

POSSIBLE BORROWING REFERENDUM DISCUSSION, REVIEW OF PUBLIC INPUT OCCUPY ASC MEMBERS DURING 15th MEETING

CRESTON, B.C., June 28, 2018 – Discussion of a possible borrowing Referendum for the Town of Creston’s new Fire Hall, and of public input gathered at two Open Houses held June 24th and 25th at the Creston & District Community Complex, dominated the Advisory Select Committee’s (ASC) 15th meeting on June 27, 2018.

The ASC first viewed information outlining the potential Referendum process as it would apply to the Fire Hall. The procedure would begin with the Town of Creston developing a draft borrowing Referendum question and bylaw, which would then be sent to the Province for review. The provincially reviewed question and bylaw would then be presented to Town Council for three readings, after which time the bylaw would go back to the Province for final approval (a process that takes approximately six weeks). The Referendum would then be held within 80 days of the Province’s final approval.

If the proposed Referendum is held and it passes, Town Council would consider adoption of the borrowing bylaw, then establish a new Fire Hall Building Advisory Select Committee to investigate the design, tendering and construction of a new Fire Hall. At this point, project leaders would pursue grants and other cost savings for the new Fire Hall.

The ASC agreed that if the proposed Referendum did not pass, there would be no new Fire Hall in Creston’s foreseeable future. The current Fire Hall would remain at limited functional capacity, with certain workplace deficiencies remaining unaddressed and the consequences upon staffing and services unknown.

FireWise Consulting Ltd. consultant Ernie Polson pointed out to the ASC that the Town of Creston “does not currently have a functioning Fire Hall. Even if a Referendum question passes this fall, it will still be two years before the town has a new Fire Hall.”

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to discussion of public input from the ASC’s two recent Open Houses, with the Committee hearing that the majority of this input was positive. One of the ASC’s main takeaways was that the community wants the Fire Hall to be built at the best possible price; oversight of this priority will be the responsibility of the Building Advisory Select Committee, which would be convened following Town Council’s adoption of the borrowing bylaw.

Open House visitors also suggested further communication to support the ASC’s recommendations. Accordingly, the Committee is considering a number of public engagement opportunities through the summer to continue to gather public input and feedback, and to discuss its recommendations.

The ASC’s 15th meeting was held from 6:30 to 8:20 p.m. in Council Chambers at the Town of Creston’s Town Hall. The ASC will suspend its weekly meetings for the summer, although a meeting is tentatively booked for July 18, 2018, with plans to reconvene in September.

The ASC was formed to make recommendations to Council on solutions to address the deficiencies of the existing Fire Hall in order to meet the province’s legislative/regulatory requirements and industry standards. To view the latest ASC Meeting and Open House materials, click [here](#).

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