

Sheila E. Cummings

**“A lifetime in Southern Victoria. A record of service. A vision for what’s next.”**

The quote above explains why I am re-offering for Council. I have spent my whole life in Southern Victoria. Throughout those years, I have been a dedicated volunteer in our community. Those volunteer experiences include being a coach (Track and Field, Basketball, Softball), Chair of the Board of Future Footprints Family Centre, President of Thunder Hockey Team, Member of the Library Board and the Recreation Committee. I also volunteer at most events held within the Village.

I have a vision for Southern Victoria’s future. This vision includes the following priorities.

**Health Care:** Like all areas of Canada, we are experiencing a crisis in Health Care. The Union of Municipalities (UMNB) of New Brunswick has identified several areas of concern in Health Care that need to be addressed. We have a provincial UMNB Health Committee that meets regularly to determine needs, to lobby government officials, and to meet with Horizon officials on behalf of all New Brunswickers.

I serve as Chair of this UMNB Health Committee. The priorities we have identified are Primary Care, Ambulance Service, Alternate Care, and Nursing Home Access. We have met with the Minister of Health and the Horizon Authorities and have expressed the needs across the province. I am a member of the ANB Paramedic Service Partnership Committee.

**Public Safety:** Our Council has identified Public Safety as a priority. We held an initial meeting with Community stakeholders. Sessions like this will continue since more plans need to be made and research needs to be done to successfully deal with this concern.

**Housing:** We are experiencing a shortage of affordable housing in Southern Victoria. We need to partner with developers and government programs to address this issue. We need safe, secure housing for seniors, young professionals, families, and the unhoused.

**Industry/Employment:** Our Industrial Park is nearing capacity. We need another location for Industry as well as an Incubator building to attract new businesses.

Without this, we cannot employ our citizens. If they must go outside the community for work, they are less likely to return.

**Team Work:** Our Council needs to work as a team alongside the Village staff. Our residents need to be encouraged to team with staff and Council to meet the needs of the community

**Financial Responsibility:** Due to the rising cost of food, shelter, and other living expenses, we need to be fiscally responsible with Village finances.

**Asset Management:** We must continue to review our Asset Management Plan and ensure that buildings and other assets are properly maintained and replaced when necessary.

**Community Engagement:** One of the most important assets in our community is our citizens. We need to keep them engaged and ensure they feel appreciated. They must be informed about what is happening. The weekly newsletter and the website are good sources of information.

Council Meetings are open to the public. We need to encourage more citizens to come to the Council Meetings to observe and learn what is happening. More Public Engagement sessions need to be planned. Topics could include Health Care, Public Safety, Volunteer opportunities, services available within the community, and other concerns.

The youth in our community need to be more actively involved. It has been drawn to my attention that they would like to volunteer to help to coach younger children, but they feel the need to be mentored in order to feel more confident and prepared. We need to engage with the youth on a regular basis to determine how we can encourage them to be more involved in our community.