

The Grand Forks Social Services Advisory Group

Now that the GFSS Advisory Group has been formed, I regret the haste with which Council instructed staff to 'enforce' City zoning bylaws on June 24th. I do not believe Council should have acted without consultation with the community and staff. Council's position brought the eviction of Whispers of Hope and the loss of a BC housing financial support. However, I am hopeful that the challenge of finding a location for a year-round or seasonal shelter will galvanize the community into supporting this obvious need. These people are addicted and desperate, and in some cases mentally ill. For their safety and that of the entire community, they need supervision and services. BC Housing is supplying the resources to do that. It is up to Council and the community to either designate a zone or approve a specific location. It makes no sense to deny these services a location. The Grand Forks Social Services Advisory Group meets tomorrow at 1 PM at the RDKB building to discuss a way forward on this social challenge. I hope they can eventually make clear recommendations to Council.

Another DMAF Plan

On September 8, 2018 the previous council set a course for the application of the DMAF grant. For many months after that we were caught in a limbo waiting to hear about the grant application. Now that we know what the province and the federal governments are going to pay for it is time to get down to the details and begin to steer these works to the benefit of all our residents.

Earlier today we heard from Graham Watt about the take up on the city's offer of in-kind help. It seems that many residents would rather take a 'pre flood buyout' than participate with any in-kind offering of the city's.

"Moved that the City of Grand Forks formally request the Provincial government grant additional funds for expropriated properties at a pre-flood value."

We also discussed the flexibility of the DMAF plan to specific projects, disbursement, and timelines. The prospect of a delayed project with increased costs is a significant risk to the city. It may be time to rethink the original DMAF plan so that Council also fulfills its duty to steward city lands for the future. We can live with the river without sacrificing one neighborhood for another. Nor do we need to throw away over 11 ha of developed and serviced city land at great expense. I know how hard any plan is going to be on the people of North Ruckle. They have lost not just lost money but homes. In some cases, homes that have been in the family for generations. For these reasons buy outs should be voluntary and residential space should be preserved as much as possible. I very humbly submit 'Another DMAF Plan' to start a conversation within the community about alternate ways forward.

"Moved that Council review the operating mandate of the DMAF project at the September 3, 2109 regular meeting."

Destination Grand Forks

I attended the first meeting of Destination Grand Forks on July 22 as the Council liaison. The group is moving ahead to form a registered association. An official mission statement was discussed as well as potential bylaws. Table officers were selected and there will be a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Sub-committees were also formed. I have joined a sub-committee to discuss the promotion of our trails with improved signage and trailheads and make recommendations for creating a truly bike-friendly town. As part of that committee I am adding trails and 'routes' to TrailForks. Please join that map site and log some of our new trails. If you are a biker, hiker or rider you can follow and add your favorite trails in our town. . You can also add photos and comments about our trail friendly town. If you have photos or gps kml files of our beautiful trails please go take a look and contribute to bringing our amazing collection of trails closer to visitors. This new association is next meeting on August 19th at 6:30 PM at the Station Pub.

Congratulations to CannaFest, the City and all the volunteers for another great show! Thank-you for rocking our town!