



Comox News

April 2011

The Town of Comox Community Newsletter

Centennial Building replacement at recreation centre

The replacement of the 1967 Centennial Building at the recreation centre is now substantially complete. The \$2.85 million project includes a 3,000 square foot multipurpose room, a much larger fitness studio with all new fitness equipment, a larger lobby area at the entrance plus offices and wash-rooms. The Town was fortunate to have received a \$950,000 grant from Recreational Infrastructure Canada to help offset the cost of construction. \$850,000 in Federal Gas Tax funding was also used for a geothermal heating system.

Green building practices were a big part of the project, including substantial use of local materials, low emission paints, flooring with recycled



content, low-flow water fixtures and an on-demand hot water system. In addition, Habitat for Humanity salvaged much of the original building, and the new building is situated to best take advantage of available sunlight. Other green features benefiting the whole recreation centre include energy efficient windows, and lighting upgrades to gymnasiums A and B. One of the most significant green features of

The construction is the installation of a geothermal heating system that will help to heat the entire recreation centre.

Geothermal heating extracts the heat from the ground, and uses it to pre-heat the air fed into the furnace. This pre-heating of the air by the geothermal system substantially reduces the energy required, and emissions generated, to otherwise heat the building.

Comox's newest councillor



Councillor Hugh MacKinnon, elected in a by-election in January, was sworn into Council on January 26, 2011.
Councillor MacKinnon

currently works as an administrator for the Glacier View Learning Centre, and is looking forward to working with Council and to listening to the concerns of Comox citizens.

He can be reached by cell at 250 792-1536 or by email at hmackinnon@comox.ca.

Anderton Park

Due to several requests from park and tennis court users, the Anderton Park washrooms are now open during winter hours. The washrooms are heated, and light sensors have been installed to help save electricity.

During the winter, the washrooms will be open between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. During the summer, they will be open from 6:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m.

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Fire Rescue to receive a new engine



Comox Fire Rescue's planned replacement of one of its three fire engines is moving forward, on schedule, with the expected delivery of a new engine this June. About every seven years, the department replaces one of its three fire engines, keeping each for about twenty years. The last was replaced in 2003, while this new unit will be replacing a 1990 model engine.

The new engine will have many added safety features and advantages. It will have almost twice the pumping capacity of the old engine and carry much more equipment. It will also carry more firefighters. Whereas the two remaining fire engines carry five fighters each, the new engine will carry seven. It will also be equipped with three thermal imaging cameras, allowing firefighters to see through smoke. Two of the cameras have been purchased by the firefighters themselves. The new engine will have technology that minimizes particulate emissions to near-zero levels without loss of power or fuel economy.

The cost of this new fire engine is approximately \$500,000, which is shared between the two operators of the fire department, the Town of Comox (70%) and the Comox Fire Protection District (30%). The new fire engine is being built by Hub Fire Engines in Abbotsford, the only fire truck builder in British Columbia. Comox Fire Rescue is proud that their entire fleet of three fire engines has been built in British Columbia by Hub Fire Engines.

Official Community Plan update

The Official Community Plan update is in its final stages, with the last set of open houses prior to the Public Hearing set for April 4, 2011. To date, 20 open houses have been held throughout Comox, and both the Town and Arling-

ton Group thank all who attended and have submitted comments on the draft OCP. The April 4th meetings will be at 1:00 and 6:30 p.m. at d'Estere Seniors' Centre.

There is still time to provide

Local government elections 2011

Local government elections are happening throughout BC again this year. General voting day for mayors, councillors and school trustees will be Saturday November 19th, with the two advanced voting opportunities on Wednesday November 9th and Wednesday November 16th. Please mark your calendars, and let's see if we can improve voter turnout this year.

In 2008, 43% of eligible voters came out to vote, up from 40% in 2005. This was pretty good, as we had a higher turnout than about 60% of the other local governments in BC. A high voter turnout is a sign of having engaged and involved residents, so congratulations to you all!

For more information on the upcoming elections - including how, where and when to vote, as well as information on who is running for office - please check upcoming issues of this newsletter, local papers and our website.

If you are interested in running for office or just interested in local government in general, mark your calendar for a

May 19th session titled, So you want to run for local government? This informative session will discuss local government in general, as well as provide useful information on candidacy, responsibilities and commitments if you are interested in getting involved. Please check local papers and our website for more information.

Remember, if you are planning on being away this November, or are otherwise unable to get out and vote for any reason, you can now request a mail-in package and mail back your ballots to Town Hall.



New decorative lighting in Marina Park

feedback. Please review the draft OCP text and maps, and then either fill out a comment sheet or email your comments. For the draft OCP and maps, see <http://www.comoxocp.ca/home.php> under the last column - Phase 3.

Comment sheets can be sent to info@comoxocp.ca. Alternatively, a comment sheet can be faxed or mailed to Town Hall.

The Public Hearing has been tentatively scheduled for early May.

Residential Water Metering Project



In 2009, the Comox Valley Regional District adopted its Water Efficiency Plan. Due to increasing demand and the fact that the Regional District was close to using the maximum permitted in its water licence, the Water Efficiency Plan includes demand management initiatives such as public education, low-flow toilet rebates, rain barrel rebates, water use restrictions and enforcement. Another aspect of the Plan is the installation of water meters at all properties with piped water in the Regional District.

As the Town of Comox is a participant in the Regional District's water service (we purchase our water from the Regional District), we have adopted many of the strategies in the Water Efficiency Plan. In addition, one of Council's goals under its own strategic plan is to increase environmental responsibility. As part of these commitments, Council resolved to implement a voluntary water metering project in 2010.

As part of the project, condominium and patio home strata complexes, as well as "meter ready" family homes, were to have a water meter installed. Data

was then to be maintained on each property's water use, with strata complexes and residents subsequently opting to pay the current flat rate fee for water, or a fee based on their actual water use. To date, approximately 1350 meters have been installed at single family home properties, while work on the strata complexes continues.

An additional part of the program was to also provide a meter to those who wished to have one installed at their properties. Data will also be maintained on these homeowners' water use, and the option of paying the flat rate fee or metered fee will be available to them. To date, 73 residents have requested to have a meter installed.

The Town intends to start reading the installed meters by June 1st, and a letter will be sent to those owners advising as to how to obtain meter readings online and as to when it will be possible to be billed on a metered rate (at the option of the property owner).

We continue to install water meters on request. If you would like to have one, please contact us.

Councillor Ray Crossley

It was with great sadness that we learned of Councillor Crossley's death of a heart attack last October, leaving behind two orphaned sons. Councillor Crossley was an exemplary role model and citizen, who gave more than most of us could imagine. His example for us all is especially commendable

given the adversities that he faced on a daily basis.



Those wishing to donate to Liam and Aiden's trust can do so at the TD Bank in Courtenay (Washington Park Branch), account number 6394809.

Tip from residents

Imagine if our refuse collectors could do their jobs in substantially less time? Imagine if they could do so with less wear and tear on their vehicles? And, imagine if they could do both while burning less fuel at the same time? This can be achieved simply by placing your refuse containers (garbage, recycling and yard waste) beside your neighbour's on pickup day.

Doing so would reduce the required number of stops and starts, reduce

idling times of the vehicles, and may even reduce the noise in your neighbourhood associated with refuse collection.

Please contact either Town hall or Emterra (250 336-8066) directly if you would like to do this, in order that they are aware the collection is from more than one household.

This was brought to our attention by some neighbours who are already doing this. If you have a tip on how to make Town operations more efficient, please contact us.



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Councillor

Ken Grant
Councillor

Tom Grant
Councillor

Hugh MacKinnon
Councillor

Marcia Turner
Councillor

We're on the Web!

See us at:
comox.ca

d'Esterre Seniors' Centre renovations



The d'Esterre Seniors' Society has partnered with Comox Rotary and the Town of Comox in a renovation project, which is now nearing completion. The project includes the complete renovation of the main ballroom with new multimedia equipment, the installation of new energy efficient windows, a new rain screen and new siding, as well as the installation of a kitchen exhaust fan, re-routed air system ducting and new energy efficient lighting.

The \$170,000 project will address in part the relatively cramped condi-

tions currently existing within the ballroom space. As the ballroom is used by a number of different groups with different requirements, the new room layout will maximize the space and allow for much needed organized storage.

In addition to the improved room configuration, a more up to date aesthetic will be realized as a result of the renovation. It is anticipated that fresh paint, modern ceiling tiles, wall sconces and a refinished ballroom floor will improve not only the look of the space but also the sense of place.

Notices

Tax Notices

Tax notices will be mailed out in May. If you have not received your tax notice by May 31, please contact the office. More information on your property tax and utility rates will be provided with your tax notice.

Stage 3 Watering Restriction

Please be advised that Stage 3 Watering Restrictions will be in effect April 6 to April 13, 2011, due to penstock maintenance. For more, see our website.

Induction lights

Currently, the Town owns and operates 507 high intensity discharge streetlights. In an effort to reduce power and greenhouse gas emissions, the Town is undertaking a pilot project whereby 5 high pressure sodium streetlights in the Highridge Drive area have been converted to global induction lighting. Because of their lack of electrodes, induction lights last 4-5 times longer. They also use up to 60% less energy than high pressure sodium lights, substantially reducing power consumption. Whereas a typical high pressure sodium streetlight uses about 1100 KW of power per year, a typical global induction streetlight will use about 460 KW, based on an average of 12 hours use per day. The pilot project runs until the end of 2011.

Please let us know what you think of the lights. Feedback can be sent to ashfield@comox.ca.

"Tag" Days

Do you ever conduct door-to-door fundraising for your community organization? If so, we encourage you to request permission from the Town prior to conducting your fundraiser. We have been advised by residents that they sometimes have three to four different groups come to their door on the same day, which may not be the best for your contribution levels. Requesting permission from the Town will ensure that this does not happen.

This newsletter is a result of Council's initiative to increase communication with residents. If you have any comments or suggestions, or would like to see anything in particular in upcoming editions, please contact us.