

## **Mayor's Report 11\_17\_2022**

### **Sales tax increase to 7%**

Let's talk about sales tax. First of all, thank you to Dan Henry for bringing this resolution forward. The proposal would raise municipal sales tax to 7% from 5% during the tourist season and the rest of the year would be a sales tax holiday. When considering this idea, it's important to consider a few things.

First, many people in the community want the MOS to retain management and control over the Dahl Memorial Clinic. The clinic is funded by sales tax and it's currently costing taxpayers \$1,400 a day for an interim administrator. It's highly likely that the cost to effectively staff the clinic is going to rise exponentially in the coming years, plus we are on the hook for maintaining the building.

The Skagway School is also predominantly funded through sales tax. The school is asking the MOS for an increase of 300% of its supplemental budget (what the MOS funds above the cap), which means that, if the budget is approved, we are spending \$2,133,158 to fund the school to the cap, and an additional \$856,195 for the supplemental budget. That totals \$2,989,353.

I hear many residents who say they would like to expand the rec center, build a pool, etc.

Either we have to raise taxes or we have to be more prudent in how sales tax revenues are spent. I'm curious to hear more from the public because it's a big decision. But, in my opinion, the bottom line is that if we want to run a clinic and fund the school well above the cap, we have to approve this tax increase.

### **Recording public meetings**

I support this resolution. Numerous residents have asked me how to find recordings of public meetings, especially clinic meetings and Ports & Harbors meetings, so it's time we implemented a policy to ensure they're available to folks who don't have time to attend meetings in person.

### **Harassment Policy**

I asked Assembly Members to review the harassment policy and do the online training. Obviously, I can't enforce this as it's not official Municipal policy but since most everyone hasn't taken the training, I intend to speak with the Attorney about making it mandatory. Assembly Members spend a lot of time in City Hall and should be held to the same standard as staff to ensure a healthy workplace.

### **Staying healthy**

I heard that 74 children were unable to attend class on Monday and just about everyone I know is sick with a cold, flu, or something else. I encourage everyone to remember the health habits we learned during the pandemic. Wash your hands, don't touch your face, and if you feel sick, stay home. Not everyone has a strong immune system, which could make a cold something far worse.

- Andrew Cremata