

Welcome to Your Kamloops!

Helping Kamloopians become better citizens...

Council Meeting March 27th - Recap

After some approving of minutes and adding to the agenda, this meeting really started with a reconsideration request by Mike Rink after the initial denial of his rezoning request for his proposed Mission Hill development.

As someone who voted on the prevailing side in the initial vote, I could move for the matter to be reconsidered. Also, the Mayor could have also brought the proposal back for a second vote, under powers delegated to Mayors by law. I have a strong belief in the democratic process, and I felt that the proposal should have the benefit of the full council, especially since the first vote was split 4-4. Peter Milobar was not present at the initial vote, due to his TNRD responsibilities.

So I moved and voted for reconsideration, but I still stated why I still could not support the development, and still voted against it. Peter Milobar voted for it, and no one else changed their vote - so the proposal was in the end approved.

At this point, the Mayor had to leave for a plane, and as deputy mayor for March 2007, I muttered "God Help Us" and assumed the Mayor's chair for the rest of the meeting.

There were 3 separate public inquiries today. This section of the agenda allows anyone to address Council unannounced by simply approaching the podium. First, a lady asked about when a rezoning hearing might occur on an illegal 12 plex that was converted from a 4 plex on Thompson Drive. Second, Garnet Lineker from the Brock Estates mobile home park asked about the progress of the study looking into a possible dangerous goods route on Ord Road. And third, Ms Debbie Lazar asked us to impose an overall ban on pesticide use in Kamloops. Ms Lazar attributes pesticides as causing the death of her husband.

We approved public hearings for proposals for splitting a lot on Bank Rd, for providing more short term off street parking on Beach Ave for the Kamloops Alliance Church, and for a mixed commercial / residential development on Copperhead Drive.

Happily, we will finally have a Holiday Inn on the North Shore of Kamloops. We approved the development permit, and construction should begin very soon.

We approved the purchase of 23000 wheeled recycling containers and 12 new trucks to replace our existing garbage trucks - this all for the new recycling program, which is now scheduled to begin in December 2007. We held off on setting any fees for the program, until we get word on the Federal grant money we have applied to help with the costs.

We received 2006 reports from the public works and utilities department and the community and corporate affairs department.

A motion to donate a surplus city vehicle to the SPCA passed. And we accepted recommendations to appoint members to various city hall committees.

Council Peter Milobar announced the umbrella name for the complex consisting of the new stadium, fieldhouse, and the Canada Games Pool - it will be called the "Tournament Capital Centre".(pdf file)

In the delegations section of the agenda, Paddy Harrington and Kirsten McDougall updated us on happenings with the Kamloops Foundation. Marg Spina then gave us an overview of the food share program, coordinated by the Kamloops Food Bank and Food Action Centre.

On behalf of the Canadian Cancer Society, we proclaimed Daffodil Day and Daffodil month in Kamloops.

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My 2006 Travel Expenses - OK or too much?

I spent \$4612.03 of taxpayer money attending conferences in 2006. I had the second highest expenses on Council. I really tried to take in as much relevant education as possible, and I believe it has made me a better representative and decision maker.

But, what is much more important is what you think.

This week our expenses for 2006 were made public and a mention was made of my second highest travel expense. But, in the end, I see getting good education for myself as good value for my constituents. And, I would not be surprised if I get close to the \$5000 limit again in 2007.

I wonder, though, if people see my spending on these conferences as just a boondoggle, or if they also see value in me educating myself on issues that seem to be very important and networking with people who can help tackle these issues in Kamloops.

Here is a adobe acrobat pdf file

[Download my 2006 travelexpenses.pdf](#)

with my detailed expenses and the conferences I attended in 2006. I would be really interested in your thoughts. Am I doing the right thing trying to maximize educational opportunities or is it too much?

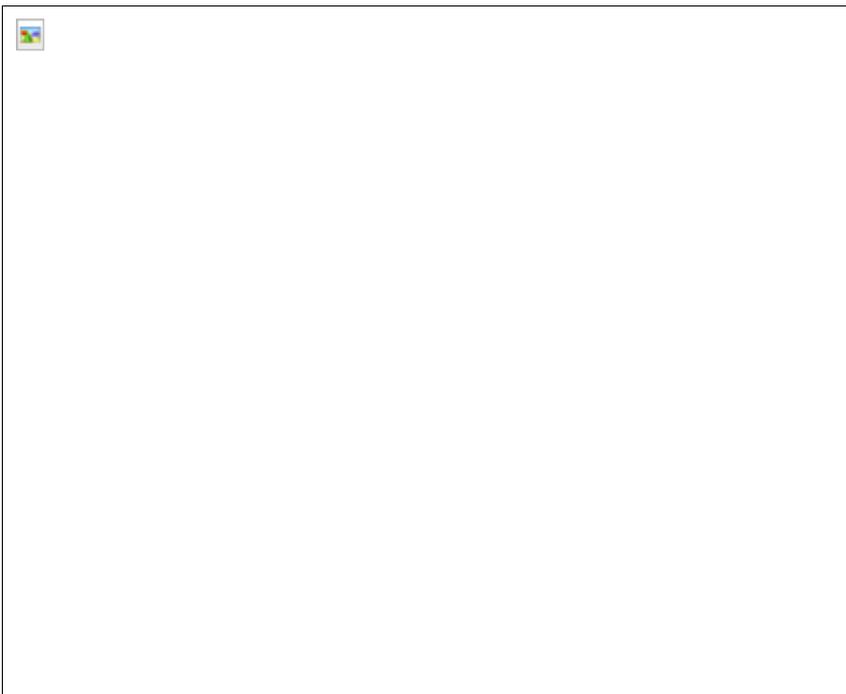
Am I spending your money wisely?

Posted on March 17, 2007 at 10:26 PM in [Interesting Ideas](#), [The City Budget](#), [The Media](#) | [Permalink](#) |

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Video blog: Be careful when criticizing non elected people willing to step up...



Posted on March 17, 2007 at 10:01 PM in [Overarching Issues](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) | [TrackBack \(0\)](#)

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Sign a Petition encouraging a Poli Sci Major at TRU

Received this email from Adam Miron, from the new TRU political science club. A TRU faculty member told me that they are also working towards this. I signed petition and ask you to consider doing the same:

We have just recently created a PoliSci club, and one of the things we are really pushing for is a PoliSci Major here at TRU.

A Political Science Major at Thompson Rivers University would increase local, provincial, federal political awareness and participation, aid in stopping voter apathy, and help create global citizenship.

We have created an online petition to gain public support for this cause. Please take 30 seconds, go to:

<http://www.petitiononline.com/TRUPSC/petition.html>

and sign up.

The site is 100% legitimate and will not spam you.

Posted on March 04, 2007 at 02:48 PM in [Interesting Ideas](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(0\)](#) | [TrackBack \(0\)](#)

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A Difficult Vote on the Mission Hill Development...

A marathon 3+ hour public hearing this past Tuesday. One of the 2 major items was this [higher density development](#) I blogged about a few weeks ago. [Mission Hill](#) is forecast to be 220 units, nestled in the elbow and arms of the summit connector.

I entered the public hearing very open to voting for the development. A lot of neighboring residents spoke - about issues like views, parking, and traffic. The first two issues seemed manageable to me. But, my mind kept coming back to the traffic issues. Around 150 extra cars on roads I consider older and substandard. Only one full entrance /exit from the complex. Now, city staff have done reputable traffic studies that show minimal impact, but the subjective part of these studies is different tolerance levels.

Some people might feel that I betrayed enviro friendly principles. Yes, I agree we need more density, but we should be giving that density a better chance for success by zoning that density in flatter and "closer to core" areas, where people can walk to amenities, and have superior pedestrian, cycle, and (yes) car connections to other areas of town.

I am starting to see Kamloops as a collection of town "centres" within major neighborhoods- downtown, Sahali / TRU, Aberdeen, Valleyview, North Kamloops, Brocklehurst, Westsyde, Raleigh. Within these, there are defined shopping / service hubs around which we should be looking for more density.

At the end of the public hearing, I was sufficiently concerned about the connections, especially the roads because this is not a pedestrian or cycling friendly proposal, to the development that I voted against.

This, however, is not the end of this matter. I am pretty confident we will see it come to another vote, as Peter Milobar could not attend the initial meeting and the initial vote was a 4 -4 split.

Posted on March 03, 2007 at 08:45 PM in [Planning](#) | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(1\)](#) | [TrackBack \(0\)](#)

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Two Great Gatherings on the City Budget...

Last Monday was a good day for a local democracy in Kamloops.

About 15 people came to Cowboy Coffee for a pre city budget meeting get together that I organized. I wasn't quite sure how this would turn out, I had sent emails to about 280 friends and also had emailed the vast majority of people who had contacted me through my Council email address since I was elected. I had some great interactions, even with folks who could not make the meetings.

The Cowboy coffee meeting turned out to be a great opportunity to talk about budget related issues in a more relaxed and informal manner. We gathered around the comfy couches at the back, I passed around some of the budget documents, and we had a pretty good discussion it seemed to me. Skylark, commenting on the post below, also had good impressions. Thanks Skylark!

There were about 50 people at the official city budget meeting later that evening. I was happy to see more people I had invited in the audience. People were pretty respectful, and there was a lot of important questions asked.

An old "saw" is that the public budget meeting is a bit of a waste of time. The city advertises the meeting, and only people who "want to throw rocks" show up. It does take work and creativity to get the diverse attendance of these meeting up. But, I think it is worth it. Council gets a better broad sense of community interest and concern. The community at large has a great opportunity to influence the process. City managers also get a handle on community concerns and ideas, and their time is well used at a well attended meeting.

Lets try for 100 next year!

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