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Time to incorporate?

Colin Dacre - Sep 10, 2019 / 5:00 am



Photo: Off Track Travel

Is it time for Okanagan Falls to incorporate and elect its own mayor and council?

That's one idea to be explored later this month at the Union of B.C. Municipalities Convention in Vancouver.

The Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen is headed to the event with a long list of proposed meetings with provincial ministers.

The incorporation of OK Falls, which had a population of just over 2,100 in 2016, will be discussed with Minister of Municipal Affairs Selina Robinson, as will be funding options for housing in the community. Area "D" OK Falls director Ron Obirek wasn't reachable Monday for comment on the issues.

Other proposed meetings approved by the board in July include raising the challenges around the endangered short-rayed alkali [aster on Christie Memorial Beach](#) with Minister of FLNRO Doug Donaldson. Forestry around Apex, the [Chain Lake Dam](#) and the Okanagan Basin Water Board's milfoil [rototilling program](#) are also on the agenda with Donaldson.

Minister of Environment George Heyman will hear from RDOS staff on single-use plastics and the proposed national park, while Health Minister Adrian Dix will be lobbied on doctor recruitment and rural medicine.

The RDOS will try to secure meetings with Minister of Transportation Claire Trevena to request improvements to Highway 97 between Penticton and Summerland and at its junction with Highway 3A. Cycling safety improvements will also be suggested.

As for formal resolutions, the RDOS is bringing forward resolutions asking the province to improve funding for rural libraries and volunteer fire departments, in addition to asking the province to start considering disaster "mitigation" a part of its mandate.

The UBCM convention runs Sept. 23-27 in Vancouver. The event provides local governments with their one chance a year to get face-to-face meetings with many ministers.

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