



Mayor's Communiqué

(July 2011)



The opinion is sometimes expressed by members of the public that the attendance of Mayor and Councillors at out of town meetings/conferences is a costly expense and, as such, should be avoided.

In reality, however, attendance at government conferences assists your elected officials in exploring creative and practical ways that other communities and colleagues are addressing the urgent issues of our time. Effective leadership can only be achieved by informed leaders.

Conferences include innovative keynote presenters, workshops, panel presentations, local mobile tours, establishment of resolutions and more. Program content is designed to inform, inspire, challenge and educate conference participants, as well as providing opportunities to network with colleagues and experienced professionals. At the local level, accountability to the community involves making the most of the conference's activities and events. As such, Council has established a policy by which event participants are required to provide a post conference report on the experience and lessons learned.

On a yearly basis there are 3 levels of government conferences held:

AKBLG (Association of Kootenay Boundary Local Governments) is a regional 3 day conference. This year the event was held in Kimberley, and in 2012 this conference will be held in Trail. Creston is being considered as the host community for AKBLG in 2014. The AKBLG conference concentrates on regional issues and concerns.



UBCM (Union of BC Municipalities) is a 5 day conference that will occur in Vancouver this coming September. Last year in 2010 the event was held at Whistler, BC., and in 2012 UBCM will be held in Victoria. The UBCM conference concentrates on provincial issues and concerns that directly impact local governments.



FCM (Federation of Canadian Municipalities) is a 4 day conference that was held in Halifax last month. The previous year the conference was held in Toronto and Saskatoon is the host location in 2012. FCM concentrates on national issues and concerns that directly impact local governments.



Personally, I believe that all Councillors should be invited to attend the yearly AKBLG on an annual basis. Additionally, it is my position that Councillors should attend, at minimum, 2 of the UBCM conferences and one of the FCM conferences during their 3 year term of serving as elected officials.

Personally, I have had the privilege of attending the last 3 FCM (national) conferences. To illustrate my point about the importance of learning from real world community experiences, I had the opportunity as part of the FCM events to visit and participate in study tours at the Recycling and Waste Programs in Whistler, Toronto and Halifax. Based on what I have learned, it is my belief that we can create a strong long-term Recycling and Waste Disposal project for the Creston Valley, and should identify such a program as a high priority project for implementation.

By participating in conferences and workshops, we can foster responsible local leadership, good governance and stewardship of public assets. By weaving together the tools and processes available to local governments with on the ground community experiences, we are provided an opportunity to benefit from "real world lessons learned".

I want to hear from you:

Please share your concerns, your experiences, and your issues (both positive and negative) on how we can improve the quality of life in our community (the Town and the Creston Valley).

Thanks

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