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For immediate release

CCRHD Chair John Massier Delivers Year-End Address

Williams Lake, B.C. - During last Friday's Cariboo Chilcotin Regional Hospital District (CCRHD) meeting, Chair John Massier delivered the CCRHD Year-End Address. The full text of the speech is included below.

"2013 was a successful year for the CCRHD on a variety of different initiatives. The first request from our Foundation Partnership Grants to the GR Baker Hospital Auxiliary was approved at our February meeting to fund \$21,200 (of a total project cost of \$53,000) for the purchase of a portable ultrasound machine.

The following month the 100 Mile House Hospice Palliative Care Society's request for \$5,809 (of a total project cost of \$14,523) for the purchase of a RIK mattress, bedding, oxygen concentrators and a PA system was approved by the Board. In October, the South Cariboo Health Foundation was successful in its approach to the Board for \$6,189 (of a total project cost of \$15,473) to complete renovations of the chemotherapy consultation room at the 100 Mile House Hospital. These volunteer organizations exist to improve the health care facilities in our communities, and our Foundation Partnership Grants Program allows them to stretch their fundraising dollars for the benefit of all the citizens of the region.

2013 also saw the implementation of a contract with the Central Interior Rural Division of Family Practice to help support the recruitment and retention of health care professionals in both Williams Lake and 100 Mile House. The Division has matched the CCRHD funding and has taken an increasingly active role in promoting the South and Central Cariboo to their fellow physicians and other health care personnel. We are hoping to expand this initiative into the North Cariboo in 2014.

Early in 2013 the Board was approached by Interior Health (IH) with a Capital Funding request to renovate the bathrooms of the 100 Mile House Hospital. The Board approved \$160,000 of a total project cost of \$400,000 for this much needed improvement. In May, IH was back before the Board requesting \$240,000 of a total project cost of \$600,000 for the long awaited Concept Planning Stage of the Cariboo Memorial Hospital (CMH) renovation. The request was unanimously approved at our June meeting and was the first positive sign of movement on this project in over two years since the CMH Master Plan was completed. The work is currently underway and a final report is expected in the spring of 2014. Other Capital Projects underway in 2013 included renovations at GR Baker Hospital to the pharmacy and sterile processing room. This \$1,564,000 project is being supported with \$625,000 from the CCRHD and is expected to be complete in March of 2014.

Many other smaller capital improvements to our local health care facilities were funded through our Global Grants to both Interior Health and Northern Health. Financial highlights for the year included motions by the Board to take advantage of early debt repayment options to the Municipal Finance Authority in August 2013 and again in December 2014. The payments were taken from capital reserves and combined, will save taxpayers more than \$250,000 in interest payments and leave the CCRHD and CRHD debt free by the end of 2014. The Board also made the decision to set the 2014 hospital tax rate at \$70/\$100,000 to help add to our strong reserve fund for future hospital improvements in both Quesnel and Williams Lake.

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Other highlights of the year were several meetings with the Chair and CEOs of both Health Authorities on various health matters and a meeting at the UBCM with Health Minister Terry Lake to lobby the Provincial government for the next stages of the Cariboo Memorial Hospital expansion. Interior Health's "Family Physicians for the Interior" forum was held in Williams Lake and Vice Chair Wagner is currently part of an Interior Health region wide collaboration aimed at bringing in physicians. Northern Health held two community meetings in Quesnel for the public to give input on the Master Plan for GR Baker Hospital and also held meetings in Quesnel and across the north on Health Aging and Senior's Wellness.

All in all 2013 was a positive year for the Cariboo Chilcotin Regional Hospital District and the Board remains strongly committed to the wise use of taxpayers' dollars and continual capital improvements to the healthcare facilities of our region."

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