

Published July 20, 2013

LOCAL NEWS

Annual report designed as ‘communication tool’

Gibsons John Gleeson/Staff Writer

The Town of Gibsons released its annual report for 2012 this week, highlighting a year of milestones in a format that is intended to be more readable and accessible to the public than past reports.

“Our attempt here was to follow in the footsteps of the strategic plan ... and use the document as a communication tool,” chief administrative officer Mani Machado said at the July 16 regular council meeting.

In addition to the required financial statements and council remuneration disclosure, the 74-page document gives a detailed summary of the Town’s accomplishments during the past year in all departments and includes work plans for this year and next.

It also features fact boxes highlighting critical numbers ranging from employees’ years of service to the number of dog licences issued during the year (338).

Machado gave full credit for the “readable document” to corporate officer Selina Williams, with Mayor Wayne Rowe telling Williams he was “very impressed” with the final product.

Among the departmental highlights, the Town issued 47 building permits last year, with total construction valued at almost \$8.5 million. The total included 18 building permits for commercial, industrial or institutional uses, 10 new single-family dwellings, 14 single-family additions and alterations, one two-family dwelling, and two new multi-family dwellings and one alteration.

The Town also issued 458 business licences, representing more than \$94,000 in revenue.

ICBC driver services earned an all-time high of almost \$280,000 in gross commissions, \$21,500 in net profit, plus an additional \$6,900 in performance and customer experience awards, with 12,555 transactions.

On the council side, annual remuneration last year totalled just under \$90,000, with Mayor Wayne Rowe receiving \$30,403, followed by Coun. Dan Bouman at \$15,493, Coun. Lee Ann Johnson at \$14,921, Coun. Charlene SanJenko at \$14,846 and Coun. Gerry Tretick at \$14,222.

Total council expenses came to \$14,282, with Rowe claiming \$2,909, Bauman \$3,283, Johnson \$3,207, SanJenko \$3,165 and Tretick \$1,718.

As well, a total of \$8,922 went toward benefit plan payments.

Major projects last year included the opening of the \$2.3-million RCMP community policing office, upgrades to the Town's water distribution system, and repaving a failed section of Park Road.

As well, the Gibsons volunteer fire department (which marked its 75th anniversary in 2012) replaced its 30-year-old pumper truck with a custom chassis pumper. The acquisition allowed the department to maintain insurance certification, saving the community "hundreds of thousands of dollars every year" by keeping down insurance rates within the fire protection area, the report said.

Ground-breaking planning initiatives included the addition of the award-winning harbour area plan to Gibsons' official community plan and the adoption of the Gospel Rock neighbourhood plan, ending years of often-rancorous public debate.

Rowe put the annual report to use Tuesday night, holding it up and pointing to the fact-box recognizing 30 years of service for administrative assistant Lee Larsen, who had formally retired the previous Friday and was working her last council meeting.

Thanking her on behalf of council for her three decades of service, Rowe said Larsen "takes with her immense amounts of corporate knowledge, quite frankly. She knows where all the bodies are buried, even Jimmy Hoffa's."

The full report can be viewed at www.gibsons.ca.

© Copyright 2013, Coast Reporter

Story URL: <http://www.coastreporter.net/article/20130720/SECHELT0101/307209999/-1/SECHELT/annual-report-designed-as-communication-tool>