

Mr. Mayor, Fellow Councillors, Staff, Media and Town Citizens, it is a pleasure to report to you this evening on the activities of the Community Services Division of the 6 months from January to June of 2016. The Community Services Division has 10 physical locations under its purview and various other programs, services, and committees to administer.

The **Fort Frances Children's Complex** is still boasting strong enrollment at the main centre and all the school programs. There was an exciting expansion at the Centre this Spring in the way of an additional toddler space that can benefit an additional 10 children. The ballooning wait lists made the decision easy for Council in an attempt to assist more families in the community with child care.

The **Fort Frances Public Library** has had a prosperous start to 2016 with encouraging attendance to community programs with thousands of patrons passing through the gate counter. The library board is currently engaged in a CEO recruitment effort as our stalwart leader, Alicia, has tendered her resignation for a great opportunity for her family in Southern Ontario. We wish her all the best in her new position and thank her for her terrific tenure with the Fort Frances Public Library Technology Centre.

The following are the highlights from the **Museum** for the first half of 2016.

Visitors

Jan - May 2016: 1414 (compared to 1270 in 2015)

Exhibits

- Jan-April: Portrait Photography – photos used from our own collection.
- May-Aug: Rainy River Roots – area early settlement
- Sept-Dec: Fibre Arts Festival – our first juried exhibit (upstairs)
- Oct: Battle of Hong Kong
- Nov-Dec: Threadworks

Things to Note:

- Intern Bethany Waite (museum studies graduate hired thru NOHFC - \$31,500), nearing end of one-year term (July 26). She has inventoried our collection, ensured database is up-to-date including location of artifacts, re-organized storage areas and made recommendations for culling. Also updated Facebook weekly, curated current exhibit, helped train students and volunteers on the database and collections care procedures, and, along with summer intern, created social media plan. A huge help.
- Summer intern Julia Piskiewicz (no cost to us), student in final semester of Museum Studies, is undertaking our interactive programming project, so researching our permanent exhibit themes and designing content for tablets. Also working with Customs to transfer material on Hallett from their archives to Museum. Very smart, confident young woman.

- Three university students and one high school hired under four grants. They oversee school visits and summer programming, and working on Canada 150 research. Also continue work on our digitization projects (newspapers primarily) and add photos of our collection to the database.
- Volunteer Nell Laur has inventoried and labeled our map collection, and now digitizing our photo collection. Very competent and tech savvy.
- In addition to student grants, museum has applied for three others: MAP (\$4300) to fund traveling exhibit in 2017, NOHFC (\$31,500) for another intern position, and CMOG (\$21,000), our yearly government grant that depends on us meeting museum standards, due June 30th.
- Ran a successful native fashion show in February, and, with 'Friends' support, Saturday arts programming for children and adults through the winter. 'Friends' has also applied for funding for our interactive programming.
- Very busy six months. Will continue to get busier as we ramp up for Canada 150. This includes our partnership with Merv Ahrens and Jim Cumming on the Tener photograph project.

The **Sister Kennedy Centre**, under the leadership of a new manager Cindy Noble has experienced a successful Spring with several Seniors frequenting the Centre on a weekly basis for programming, coffee, and fitness classes. The SKC played host to the Summer Games with almost 100 participants! Many travelled from other senior centres outside our district were thrilled with the event. A great time was had by all! This Spring there was also an operational review of activities and management of the SKC that was approved by Council.

Along with a busy end to the hockey & skating season this Spring the **Memorial Sports Centre** patrons are embracing the upgraded booking and membership software, ActiveNet that makes it easy for customers to register for programs online. The Sports Centre is about to engage in the popular summer programs for young students with higher enrolment than ever this year. Fitness continues to be at the forefront for many people in Fort Frances with over 400 regular active participants in the fitness & pool area. The MSC is poised to begin an action-packed fall and winter schedule of activity on the rinks.

The **Sorting Gap Marina** has again had a busy start to the summer with a complement of new young staff members with many regulars stopping by for ice cream and refreshments. The Marina will also play host to the Fort Frances Canadian Bass Championship again this year and the Dragon Boat Festival rescheduled for later this summer.

Sunny Cove Camp is enjoying Town capital funding and Moffat grant funding for the 3rd year that will greatly improve the camp infrastructure for the enjoyment of our 6 weeks of youth camps and numerous other functions being hosted. In June, there was a community brainstorming session held at the Camp to solicit ideas from interested community members regarding the future potential of the camp for youth programming and economic development opportunities.

Other activities that the division has been involved with in the first half of the year are the July 1st celebrations, Multiuse Tennis Court Development, Sports Tourism, Age Friendly Community, and Community Transportation Services.

Overall the **Community Services Division** has experienced a demanding and fruitful first half to 2016 and would like to extend our sincere appreciation to all our patrons and residents who encourage us daily to deliver the best service possible to our community.