



Budget—2021

February has been a busy month, Ashcroft's independent auditors from Grant Thornton LLP have been at the Village office reviewing the 2020 financials as required by legislation. The audit is in the final stages of completion and will be presented to Council in late March or early April.

Recently CFO Bhalla has directed his attention towards the development of the 2021 budget. The Community Forum that enables public input to the budget process has been scheduled for Monday April 26th beginning at 4:30 pm and the Town Hall presentation of the 2021 Budget and 5 Year Financial Plan will be presented to the public on May 10th beginning at 4:30pm. Both meetings are scheduled as virtual meetings and are subject to change if the Public Health Orders are amended to allow public gatherings.

What is required of the Village during the budget process? First and foremost, municipalities can not operate with a deficit budget. The Community Charter requires the municipal budget to be balanced. The Village divides the budget into four (4) accounts: General Operations, Water Operations, Sewer Operations and Reserves. Fees collected for water and sewer services remain in the appropriate budget and must sustain the service. All other revenues remain in the General Operating fund, and the Asset Management Policy determines the allocation to Reserve accounts. By legislation, the CFO provides at minimum quarterly Budget and Variance reports to Council in open meetings and presents the budget annually to the community. CFO Bhalla provides these updates to Council for oversight and transparency purposes and in addition Council has access to the Village's finance portal where they are able to confidentially access the financial reports to provide the ongoing oversight.

Brian Bennewith Celebrates 35 Years!

Brian began his career with the Village of Ashcroft in 1986. During his interview he was asked "how he felt about working with his dad?" and in true Brian fashion he promptly responded "I've lived with dad for most of my life, I know him best, working with dad wont be a problem." Looking back, those years of working together are cherished memories.

Brian has worked in all aspects of the public works department and says he loves operating the equipment the most. Reminiscing about days gone by, he chuckles and tells a story of unplugging the biffy's at the arena during a Beer Belly Hockey Tournament "that was a smelly situation" or digging through 4.5 feet of frost to repair a water leak on Tingley St. Throughout his years at the Village Brian has enjoyed working with many good people, completing many great projects. Today, Brian's job is a little more paper and supervision based as he manages the many projects but every day, he strives to serve the community that he loves giving his very best every day. Thank you for 35 years of dedicated public service!



COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics

Interior Health has announced dates and locations for the upcoming Vaccination clinics. As of March 8, eligible seniors can call a dedicated Interior Health phone line and make an appointment to receive their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. The phone line, 1-877-740-7747, will be open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Pacific Standard Time, seven days per week.

March 8—Seniors born in or before **1931 (90 years +)** and **aboriginal peoples born in or before 1956 (65 years +)** may call to book their vaccine appointments.

March 15—Seniors born in or before **1936 (85 years +)**

March 22—Seniors born in or before **1941 (80 years +)**

Site: Ashcroft Hospital & Community Health Centre (700 Hwy 97C) Opening Date: March 15, 2021—2 days per week

The Village and IHA are in the planning stages of a Community Vaccination Centre—stay tuned for progress updates.

Village of Ashcroft

Mayor and Council:

Mayor:

Barbara Roden

Councillors:

Marilyn Anderson

Jonah Anstett

Nadine Davenport

Deb Tuohey

Commit 2 Conserve



Working Groups—A New Initiative

Council developed 7 priorities in the 2021-2022 Strategic Plan, each priority was assigned a Working Group (WG) to oversee and complete the projects. Some WG's will meet monthly, others quarterly or as needed. The WG's consist of 2-3 staff members, 2 Council members and other guests that are community experts in the field and are invited at the discretion of the WG.

For transparency and public accountability purposes, Council members may report on WG meeting discussions and progress updates, additionally recorded meeting notes will be included on Council Meeting Agendas following the WG meetings.

The intent of the WG's is to provide each strategy with a diverse steering committee to see the project through to completion. This approach is a little unorthodox and only a fraction of communities have established WG's; however, Council believes that applying a hands on approach will be beneficial, provide an opportunity for inclusion and enable community participation from time to time. We look forward to sharing updates and progress reports as the strategies are moved forward.

What has Council been up to?

- Council endorsed the grant funding application to NDI Community Spaces funding stream for a Community Garden in the downtown core;
- Council approved the Easter Egg Scavenger Hunt’s request to donate a 2021 Family Season Pool Pass to the Ashcroft Pool;
- Council approved the request for Street Art in the Round in collaboration with the E. Fry Society to allow the art work to be displayed on the fence at the back of E. Fry and municipal building;
- Council approved a letter of support be sent to Telus in support of their application for funding to expand the broadband service in the Village;
- Council endorsed the Village’s participation in the Red Cross funded TNRD Wildfire Invasive Plant Management Program for 2021;
- Council approved the Community Resource Society’s grant-in-aid funding request for \$500 for the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program (CVITP).

Events & Meetings

Council Meetings:
 Mar. 8—6:00 pm
 Livestream by HON
 Mar. 22—6:00 pm
 Livestream by HON

Voyent Alert—Mass Notification System



Some of you may have received the Information Sheet about Ashcroft’s new Voyent Alert System with your Utilities Bill. We wanted to share again with everyone, the new Voyent Alert notification service for the Village of Ashcroft. Voyent Alert is a mass notification service that will be used to communicate important information to our residents. Notifications will be sent for critical events like fire, flood and extreme weather as well as service disruptions etc.

We encourage you to register to receive these important alerts. Alerts can be received on the Voyent Alert app (GooglePlay and Apple App Store), by email, text message or phone call (Landline).

How to Register

Mobile App Users
 Download and install the Voyent Alert! app from the Apple App or Google Play stores.

Email, SMS or Voice Dial Users
 Register online to receive email, voice or text-based alerts at <https://register.voyent-alert.com>

Legacy Park—Upgrades

The Village recently received notification from the Province that our grant application to upgrade Legacy Park has been approved. The \$124,191 grant will be used to install sewer services to all sites, upgrade the electrical to 30 amp service at each site, develop 4 tenting sites, replace picnic tables, repair sani-dump station and re-configure the irrigation.

The park is gaining popularity and is often at capacity, ironically it was COVID-19 that brought to light the need for additional tenting sites and the installation of sewer connections. During the 2020 camping season only self contained units were able to camp at the park as the bathrooms remained closed. Even with the reduced travel last year due to the virus, the sites were full. If tent camping would have been permitted at the park last year, a fully serviced site would be utilized, as such, four tenting sites will be developed on the flat grassy area between the horseshoe pits and the lower grass section. We hope that the upgrades will meet the needs of campers staying the park and further that the added amenities will cause these visitors to stay longer enjoying all the wonderful things Ashcroft has to offer. These extended stays will be an added benefit to the business community as the tourists stay, shop and eat, local!

Other Village Happenings

- ◆ Joe Paulos retired from the Village in February after 20+ years with the Public Works department. Best of luck Joe, we hope you enjoy your well deserved retirement!
- ◆ Council met with MP Brad Vis to discuss various items including the HUB, Broadband connectivity and the Trails Plan development.
- ◆ The Village continues to work with land owners to move developments forward. Recently, the Province announced assistance for local governments to streamline and speed up the development processes. Village staff are looking into participating with this program.
- ◆ The recently adopted new Subdivision Development and Servicing Bylaw, a new development services guide is being drafted to guide developers and staff through the process ensuring timelines are met.
- ◆ The Village has purchased a “new to us” Bylaw Enforcement vehicle, next step will be to advertise the job posting and move forward with Bylaw development to provide the BNA inter-community service.
- ◆ Council met with TNRD Invasive Plant Management Program leaders to discuss noxious weed removal in the Ashcroft area.
- ◆ HVC Teck presented their plan to Council highlighting the application to extend operations to 2040
- ◆ Pool reopening plans are underway, staff is researching what safety protocols are required from WorkSafe BC