



Date: 06/01/2021

To: Chair and Directors, Cariboo Regional District Board

And To: John MacLean, Chief Administrative Officer

From: Alice Johnston, Manager of Corporate Services/Deputy CAO

Date of Meeting: Cariboo Regional District Board_Jan15_2021

File: 400-20

Short Summary:

Request from Director Forseth – Letter to Minister of Finance to Extend Due Date for 2021 Rural Property Tax Payments

Voting:

Corporate Vote - Unweighted

Memorandum:

Director Forseth has submitted the following request:

"PURPOSE:

To propose to the Board that a letter be forwarded to BC's Finance Minister (Hon. Selina Robinson) asking that, for 2021 only, that the due date for rural property taxes be extended from July 2nd to September 2nd (60 days) in light of the on-going COVID-19 impacts on personal finances for rural residential property owners

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:

As the Board is aware – COVID-19 has had a severe impact on both business/individuals from both economic and social points of view. In March 2020 – I am aware of a RD on Vancouver Island who asked for a time extension in order to revise their budget, in light of COVID-19 and that request was rejected by the then Minister of Municipal Affairs. In the meantime – it is expected that the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 in relation to personal finances for rural property owners will continue into the vast majority of 2021 until a sufficient majority of the populace has received their COVID-19 vaccine. Unlike Municipal Councils in British Columbia – the 27 Regional Districts' in BC do not either set property tax rates nor can they determine the deadlines to pay property taxes before penalties kick in. For Electoral Areas in British Columbia – both of these items are determined by the Provincial Government via BC Cabinet Order/Provincial Regulation

While there are property tax deferral programs in British Columbia – these are restricted to those either "55 and up" or "Families" only and not for those working without dependants. Moreover, these programs are dependent on people applying. While it has been said that 70%

of property owners would normally be covered by these property tax deferral programs – there are many reasons why they don't apply – anything from property owners not qualifying, right up to personal preference.

However, in the meantime, the consensus of information I have seen so far is that 2022 should see a return to some sort of normalcy....”

Attachments:

None

Financial Implications:

The request being made to the province has possible financial implications for the CRD, should the province decide to act on the request being made. If the province extends the tax due deadline for rural taxpayers, it would make sense that they would also delay the Provincial and Municipal remittance dates to coincide with the extension. Hence, the CRD could expect to receive the requisition amounts possibly as late as October 31, 2021. A deferral of revenues at this time of year would necessitate short-term borrowing for the CRD to maintain cash flows.

Policy Implications:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Alignment with Strategic Plan:

- Communication:** Facilitate communication strategies throughout the entire Cariboo Regional District that meet the needs of residents, community stakeholders, and other levels of government.
- Planning:** Intentionally plan services and activities of the CRD to prepare for future needs of residents and community stakeholders.
- Economic Sustainability:** Foster an environment to ensure the economic sustainability of CRD communities and the region.
- Governance:** Ensure that CRD governance policy and practices are intentional, transparent, and respectful.

[Click here to enter text.](#)

CAO Comments:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Options:

- 1) Receipt
- 2) Receipt and authorize that the letter be sent

Recommendation:

That the agenda item summary from Alice Johnston, Manager of Corporate Services/Deputy CAO, dated January 6, 2021, regarding a request from Director Forseth that a letter be forwarded to the Minister of Finance requesting that the due date for 2021 Rural Property Taxes be extended to September 2, 2021 in light of the on-going COVID-19 challenges on personal finances for rural property owners, be received. *Further action at the discretion of the Board.*