

## **Jumbo proponents should pay for review**

For years this newspaper has been stating cautions about the Jumbo Glacier Resort Ltd. project in regard to it becoming a costly proposition to taxpayers.

And for years the proponents and supporters of the \$500 million ski resort project have stated it won't cost taxpayers any money - at least nothing more than what would be offset by tax revenues generated by the project.

Aside from a lengthy and expensive Environmental Assessment Office project review and subsequent ministerial reviews, that has thus far been the case.

However, that could all change really quickly as last week the Regional District of East Kootenay (RDEK) board of directors unanimously agreed to ask the provincial government for \$194,000 to help it conduct a review of the project plans when and if the proponents apply for zoning and other legislative considerations.

Regional administrative chief Lee-Ann Crane explained that it is normal for project opponents to cover the costs of official community plan amendment work but the regional government always covers internal reviews of projects.

So rather than have regional taxpayers cover the estimated \$194,000 review, the RDEK is opting to take the provincial government up on its past offer of providing money to help in reviewing/planning work.

The long and short of the RDEK's request for funding help is its directors and staff are doing their jobs appropriately. They're trying to spare regional taxpayers financial grief by having to allot funds from the RDEK budget to cover those costs and they're also attempting to ensure business remains as usual during such a review period - meaning other regular tasks and duties will be performed without interruption from this pending onerous and detailed matter.

But the overall, general tax base in the province will be on the hook for this work and that just doesn't sit right with us.

As far as we are concerned, if a developer wants to play in the Columbia Valley and B.C., he/she/they should pay for that privilege.

So any subsidiary planning and review work necessary should be covered by the proponent, as should be all needed infrastructure upgrades, such as highway/road costs etc.