

District of Barriere

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Date: February 3, 2025	
To: Council	From: Department Heads
Re: Departmental Updates	

CORPORATE OFFICER:

By-Election

- A Declaration of By-Election by Voting was made on February 3, 2025 at 4pm as legislatively required.
- A dedicated 2025 By-Election webpage is live on www.barriere.ca under the Mayor & Council tab. A direct link to that page can also be found in the Declaration of By-Election by Voting posted Notice on the front page. The website is a living page which is updated consistently so voters and candidates are advised to check back often.

Indigenous Engagement Requirements Funding Program – Forum: February 10, 2025

- The District of Barriere is pleased to have scheduled its Emergency Management Climate Readiness (EMCR) Indigenous Engagement forum on February 10th, 2025. There are two components to this forum: one being a meeting between key staff and membership directly involved in the administration of the District's and Simpcw First Nation's Emergency Response, and the other, being a gathering of both Simpcw and DoB Council membership, staff and local first/emergency responders in the evening. This forum will meet the obligations and objectives of the funding program and is not a public meeting.

Recreation

- Family Fun Night planning underway – Sunday, February 16, 2025 @5:30pm – 9pm. The annual Provincial funding provided in conjunction with BC Parks & Recreation, has not been made available this year. For the past 7 years, this 100% funding in the amount of \$1000.00 has been helping to facilitate this popular family event. In order to ensure the event can continue as planned this year, both NTACS and the Rec Committee will be splitting donations and other funds raised equally. NTACS' portion will be used to help support youth programming as it always has, and the remainder will be used by the Rec Committee to help recoup the event's expenses. With the high volume of dedicated volunteers, reduced vendor rates and public donations, this funding setback (while disappointing) should not affect this year's event. The Rec Committee will discuss other funding options going forward.

Development/Planning

- One Board of Variance application process is underway; a number of development inquiries are ongoing; and two subdivision applications are currently active and in their final stages.

Other

- Continues to work on a Ridge key catalogue with all tenants/users of this building.
- Continues to work on updating the record management system of the District's received grants and funding programs.
- Worked with the CFO in the finalization of the 2023 SOFI Report
- Completed the Interim LGHI Housing Needs Funding Report and final ETSI Funding Report.
- Participated in various working group meetings with the Fire Chief and Indigenous Engagement facilitating staff in planning of the upcoming forum on February 10th, 2025.

PUBLIC WORKS MANAGER:

Roads

- Winter roads maintenance contractor is maintaining a high level of service in the community. Very few complaints have been received on road conditions.

Parks

- Skating rink is operational and is being maintained by staff and volunteers (after business hours)
- Received Community Forest grant to add shade trees along pathway in Community Park. Still awaiting decision of grant application to BC Hydro for same project.
- Planning to work with Community Garden user group to upgrade and clean-up the garden. Looking at creating more garden plots.
- Staff will be commencing some FireSmart work in Community Park this winter.

Utilities

- Dustin Doherty has been re-hired for the Utility Operator II position on a part-time term starting February 3rd. Will be part of on-call rotation.
- MOE inspector was here to conduct inspection at SAWRC. We don't anticipate any fines as they know we are in the process of upgrading.
- The WWTP process design RFP has been issued.

Facilities

- Property condition assessments are on-going for all DOB owned facilities as part of asset management program
- Local contractors have been contacted for construction on Unit #4 at the BBC. Still waiting for all cost estimates to come in. Funding to come from LGCAP.

FIRE DEPARTMENT:

Calls:

- 3 Fire Alarms
- 2 Rural Rescues
- 1 Burning Complaint
- 1 Hydro Line Down

Training that occurred in January:

- First Responder Certification
 - SCBA Training
 - Ropes and Knots
 - NFPA 1001 (Two classes: Exterior Crew and Interior Crew)
- Community Fire Risk Reduction Dashboard Meetings
 - Draft Community Wildfire Resiliency Plan submitted for edits to Utilities and Fire Department

FireSmart:

- FireSmart Fridays
- A BC FireSmart Program poster was created and sent off for printing (Advertising around the community).
- Two FireSmart Lunch-ins have been scheduled for March 15th from 11am-2pm and April 19th from 11am-2pm at the Seniors Center.
- An overall FireSmart Program update along with the proposed, spring Yard Waste Day will be provided at the next Regular Council Meeting.

CHIEF ADMINISTRATION OFFICER:

Finance:

- Working on 2025 budget process and capital request items. Budget process will be a primary focus for Council once the by-election is complete and the new Mayor and member of Council are determined.

Governance:

- Planning is underway for a Council Orientation workshop that should occur as soon as the new council members are determined through the by-election.
- Agreements / Contracts:
 - Trails Stewardship Agreement – actively being worked on
 - Community Hall Lease Agreement – actively being worked on
 - CN Rail – received update draft agreements regarding Hall Road crossing
- Policies / Bylaws:
 - Focus is on Strategic Priorities of Council and Asset Management was a top priority in the plan. A draft updated Asset Management policy is attached as a separate report.
 - Worked with the Fire Chief on challenges with Remuneration Policy for Volunteer Fire Fighters.

Administration:

- ETSI-BC gave conditional approval to the Chamber and District regarding the Wayfinding grant just before the winter holiday season. Some requirements were still outstanding (an official quote for the requested dollar amount from a qualified provider), which was recently provided to ETSI-BC which should now remove the condition. The grant provides up to \$25,000 in funding for projects up to \$50,000. Simpcw First Nation has so far verbally committed to \$5,000 as well, reducing the remainder for funding required to \$20,000. The Chamber will now approach other community partners about this project and potential funding and sponsorship.

Information Technology:

- District Office is now operating on new network cables and infrastructure. The District wide Phone System is planned to be swapped over on February 6, 2025. We are also moving to digital fax lines in 2 locations. There may be some interruptions to service to the public on that day.

**submitted for information*