

New Denver council, April 9: ReDi grant applications adjudicated

by Jan McMurray

New Denver received 33 ReDi grant applications with requests totalling \$57,779.50, but had only \$34,364 to disburse. A local selection committee (John Fyke, Colin Moss, Janice Gustafson, Debbie Dubinsky, Ray Schuff and Leanne Fulton) adjudicated the applications based on local impact, community need and overall benefit to the village. Community members were able to choose their top five projects online or in person at the Village office. A public meeting was held April 3, where applicants briefly presented their projects to the committee. Following the public meeting, the committee made its decisions.

Council accepted the committee's recommendations, and will send them on to the RDCK board for ratification at the May 16 RDCK board meeting. Results are below. Funding for these grants comes from Columbia Basin Trust, and the program is administered by the RDCK.

Bee Awareness Society (Bee Awareness Education Program): \$1,000; **Diverse Family Roots Society:** \$500; **Friends of the Orchard Society (Orchard Heritage Interpretation):** \$500; **Goat Mountain Kids Society (sunshade and program supplies):** \$4,000; **Haleyon Assisted Living Society (Dr Brouse Lodge Gardens):** \$2,000; **Harvest Share:**

\$2,900; **Healthy Community Society of the North Slocan Valley:** \$3,000; **Nakusp Ski Club (Summit Lake Night Skiing Improvement):** \$1,000; **New Denver and Area Youth Centre Society:** \$3,200; **New Denver Hospice Society:** \$700; **North Slocan Trails Society (Butter Me Up Trailhead Connectors and Trail Completion):** \$2,000; **PALS Animal Rescue Program:** \$1,500; **Sandon Historical Society (Signage, brochures, improvements):** \$600; **Silvery Slocan Historical Society (Artifact Signage Project):** \$692; **Slocan Lake Arts Council (Sunset Concert Series at Centennial Park):** \$2,000; **Slocan Lake Golf Club (Power Shed):** \$1,500; **Slocan Solutions (electric fencing/fruit tree replacement cost-share):** \$1,092; **Slocan Solutions (reading centre):** \$2,600; **Slocan Solutions (Valhalla Community Choir):** \$1,000; **Summit Lake Racers:** \$500; **Hidden Garden Gallery:** \$1,080; **North Valley Mountain Film Festival:** \$1,000.

FireSmart initiatives

FireSmart initiatives in New Denver and Slocan, delivered by SIFCo (Slocan Valley Community Forest), will continue if a grant application to the provincial Community Investment Resiliency Program is successful. In the past, Silverton has also been a partner in this project, but there was no

response from Silverton for this round of funding. New Denver will be the lead applicant, and will form a Wildfire Resiliency Committee. The terms of reference for the committee will be reviewed at a Committee of the Whole meeting.

The program would include free home assessments, rebates for mitigation work recommended in the home assessments, support for the Neighbourhood Recognition Program, and educational outreach. **Wildfire Resiliency Plan**

An application for provincial funding will be submitted for an update to the Community Wildfire Protection Plan. The most recent plan was prepared in 2019 and included New Denver, Silverton and Area H North. The RDCK has found funding for Area H, and has offered to coordinate the project to update the regional plan. New Denver will apply for funds for the New Denver portion of the plan.

Recycling depot agreement

The agreement with the RDCK for the operation of the recycling depot in New Denver was renewed for the period June 2020 to June 2025. The delay in finalizing the agreement was due to staff changes at the Village and the RDCK, and a change in the location of the depot, a staff report explains.

Councillor Hammond was happy to hear the agreement expires

in 2025. She is hesitant to sign a long-term agreement because the Sustainability Committee is looking into centralized garbage collection, and it is possible that this could include recycling. She said the committee has talked to the Town of Banff, where they bought several bear-proof containers and scattered them around town. Banff's experience is that the bins need frequent repair or replacement, and people abuse them. They recommended Whistler's model, which involves a centralized, staffed location for collection of garbage, recycling and compost. Hammond indicated that the committee was still gathering information and it would be a big discussion for council sometime in the future, but she didn't want to be locked in to a five-year agreement with the RDCK for the recycling depot.

Hammond also said she "didn't love" the location of the recycling, right across from the Osprey Residence. Mayor Casley said if a move was being considered for the recycling depot, the RDCK would want to move it to the Rosebery Transfer Station, as the RDCK owns the transfer station property and the facility is staffed. Councillor Moss said residents would probably not be happy about having to take recycling to Rosebery.

Grants-in-aid

Council approved requests for

grants-in-aid from the Goat Mountain Kids Society for use of Knox Hall at no charge for a fundraiser, and the May Days Committee for use of the PA system and Centennial Park for the May Days Celebration May 17-19. The Village will also provide \$100 for the Citizen of the Year Award, close 6th Avenue on Sunday for the Soapbox Derby, and permit the use of Village streets for the parade Sunday evening.

The Village's \$3,500 budget for grants in aid has now been overspent by \$480. No more applications will be accepted this year.

New Denver Library

Library committee members Colin Moss and Judi Gardiner will make a presentation to the Nakusp Library board of directors. Moss explained that a service agreement with the Nakusp Library would have to be voted on via referendum in the next local government election in fall 2026 – but before then, perhaps there are things the two libraries can do together. Moss and Gardiner would like to discuss this with the Nakusp board.

The New Denver Library is working on a survey, and Village staff will assist.

Accessibility Committee

The Accessibility Advisory Committee is planning a public survey on accessibility priorities in New Denver. Staff will assist the committee with the project. Committee member Kevin Murphy has resigned due to failing health. The Village will advertise to fill this vacancy, as well as the still-vacant seat that is reserved for an Indigenous person.

Spark in the Dark

The hope is that the Spark in the Dark Festival will continue under the Slocan Lake Arts Council, Councillor Moss reported. The final Spark in the Dark board meeting was held April 12.

Fitness Centre

The New Denver Community Fitness Centre will be getting a new treadmill, reported Councillor Fyke. Rec 6 spring grant applications are due April 26, and the commission will make decisions May 2.

RDCK budget

Councillor Fyke noted that the RDCK tax increase for New Denver was 4.6%, under the average increase of 5.8% across the RDCK. Councillor Moss noted that New Denver's assessment value was the third highest in the West Kootenay this year, and that Slocan was still in first place.

Human-powered adventurer comes through Kootenays

by Jan McMurray

A young man from Seattle travelling on his own steam with a baby stroller to carry his gear came through New Denver the other day.

Olly Cohen has run and backcountry skied from Seattle

and has been to Whistler, over the Duffey to Kamloops, Mount Robson, Bird Lake, Jasper, Lake Louise, Fairmont Hot Springs, Kimberley, over Grey Pass to Grey Creek, Balfour, Kaslo, and New Denver. He was heading down the Slocan Valley on April

11 on his way back to Seattle. He left Seattle January 1.

"I was a software engineer at Amazon and got fired in November. So instead of looking for a new job, I designed my perfect adventure combining all the things I love doing – so I've been running, backcountry skiing and eating a lot of chocolate," he said.

The three tenets of the adventure are that it be a continuous, improvised one-way meandering trip; that it be human-powered; and that it be fun.

"I run, stop and ski," he said. "Once – only once – I put the baby jogger on a sled and towed it over a mountain pass while on skis."

Cohen got the idea to use a baby stroller when he worked as a backpacking instructor in Alaska. His manager's husband had run across Alaska with a baby stroller. "So I knew it was possible, but I had never heard of anyone doing it with skis," he said.

He purchased the baby stroller on Craig's List for \$100 from a grandfather whose grandchildren didn't need it anymore. "Glen has become a good friend," he added.

Every now and then, Cohen has been able to stop to have a warm shower by checking in at warmshowers.org, a network of cyclists who host each other when on tour. That's how he found Daniel Hellyer and Helen Davis



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