but one way "health" can be achieved. Other ways include affordable housing, increased food security, poverty reduction, reduced usage of fossil fuels, a focus on sustainable community development, clean air, more exercise, etc.

Perhaps local government should also have policies on "health" of which access to recreational services is included in the policies. According to the WHO, Health Policy refers to decisions, plans, and actions that are undertaken to achieve specific health care goals within a society. It outlines priorities and the expected roles of different groups; and it builds consensus and informs people.

In May 2011, the Province launched a **Healthy Families BC Strategy**. This \$68 million health promotion program will be comprised of a 4 key Healthy Families BC strategy to support families and communities. The 4 areas are: **Healthy Lifestyles, Healthy Eating, Healthy Start and Healthy Communities**. **Local governments are included in the 4th area - Healthy Communities**. Based upon a News Release titled *"Healthy Communities Support Healthy Families BC"* comprehensive consultations will take place with local governments throughout British Columbia over the next few months with the intent to launch Healthy Families BC Communities in early 2012.

As a part of the Healthy Families BC Communities initiative, provincial health authorities will work with interested communities to develop plans to make their city or town healthier. Planning can take place in such areas as physical activity, healthy eating, tobacco reduction, healthy-built environments and priority populations. Local government is ideally placed to develop and implement local policies and actions to address health and the broad range of determinants that influence health. This involves actions in a range of areas including transport, roads, parks, waste, land use, house and urban planning, recreation and cultural activities and creating safe public places.

I will be attending the Local Government consultation session with Northern Health scheduled for May 2, 2012 in 100 Mile House, BC at North Central Local Government Association (<http://www.nclga.ca/>) conference. I look forward to hearing the approach to building relationships between local government and health authorities and how this consultation will benefit our northern communities.