

Okanagan Falls Irrigation District

Annual General Meeting April 26, 2016

Report from the Chair

The mission of Okanagan Falls Irrigation District is to provide a reliable and safe supply of drinking water to our community, and to develop, maintain and improve our district services now and in the future.

The planning and work done by staff and trustees this past year has been directed toward that end.

The **major achievement** for the District this past year has been the completion of Well #6 on Maple Street. This project not only has added to the capacity of the system, but provides for a system with a back-up generator to allow operation of the well in the event of a major power failure. Thanks to previous trustees for their vision for this project and to current trustees for making the vision happen.

The Board's goals for 2015 included continuing work in the areas of: Improving Communication; Board Duties and Responsibilities; Security; Budget Planning; and System Projects. Hard work by the Board and Staff has resulted in a great deal of success in all these areas.

The Board's efforts to **Improve Communication** saw: the refinement of our new website in order to provide up-to-date information about the District to the public; the development of OFID News and Alerts in order to quickly broadcast news of emergencies through e-mails and texts; monthly articles in Skaha Matters; joining with Community Partners, an organization of community groups working toward the betterment of Okanagan Falls; and reaching out to other Improvement Districts in the Okanagan in order to develop a network of colleagues with whom to share information.

The Board's attention to **Board Duties and Responsibilities** resulted in: the development of a Trustee Handbook of Policies and Procedures as a guide for current and future Trustees; the beginning of an Operations and Procedures manual to ensure that there are written instructions for every part of the system; a Safety Audit to ensure a work safe environment for our employees; developing a good working relationship with Interior Health Officers to assist us with our knowledge and compliance with the latest regulations; and attendance at Water Conferences in order to become knowledgeable about water issues and practices.

The Board's work on **Security** has included: continued effort to keep drinking water safe from contamination through our Drinking Water Monitoring Plan, attention to our Groundwater Protection Plan and regular communication with water engineers and Interior Health Officials; and a review of all operations of the district to identify potential security risks that could threaten the safety and/or reliability of the water supply to the community and to preserve the assets and records of the district.

System Projects, in addition to the completion of Well #6, have included planning for the installation of a series of Isolation Valves to reduce areas of the system that are impacted by line breaks and to impact fewer properties in that event. This project is scheduled for completion by early summer.

A second major project the District has begun is to upgrade the flows of all hydrants in the system to a standard of 60 litres per second. Planning for this project has begun and is scheduled for a three year completion date.

Tasks related to **Budget Planning** include adopting a system for long term planning which includes a comprehensive inventory of every part of the system, a schedule for repair or replacement, and appropriate budgeting. The outcome will be a system of rates and charges which cover maintenance, operating costs, replacement, reserves and debt repayment.

A system of on-line bill payment, begun this past year, has proved popular as, to date, 30% of ratepayers have paid their water bill this way.

Although not related to water, another major accomplishment was the completion of the Band Shell in Centennial Park in partnership with Okanagan Falls Womens' Institute. This will become a major asset to the Community for years to come.

To support such an asset, the Irrigation District has also developed a plan for beautification to Centennial Park that involves painting buildings, planting trees and installing benches and picnic tables. This plan will be supported through grants and donations.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Okanagan Falls Irrigation District Administrator Judy Morris, Operator Ken Peters, Standby Operator Ed Smith and Trustees Bob Haddow, Ted Lynch, Randy Perrett and Marjorie Braconier for their dedication to serving the Community of Okanagan Falls through their work with the Irrigation District this past year.

Respectfully submitted

Bob Daly, Chair