

SILGA FALL 2017 Newsletter UBCM Update



Revelstoke Resort Municipality

2017 - 2



SILGA YOUTH AT UBCM

SILGA was very pleased to sponsor three young ladies to represent SILGA at UBCM. Cecelia McLean (Ashcroft), Allie Landy (Salmon Arm) and Lexa Monaghan (Lumby) attended the convention. These young ladies participated in both the formal and informal sessions at UBCM and here are a couple of excerpts from their reports.

Allie wrote "Too often in my life I have been made to feel as if my thoughts and opinions don't matter, as if I am still just a child. At UBCM, I saw that my opinions were valuable and met people who genuinely wanted to have youth input and experiences presented to them."

Lexa commented "I learned how to be professional when at meetings, how to ask the right questions and when to just listen". This insight is something we can all strive for!

Cecelia found that "UBCM was a fascinating, eye-opening experience for me. The workshops demonstrated how many small communities face the same kinds of issues, and they can share their own struggles and solutions to help other communities get through or avoid similar problems. I had no idea that the meetings would be as personal as they were, so that exclusivity for Ashcroft to share its own issues and aspirations was a pleasant surprise. "

Thanks to everyone that made this experience such a positive one for them. We hope that their experiences will be passed on to other youth to increase the impact this week had. Please remember that SILGA has a mandate for one more year to bring youth to the 2018 UBCM Convention. Nominations will go out to the members by May 1st.

2018 SILGA CONVENTION Revelstoke, B.C.

Save the dates!
April 24 to 27,
2018

Key Note Speaker
Arthur Black
Canadian Humorist



2018 SILGA Convention Planning News

- Marijuana update pending the July 1st rollout
- CAO performance review
- PEP and fire/flood strategy after debriefs with local governments
- Technology boot camp
- Tours of Dam, Railway museum and sawmill
- Welcome reception on the mountain!

UBCM MINISTRY MEETINGS 2017

EDUCATION

Minister Fleming stated a review of the education funding formula is coming with rural/special education/inner city issues looked at very closely to hopefully increase the fairness throughout the province. SILGA asked for increased in-house support for online and distance learning to improve success rates. Minister Fleming also commented that there are a number of different methods to access on-line learning; these should be streamlined to simplify and improve outcomes for students. Library funding was also discussed as funding significantly impacts rural libraries as they are finding they can't afford to keep minimum services available. This is especially important as libraries are often the communication hub of a small community. SILGA requested the removal of the freeze on provincial funding and, at the very least, asked for funding increases to be commensurate with the change in CPI. The Education Minister said there will be a Rural Communities review as we are still using the framework from the previous government.

SOLICITOR GENERAL AND PUBLIC SAFETY



SILGA brought up two main issues with Minister Farnworth – the Provincial Emergency Program and rural policing.

SILGA wants funding programs established for preventative measures for both wildfire and floods including funding to increase barriers between forests and communities and funding for storm water management to better handle flash flooding.

The responsiveness and communication from PEP also needs to be improved while disasters are happening. Bob Turner, head of PEP, let us know that 10 SILGA communities have accessed the National Disaster Program Fund.

Minister Farnworth commented that his ministry will be doing an extensive debrief with all those involved to find out what worked and what needs improvement. He hopes to have better plans in place in the future to get away from reactive and focus on proactive measures. He wants to have risk assessments completed on an ongoing basis to determine challenges ahead of time.

A \$32 million Community Emergency Preparedness Fund has been established for the

following:

1. Flood Risk Assessment, Flood Mapping and Flood Mitigation Planning.
- **Grants up to \$150,000**
2. Emergency Social Services fund to build local capacity to provide emergency social services.
- **Grants up to \$25,000**
3. Emergency Operations Centres and training
- **Grants up to \$25,000**
4. Structural Flood Mitigation fund
- **Grants up to \$750,000**
5. Evacuation Route Planning

For more information contact Rebecca Bishop, UBCM Program Officer @ rbishop@ubcm.ca Policing, including getting more boots on the



ground, was also discussed. Minister Farnworth acknowledged that many policing issues often have a Lower Mainland focus and issues in other areas are often pushed aside. The ADM commented that there are numerous vacancies to be filled but there are just not enough police – they are looking at using peace officers to handle some of the more routine tasks.

ENVIRONMENT

SILGA continues to emphasize their concern to



keep our waterways protected from the quagga and zebra mussel invasion. After hearing from SILGA, a number of SILGA members and the Okanagan Basin Water Board, Minister Heyman asked the OBWB to prioritize their recommendations to deal with this issue. Their top recommendations are as follows:

1. Make legislative changes that require all watercraft entering B.C. to report to an inspection station prior to launching in any provincial waters.
2. Expand watercraft inspection and

decontamination options for all boaters, and increase signage at boat launches to raise awareness of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS).

3. Expand the number of hours, Conservation Officers (COs) and dogs at inspection stations.

HOUSING

SILGA met with ministry staff who stated they are working closely with BC Housing to combat homelessness. They understand that there are many mental health issues that also must be dealt with, but are currently focussing on housing and are committed to getting 2,000 modular homes available – these homes also have 24/7 monitoring and support.

And to help with other affordable housing needs, BC Housing is looking for local governments who have flat serviced lots available and are also willing to waive permit fees and DCC's. A community should have the local needs assessment done and be ready to proceed without controversy.

Recommendations from the Ministry:

- Keep knocking on BC Housing's door, get advice early on. Don't wait to see if a proposal comes out, get ahead.
- The BC Government is interested in cooperative housing. BC Housing has partnered with contractors & purchased a portion of a project for affordable housing use.
- The Ministry is willing to engage through the local government area associations.

Marg Spina, SILGA Past President, honoured at UBCM luncheon



On September 27th during the SILGA luncheon at UBCM our Past President Marg Spina was honoured with a Certificate of Life Membership. Acting Kamloops Mayor Arjun Singh accepted the certificate on her behalf. Unfortunately Marg has had to step away from local politics as she is currently battling cancer.