Village Update

Friday, January 12, 2018

From the Mayor's Desk

Hello Lions Bay,

Happy New Year. Council is back in the saddle. Long-memoried readers of this blog will recall my stated intention to recommend to Council that we repeal the occupied secondary suite fee. Community Charter 116 (2) (a) says "In addition to the mayor's responsibilities as a member of council, the mayor has the following responsibilities:...to [recommend] bylaws, resolutions and other measures that, in the mayor's opinion, may assist the peace, order and good government of the municipality...," and in this case I felt that while the fee ostensibly compensates for extra water and garbage (and sewer in Kelvin Grove) used by secondary suite occupants, it's too odd that it's waived if those occupants are relatives, and it's half-baked since it does not account for the total people living on the property and surely not all suites were paying it. Worst, I felt it may be an impediment to having suites safety inspected. But the requested staff report came back unfavourable to a change, and a majority of Council voted to maintain the fee this year, but must still decide whether to continue the exemption for family members.

Fee or not, relatives or not, occupied or not, all secondary suites however and whenever installed, are still required to be registered and to undergo a minimum safety inspection (of linked smoke/carbon monoxide detectors, fire doors, rating requirements for ceilings and bedroom egresses). Council did approve a secondary suite education campaign, with the goal of having all secondary suites in the Village registered within 2018. Today there are 60 suites on the Municipality's register (35 self-declared on the utilities notices and 25 determined through other means). I don't

believe that number; while I don't like the fee, we really must have all suites safety inspected for the sake of persons occupying them and for the protection of the municipality. That process is ongoing and Council is supporting graduated enforcement by staff to achieve the desired result. So if you haven't already had yours inspected, it's pretty much time to do it now.

While I'm on government over-involvement (not like the old days, eh?), a reminder that in Lions Bay short-term rental businesses require a temporary use permit. If you rent your property on Airbnb, VRBO and the like, you must apply for a permit. Without rehashing the community drivers for this requirement, penalties for non-compliance are significant, and let's face it: STRs are pretty easy to track down, especially once the platforms start providing data to municipalities as recently agreed. Again, Council's goal here is to have all operating STRs permitted in 2018.

In a marathon Council meeting that ended at 11:20 pm on Tuesday, Council got its first look at staff recommendations for the Village's 2018 base budget and the fees and property taxes we are going to have to raise to fund it. No major surprises yet, but then we haven't seen it all. Every year people wonder if changes in their property assessment will impact their property tax. The short answer is, no. What matters is how assessed value has changed relative to the average change for a property class in a taxing jurisdiction. Your assessment itself only affects your share of the property tax pie, and Council has not yet seen let alone approved, the 2018 pie. Assessments have no direct bearing on Lions Bay's municipal budget and hence on how much tax revenue we need to raise. Check out BC Assessment's take: Property Assessments and Property Taxes: A not-so complicated relationship and The Property Tax Equation.

Helpful BC Assessment people provided me some extra data on the 2018 assessment, so let's see if I can confuse us all at a higher level. Lions Bay's 524 single family and 26 strata residential property folios (plus 39 vacant residential parcels, but excluding commercial, utility and other property types), had an average assessment of $1.62 mil. ($1.49 mil. median for us statisticians). If your assessment is higher than this average, you will pay more property tax than the average Lions Bay folio, and vice versa. And in aggregate, Lions Bay residential assessments rose 6.9% from 2017 to 2018. If yours went up more than that, you will also pay more of the pie than you did last year. I repeat: we still don't know what the pie is. But that's not the whole story.

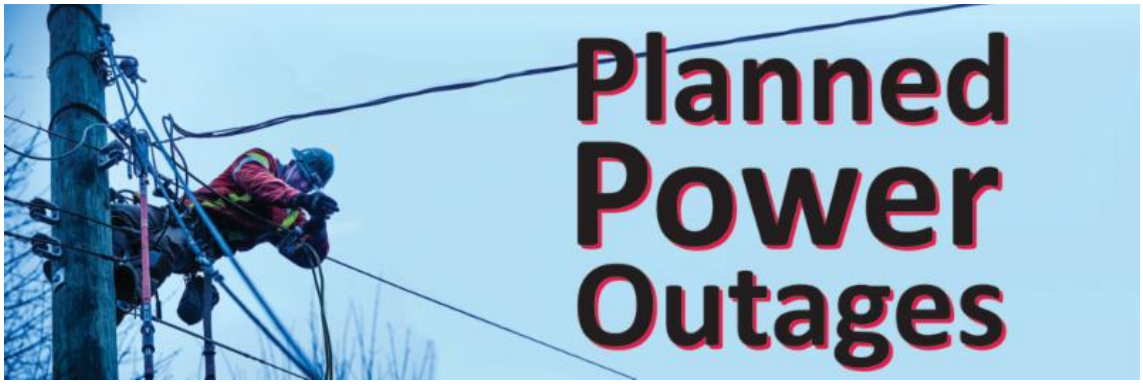
About half of the Lions Bay tax bill is collected for other government entities. School tax is set according to the Ministry budget for SD-45, shared between Lions Bay, Bowen Island and West Van. There we luck out. While Bowen's weighted average assessment for their 1,816 residential folios is $1.06 mil., West Van's is $3.24 mil. for 15,332 folios

and they pay 94.5 percent of our district's school tax. BTW, did you know that school tax just goes into the province's general revenue coffers, and what's actually spent on schools is so hard to tease out, no one really knows? But I digress. Similarly, the Translink and Regional District tax rates are the same across the 23 jurisdictions in the regional district, and since Lions Bay assessments are high regionally, we pay more than the average Metro Vancouver muni. Same for the Policing Levy, which is the same rate across the province. So how high are our property values? Some spreadsheet work on BC Assessment's data shows that this year Lions Bay's weighted average single-family and strata residential assessment is the fourth highest non-rural assessment area in the province, behind only University Endowment Lands ($3.51 mil.)*, West Van ($3.24 mil.) and Anmore ($1.65 mil.).

I've been asked lately about the fate of eight lots at the north end of the Village that were said to have been ceded to us by the Ministry of Transportation as part of the highway upgrades in 2009/10. Here's the refreshingly short report back I asked for from CAO DeJong: "I have...read through all reports and emails I could find on the matter, and [at the end of the day] there was nothing from the Province agreeing to anything.... The lots [are anyway now] expunged from the Land Title Office [registry] and no longer exist. End of story."

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

*UEL is not a municipality, nor part of Vancouver, but an unincorporated part of MVRD's Electoral Area A. I happen to be Vice Chair of the MVRD Electoral Area Committee, so know arcane things. I asked BC Assessment about this number and they say that yes, these are some of the highest valued single family dwellings in BC, with 1,190 parcels ranging in assessed value from about $3.7 mil. to $34.7 mil. Who says there's an affordability crisis!



JANUARY 16TH AND 17TH

BC Hydro

Please be advised that BC Hydro requires two outages on January 16th and January 17th (approximately 30 minutes and 15 minutes respectively) to safely replace damaged switches at the Lions Bay substation. These outages will occur from 9-9:30 am on January 16th and 4-4:15 pm on January 17th. BC Hydro has notified affected residents by phone (dates were changed from the 8th and 9th). The Village Office will have no access to phones or internet during the indicated times.

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.

- Closed Council Strategy Committee Meeting - January 16, 2018 at 4:00 pm
- Lions Bay Beach Park Advisory Committee Meeting - January 18, 2018 at 7:00 pm
- Council Strategy Committee Meeting (Public Works Core Services Review) - January 23, 2018 at 3:00 pm
- Regular Council Meeting - January 23, 2018 at 7:00 pm
  (Includes presentation of the 2018 Preliminary Budget)

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

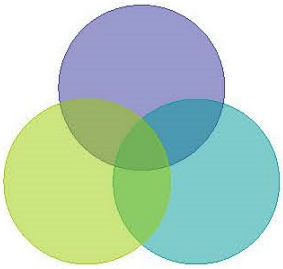
MANAGING RESIDENTIAL WOOD SMOKE IN METRO VANCOUVER



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Metro Vancouver is proposing a phased approach to regulating residential wood smoke emissions in the region. To provide your feedback by January 15th, click here. Find out more: www.metrovancouver.org and search "residential wood smoke".

SENIORS SOCIAL CIRCLE



SSC Notepads #1: The 2018 Spring Session of Tai Chi/Qigong for adults has begun! There is still time to join for a partial program (Tuesdays, 11:00 am to 12:15 pm, beginning with a social interlude of Rooibos tea!) All Welcome!

SSC Notepad #2: The Resources Directory is launched on most streets (all of Kelvin Grove, Brunswick, Lions Bay Avenue, Seaview, Cloudview Oceanview, Highview, Panorama, Crosscreek, Upper Bayview). Residents on other streets (Isleview, Bayview Road and Place, Stewart, Sunset, Timbertop) may pick up their free copy at the former library (aka "community common room") on Wednesday, 17th January, 2018, 4:30 - 7:30 pm. Make sure to get your FREE copy before they go on sale! For information contact info.lbdirectory@gmail.com.

SSC Notepad #3: ON OUR DOORSTEP(almost!). On Sunday 14th January the Brackendale Art Gallery Theatre presents two events of interest to all nature lovers , environmentalists and artists:

- 1:00-4:00 pm, "Eagle Festival Celebration";
- 6:30 pm, Natural World Lecture Series #1, by keynote speaker Wade Davis, "a world-renowned anthropologist, lecturer, photographer, author, National Geographic Explorer in Residence, and Member of the Order of Canada".

For full details and information see info@brackendaleartgallery.com.

SSC Notepad #4: In just one month, on Tuesday 13th February, the spring session of Lions Bay House Concerts begins with "an opportunity for an evening of ultimate relaxation, while transported to another era, within the melodic sounds of jazz and blues music, as played by Janelle Nadeau on pedal and lever concert harp. Seating is very limited". Contact tamara@tamaraleger.com

SSC Notepad #5: Seniors, wanna-be seniors (and not-wanna-bees as well) are warmly invited to "Trivia Night" on 19th January in the Hall. Bring your trivia pencils and lighten up a trivia January evening!


TRIVIA
NIGHT
FRIDAY, JAN 19
7PM - BROUGHTON HALL
$5 ENTRY - PRIZES TO WIN
TEAMS UP TO 4 ALLOWED
CASH BAR & SNACKS

Create your winning team of up to 4 people, or dare to go it alone. Lions Bay Trivia Night: bragging rights will last a long time. Come ready to test your knowledge with a mix of history, geography, sports, pop culture and music. Prizes for each of the 3 rounds.

$5 entry per person (an adult event). Doors open at 7pm - expect to start by 7:30 at the latest. Cash bar and some snacks available.

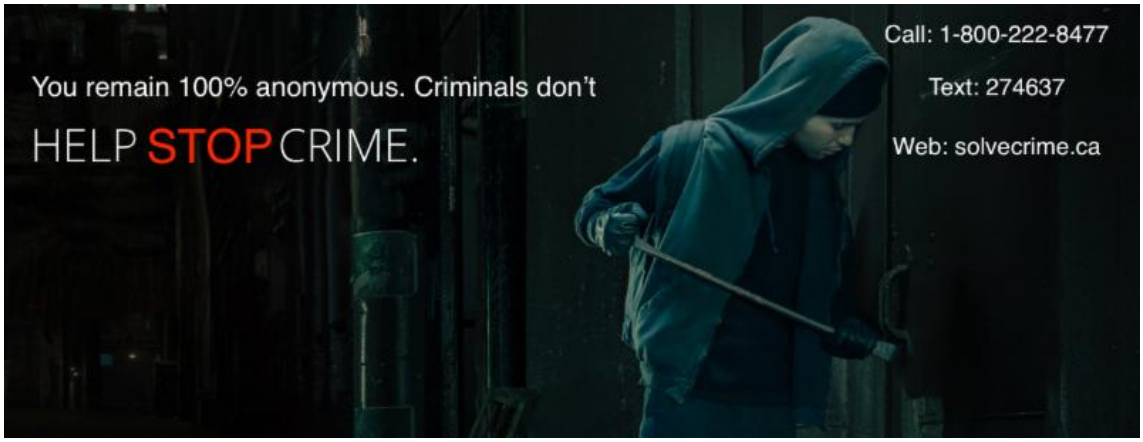
Lions Bay Events Committee
Bringing our Community Together

LIONS BAY COMMUNITY SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION



Note #1: Calling all Grade 12's -- The Lions Bay Community Scholarship Foundation provides Scholarships and Awards to qualifying Lions Bay applicants. Watch for upcoming details, or contact your School Counsellor or lpeterso@sfu.ca.

Note #2: SEASOIL IS BACK! Support the 15th Anniversary of the Lions Bay Community Scholarship Foundation by buying your Seasoil needs from the LBCSF. Details available soon, or contact lpeterso@sfu.ca.



Crime Stoppers is an international organization dedicated to helping keep our communities safer. They do this by providing a mechanism where citizens can provide tips related to crimes in a completely anonymous way. Crime Stoppers encourages tips by providing cash rewards for tips that lead to convictions. Rewards are also handled in a completely anonymous way. The police are never informed of the tipster's identity.

Sea to Sky Crime Stoppers is the local chapter responsible for the management of the program in the Sea to Sky corridor of BC. This includes Bowen Island, Lions Bay, Furry Creek, Britannia Beach, Squamish, Whistler, and Pemberton. It is a volunteer run organization that passes leads on to local RCMP.

The Crime Stoppers tip line, 1-800-222-TIPS (8477), is staffed by trained personnel who receive, process and pass on tip information to the appropriate agency to investigate. See solvecrime.ca or visit their Facebook page: @SeaToSkyCrimeStoppers and Twitter page: @SeatoSkyCS to 'like' or 'follow'.

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