Municipal Update

Friday, February 26, 2016

From the Mayor's Desk

Hello Lions Bay,

I've been asked to talk this week about 2016 utility notices to be mailed out next week. We will see several changes this year.

First, water. Up to now the municipality has charged for water in three places: a water utility rate billed in February (2015's fee was $788 for all Lions Bay residential parcels), plus two parcel taxes billed in July, one under Bylaw #130 to central Lions Bay and Kelvin Grove parcels since 1985 ($485 in 2015), and the other under Bylaw #368 to 29 of Brunswick Beach's 43 parcels to cover the cost of connecting Brunswick Beach to the Lions Bay water system ($365 a year for 20 years starting in 2005; the remaining 14 Brunswick Beach parcels paid their share of the connection project upfront).

Residents and staff have long pointed out that the parcel tax charged under 1985 Bylaw #130 needed fixing, because having joined Lions Bay after the tax was promulgated, Brunswick Beach parcels were not paying it and thus not participating equally in the ongoing costs of the overall Lions Bay water system. This year Council will finally address the issue by repealing the parcel tax and adding its amount to the water utility rate paid by all of Lions Bay. The result: this year's water utility rate is $1418 for residential parcels (higher for commercial and school parcels). That's the 2015 user rate plus the 2015 parcel tax, plus an almost 12% increase as approved by Council. This amount fully covers the budgeted cost of operating the water system this year. Tax bills in July will no longer contain the Bylaw 130 water parcel tax (although they will continue the Bylaw 368 amount for the 29 Brunswick Beach parcels for another nine

years). The net effect of all this is that central Lions Bay and Kelvin Grove pay the same amount for water before the rate increase, just at different times. With $485 + 12% no longer being a parcel tax on the property tax bill, this will reduce the amount that can be deferred for those residents with tax deferral arrangements with the Province. Brunswick Beach will pay $485 + 12% more for water than before.

The February utility bill also covers garbage collection, with rates ranging from $363.00 for residential parcels to $650.00 for commercial parcels, on average a 2% increase on last year. Not bad considering the costs of diverting ever-increasing proportions of our waste stream away from landfill into recycling and composting, as mandated by the GVRD.

Sewer utility rates for Kelvin Grove parcels are $533.60, a 5% increase on last year, now also on the February utility bill (rather than the July tax bill of yore, for reasons lost in the mists of time). Sewer parcel tax will continue to be billed in July. These amounts combined don't cover all proposed 2016 sewer costs and capital investment, but there is a Sewer Fund surplus to draw on.

Utility bills are due 31 Dec. 2016 (31 March to qualify for small prompt payment discounts). I also don't like it that Lions Bay utility fees are rising, but that's because they were artificially low before. We were using general taxes to cover utilities. I'll keep saying it: Lions Bay does not enjoy many economies of scale. If Council intends to cover ever-increasing costs and pay for years of under-spending, beyond intermittent grants and municipal loans (which just spread out the cost) we have only two ways to do it: increase tax, or increase the tax base by adding new parcels. Please let me know which you prefer.

To close, a word on those July tax bills. You may have heard lurid tales about massive property tax increases coming. Given must-do road and drainage projects in 2016, it's fair to say tax dollars are going to be needed. But Council and staff are still working through the projects to understand how much we need to do this year. A 1% increase in municipal taxation raises only $11,000 in spending money, but any number mooted at this stage can only be rumour-mongering. No one knows yet what this year's property tax looks like.

Finally, another reminder that property assessment values have no bearing on the funds needed by the Village to run its budget. Budget is determined every year by fixed costs and project plans, and only then are mill rates determined by knowing the year's total assessment. A parcel's value relative to the total assessment determines what share of the budget it pays.

Regards,
Karl (mayor.buhr@lionsbay.ca, council@lionsbay.ca)

2016 UTILITY NOTICES

The 2016 Utility Notices will be mailed out on Monday, February 29. Please note that the Utility Notice will include some charges that have previously been billed on the Property Tax Notice.

The Water Parcel Tax Bylaw No. 130 has been repealed and the revenue has been replaced with a consolidated water user rate. So your Utility Notice will include a higher water user rate charge but there will no longer be a LB Water Parcel Tax charge on your Property Tax Notice.

For Kelvin Grove property owners, the sewer user fees are now billed on the Utility Notice rather than the Property Tax Notice.

Please contact the Village Office if you have any questions or require additional information.

UPDATE ON HARVEY CREEK SLIDE

Contractors continue to work to clear the debris slide covering the access road to the Harvey Creek water intake. Falling and scaling commenced this past week, and debris disposal will commence next week, weather permitting.

Please be aware that there will be significant dump truck activity along the intake road and Oceanview Road through the Village to the highway to remove the debris.

Temporary public access restrictions will be placed on the road above the Unnecessary Trail head to ensure the safety of the public and heavy truck operators. As always, please obey any signage and crews working in the area to ensure your safety and theirs.

UPCOMING COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MEETINGS

All meetings take place in Council Chambers unless otherwise noted. The Village Office is open until 6:30pm on *Regular Council Meeting* nights.

- Regular Council Meeting - March 1, 2016 at 7:00pm
- Council Strategy Committee - March 3, 2016 at 3:00pm

Note: please check the Village website calendar for meeting schedule changes or cancellations.

GRADE 12 SCHOLARSHIPS

Lions Bay Grade 12 students considering pursuing post secondary educational opportunities are invited to submit an application for a Curly Stewart Memorial Award or a Lions Bay Community Scholarship. For information and Application Forms contact your School Councillor, the Village Office, or Louis Peterson, Chair, Lions Bay Community Scholarship Foundation (lpeterso@sfu.ca). The deadline for applications is May 2nd, 2016.

Lions Bay Events Committee
Bringing our Community Together

LIONS BAY'S GOT TALENT 2016

Talent Call - All Ages

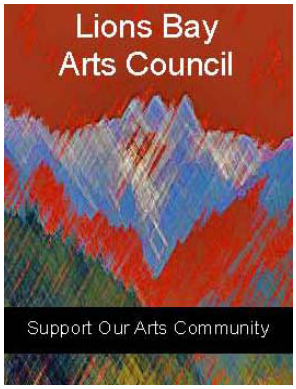
for Lions Bay's Got Talent 2016
April 14, 6 - 8pm

We are looking for performers of all ages to compete for cash prizes. Start practicing now to impress the judging panel - prizes and glory await you.

Applicants must reserve their spot in the competition by emailing lionsbaytalent@gmail.com. Space is limited, so sign up soon.

The event will be held at the Village Hall, on Thursday, April 14th, from 6 - 8pm.

LIONS BAY ARTS COUNCIL



Lions Bay Arts Council is seeking participating gardens for this year's Arts and Garden Festival. The festival will be held on Sunday June 19th this year from 11:00 until 4:00 pm.

Please e-mail info@lionsbayartscouncil.org or call 604-921-2520 if you would like to be part of this wonderful community event.

Also, please click the button below for information on the 2016 Banner Contest.

2016 Banner Contest Info



LIBRARY BOOK EVENT

Please click the button below for updated information on the Library Special Book Event happening on Sunday, March 6th from 2-4pm.

Library Book Event

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Please click the button below for the March 2016 Community Calendar.

March Community Calendar

See what's happening on our social sites:

THE MUNICIPALITY OF THE VILLAGE OF LIONS BAY

Direct: 604-921-9333 | reception@lionsbay.ca | www.lionsbay.ca