

Press Release

Landis and Biggar Credit Unions are discussing the possibility of merging.

Chairpersons Becky Huber (Landis) and Wayne Dollansky (Biggar) announce that the two credit unions are having discussions regarding the possibility of merging into Biggar & District Credit union. The discussions have been underway since November 2017. Thus far the possible benefits for both credit unions are looking very positive.

Merging the two credit unions will improve efficiency over time, providing long term, sustainable operations serving the Perdue, Landis and Biggar communities as well as communities within the region.

Wayne acknowledges that, "Landis and Biggar are closely connected on a number of fronts. The two communities have worked together in the past in bringing ancillary services to the area; the Lodge is a prime example." Becky pointed out that, "The two credit unions have been partners with the Biggar Landis Insurance agency since 2010, which has been beneficial to both credit unions. Having the insurance agency in Biggar and Landis gives our members another option in keeping their business within their communities". Biggar also has a wealth management and life insurance division that, like the insurance agency, serve members in their home communities of Landis and Biggar. Currently the wealth management division services \$57,680,500 in assets held by members.

Wayne and Becky agree that, "Both credit unions are financially healthy posting strong metrics of capital, liquidity, leverage and ROA. Overall the preliminary discussions have been very positive. As a combined credit union the future looks very positive."

The merger must be supported by a member vote from both credit unions. It is anticipated that the due diligence process will be completed early May 2018 at which time the boards will announce their recommendations. Assuming the recommendation is to merge, the vote is anticipated to take place in June 2018

with an anticipated merger date of January 1, 2019. The credit unions will also need to get the approval from the provincial regulatory bodies prior to merging.

Executive leads, Bill Hammel (Biggar) and Bob Carpenter (Landis) see the merger as positive for both credit unions. They point out that merging demonstrates that the cooperative foundation on which the two credit unions were founded is still very strong.

Assuming a yes vote is acquired in June 2018, they will have six months to commence some of the operational tasks that need to be undertaken as a merged credit union; providing the opportunity of capturing efficiencies as soon as possible. Bob notes that the efficiencies will be brought about through process improvements versus staff reduction. Both are quick to point out that we are lucky to have excellent, talented staff at each credit union. “Why would we want to reduce our human capital? It’s the staff that serves the members, members like seeing familiar faces and knowing who they are dealing with. It makes no sense to jeopardize our relationships with staff and members alike.” Bill adds, “We have an aggressive strategy in serving our memberships and we need our staff in order to succeed. The financial services environment is rapidly changing and we need all our staff to make us successful. Furthermore with the changing environment there will be lots of opportunity for staff to further their careers.” Bill sums it up by saying, “We may be in the financial services industry that is often filled with numbers, however, at the end of the day our relationship is with people (members), and we need people (staff) to drive us into the future.