

SILGA

2019 UBCM Newsletter

RESILIENCY
+ CHANGE UBCM
2019

RESILIENCY
+ CHANGE UBCM
2019

Premier Attends SILGA Luncheon



Premier John Horgan joined the SILGA delegates at the annual SILGA luncheon. Towards the end of the lunch, the Premier addressed the delegation commenting that the province must share challenges, mutual opportunities and best practices with local governments.

The province cannot be divided between rural and urban but everyone must understand that this diversity is what makes BC strong. The forestry, mining and agricultural sectors, the economic heartbeat of rural areas, are key to the strength of the entire province.

2019 Community Excellence Awards

Thompson Nicola
Regional District

Winner in Excellence
in Service Delivery

*A New Road Travelled-Mobile
Library Service Provides Advanced
Voting Opportunities for Rural
Communities*



UBCM Elections

We are pleased to announce the election of Chad Eliason, Salmon Arm Councillor and former SILGA President as a Director at Large on the UBCM board. Councillor Eliason joins Arjun Singh, Kamloops Councillor who steps in as Past President after his year as UBCM President.

MINISTER MEETINGS

Agriculture

During the meeting with Minister Popham, SILGA asked for clarification regarding secondary and migrant worker housing on farms. Minister Popham stated the Ministry has provisions in the Act to accommodate family needs as they understand that additional residences may be required on the farm to support multi-generational farms.

Farms can also apply for worker housing. The farmer needs to approach their local government first who then passes the request on to the ALC. Only temporary buildings can be constructed as the ALC does not want agricultural land developed for the long term.

The Ministry is travelling around BC in October to “myth bust” and get feedback from the public on ways to support BC farmers. A public meeting will be held in Kelowna on October 10th; individuals can also go the website to provide feedback to the Ministry. Contact the ministry for more details.

<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/supportingfarmers/>

Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation

The purpose of the meeting was to let the Area Associations understand how the United Nations Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) will be rolled out in BC. Minister Fraser was proud to announce that BC is the first province in Canada to develop legislation, and together with UBCM and the First Nations Leadership Council, this legislation will be introduced in late fall.

BC has added two key parts to the UN declaration:

1. BC Government will have the ability to recognize as legal entities other First Nation bodies not included in the Indian Act.
2. BC Government has the ability to do shared decision making with Indian bands, especially around child/family services and environmental issues.

This legislation will allow more certainty to the land base owned by First Nations. The ministry is working on building an action plan to show how it will be unrolled. Stay posted!

Social Development and Poverty Reduction

The Okanagan Regional Library, thru SILGA, requested funding for a social worker, along with 2 part time peer navigators, to assist homeless individuals to stay connected and access information via the internet and standard reading materials. Minister Simpson informed SILGA that there are no long-term funding programs available, but funding is available that promotes employment job skills. There may also be some room in poverty grants (\$5 million to local governments, \$6 million for homeless) that this program may be able to access. Community Integration Specialists, 75 across BC, are on the streets in your community to connect with people who don't use the phone or internet.

Southern Interior Local Government Association

PO Box 27017 Cityview PO
Kamloops BC
V2E 0B2
250-851-6653

www.silga.ca

EMBC - Modernizing the Emergency Program Act

In October, a discussion paper will be presented, and engagement will follow with all levels of government, Indigenous Nations, industry and the public later this year, culminating with a new Act coming into force by spring 2021.

EMBC staff will be coming to Kamloops in November for a full day presentation to discuss the new provisions along with getting feedback from local governments. Feedback period open from release to the end of January.

Details on this full day session will be available shortly.



Forest, Lands, Natural Resources and Rural Development Staff Meeting

Ministry staff announced a \$69 million package to address forestry downturn and the communities who are facing curtailments or permanent closures, including \$40 million to go towards bridging mill workers to their retirement options at 55, \$12 million for training and mental health and \$2 million for job coordination and addressing issues around job transitions.

The Premier met with forestry company heads and made it clear that they need to do better and the government needs to do better to

keep BC forest industry healthy. SILGA raised the issue around Bill 22 and the concerns around tenure transfer. This issue impacts communities who work with Interfor and the mill at Adams Lake. The Ministry acknowledged that this is taking longer than expected and that they would like to see Canfor, Interfor and Simpcw come forward with a deal. It is very important that First Nations be a part of these discussions.

The government is looking for more value and less volume for in forestry in the future. Discussions were had around regionally based forestry co-managed by communities and First

Nations. Discussions centered around the value and importance of Community Forests.

Caribou and Back Country Access

The BC Government is working hard behind the scenes to protect areas and addressing their own protected areas. They acknowledge the need for herd plans to be tailored for each herd and their location and specific environments. With the Federal election, work on this has slowed, but partnership agreements between all levels of governments and indigenous groups continue to evolve.

Premier Horgan with SILGA Students



Four students represented SILGA at the 2019 UBCM Convention - Vivian McLean (Ashcroft), Candace Taron (Vernon), Zachary Naish and Emma Brennan (Salmon Arm). They were wonderful youth ambassadors for our region. They shadowed both their local councils as well as the SILGA board during minister meetings and session presentations. All the students expressed their appreciation for this unique opportunity that was extended to them.

STUDENT COMMENTS FROM THEIR REPORTS TO THE SILGA BOARD

Ms. McLean wrote *"the Premier spoke especially about the importance of working with and asking for help from those around us - whether or not they're in the Opposition - which I think is a very valuable and applicable ability to develop for everyday life."* She also stated *"I think a lot of youth from small towns feel a disconnect from the government, having the impression that our voices can't make a change and that our views lack representation in politics. However, I was so inspired to hear some of the speeches at UBCM prove that mindset wrong."*

Mr. Naish commented *"I can confidently state that my experience at UBCM has been an enlightening and motivating one that has shaped my perception of political discourse on a provincial level. It was only once I attended a reception at UBCM that I realized the true magic of the event: networking. Developing social - professional interactions between elected officials as well as between elected officials and other organizational representatives."*

Ms. Brennan wrote *"throughout the conference, I was impressed with how respectful people were when others had differing opinions. I had the impression, at UBCM, that the goals were to help the community, and the differing opinions were only a different way to get there. This was really nice to see considering the impression of politicians that is seen in the media where politicians seem to be out to put each other down and argue"*.