

Two options under review for Rogers tower

GIBSONS BRIEFS
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A public information meeting will be held on Wednesday, Nov. 20, to discuss the controversial Rogers Communications tower replacement proposed for the Gibsons fire hall at 790 North Road.

Gibsons council called for the meeting last May in the face of public concerns over potential health impacts from the tower, which Rogers said would improve emergency 9-1-1 service and Gibsons fire department radio dispatch service, as well as the company's commercial network.

Two options are under review for the replacement, according to a notice of the meeting issued by the Town.

"Discussion will focus on the need for replacement of the existing structure, two different options for replacement, the financial implications of each option, services the new tower could provide, visual impacts, health considerations, location and site design," the notice said.

The meeting, which runs from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Gibsons Area Community Centre, will include a facilitator "to support information exchange and thoughtful discussion."

Hometown hero

Mayor Wayne Rowe paid tribute to hometown hero and Boston Red Sox pitcher Ryan Dempster's achievement at the close of council's Nov. 5 meeting.

"I want to extend my congratulations, and the Town's, to Ryan Dempster and his family," Rowe said.

The Red Sox won the World Series on Oct. 30 after beating the St. Louis Cardinals in game six.

Winning the World Series, Rowe said, was "a great example, a great inspiration for members of our community, so I really want to congratulate them on that success."

Best stout in B.C.

Less than two months after it opened, Persephone Brewing Company won first place for best stout in the province at the Oct. 19 BC Beer Awards, beating out 14 other entries.

Speaking at Tuesday's council meeting, Persephone co-owner Brian Smith said full credit goes to brewmaster Anders McKinnon "for that beer and all our beer."

Rowe invited Smith and McKinnon to the meeting "to toot their horn," Rowe said, and the full gallery responded with sustained applause.

The self-described beer farm, located at the intersection of Stewart and North roads, opened on Aug. 22 and drew 500 people on opening day.

Leadership lacking

Council adopted an economic development strategy and action framework at Tuesday's meeting, but Coun. Gerry Tretick said there was an important piece missing from the document — leadership.

"If something's going to happen, somebody has to take the lead, and that would be the economic development committee," Tretick said.

Past successes, he said, have involved an organization identifying crucial projects and bringing together a team to initiate action.

Greg Russell, chair of the select committee that developed the framework, said he took Tretick's comments "very seriously," but when the committee was formed, taking a lead role in projects was not part of its mandate.

"I didn't understand that we were expected to take the lead," Russell said at the meeting. "If council wishes us to take a leadership role, certainly the committee could discuss that."

Council agreed to adopt the framework as is, but allow for further discussion.

The framework lists five overarching economic development strategies:

- Facilitate the development, updating and distribution of informational resources to support economic development and inform decision-making.
- Coordinate, sponsor and support events to initiate and strengthen economic initiatives.
- Communicate the strengths, successes and opportunities in the Gibsons economy.
- Advocate to address weaknesses in the Gibsons economy through policy initiatives and with responsible third parties.
- Monitor economic development and evaluate initiatives undertaken.

Coun. Charlene San-Jenko, a select committee member, said she was grateful to have the framework in place, calling it "a great document moving forward into next year."