

President / Chairman's Report - AGM - October 20, 2016

Welcome to the 60th Annual General Meeting of the Millican Ogden Community Association. As I explained last year, actually the organization was originally named the Millican Heights Community Association and it was formed comprising of a merger of the Millican Rate payers Association and the Athletic Association, who then invited the Ladies Auxiliary to also join. Apparently the Ladies Auxiliary had the most money [\$ 79.00]. The Millican heights Community Association was officially formed in 1956 and Harry Huish became the very first president. They saw the very first joint-use site in Calgary in which a school as well as a community centre would utilize the same land and that land referred to, is this city block that this building now sits on, together with the two schools, the outdoor pool, and the arena.

This past 12 month period has been an extremely exciting and productive year. Certainly the highlight has been the celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the Millican Ogden Community Association. This Anniversary Celebration was held together with the Summer Carnival and the opening of the pool, and coincided with the City's Neighbour Day promotions. It was a great day with huge credit to a few Directors, all of our staff, and a full team of volunteers.

By the way, A plaque now exists in the MOCA office that lists all Executive, and other Directors whose names were are aware of, dating back to 1956. It became evident that current Vice-President, Ray Jasper, is the longest servicing Director in MOCA's history.

Many of you will remember the Ogden Whistle which is a book describing the history of the community from 1875 to 1975. It was written by Walter Boote who owned Ogden Service Station and that business still carries on under different ownership, and he went on to become a City Alderman. Many small towns will create a history book to outline the early days of the district and the people that built it, but to my knowledge the Ogden Whistle is the only history book that is written about a district within the City of Calgary, and might be the only history book written about a district with a major city anywhere. Anyway, as part of our Anniversary Celebrations, the Board determined that there was still some interest in the book and so with the financial help of C P Rail, we proceeded with a reprint and these books are now available at a small cost of \$ 35.00. It does only describe the period up to 1975 but it does a great job of describing the area as it developed over the early years and the relationship with C P Rail.

As you have heard me say many times "when you surround yourself with good people - good things happen". Well we have had many good things happen and much of that is because of the quality of the individuals that we now have in our management staff, and in fact all staff, the volunteers that help out with the many aspects of our operations, and

of course the Board. We all bring certain strengths, and skills, to the table, and collectively, it has been working. You will hear in a few minutes of MOCA's financial position but we are in great shape, again due to improved rentals, and attention to operational efficiencies that have had the effect of reducing costs.

One concern we do have is very similar to the concern we all have, and that is how MOCA's utility costs will be affected by the upcoming carbon tax proposed by the Provincial Government. Our entire organization will be affected to some degree, but our biggest concern obviously is the arena. Over the past year we have spent several hundred thousand dollars to upgrade the ice plant, a new condenser, new LED lighting, and improved heating and plumbing equipment, all done to improve efficiencies in the operation of the facility. Our operating costs have come down considerably, but still, we anticipate some added costs that we currently do not have because of the expected carbon tax, and it is very difficult to guess what that added cost to the organization might be. We continue to look at how we might operate more efficiently without compromising the quality of our ice and our customer experience.

We did get a little lucky this past year with the generous donation from the Ogden Legion Branch 154. It is a bit of story that I won't go into today, but essentially when the new Legion Board found that it was just too difficult to become re-established, they found themselves in a unique position of having a substantial amount of former lottery proceeds that had to be returned to the community at large. Luckily MOCA was the recipient of a total of \$ 642,000. We looked at a few projects but at the end of the day we chose two

- The funds received from our primary funders of the Resource Centre can only be directed to operations of the various programs that they support – not to capital improvements. Therefore, over the many years that the Resource Centre has been operating, the building, and specifically the interior, has deteriorated considerably and required many improvements. Our staff were able to get some donated help but the Resource Centre did get new paint throughout, new flooring throughout, new computer equipment, and air-conditioning. A new look that all seem to appreciate.
- We have recognized for years that this building, the Community Hall, is not getting any younger – it is approaching 60 years of age and it is in need of some attention, or it will be lost. Just doing the lifecycle improvements to the heating, plumbing and electrical doesn't really give the building new life, nor does just improving the access to the lower level which was how this conversation started. So the decision was made to use the remaining Legion funds as seed money for a hall expansion project to modernize the building and create a facility that will serve our community for years to come. The Board is continuing to make

progress on this and is currently searching for additional funds to support this project. More specific information and details will be provided as it becomes available.

This past year saw a new two year lease agreement with Calgary Housing for the Resource Centre. Unfortunately they will only give two year terms now which is a bit disappointing but there is no reason to think that there are any concerns for the long term.

Another success was the completion of a project by Alberta Processing for their improvements to deal with the odour issues. Your Board started meaningful discussions with the principles of Alberta Processing and the owners, West Coast Reduction Ltd out of Vancouver, and they proposed a \$ 1.2 million dollar investment to install an upgraded air cleansing system and a new air duct system to transfer the emissions from the old plant to the new plant where the exhaust stack is about 160 feet high. Unfortunately it took Alberta Environment a little longer than expected to approve this, but they finally did and the new system started up in July, and they assure me it is working well. They did have an equipment breakdown in August which reminded us of the odour smell, but they tell me that was unrelated to the new installation and those repairs have been dealt with.

The Community Association hosts a number of social events including the Summer Carnival that we spoke about, the Community Clean-up which again was very successful, Jelly Bean Dances, the Lego Contest, and others. All great events that we intend to continue with. We closed the swimming pool this year with our first ever Puppy Swim and that was a lot of fun – it will happen again. Upcoming is the MOCA Winter Carnival on December 11. More information will be provided. But for all of these events, they rely on the support of sponsors, and of course volunteers. Our staff do a great job co-ordinating these events, which we believe are essential to the fabric of the community.

And I would be remiss if I did not mention Seniors Housing. Your Board is doing its best to get some progress on this matter. Although it would certainly happen sooner if a private developer would get involved, the focus over the past years has been to use City land despite the controversy that can be attached to the use of City land. Your Board has identified a site reasonably close to the future Ogden LRT Station at 72nd Avenue which would also be close to the planned development improvements along Ogden Road which would provide the type of business amenities that one would expect to be nearby where seniors live. With the help of Councillor Carra, this site is now the subject of a feasibility study to determine firstly if the site is available, and secondly, if it will support a seniors housing development. Once this feasibility study is complete, and assuming it comes back with a positive result, then we can begin the process of getting

the permission of local residents and other community support. It is a complex process and it will be controversial.

On a similar subject, it is somewhat frustrating that the site behind the Ogden firehall which has been identified for years as a potential site for seniors housing, has not seen any development. The former Ogden Legion, when they owned the property in the early 1990's, obtained the required land use designation, or zoning, for a seniors housing complex. I don't know if they went so far as to get a development permit, but the current owners, Homes by Us Ltd, did obtain a Development Permit in 2013 to develop something similar to what the Legion was proposing. Again nothing has happened, and in fact the property was again listed for sale some time ago. We know that Homes by Habitat looked at it but withdrew their Offer to Purchase. Now there is another developer who is looking at it but we have no idea what they have planned. We are concerned that there is something about the property that scares away the developers but we don't know what that might be. This is just another example of the difficulty in creating seniors housing the Ogden area, and in a location that is suitable for housing.

You have heard me say before, and one of my favourite sayings from my days with the City is this "for as big as this City is – it will never be this small again! "I say this because as this City grows, and it is growing, we become more and more considered to be inner-city, and more and more affected by that growth, by non-local traffic. Effectively, we are a victim of the growth of the City. I have heard people say "Why can't Ogden go back to the way it used to be?" Well that is not going to happen – so the question then becomes – How do we deal with it and how can we benefit by it?

That is exactly what your Board is primarily working on at this point. We know that the Greenline, being the future LRT system, is going to run through our community. It has to run through our community in order to get to the points south where they really need it, to get drivers into public transit. We expect that we will have access to three LRT Stations when the project proceeds – Lynnwood Station being Ogden Road and Millican Road, Ogden Station being at 72nd Avenue, and South Hill Station being just south of Glenmore Trail. These are currently in the planning stages but we anticipate many improvements to the Ogden Road area starting around the 72nd Avenue to 74th Avenue with what the City calls Transit Oriented Development, or TOD. We anticipate this could be 3 and 4 storey buildings for office, commercial and apartment style residential, creating the beginning of a village style district along Ogden Road. Aside from simple access to the LRT, it could redefine our community for generations to come and really allow the Millican Ogden community to become attractive to younger families. As we all have said, Ogden is a bit of diamond in the rough, and while we have an awful lot to offer residents, we have to get those younger folks in here to give us a look. With the

new business development in Quarry Park, there has to be a lot of people who might like to live closer to where they work.

Together with the Greenline discussions, your Board is also working with the City planners on a new Area Redevelopment Plan for the Millican Ogden area and a new Station Area Plan for the South Hill District. The City is treating these districts separately because they have different future planning issues. These documents are very complex and we have a number of concerns relating to their vision of what features the community should look like in the future, but primarily, we are saying that the Plan must be realistic. We recognize that redevelopment of an older district is extremely complex, but still, the vision must recognize that this is an already established neighbourhood, and while new development is healthy, it must fit with the character of the existing developments. We continue to work with the City Planners on the detail of the long term planning document.

And another piece of good news is that your Board, and more specifically Director Ray, has made some real progress with the Community Entrance Sign project. If you recall this is something that was identified some 20 years ago but for a variety of reasons, it continually ran into road-blocks, mostly with the City. Ray took this on together with Larry Muraski who has been trying to spearhead this project for years. They chose a monument style sign staying with the railway theme, they chose a sign company who has experience with this type of sign, and they have arranged the purchase of three signs because we have three main entrances to the community. The money is coming from an old City budget where funds are remaining and we have applied for reimbursement. Anyway, the new signs have arrived and are in storage. The City does have some rules relating to placement and we are just working through some of that now. Ray is hoping to get at least one sign, the one on 18th Street north of Glenmore, installed this year and we are just now trying to understand exactly what the City needs.

Going forward - you have heard me talk about the Hall Expansion, the Greenline, and the two Area Redevelopment Plans. That in itself is going to keep us busy. We did have plans to review our Corporate Bylaws but that unfortunately had to be put aside for now. We will have to see how the next few months go, as to whether we can give that some more attention.

The Civic Affairs Committee being a sub-committee of MOCA Board is involved regularly in a variety of planning and development applications in the community. Whenever there is an application for a development permit or a land use re-designation, we do get provided the details, and we have an opportunity to provide comments.

So in closing, As you might know, MOCA, by default, is essentially a facility operator. And as such, we own and operate the Community Hall and Lounge, we operate Jack

Setters Arena, and the Outdoor Swimming Pool. And we operate the South East Calgary Community Resource Centre – formally known as the Family Resource Centre. The Resource Centre has become an extremely important piece of what we do because of the support to the less advantaged, and for the social programs that are offered through the centre to the entire southeast corner of the city. And of course we are actively involved in the quality of life issues that like traffic, community planning, Bylaw issue, and others, Purchasing and maintaining a membership in MOCA not just allows a member to vote at this meeting, but shows in a small way the support for the good work done by the volunteers and staff on behalf of the residents.

And so in closing, I want to explain that I have been so fortunate over the past two years to have a great group of Board members. As I said in my opening comments – when you surround yourself with good people, good things happen. I want express my personal thanks to each and every one of the current Board members for their dedication to the community, for their various contributions, and specifically for their commitment to the Millican Ogden Community Association.

And I would be remiss if I did not mention a vote of gratitude to the families of the Board members and volunteers, and even the staff. Board members and volunteers often spend time away from the home for meetings, or projects, and sometimes they are even even working on community matters while at home. Without the support of the families, the commitment of giving back to the community may not be possible. Thank you to the families.

Again, it has been my pleasure to serve on MOCA's Board, and particularly to have served as your Chairman over the past three years. There is much yet to do and I look forward to the upcoming year.

Thank you.

Rick Smith // Chairman/President