

Council Report: Participation at the SILGA 2024 Conference

Date: May 6, 2024

To Mayor and Council, City of West Kelowna

The Southern Interior Local Government Association (SILGA) 2024 Conference was held from April 30 to May 3, 2024, at the Coast Hotel and Conference Centre in Kamloops, BC. The theme for this year's conference, "Keep the Ball Rolling," reflected the host city Kamloops' recognition of its sporting culture and dedication to maintaining momentum in local government initiatives.

West Kelowna was represented at the conference by Councillor Tasha Da Silva, Councillor Rick De Jong, and Councillor Carol Zanon. Our delegation played a role in the various discussions and we've brought back valuable insights and knowledge that will benefit our city's governance and community initiatives.

Highlights and Key Events:

1. Election to SILGA Board of Directors:

We are proud to report that Councillor Tasha Da Silva was elected as the 2nd Vice President of the SILGA Board of Directors for the 2024-25 term. Her new role on the Board will enhance West Kelowna's influence in regional governance issues and provide a platform to advocate for our community's interests.

2. Opening Ceremonies:

This year, the opening ceremonies were uniquely held at the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc arbor. The ceremonies included a keynote address by Tk'emlúps Councillor Nikki Fraser, who eloquently spoke about the importance of communication and understanding between the City of Kamloops and their First Nations neighbors. This event underscored the value of building stronger relationships and partnerships with Indigenous communities.

3. Engagement with Provincial Ministers:

The conference featured a series of impactful breakout sessions where delegates had the opportunity to submit direct questions to five Provincial Ministers, including; Municipal Affairs | Forests | Emergency Management and Climate Readiness | Mental Health and Addictions | Water, Lands and Resource Stewardship. This engagement allowed for direct dialogue on pressing issues facing our communities.

4. Educational Content:

A diverse array of presentations and discussions covered critical topics, including BC's Short-Term Rental Accommodations Act, strategies for managing wildfires, meeting the future energy needs of BC, and fostering economic development. Notably, Trish Mandewo, President of the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM), delivered a compelling address that highlighted collaborative strategies and resources available to local governments.

5. 2024 Resolutions:

A total of 46 resolutions were submitted during the conference, allowing municipalities to amplify their collective voice and influence on key regional issues. Out of these, 6 were defeated and 1 was removed, showcasing the dynamic and responsive nature of municipal advocacy and priority-setting.

The SILGA 2024 Conference provided invaluable insights and robust networking opportunities, significantly strengthening the collective voice of the region and promoting collaborative approaches among municipalities.

With the SILGA resolution submission deadline in February 2025, we recommend starting preparations early to effectively represent our community's needs, thereby strengthening West Kelowna's regional and provincial interests and enhancing our governance.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tasha Da Silva', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tasha Da Silva
Councillor
City of West Kelowna