

## **President / Chairman's Report - AGM - October 13, 2020**

Welcome to the 64th Annual General Meeting of the Millican Ogden Community Association.

This past couple of years have taken an enormous toll on this community association. Last year was the year of the roof support problem at the arena which effectively shut that facility down for almost a full season. This year was the horrible Coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, and everyone from all levels has experienced the impacts of that from the new rules, and restrictions for our quality of life. It is very difficult to predict what our new normal will look like, but things could still get worse, before they get better.

Regardless, COVID-19 has impacted our business and our customers. Our AGM is October but our financial year is June 1 to May 30, and you will hear from treasurer Pieter van Lindenberg in a few minutes about those financial details, but our revenues and operating costs during that year end period have been impacted by both the arena roof issues, and COVID-19. We are now in the 2020 – 2021 fiscal year and we are back in business, but there is no doubt that we feel the lingering impact of the COVID crisis on our revenues. Many of the new operating restrictions that we must abide by for both the hall and the arena, are impacting our rentals, and limiting the types of activities that we can offer. And they place a huge strain on our staff to meet the sanitation requirements.

Also impacted is our plans to move forward with our hall expansion project which we are now approaching our 4<sup>th</sup> year of planning. We keep running into roadblocks and extra costs, and now COVID, and it is frustrating. Luckily, our grant providers have given us extensions, but we know that will be coming to an end. Construction must happen within the next year, or not at all. As mentioned before, the building is now over 60 years old and in need of some lifecycle improvements. But to simply do those lifecycle issues still leaves us with old building. Luckily MOCA received a substantial gift from the Ogden Legion Branch 154 when the Branch was formally terminated a few years ago, and we are using those funds as their legacy to provide the seed money to initiate these planned building improvements. With any luck we can complete that work next year.

Beyond that, several other issues have kept us busy this past year. The proposed Area Redevelopment Plan for the Millican Ogden area remains on hold. It has now been 5 years in the making but the delays are now related to a planning document now call the Guidebook for Great Communities, which is intended to be the reference document for all future Area Redevelopment Plans, or Local Area Plans as they are called by some. Our position related to the proposed ARP has not changed in that we continue to have the view that much of the vision outlined in the ARP is unrealistic and unachievable, but the City planners appear unwilling to listen, or even consider, our concerns. We look forward to seeing some new development along Ogden Road particularly around where the proposed LRT station will be located at 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, with the hope that that would spark other new development along Ogden Road, but the City's vision of other parts of our community is not practical, and we believe to be unrealistic, and unachievable.

We continue to work with various City staff on the rewriting of our two Licence of Occupation Agreements, or leases, on the City land on which we operate. We have two Agreements, one is the area where the community hall and the arena are located, and other is that area west of the arena where the bantam football clubhouse is located. It all started about 4 years ago because of some minor boundary changes that were required, but the City would not just change the one page in the document that described the boundaries, but rather they demanded entire new agreements. That opened everything up and we have been in discussion about clarification of other clauses ever since. I think we are getting closer at this point, but we are not there yet.

As I have said many times – “for as big as this City is, it will never be this small again”. I say that because we can continue to expect the Green Line to come through the community at some point in the future. However a person feels about the Green Line, and the route that has been chosen, Phase I has been approved, and we will soon see some evidence of that Phase I construction which, as you know, will run from about 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue on Centre Street North, through the downtown, and south to about 126<sup>th</sup> Avenue, which is just north of the commercial district on 130<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Deerfoot. There is no question that the people who really need the LRT service are located in the extreme north end of the city, and the extreme south, and while this first Phase of the system will not

reach either of them, still the entire system will be needed at some point in the future. I know there is some question about how this COVID pandemic will impact the working world in the future in terms of those who will be working from home, but another comment that I used to make back in my City days, is that “this City must be ready for itself as it grows”, and an improved public transit system is part of that. And my point here is that there has been tremendous growth of the City to the southeast, with many new communities and a huge population in those new communities, and that highlights why I say that we, in Ogden, have become a victim of that growth. Unfortunately, to get to them with an LRT system, they must come through us. It will be short term pain for sure, particularly during the years of construction, but hopefully there will be long term gain. We do expect to see some benefits from the system, not the least of which is the access to the system, but we also expect to see some interest by investors and developers in new office, commercial, and residential projects, particularly along Ogden Road near the 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue Station. There are a couple of major preliminary projects that we have been expecting, and I know that COVID and other issues have caused some of the delays, but I am referring to the upgrades to Millican Road and the hill, and the 78<sup>th</sup> Avenue underpass, which is going to be very disruptive to those who live near there when that work starts. We don’t have any timeline for when construction will start on these, but they are critical to the Green Line project, and so they will be done at some point.

Vice President Ray Jasper continues to work with the City on the placement of the two remaining Community Entrance Signs that we have in storage. We accept that the one that is expected to be located on Millican Road near the Ogden Road intersection, is being held up pending the Green Line preliminary work that is expected, but the third entrance sign is planned for Ogden Road, northbound, near the entrance to the Glenmore Inn. It boggles the mind why these things become so complicated when dealing with various City Departments, and we are really not sure why these relatively simple projects continue to be delayed.

As you will recall, we did lose our newsletter publisher back in December of 2018 because they went out of business. There have been conversations with other publishers, and while there is some value to a paper newsletter delivered door to door, it would be expensive, and we would have serious space limitations. We will continue to produce an electronic newsletter each month, and if we have an e-mail address for you, it will arrive in your home, or place of business, automatically. Otherwise, it is also available on the MOCA website, and our social media sites. Again, we would encourage you to provide us with your e-mail address and you can be kept informed of the happenings in the neighbourhood.

The Southeast Calgary Community Resource Centre for which MOCA is the official agent and operator, continues to be an area of operations that we are extremely proud of. Yes, it is an agency that provides a number of programs and services to that area of the population that require higher needs. It serves not only the Ogden area, but well beyond, and in fact, the entire service area includes about 47 communities in the southeast corner of the city. They are always looking for donations of clothing and other small household items, so with all due respect to the many other agencies out there who are also doing a great job, please think of the local Resource Centre for your donations. They are always looking men's clothing as us guys tend to wear stuff till it practically falls off, but if you have things in your closet that you have not worn for a while and it is still in good shape, please think of the Resource Centre. And as we approach the colder weather, this becomes even more important. They do a great job there and provide a very needed service. Our Resource Centre Manager, Lynn Mutch, will provide a brief presentation shortly.

To summarize, as you might know, MOCA, by default, is essentially a facility operator, and as such, we own and operate the Community Hall and lower level Lounge, and we are the manager and operator of the City owned Jack Setters Arena. In addition, we are the official agent and operator of the South East Calgary Community Resource Centre – formally known as the Family Resource Centre. And of course, we are actively involved in the quality of life issues like traffic, community planning, bylaw enforcement issues, and others. Going forward, we will continue our work with the City planners on the Green Line

issues, the Millican Ogden Area Redevelopment Plan, and the South Hill Station Area Plan, as well the many other community quality of life issues that come up from time to time through our Civic Affairs Committee. And of course, to keep the Community Hall Expansion project moving forward.

And so, in closing, I want to explain that I have been so fortunate over the past seven years to have had a great group of Board members to work with. As I have said many times – when you surround yourself with good people, good things happen. I want to 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 as always, 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 in fact all volunteers, often spend time away from the home for meetings, or projects, and sometimes they are 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 President over the past seven years. There is much yet to do, and I look forward to the upcoming year.

Thank you.

Rick Smith

President, Millican Ogden Community Association