



Mayor's Monthly Message

December 2017

Our December Council meeting was focussed on reviewing the fees and charges required for the 2018 budget cycle. Our collective goal was to avoid any increases where possible and for the most part, fees and charges are being held flat to be the same as 2017 rates. Admission rates and passes at the pool have been increased slightly to reflect growing operating costs coming from wage pressure due to the increased provincial minimum wage as well as higher electrical costs due to the provincial carbon levy. The pool remains heavily subsidized by general tax revenues and only operates at about 40% cost recovery. Admission charges are also consistent with other facilities in our region. Another required change includes the fixed component of the monthly water and sewer charges which also increase slightly but we were able to hold the consumption based variable rate the same into 2018. Look for a full list of updates fees and charges in your mailbox along with the usual Village January newsletter in the coming weeks.

The school modernization continues to move forward with impressive results. If everything goes according to plan, students could begin occupying the newly renovated phase 1 classrooms and gymnasium as early as February. Indeed, with almost 18 months of construction behind us, the school could be completed in as little as 8 to 10 months. Despite some excellent work by the dedicated volunteers of the community fundraising committee, financial contributions to the community's commitment of \$1 million for the project are far short of what is required. The Village remains committed to our capital contribution of \$125,000 and seeking corresponding matching grants. That leaves \$750,000 to be raised by the community. To date, we have contributions or commitments for about \$61,000 of that requirement leaving a lot still to be done. The school modernization represents a once in a generation opportunity for our community to enhance our largest employer and strengthen one of the most important facilities at the core of Stirling's identity. However, the project also represents the largest potential financial risk to the Village as we work to secure that community commitment. It will be important for every club, community group and organization to help focus attention to the fundraising effort. Be sure to reach out to school alumni, corporate partners and other stakeholders in your networks to engage those who might be willing to help. Please visit gostirling.com for fundraising details.

Finally, a reminder from your volunteer Stirling Fire Department to keep fire prevention top of mind this holiday season. Chief Hodder reminds everyone with a real Christmas tree that it's important to keep natural trees healthy to prevent any chance of fires. It is recommended to water the tree every day, and keep it at least one metre away from any heat source like a fireplace, space heater or candles. You should also use proper power bars when plugging in decorations and to make sure all electrical wiring is in good shape. Never overload extension cords or outlets with too many devices.

I'd like to take the opportunity on behalf of your Council and Village Staff to wish you and your families the best the holiday season has to offer. Best wishes from us for a safe, happy and very Merry Christmas!

Trevor Lewington

Have a comment? Question? Idea? Suggestion?

I'd love to hear from you.

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