

Chair Report
Up to & Including June 18,2024

On Saturday May 25th, I attended the opening of the Big Lake Heritage site on behalf of NDIT. Representing the CRD was Director LeBourdais, and it was great to see some of the old log structures that we see derelict and falling down, given a second life within these heritage sites.

I attended the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) convention in Calgary from June 6-9th inclusive. It was the largest FCM to date with over 3100 delegates attending from across Canada. Unfortunately, the study tours of Calgary's EOC had to be cancelled due to the major water line break that happened the day the convention started. Directors Pare, Neufeld and I did a river raft tour down the Bow River, which gave us an ideal opportunity to learn about storm water management and its treatment before entering the Bow River, plus several examples of rip rap along the banks, many of which have to be environmentally suitable for the endangered bank swallows that nest in the riverbanks.

The BC regional caucus met and discussed the many issues we are all experiencing around healthcare and housing. Our UBCM Electoral Area representative, Jeri-Lyn Kirk, was successful in her bid for a position on the BC Caucus, so will now give Northern BC a voice on the FCM Board whilst advocating on BC's behalf with the Federal Government.

There was a sense of excitement and hope, discussion around the new Municipal Growth Framework funding, which will hopefully give local governments, especially regional districts, alternative funding other than relying on property taxes for the bulk of funding. As more and more expectations of funding programs come down to local governments this should be a game changer.

Other sessions that I attended included Sustainable Land Use Planning; Rural Resiliency – Innovation and Economic Growth (this session was not really what we in the CRD would consider rural); Fires & Floods – Planning for Extreme Weather Events; Bridging the Digital Divide in Rural Communities; and the last session of the conference was on the increasing harassment of elected officials.

On Friday June 14th I attended the graduation ceremonies of 82 graduates from Peter Skene Ogden school in 100 Mile House.

CAO Daly and I travelled up to Prince George on Tuesday June 18th, to meet with the Chairs and CAO's of the Bulkley Nechako Regional District and the Regional District of Fraser Fort George for the second time this year. We discussed similar issues and have requested meetings during UBCM with Ministers and staff individually. As we get confirmation of our requests, we will share them with each other and plan to attend the meetings as a group. We did this last year, and we all felt we had more impact presenting as a group to Ministers and/or staff with like-minded concerns.

Respectfully submitted,
Chair Margo Wagner