

ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTLOOK

LAKE LOUISE BANFF CANMORE MD OF BIGHORN KANANASKIS STONEY NAKODA

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KAPOW Leo Jensen reacts to being kicked by Ben Townell at the 2023 Kyokushin Karate Championships in Banff on Saturday (Dec. 2). For story and more photos see A32 and A33. MATTHEW THOMPSON RMO PHOTO

Kananaskis council halved as provincial appointments end, councillor resigns

JESSICA LEE

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

KANANASKIS COUNTRY – Half of Kananaskis Improvement District councillors’ terms have come to an end, but quorum remains under the municipality’s procedural order.

The council of six recently became a council of three – the number needed for quorum – with terms of the municipality’s two provincially appointed members ended and one elected councillor having resigned.

Couns. Erum Afsar and Darren Enns, appointed by the Ministry of Forestry and Parks to represent citizens-at-large, each completed an extended four-year term at the end of October. Coun. Anita Szuster, whose last day on council was Nov. 27, had to make

the difficult decision to resign due to ineligibility to continue representing non-commercial residents and ratepayers.

“I had to resign my position because I was no longer employed full-time in the Kananaskis region,” said Szuster, who was elected to the position in a byelection in August 2022 when former councillor Jeff Storck resigned for the same reason.

“It wasn’t really by choice that I resigned because I really liked my position as councillor, but the rule book says that you have to reside in Kananaskis and in order to reside in Kananaskis, you need a certain amount of hours of employment.”

Specifically, KID’s need to reside policy states residents must work at least 30 hours per week within Kananaskis to qualify.

Szuster was formerly working full-time in a man-

agement role at a Kananaskis hostel, where she also resided. Finding housing to replace her accommodation was challenging when she left the job, which forced her to move out of the region, she said.

Although her term was short, Szuster said she was proud to represent and be part of decision-making projects for the small community of about 250 residents spread over 400,000 hectares of provincial parks, protected areas and Crown land, in addition to the millions of visitors to Kananaskis each year.

“The learning curve was extremely challenging. And for me, personally, I wish I would have had more time to be able to commit to the learning process. It is such a unique governance model, and I found that was extremely exciting and a privilege to be able part of,” she said.

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