

To: Electoral Area Services Committee

Date: 2025-05-15

From: Jaime Van Nes, Director of Legislative Services

Subject: Electoral Area Director attendance at BC Rural Centre's Keeping It Rural Conference:
June 10-12, 2025

Reviewed by: Kelly Lownsbrough, Director of Corporate Services & CFO
Jennifer Kinneman, Chief Administrative Officer

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Fraser Valley Regional District Board authorize Directors Johnson, MacAhonic and Waardenburg to attend the Keeping It Rural Conference in Kelowna, BC between June 10 and 12, 2025;

AND THAT registration fees, accommodation and travel costs be approved from Budget 102 (Electoral Area Administration)

BACKGROUND

Following the 2022 general local elections, the Board authorized attendance of all Electoral Area Directors to attend the Local Government Leadership Academy Forum, Lower Mainland Local Government Association Annual General Meeting and Conference, Federation of Canadian Municipalities Annual Conference and Trade Show, and Union of British Columbia Municipalities Convention for the years 2023 through 2026. These four annual conferences are ones most commonly attended by FVRD's Electoral Area Directors.

In 2024, Directors Johnson and MacAhonic advised that they did not plan on attending the 2024 FCM Annual Conference and Trade Show being held in Calgary, Alberta, and the Board approved substitution of attendance at FCM with attendance at the 2024 BC Rural Centre's Keeping It Rural Conference.

DISCUSSION

This year's Keeping It Rural Conference is scheduled to take place at the Four Points by Sheraton in Kelowna, BC. The three day event is held between June 10 and 12, 2025, and focuses on topics such as alternate energy, rural healthcare, community and economic development, and rural tourism. An official event program has not yet been released.

Directors Johnson and MacAhonic have indicated they wish to attend the 2025 FCM Annual Conference being held in Ottawa, Ontario in addition to the 2025 Keeping It Rural Conference. Director Waardenburg will not attend the 2025 FCM Annual Conference.

Staff are considering alternative approaches for Electoral Area Directors to manage future conference attendance directly through the budgeting process.

COST

Registration for this event is \$500 per person, plus taxes. The conference offers a room rate of \$169, plus taxes, per night. Additional travel expenses will include parking and mileage. These costs will be **allocated within Electoral Area Administration (Budget 102) to the Director's individual Electoral Area travel budgets.**

CONCLUSION

In November 2022, the Board authorized the attendance of Electoral Area Directors at four local government conferences commonly attended by Electoral Area Directors. In 2024, the Board authorized the attendance of Directors Johnson and MacAhonic at the Keeping It Rural Conference in lieu of attending the FCM Annual Conference.

Directors Johnson, MacAhonic and Waardenburg have all expressed interest in attending the 2025 Keeping It Rural Conference scheduled to take place between June 10 and 12, 2025 in Kelowna, BC. All registration, accommodation and travel expenses will be allocated within the Electoral Area Administration service area **to the Electoral Area Director's individual Electoral Area travel budgets.**