

Councillor's Report

January 29th, 2018

Julia Butler

The Rec Commission started off the new year with a meeting on January 11. Dean Engen and Brian Noble were re-elected as chair and vice-chair respectively. I'm happy to report that the warm water week at the pool over the holidays was a big success. Attendance was up significantly over last year and people are asking when we can do it again. We are investigating the possibility of raising the temperature on weekends but during the week, the temperature has to remain lower for aquafit and the swim team, as per health regulations. A sub committee has also been struck to re-evaluate operating hours in response to our needs assessment survey. In addition, the ability to register for programs online will soon be a reality, as staff are in the process of implementing new software.

To start off the new year I have been thinking of new directions and new projects to pursue. Two areas that I will be researching this year include, the planting of trees along Central Avenue and working with the student council at the high school to incorporate youth initiatives into our COTW meetings. Last years focus on drug addiction and homelessness has prompted me to focus on solutions through prevention. I think my time can be better invested on developing and empowering our teenagers and strengthening our families. I'd also like to thank Alan Petersen for giving me the opportunity to speak at the Rotary breakfast March 1. He has asked me to address the topic of how our community can do a better job of attracting young people to participate in community affairs, ideas around civic projects that would particularly benefit the youth and young families in our community, and what role a service club like Rotary could play in such projects. Glad to know we are thinking along the same lines!

With regards to a tree planting project, I have always felt, as I know many of you do, that Central Avenue is a gem in the middle of our town. I don't know how many people have commented to me over the years that they always remember the lovely tree lined, green boulevard going through our town. I'd like to extend those trees farther west towards the city limits. We had a good discussion about it at the Rec Commission (as their highway frontage would be part of the planting) and some grant ideas were brought forward by two members who had done similar projects in the past. The idea with the most merit seems to be "Tree Canada" <https://treecanada.ca/about-us/>. Perhaps there's even an opportunity to partner with the school district and get the school kids involved in the project.

Finally, I'd just like to recognise the fantastic efforts of the Grand Forks Search and Rescue team, as well as other rescue groups from neighbouring areas, who helped save the lives of four local residents this past weekend. What was a terrifying night for many local families, was rewarded with a happy ending on Sunday, after the joint search effort located the lost skiers, all in good condition. Job well done everyone!