



January 2006
Volume 2, Issue 1
Published Quarterly

Comox News

The Town of Comox Community Newsletter

November 19th Election Results

The election results from November 19th were:

Mayor, Dr. Jim Brass

Councillor Ray Crossley

Councillor Patti Fletcher

Councillor Ken Grant

Councillor Paul Ives

Councillor John Marinus

Councillor Marcia Turner

Our School Dist. 71 Trustee is Karen Charlesworth

There were three referenda questions on the ballot:

Comox Library Borrowing, Knight Road+Point Holmes Boundary Extensions

Voters passed all three.

The Town will be working to implement all three referenda this year.

As a first step forward on boundary extensions, Council is establishing a transition committee that includes area residents, Town and Regional District staff to discuss key issues.

Inside:

- New Town Website
- Time to renew:
Dog Tags and Business Licences
- 2006 Assessments
- Public Notice of Construction Traffic
- 2006 Firefighter Youth Camp
- Construction Values 2002 to 2005
- Parkland Acquisition Update
- Pioneer Park
- Mayor's Inaugural Address
- 2005 In Review

December 5th Inaugural Meeting

Mayor and Council were sworn in on December 5th, by Justice of the Peace, Mr. Rolph Krayenhoff followed by the Inaugural meeting. Council made its 2006 appointments including the roster for Deputy Mayor (which rotates through all Councillors) our Regional District Director (Councillor Paul Ives) and to other organizations.

Mayor Brass will liaise with 19 Wing, HMCS Quadra, the RCMP, and the Comox Valley Emergency Program.

Councillor Crossley will sit on the Vancouver Island Regional Library Board, the Community Justice Society, and the Marina Enhancement Committee.

Councillor Fletcher will sit on the Comox Valley Sewer Commission, the Town's Advisory Planning Commission, the Filberg

Heritage Lodge & Park Association, and the Nautical Days Committee.

Councillor Grant will liaise with the Chamber of Commerce, the Business Improvement Area and Family Court & Youth Justice Committee.

Councillor Ives will sit on the Sewer and Water Commissions, the Economic Development Society and the Town's Marina Enhancement Committee.

Councillor Marinus will represent the Town on the Courtenay Golf Club Ltd. (which owns the Comox Golf course) and sit on the Comox Valley Sewer Commission.

Councillor Turner will sit on the Comox Archives and Museum Society, the Environmental Council, the Town's Advisory Design Panel and lead our preparations for the Town's 60th Anniversary.



New Town Website: *comox.ca*

Do you need information on or about the Town? If you have internet access then your best resource may be to visit our new website:

comox.ca

While information is still being loaded into it, you will already find it packed

with agendas, bylaws, minutes, news, events, maps and pictures about the Town. Whether you are a resident or a visitor this site will be useful to you.

The site is text-searchable (see the "Site Live Search" box in the top right corner of each page) allowing you

to quickly reach the key information you need.

This new site will be more interactive featuring regular web polls and dialogue pages on key issues.

Is there something we've missed? Just let us know and we can add it to the new site.

Did you know that not all websites need the www. prefix?

*The fastest way to reach our site is to just type **comox.ca** into your internet browser's address box.*

It's the start of a New Year so it's time to renew!

Dog Tags and business licences are due for renewal on January 1st.

If you have a dog, please come into Town Hall to renew your dog's licence.

The annual fee is \$10 for spade/neutered dogs and \$30 for dogs that are not. Replacing a lost tag is \$1. Remember: without a tag the SPCA may not be able to determine who owns it!

If you own a business and already have a business licence, then we will automatically renew it and send you the bill. If you don't receive the renewal by the end of January, please

contact us to find out why you haven't. If your business moves, you need to re-apply for a new licence (because we need to verify that your new location has appropriate zoning).

2006 Assessments Published

BC Assessment has published its 2006 Assessment Roll for Comox and mailed notices to owners. The average increase in market value was 18% for Comox residential property and 16% for business property. If your assessment has increased by more than that, then your 2006 general property taxes are likely to increase by more than the Town's scheduled 3.4% general tax increase.

If you need an explanation of why your property was assessed its value, you will have to contact BC Assessment – not the Town. But we can help you compare your property's value to neighbouring properties. That's because BC Assessment has provided a report showing Comox Assessments and Sales sorted by address. We have this on our counter in Town Hall and on our website.

If you haven't received your assessment notice, please contact BC Assessment and let them know: By Phone 338-6511 or Fax 338-8112 or email to: courtenay@bcassessment.ca

You can appeal your 2006 Assessment, but you have to do so in writing by January 31st. Read your assessment notice for the details on how to appeal.

Fast Facts:

General Taxable Values in Comox have climbed \$239 Million to \$1.26 Billion.

Residential properties make up over 94% of Comox's Taxable Assessment.

The median residential value increase (2005 to 2006) was \$36,600 or 20%.

The median residential property (all types) is valued at \$231,800 in 2006.

Public Notice of Construction Traffic

We have been notified that HMCS Quadra (on Goose Spit) has hired a contractor to place rock along the windward side of their base to deter erosion. The rock will be quarried near Campbell River, and brought by truck through

Comox during daytime hours (7:30 am to 5:30 pm) throughout the month of January. They estimate there will be 24 round trips through Comox daily.



The route they will take through Comox will be east along Guthrie Road to Pritchard Road, then south along Pritchard Road to Balmoral Avenue, and finally east along Balmoral Road and Hawkins Road to Goose Spit.

On return trips the trucks will travel the same route in reverse.

For additional information on the project, contact 19 Wing Comox Environmental Officer at 339-8187

2006 Firefighter Youth Camp

The Comox firefighters will be hosting another Youth Camp from March 11th to 15th. The camp will take place during the school spring break period. Thirty Comox Valley high school students will have the opportunity to spend their Spring Break at the Comox Fire Hall participating in a variety of firefighter training activities. The camp runs every second year and this will be the Fire Department's fourth camp.

Comox Fire Chief Gord Schreiner states: "This is a great opportunity for the students who attend. It requires a huge commitment by our outstanding group of firefighters. Their assistance makes this possible. We are also very fortunate to have great support from many local businesses and funding from our local Kiwanis Club. I am looking forward to once again working with some of the young people in our community."

Training during the camp will include: safety in the workplace, self-contained breathing apparatus, large ladders, ropes & knots, rappelling, confined space, auto extrication, first aid, live fires, fire extinguisher, fire prevention, and team work. All of the training is provided by firefighters.

The camp is open to both males and female, grades eleven and twelve students. Applications and selections are done by the Work Experience staff in the high schools. The camp is designed to make a huge impact on the students who attend. Call Fire Chief Schreiner at 339-2432 for more info.



Training at 2004 Firefighter Youth Camp

Growth in the Town

Noticed quite a bit of construction activity lately in Town? Over the past few years the Town has received an increased level of construction and building activity in all parts of Town.

Along with the Town's own projects such as down-

town Revitalization, Brooklyn Creek diversion, and the reconstruction of Pritchard Road, we witnessed the addition of Extra Foods in the Comox Centre mall, Aspen Grove, the commercial development adjacent to Quality Foods, Berwick House,

the congregate care facility on Comox Avenue, as well as Comox Quay 1 and Comox Quay 2, also on Comox Avenue, just to name a few. The estimated construction value of building permits

over the past four years is summarized in the table below. It shows the dramatic increase in annual construction values from 2002 to 2005:

2002	2003	2004	2005
\$5,600,000	\$19,193,000	\$24,904,000	\$36,690,000

Parkland Acquisition Update

Last fall we advertised our intention to borrow \$700,000 to acquire parkland. As we received no petitions against the proposal, Council has now adopted the borrowing bylaw.

Together with another \$700,000 in Development Cost Charges on hand at the start of 2005 we had \$1.4 Million at year-end that we could use to acquire parkland.

Council has identified a preferred property to acquire, but because it is waterfront, the funds available were not enough to purchase the property in 2005.

We have therefore begun to look for partners to share in the cost of this acquisition. We are hopeful it will be achieved in 2006. Watch for more news in the near future!

Pioneer Memorial Park

One of the most interesting parks in Comox is Pioneer Memorial Park. Located on Manor Drive (south of Comox Avenue just west of the Hospital), it is only 1 acre in size, but it remains an important part of our heritage.

This was the original site of the Comox cemetery for St. John the Baptist Catholic Church. It was given to the Town in 1980 to be maintained in perpetuity as a memorial cemetery. It was renovated (in co-operation with the Knights of Columbus) in 2002.

A cairn constructed from the original gravestones and a display showing the burial records from the church are featured in the park, along with lovely views out over the harbour. It is a special place of quiet contemplation that you are invited to share.



Town of Comox

1809 Beaufort Avenue
Comox, BC V9M 1R9

PHONE:
(250) 339-2202

FAX:
(250) 339-7110

GENERAL E-MAIL:
town@comox.ca

Staff Contacts

Richard Kanigan
Administrator

Al Fraser
Parks Superintendent

Don Jacquest
Director of Finance

Marvin Kamenz
Planner

Shelly Russwurm
Deputy Corporate Administrator

Gord Schreiner
Fire Chief

Glenn Westendorp
Public Works Superintendent

Council

Dr. Jim Brass
Mayor

Ray Crossley
Councillor

Patti Fletcher
Councillor

Ken Grant
Councillor

Paul Ives
Councillor

John Marinus
Councillor

Marcia Turner
Councillor

We're on the web at
comox.ca

Mayor's Inaugural Address

It is my pleasure to welcome everyone to this first meeting of our new Council. I believe that we have received a mandate from our citizens. That is, to work together as a team to ensure that at the end of our term, Comox will be a better community because we have served.

We have received direction from our citizens in the form of three favourable referenda. We must move forward on these while maintaining our

environmental and fiscal responsibilities to the citizens that have put their faith in us.

I would like to welcome back Councillors Ray Crossley, Patti Fletcher, Paul Ives and John Marinus. As a new Council we are very fortunate to have the experience of these individuals. I welcome Ken Grant and Marcia Turner who are joining our team.

December 5, 2005

I would also like to thank Don Davis and Dennis Strand for their contributions over the years to the citizens of Comox. They spent a great many hours serving, and Comox is a better Town because they served. I wish them success in all their future endeavours.

To our new Council, thank you for running, as I know that it is a tremendous commitment of both time and energy, and your dedication will help us move forward as a team, and as a community.

2005 In Review

This past year was another busy one for the Town. Among the projects that we completed included a joint skateboard park with the City of Courtenay, a new playing field added to the Highland fields funded by the Regional playing field initiative, a new marina pavillion and expanded viewing area (thanks to funding from Rotary, Comox Valley Community Foundation, and the Community Economic Adjustment Initiative), completion of the Knight Road water line and the Brooklyn Creek Stormwater Management system (both thanks to funding from the Canada / BC Infrastructure Program), and renovation of the public washroom in Kye Bay.

Every year we repave around \$200,000 in neighbourhood roads. In 2005 we repaved Beach Drive (below Beaton) and Nootka (Noel to Capilano). We also installed walkways on Comox Avenue (from Manor Drive to Rodello) and from Comox Avenue to Beaufort Avenue.

Not all of the changes were capital projects. Our RCMP staffing increased to 10.3 officers. We introduced blue-bag recycling in June, and began receiving compost on Saturdays (from March to October). We added a seasonal position to the Parks Department, and increased our funding to the Comox Recreation Commission.



New Pavillion and Totem in Marina Park

This newsletter is a result of Council's initiative to increase communication with residents. Our goal is to provide quarterly newsletters. If you have any comments or suggestions, or would like to see anything in particular detailed in upcoming editions, please contact Town Hall.