

September 11, 2020

Changes in the SLRD

At the end of January, our CAO Lynda Flynn resigned from her role so she could be closer to her parents in another area.

The Board started an executive search for the new CAO, appointed our Corporate Officer, Kristen Clark as the Interim CAO and promoted another staff member Graham Haywood to fill her position on an interim basis. This left the organization short one senior person but it would only be for a few months.

Then came COVID! The office in Pemberton closed to the public and staff were deployed to work from home. The Province enabled virtual meetings to be conducted and this of course had to be figured out and policies in support of this technology had to be developed.

The Provincial State of Emergency enabled us to hire some staff on a temporary basis to assist with issues created by the COVID restrictions. This situation was exacerbated in April by the wildfire in the Upper Squamish Valley which resulted in over 100 evacuations and, sadly, the loss of some buildings. Fast forward to last month and a lightning storm that ignited several fires throughout the SLRD, followed by heavy rains, and another evacuation order due to the potential of debris flow.

And while this was ongoing, the SLRD's day to day work continued and so did the search for a new CAO. In July our new CAO Melany Helmer was hired and we are very happy that she has joined us as of September 8. Melany most recently was working in Fort St. James and prior to that was the CAO of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako. Melany's arrival has allowed our 'interim' staff to return to their normal roles and has returned some sense of normality to the office – relatively speaking, of course, because most of us continue to work remotely.

COVID will continue to complicate the way that we do our jobs but be assured that we will do the very best that we can for you.

Please continue to follow us on Facebook, visit our website for regular updates, and take a look at the staff directory if you need to contact someone directly.



Tony Rainbow
Chair, Squamish-Lillooet Regional District