

## CHAIR REPORT UP TO & INCLUDING OCTOBER 1/20

The bulk of this report will be based around the UBCM virtual AGM we have just completed. The bulk of our sessions with staff and/or Ministers were scheduled for the week prior to the UBCM convention itself. Whilst I was unable to be on all the calls due to conflicts with other calls, from what I have heard from Directors and/or staff who attended virtually, their concerns were well received, and in many cases, Govt. was already well aware of the issues we were raising. My conversation with outgoing Minister Doug Donaldson regarding the re-instatement of the Rural Dividend Fund was positive. Minister Donaldson did refer to the newly announced Recovery and Rebuild package, where on page 30 of the document, there are grant opportunities similar to the Rural Dividend fund. The Minister also stated that should the NDP get re-elected, he is confident that there will be other funding coming forward in the spring budget for smaller communities. I did stress with him, how important it is to the small rural communities, that the population cap be in place on any grant applications under this program, to which he vehemently agreed.

Another Ministerial meeting CAO MacLean and I had, was with Ministers Popham, Farnworth, Trevena & Donaldson, Deputy Minister Hall and Parliamentary Secretary Rice over the land slippage, flooding, road instability issues from the spring freshet. It was reassuring to hear that the GOVT. is already well aware that river and lake levels are still at historic highs for this time of the year, and if the Cariboo receives a normal snow pack, with normal spring rains, the spring freshet of 2021 could potentially be worse than what we experienced this year. Concerns were expressed by us regarding the apparent shift in funding and responsibility for some of these issues, and reference from the Ministers was made to the Flood & Wildfire review committee as it works to modernize the current Emergency Program Act. As a member

of this Committee, I will continue to bring forward the concerns we have regarding these issues. I know CAO MacLean has been involved in conversations at a staff level regarding this issue.

With the announcement of the Provincial election for Saturday October 24/20, the day before the start of UBCM, did cause some last minute rescheduling for UBCM staff, which I think they handled admirably. I'm sure that this new format of a virtual convention will be the norm for at least one more year. It was good to have some of the directors attend the boardroom for the full 3 days, along with some others that were there just for a day.

CAO MacLean and I travelled to Quesnel last Wednesday to meet with Mayor Simpson and Byron Johnson. These meetings have taken place before, and are more to discuss alignment of some projects that are joint efforts, and discussions around other upcoming projects and verbiage around some of these. As always, both parties find these meetings useful, as CAO MacLean and I continue to build and reinforce our relationships with our 4 Municipalities.

Just as an FYI, NDIT announced its new programs under the Trust 2020 heading. One of the big changes is the ability of Communities to apply to the Trust for funding online, and a lot of the required reporting has been decreased for some of the programs. I am in Prince George in late October, and will bring back the informational postcards for Directors on the new programs.

As always, please feel free to discuss this report either privately or at the Board meeting if you have any questions or concerns.

Respectfully submitted,