



**REGIONAL DISTRICT OF CENTRAL OKANAGAN
GOVERNANCE AND SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING
AGENDA**

Thursday, March 11, 2021
8:30 a.m.
Woodhaven Board Room
1450 K.L.O. Road, Kelowna, BC

Pages

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair to acknowledge that the meeting is being held on the traditional territory of the syilx/Okanagan peoples.

In accordance with the most recent Provincial Health Officer Order regarding gatherings and events, the public is currently not permitted to attend Board meetings in-person.

As an open meeting, a live audio-video feed is being broadcast and recorded on rdco.com.

Roll Call

2. ADDITION OF LATE ITEMS

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Recommended Motion:
THAT the Agenda be adopted.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

- 4.1. Governance & Services Committee Meeting - February 11, 2021 & February 25, 2021

1 - 9

Recommended Motion:
THAT the Governance & Services Committee meeting minutes of February 11, 2021 and February 25, 2021 be adopted.

5. CORPORATE SERVICES

- 5.1. Air Quality Service - Update on Agricultural Chipping Program 10 - 13

Recommended Motion:

THAT the Committee recommend the Regional Board approve adding \$40,000 to the Air Quality - Agricultural Wood Chipping Program in 2021.

- 5.2. First Nations Engagement Budget Consideration 14 - 17

Recommended Motion:

THAT the Governance & Services Committee recommend the Regional Board approve allocating \$50,000 from the RDCO *feasibility reserve fund* to undertake a feasibility study in consideration of establishing a Regional First Nations Engagement Service;

AND FURTHER THAT this expense be included in this years' 2021-2025 Financial Plan.

6. ADJOURN

Minutes of the **GOVERNANCE & SERVICES COMMITTEE** meeting of the Regional District of Central Okanagan held at Regional District Offices, 1450 KLO Road, Kelowna, BC on Thursday, February 11, 2021

- Directors:
- J. Baker (District of Lake Country)
 - M. Bartyik (Central Okanagan East Electoral Area)
 - W. Carson (Central Okanagan West Electoral Area)
 - M. Singh, alternate for M. DeHart (City of Kelowna)
 - C. Fortin (District of Peachland) (*attended electronically*)
 - G. Given (City of Kelowna)
 - C. Hodge (City of Kelowna) (*attended electronically*)
 - S. Johnston (City of West Kelowna)
 - G. Milsom (City of West Kelowna)
 - B. Sieben (City of Kelowna)
 - L. Stack (City of Kelowna) (*attended electronically*)
 - L. Wooldridge (City of Kelowna)
- Absent:
- C. Basran (City of Kelowna)
 - J. Coble (Westbank First Nation)
- Staff:
- B. Reardon, Chief Administrative Officer
 - T. Cashin, Director of Community Services
 - D. Dudzik, Senior Planner
 - J. Foster, Director of Communication & Information Services
 - C. Griffiths, Director of Economic Development
 - D. Komaike, Director of Engineering Services
 - M. Kopp, Director of Parks Services
 - M. Rilkoff, Director of Financial Services (*attended electronically*)
 - M. Drouin, Manager-Corporate Services (recording secretary)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Given called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. and acknowledged the meeting is being held on the traditional territory of the syilx/Okanagan peoples.

In accordance with the most recent Provincial Health Officer Order regarding gatherings and events, the public is currently not permitted to attend Board meetings in-person.

As an open meeting, a live audio-video feed is being broadcast and recorded on rdco.com.

2. ADDITION OF LATE ITEMS

There are no late items for the agenda

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

#GS05/21

BAKER/BARTYIK

THAT the agenda be adopted.

CARRIED unanimously

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**4.1 Governance & Services Committee Meeting Minutes – January 14, 2021****#GS06/21****BAKER/MILSOM**

THAT the Governance & Services Committee meeting minutes of January 14, 2021 be adopted.

CARRIED unanimously

5. DELEGATION**5.1. Okanagan Film Commission Update - Jon Summerland, Film Commissioner**

Jon Summerland addressed the Committee and provided an update of 2020 film activities.

- The mandate of the Commission is to generate a positive economic impact by enabling growth of the Okanagan-Similkameen-Boundary region as a film and new media center.
- Regional government funding = \$255,224, with an economic impact of \$48.830mil.
- The Okanagan is a renowned filming destination and provides a significant contributor to the economy and a generator of jobs. Domestic growth is significant. COVID impacts were noted.
- The Commission's Board of Directors were highlighted.
- Partner funding model was outlined.
- 2020 Production expenditure statistics were noted.
 - 104 location service requests
 - 25 productions filmed

Discussion ensued highlighting the economic value to the area with the increase film activity in the region.

#GS07/21**BAKER/SINGH**

THAT the Okanagan Film Commission presentation be received for information.

CARRIED unanimously

6. COMMUNITY SERVICES**6.1. Regional Growth Strategy Priority Projects Plans 2021**

Staff report provided an annual update on the RGS and an overview of the projects outlined in the Priority Projects Plan.

Staff outlined the ongoing projects and projects identified for 2021:

- The five-year action plan was highlighted, including a status update.
- 2021 projects include the regional citizen survey (4th quarter of 2021) and regional housing strategy (commencing in 1st quarter 2021).
- Phase 3 of the Regional Floodplain Management Plan is underway.
- Regional Planning Lab update—in the fall of 2020 participants throughout the region convened to discuss changes to the ALR Exclusion Process and explore opportunities for regional consistency.
- In November 2020 the Regional Board endorsed a consultation process for a possible 5-year review of the RGS.
- Central Okanagan Poverty and Wellness Strategy update is currently in its second phase.
- Okanagan Lake Responsibility Planning Initiative is underway which outreach and engagement is being led by the Okanagan Nation Alliance.

Discussion ensued:

- Funding is in place and there are no obstacles to complete the projects outlined.
- If the Board pursues a full 5-year review of the RGS funds will need to be allocated.
- Staff are focused on updating the priority projects plan.

#GS08/21

MILSOM/WOOLDRIDGE

THAT the Governance and Services Committee receive for information the Regional Growth Priority Projects Plan report dated February 11, 2021.

CARRIED unanimously

7. PARK SERVICES

7.1. RDCO Parks Community Wildfire Protection Plan 2020 Update Consultant: Kyle Broome, Cabin Resource Management

Staff report outlined the completed Parks Community Wildfire Protection Plan. Staff introduced the review that was undertaken by consultants, Cabin Resource Management and funded through the Province (\$30K grant).

Kyle Broome addressed the Committee outlining the consultant's work.

- The updated Plan includes 35 recommendations for improvements in areas of fuel management, FireSmart initiatives, community education, park infrastructure and wildfire response.
- Full methodology and detailed recommendations are contained in the report.
- The scope is focused on RDCO parks however included an overlap with several municipalities, First Nations and local fire service areas.
- Response, recovery and preparedness also addressed.
- 40 areas for wildfire mitigation fuel treatment identified. Top 4 park areas prioritized: Kalamoir, Lebanon Creek Greenway, Scenic Canyon and Stephens Coyote Ridge
- Fuel treatments include site specific plans, removal of hazardous fuels.

- Total of 40 sites across RDCO parks: prioritized on risks, cost based on treatment.
- All areas received site visits to confirm fire hazard; fuel treatments were identified for priority areas and results; and site photos uploaded to online ArcMap.
- Prevention and mitigation information tools have been provided, as well as wildfire response.

Discussion ensued:

- The question was raised if there a workplan and funding in place for the next phase. Staff noted that the Plan will be submitted to the Province. Once approved funding will be requested. Will likely not be in a position to action a plan in 2021. The new stream for wildfire reduction funding is now being tendered.
- Treatments have occurred in many of our RDCO regional parks to date. For the most part given where we live, investments made have paid off. There is a low level of risk in many parks due to the work done over the last 10-14 years.
- The question was raised whether there is funding available for fire mitigation in community parks in the electoral areas. RDCO has had partnership with Ministry of Forests and First Nation for fire mitigation in Westshore.
- There is no ability to provide wildfire mitigation to private lands, land owners are responsible for their property.
- The report is designed for regional parks however will be shared with our fire services department.

#GS09/21

SIEBEN/MILSOM

THAT the Governance and Services Committee recommend that the Regional Board receive the RDCO Parks Community Wildfire Protection Plan (2020) as prepared by Cabin Resource Management.

CARRIED unanimously

8. ADJOURN

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

CERTIFIED TO BE TRUE AND CORRECT

G. Given (Chair)

B. Reardon (Chief Administrative Officer)

Minutes of the **GOVERNANCE & SERVICES COMMITTEE** meeting of the Regional District of Central Okanagan held at Regional District Offices, 1450 KLO Road, Kelowna, BC on Thursday, February 25, 2021

Directors: J. Baker (District of Lake Country)
M. Bartyik (Central Okanagan East Electoral Area)
M. Singh, alternate for C. Basran (City of Kelowna)
W. Carson (Central Okanagan West Electoral Area)
C. Fortin (District of Peachland) (*attended electronically*)
G. Given (City of Kelowna) (*attended electronically*)
C. Hodge (City of Kelowna) (*attended electronically*)
S. Johnston (City of West Kelowna) (*attended electronically*)
G. Milsom (City of West Kelowna)
B. Sieben (City of Kelowna) (*attended electronically*)
L. Stack (City of Kelowna) (*attended electronically*)
L. Wooldridge (City of Kelowna)
J. Coble (Westbank First Nation)

Absent: M. DeHart (City of Kelowna)

Staff: B. Reardon, Chief Administrative Officer
T. Cashin, Director of Community Services
J. Foster, Director of Communication & Information Services
C. Griffiths, Director of Economic Development
D. Komaike, Director of Engineering Services
M. Kopp, Director of Parks Services
M. Rilkoﬀ, Director of Financial Services (*attended electronically*)
M. Drouin, Manager-Corporate Services (recording secretary)

1. CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Milsom called the meeting to order at 10:28 a.m. and acknowledged the meeting is being held on the traditional territory of the syilx/Okanagan peoples.

In accordance with the most recent Provincial Health Officer Order regarding gatherings and events, the public is currently not permitted to attend Board meetings in-person.

As an open meeting, a live audio-video feed is being broadcast and recorded on rdco.com.

2. ADDITION OF LATE ITEMS

There are no late items for the agenda

3. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

#GS10/21

BARTYIK/WOOLDRIDGE

THAT the agenda be adopted.

CARRIED unanimously

4. **CORPORATE SERVICES**

4.1. CAO Year-End Review

Brian Reardon presented a PowerPoint presentation recapping 2020 year-end retrospective and setting the stage for budget discussions today. The following was highlighted:

- 2020 provided challenges with COVID-19 to local government services.
- 2021 key objectives for the 2021 Financial Plan:
 - Capacity building year, advancing the Board's strategic objectives;
 - Addressing infrastructure deficits;
 - COVID-19 response and recovery efforts;
 - Keeping operating costs on pace with growth and inflation
- Reserve balances and asset management planning is in place.
- 2021 Capital Project Plans.
- An overview of the tax increases over the last five years for core services
- Proposed increased staffing for 2021.
- The strategic priorities approved by the Board last week.
- COVID-19 restart grant of \$1.107m and how it is being applied per area.

Discussion ensued:

- The question was raised whether there are funds budgeted for First Nation reconciliation? Is a staff person being considered? The issue had previously been raised with the Board and follow-up has not been reported. Staff noted there is no money set aside specifically for a staff person. It was noted that staff currently work and collaborate directly with WFN on projects, and outlined examples of collaboration efforts with WFN. A Community to Community Forum or Committee workshop may be an avenue for further discussion on the issue of reconciliation.
- The COVID-19 grant received is for 2020 and 2021.

ACTION: There was consensus that staff bring forward a report to the March 18th budget meeting regarding steps to be considered and discussed in regards to First Nation reconciliation.

#GS11/21

BAKER/SINGH

THAT the Governance & Services Committee receive for information the CAO Year-End Review report.

CARRIED unanimously

5. **FINANCIAL SERVICES**

5.1. 2021 - 2025 Budget and 5-Year Financial Plan (Draft 1)

5.1.1. Director of Financial Services - Introduces the 2021-2025 Financial Plan

M. Rilkoﬀ provided an overview of the RDCO budget process

General summary of taxes per average house by area was outlined:

| | <i>2020 Total Tax per House. Avg House Value \$734,000</i> | <i>2021 House Value</i> | Feb 25 Draft | |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | | | 2021 | 2021 |
| | | | Total Tax per House | Change per Avg House over 2020 |
| Kelowna | \$183.41 | <i>\$750,000</i> | \$190.57 | \$7.16 3.092% |
| Peachland | 213.45 | <i>754,000</i> | \$222.05 | \$8.61 4.032% |
| Lake Country | 210.68 | <i>774,000</i> | \$225.38 | \$14.70 6.977% |
| West Kelowna | 203.34 | <i>753,000</i> | \$210.85 | \$ 7.51 3.693% |
| C. O. West | 665.92 | <i>746,500</i> | \$676.52 | \$ 10.59 1.591% |
| C. O. East | 535.31 | <i>739,000</i> | \$535.12 | \$ (0.19) (-0.036%) |

- Tax requisition impacts per average home vary from a decrease of 0.036% to 6.977%. Each area was highlighted.
- Operating budgets are \$56.7mil. Capital budget is \$12.4mil
- Municipal Finance Authority financing was explained.
- Tax requisition increase is 3.76% (increase of \$917,420).
- Reserve balances for operating, equipment, capital facility, park land, park legacy, DCC reserves were noted.
- Overhead rate increases were explained.
- Explanation of why each service needs to be considered separately, tax rates cannot be combined with other services. Regional Districts budgets are not like municipalities. There is no single tax rate or group of taxpayers
- There is no 'one size fits all' tax rate

The Committee recessed at 12:30 p.m. and reconvened at 12:50 p.m.

Directors Fortin, Hodge, Johnston, Sieben and Wooldridge left the meeting.

When the meeting reconvened it was noted that:

- Reserves for regional rescue needs to continue to be monitored closely
- The question was raised if the COVID grant has been dispersed fairly among the partners. Other local government electoral area directors have sent a letter to the Province to raise this question.

Councillor Coble left the meeting at 1:08 p.m.

5.1.2. Summary Highlights Review of the Draft Budget

At this time, staff proceeded through each service budget in Tab 5 of the budget binder. The Director of Financial Services report dated February 15, 2021 outlined specific increases/decreases to requisition, reserves, surpluses and any specific concerns of note to a service.

Discussion was raised on the following services:

- Dog Control – increases highlighted due to:
 - Staffing payroll increases, reduction in revenue explained.
 - Does revenue need to be increased versus an increase in operational expenses.
 - Change to revenue due to COVID impacts. Reductions include reduced licensing, impound revenue and adjudication fees.
 - If operational changes continue to increase staff to report on reasons why and how revenue can be increased ie: increased licensing fees.
 - COVID restart funding of \$37K is available and may be applied to assist in the reduction of revenues to the service due to COVID impacts.

#GS12/21 GIVEN/STACK

THAT COVID restart funding of \$37,000 be directed to the Dog Control service to assist in loss of revenue in 2020 due to COVID-19 impacts.

CARRIED unanimously

- Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) – the stakeholder committee agreed to an increase in reserve funding and capital levels from 45% to 55%. Increases to WFN is due to increase in flow shifts.
- Regional Grant in Aid – there was consensus to continue with the Community Gardens grant in aid.
- Central Okanagan West Electoral Area Grants in Aid – reduce grants in 2021 by \$3,100. It was noted that the West Kelowna School Liaison Officer is based on actual costs from West Kelowna.

#GS13/21 CARSON/BARTYIK

THAT Central Okanagan West Electoral Area grant in aid be reduced by \$3,100.

CARRIED unanimously

Director Hodge returned to the meeting at 1:55 p.m. Director Sieben returned to the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

- Air Quality Service – It was noted that the agricultural chipping program is available through this service and is available by application; funded annually at \$80K per year. Question was raised how the program operates, including the number of applications annually, if there is a wait list and if there is, should funding for the program be increased.

#GS14/21 SIEBEN/SINGH

THAT staff report to the March 18th budget meeting on the operation of regional air quality chipping program.

CARRIED unanimously

- Okanagan Basin Water Board – the question was raised what long term requisition changes are expected. At this time staff are not aware but will
ACTION follow up with OBWB staff to confirm.

5.1.3. Public Comment on the 2021-2025 Financial Plan

Due to the Provincial Health Order in effect whereby the public cannot attend public meetings, written comment on the budget process may be received prior to the final budget meeting of March 29th via letters/emails.

5.1.4. Recommendation to Forward the Draft Budget to the March 18, 2021 Governance & Services Committee Meeting

#GS15/21 SINGH/BAKER

THAT the Governance & Services Committee receive for information the 2021- 2025 Financial Plan documentation;

AND FURTHER THAT any recommended amendments discussed today be brought forward to the Governance & Services Committee meeting scheduled for March 18, 2021.

CARRIED unanimously

6. ADJOURN

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:28 p.m.

CERTIFIED TO BE TRUE AND CORRECT

G. Given (Chair)

B. Reardon (Chief Administrative Officer)



Governance & Services Committee

TO: Governance and Services Committee

FROM: Brian Reardon
Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: March 5, 2021

SUBJECT: Air Quality – Agricultural Wood Chipping Program Update

Purpose: To provide the Committee with an update to the Air Quality – Agricultural Wood Chipping Program.

Executive Summary:

At the February 26th, 2021 Governance & Services Budget Workshop meeting, Committee members raised some questions regarding the Air Quality – Agricultural Wood Chipping Program. The following resolution was passed:

“THAT staff report to the March 18th budget meeting on the operation of regional air quality chipping program.”

The agricultural wood chipping program in the Regional Air Quality function currently has an annual budget of \$80,000 and is used to provide chipping services to orchardists in the Central Okanagan. This program has two components; agricultural chipping for large acreages and a Mow/Chip rental rebate component for smaller acreages. This program is oversubscribed every year leaving some orchardists to find other ways to dispose of their wood waste. In 2020, our chipping contractor had a major mechanical failure that made this situation worse.

In order to address last years backlog and provide better service to our orchardists, it is recommended \$40,000 be added to the Agricultural Chipping Program in 2021.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Committee recommend the Regional Board approve adding \$40,000 to the Air Quality - Agricultural Wood Chipping Program in 2021.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Reardon".

Brian Reardon, CAO

The table below provides some important statistics for our Agricultural Wood Chipping Program for the last three years.

| Year | 2020 | 2019 | 2018 |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| No. of registered orchards | 43 | 60 | 59 |
| Total Orchards Finished | 17 | 25 | 20 |
| Volume of Wood Chips (m3) | 3618 | 4891 | 7238 |
| Agricultural Chipping Program (acres cleared) | 111 | 128 | 119 |
| Mow Chip Rent It (acres cleared) | 139 | 53 | 73 |
| Total Mow Chip Rent Rebates Granted | 19 | 17 | 17 |

Further background information on the Regional Air Quality Service is provided in the attached 4th Quarter Report.

Staff are currently developing a formal business case for the agricultural wood chipping component of our Air Quality Service that will be presented to the Board in the 2nd Quarter of 2021.

Attachment: 2020 4th Quarter Air Quality Report

Memo

Date: January 21, 2021
File: 1410-2020
To: Regional District Central Okanagan
From: Nancy Mora, Regional Air Quality Program Coordinator
Subject: 2020 4th Quarter Report

The following information relates to the 4th quarter 2020:

Woodstove Exchange Program (WSEP)

- **4** exchanges were completed in 2020.
- We applied and received funding from the BC Lung Association to continue the program during 2021. Rebates available for 2021 are; 113 of \$250 or 71 of \$400. Total availability may vary as it will depend on the type of appliances exchanged.
- As an alternative for the Annual Workshops, a [new Burn it Smart Tool](#) was designed and launched in September 2020.
- A survey to evaluate the program was also planned by early January 2021, as part of the BC grant report requirements.

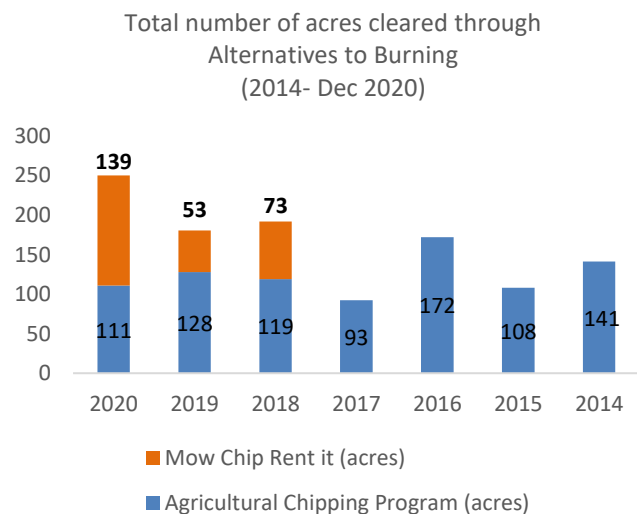
Alternatives to Burning:

• Agricultural Wood Waste-Program Update:

- A total of **3,682m³** were chipped.
- **17** orchards were completed.
- **111** acres cleared without burning.

• Mow/Chip/Rent it Rebate update:

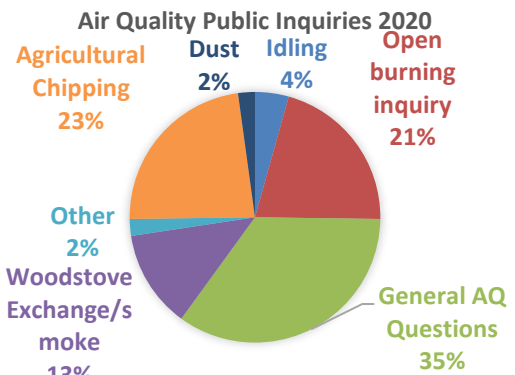
- We provided **19** rebates to residents; 37% of these were issued to City of Kelowna residents, 26% to Lake Country and 37% to RDCO residents.
- **117** wood piles were avoided to be burned - average pile size 4 m width x 2.5m height
- Estimated time residents have spent cutting, dragging and making piles-**508** hrs
- **139** acres have been treated for fuel reduction



Air Quality Public Inquiries

- Public inquiries through the tracking system were as follow:
 - 230** Air Quality inquiries were received from January to December
 - Air Quality inquiries increased **104%** when compared to 2019 data.

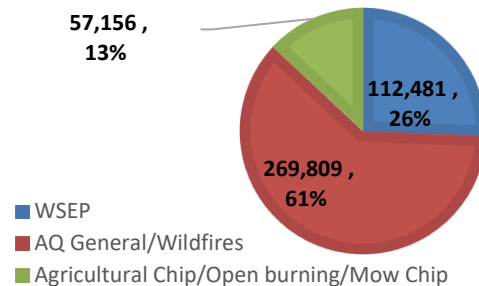
This tracking system is designed to handle questions that may not be tracked through the service request system. **Note that this does not include registration for agricultural chipping and woodstove exchange program.*



Social Media

- Through Social media we reached “accumulated” more than 435,000 residents (January to December):
- Through the Living Greener Calendar, we reached 28,000 people more

People Reached Through Social Media (January-december 2020)
(Facebook, Twitter, Newsletter, Newspaper)

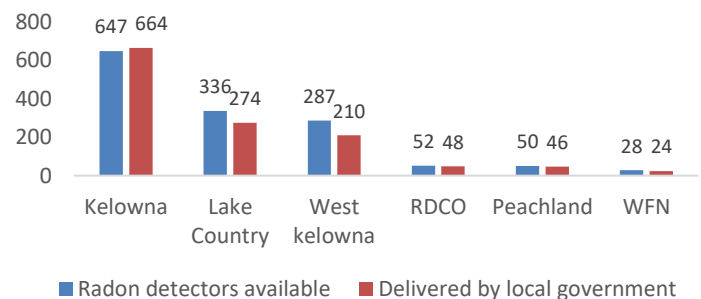


Radon Test Challenge

The Air Quality program with the support of Interior Health, Take Action on Radon, the British Columbia Lung Association, the Vancouver Foundation and all local municipalities provided 1266 FREE radon test kits and a radon awareness webinar to interested residents within the Central Okanagan. The webinar has more than 600 reproductions so far.

Through the School Radon project, we deployed 373 detectors in 23 public schools and 7 independent schools. Radon awareness reached more than 23,000 students in December 2020. The schools will receive their results by June.

Number of radon detectors available and delivered Central Okanagan 2020



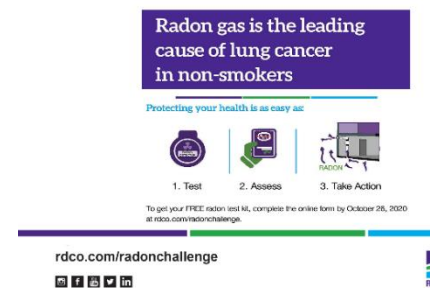
Pollutant Reductions

Through all the programs and activities of the Air Quality Department and other Transportation Demand Management Programs an estimation of **246** tonnes of particulate matter (PM10 and PM_{2.5}), **723** tonnes of CO and **116** tonnes of VOC's are not released on average per year (2003-2020).

Submitted by:

Nancy Mora Castro, P. Eng.

Regional Air Quality Coordinator





Governance & Services Committee

TO: Governance and Services Committee

FROM: Brian Reardon, CAO

DATE: March 4, 2021

SUBJECT: First Nations Engagement Budget Considerations

Purpose: To provide advice to the Committee on how to further enhance and build strong working relationships with the Okanagan's First Nations.

Executive Summary:

At the Budget Workshop held on February 25, 2021 the Governance & Services Committee discussed ways in which the Regional District could enhance and improve indigenous relations with Okanagan First Nations. The Committee subsequently requested a staff report.

As stated at the February 25, 2021 Budget Workshop, the Regional District and Westbank First Nation has a history of collaborating and partnering on numerous initiatives in the traditional territory of the sylix/Okanagan peoples in the Central Okanagan. These efforts have been primarily project based and provided through existing programs and services such as Regional Parks, Emergency Management, and Economic Development, to name a few.

The foundation of the conversation at the February 25, 2021 Budget Workshop advanced the desire to do something more than just celebrating project successes. Members of the Committee spoke about wanting to engage in Reconciliation efforts in a more meaningful way through respectful dialogue, learning and relationship building. The Committee also expressed the need to include all sylix/Okanagan First Nations within the Central Okanagan region.

To be effective, these efforts must be sustained for years to come. In order to fund these ongoing efforts, the Regional District needs to establish a new regional service to deliver this program. Approval of the recommendation below will allow the Regional District to take the first step towards providing this new service.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Governance & Services Committee recommend the Regional Board approve allocating \$50,000 from the RDCO *feasibility reserve fund* to undertake a feasibility study in consideration of establishing a Regional First Nations Engagement Service;

AND FURTHER THAT this expense be included in this years' 2021-2025 Financial Plan.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Reardon".

Chief Administrative Officer

Implications of Recommendation:

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Strategic Plan: | <p>The Board's Vision Statement includes "The sylix/Okanagan people are true partners, helping to interpret the past, shape the present and define a common future."</p> <p>One of the Board's Values includes "We build relationships with our member municipalities, the sylix/Okanagan people and partners."</p> |
| Organizational: | Should a new regional service be established, it would provide the Board and staff with added resources and a clear mandate going forward. |
| Financial: | Use of \$50,000 Feasibility Reserve Funds |
| Legal/Statutory Authority: | Part 10, Division 4 [Approval of Establishing Bylaws] of the Local Government Act |

Background:

At the Budget Workshop held on February 25, 2021 the Governance & Services Committee discussed ways in which the Regional District could enhance and build indigenous relations with the Okanagan's First Nations. Through consensus the Committee requested a staff report on the matter.

The Committee made reference to a resolution adopted by the Board at the regular Board Meeting held on November 25th, 2019:

#215/19 THAT staff be directed to explore opportunities to enhance and build indigenous relationships with the Okanagan's First Nations either within existing services or potentially creation of a new service and report back to the Board.

The Regional District and Westbank First Nation has a history of collaborating and partnering on numerous initiatives in the traditional territory of the sylix/Okanagan peoples and more specifically, the Central Okanagan. These efforts have been primarily project or service based that are provided through existing programs such as Regional Parks, Emergency Management, and Economic Development, to name a few.

The foundation of the conversation at the February 25, 2021 Budget Workshop advanced the desire to do something more than just celebrating project successes. Members of the Committee spoke about wanting to engage in Reconciliation efforts in a more meaningful way through respectful dialogue, learning and relationship building.

The Committee also expressed the need to include all sylix/Okanagan First Nations within the Central Okanagan region. These would include Westbank First Nation, Okanagan Indian Band and the Okanagan Nation Alliance.

To be effective, these efforts must be sustained for years to come. Based on the scope of what the Committee has spoken about, the Regional District will need to establish a new regional service to fund and deliver this program. The process of establishing a new regional service is described on the following page.

Part 10, Division 4 [*Approval of Establishing Bylaws*] of the *Local Government Act* is the legislation that applies to creation of a new regional district service. A simplified, generic process for establishing voluntary regional district services can be described in 4 steps:

1. **Raise Idea:** the idea for a new service emerges
2. **Study Feasibility:** to ensure the proposed service has:
 - a clear and understood purpose,
 - a defined and agreed-upon scope,
 - identified specific and measurable goals,
 - an agreed to method of cost apportionment,
 - an agreed to governance framework,
 - an agreed to service delivery model,
 - an agreed to service review process,
 - a developed start-up plan, AND
 - broad and sufficient support amongst elected officials
3. **Develop Bylaw:** if the service is deemed feasible, then a service establishment bylaw is drafted.
4. **Adopt Bylaw:** the adoption of all establishing bylaws must be voted on using the “unweighted corporate vote” rule – every Director present, one vote, simple majority.

This process usually takes four to six months to complete depending on the complexity of the service and how broad and sufficient the support for the new service is. For a service such as this, a robust engagement strategy will be needed to reach consensus on the purpose, scope and goals of the service.

From a timeline perspective, should the Committee support the staff recommendation in this report, the new establishment bylaw should be adopted in the third or fourth quarter of 2021 and funding for this new service would be put in place in 2022.

Financial Considerations:

By statute, the Regional District maintains a “*feasibility reserve fund*” for the purpose of studying the feasibility of establishing new services. This fund currently has a balance of \$100,374. In order to retain the services of a third party consultant to undertake a feasibility study for the potential establishment of a Regional First Nations Engagement Service it is recommended \$50,000 be allocated from the RDCO *feasibility reserve fund* in 2021.

If a regional service is established as a result of this process, the costs associated with its creation will be repaid/recovered from the newly established service and transferred back to the RDCO *feasibility reserve fund*. If a new service is not established through this process, the *feasibility reserve fund* will be replenished through the following years’ general government requisition.

In addition to the use of these reserve funds, staff time and associated resources will be required to advance this initiative.

Organizational Issues:

The Regional District values the strong working relationship it has developed with the Westbank First Nation. It is based on mutual respect and shared values on the protection of the environment and building sustainable communities through collaboration and partnerships.

This work started almost thirty years ago with the signing of a sanitary sewer service agreement in October, 1992 and then the signing of a “Statement of Political Relationship between the Westbank First Nation and the Regional District of Central Okanagan” in January 1999.

Then in January 2007 the Westbank First Nation and the Regional District of Central Okanagan signed a comprehensive “Local Services Agreement” for the provision of thirteen services to Mission Creek Indian Reserve No. 8, Tsinstikeptum Indian Reserves No. 9 and No. 10, Medicine Hill Indian Reserve No. 11, and Medicine Creek Indian Reserve No. 12. This agreement was amended in September 2014 adding three new services including Regional Air Quality, Crime Prevention and Economic Development.

Over the years the Regional District has collaborated and partnered with Westbank First Nation on numerous occasions including:

- Archeological Impact Assessment @ Black Mountain-sntsk'il'ntən Regional Park;
- Black Mountain / sntsk'il'ntən Regional Park Memorandum of Understanding (2014);
- WFN - RDCO MOU for the Protection and Conservation of Cultural Heritage Sites in Regional Parks (2017);
- Co-management agreements in a number of Regional Parks;
- Applying for numerous grant programs to support increased park information and wayfinding signs that incorporate the sylix language;
- Recruiting Westbank First Nation and sylix/Okanagan People in our Regional Parks and Regional Planning departments;
- Awarding fuel mitigation contracts in our Regional Parks to Okanagan Nation Alliance companies;
- Updating the Regional Growth Strategy
- Involving Westbank First Nation staff in the Emergency Operations Centre and the Regional Emergency Management Program;
- The list goes on.

The examples listed above have been provided on a project by project basis through an existing service. The Committee has expressed an interest in engaging in Reconciliation efforts in a more meaningful way with all sylix/Okanagan First Nations within the Central Okanagan.

In order to achieve this, a new regional service will be needed to clearly define the purpose, scope & objectives as well as provide the necessary financial resources to deliver the program.

Approving the staff recommendation in this report is the first step in establishing a new service.

Alternate Recommendation:

Allocate \$50,000 into General Government – 002 for First Nations Reconciliation Education and Programming in 2021.