

Verco R2 Newsletter - March 2022

People who wish to join Verco R2, just send their request to saurerandreas@bluewin.ch

As in the previous year, the COVID pandemic did not facilitate the associative life of Verco R2. Nevertheless, we were able to meet face-to-face with the President of the Municipality, Mrs. Sylvie Masserey-Anselin, and the Municipal Councillor, Mr. Kilian Siggen, responsible for the Public Services Department. This meeting, thanks to the invitees' great openness of mind, allowed for a pleasant, open and constructive exchange.

Drinking Water, Sewer and Garbage Taxes

We are still in discussion with the Municipality concerning the different taxes. As for other services, we have to separate the fixed part - the costs of the sewerage are the same regardless of whether the infrastructure is used 50 (as for the tourist tax) or 365 days a year - and the variable part, which depends on its use. As far as this variable part is concerned, the Municipality agrees to take it into account in the calculation. In order to make progress in the discussion, the Municipality will provide us again this year with precise figures concerning the expenses and receipts of the various services financed by taxes.

Waste Disposal Center and Eco-Point

The waste disposal center (garbage tip) at the bottom of the village for bulky items and green waste will be restructured before the end of this year. Only the part for "green" waste (hedge cutting, garden waste and grass) will be kept. On the other hand, bulky objects, household appliances, plastic objects, chemical products, etc. will no longer be accepted there and will have to be taken to the Sion or Sierre waste disposal center.

The eco-point at the exit of the village will be completed by a container for biological kitchen waste intended for compost. It is only at a later time, in 5 to 10 years, that this eco-point will be moved to a place which remains to be defined.

Lighting

The Municipality is aware that the functioning of the streetlight fixtures is not optimal. The intensity of the lighting has been reduced between 10 PM and 5 AM and a replacement by LED bulbs is planned. Finally, tests will be made to reduce the diffuse nature of the lighting and focus it essentially on the road.

Obstruction of Pedestrian Pathways at the Top of the "Mont"

Following the construction of a building on the East side of the Mont and the installation of barriers on the West side of the path, the pedestrian paths on the Mont have become impassable, which we deeply regret. The Municipality is aware of this problem. However, since these are not officially recorded trails and that a legal right of use cannot be invoked in this case, amicable solutions must be found with the owners concerned. The Municipality will organize a discussion with the owners of the land and the users of the surroundings.

Tour du Mont

The development of the Tour du Mont and the construction of the wooden footbridges were authorized and subsidized by the Canton on two conditions: one mowing of high grass per year and the closure of the passage during the winter to protect the local fauna. The Canton's decision came into effect in 2020. The Municipality will put up a sign explaining the closure of this path in winter, but without putting up a barrier that physically closes the path. Obviously, if people take this path given the fact that it is not prohibited to walk in the forest, they do so at their own risk and peril. On the other hand, and we insist on this, it is strictly forbidden to walk with a dog without keeping it on a leash, and this either during the summer, or during the winter.

Village Fountain

The fountain on the village square has caused some commotion and the Municipality is aware of this. Work will be done on the fountain and the central square, paving stones will be added, the Vallet street will become pedestrianized and some unesthetic street signs will be moved.

Chalais-Brie Vercorin Cable Car

Several appeals have been filed against the new cable car route. The Cantonal Court has not yet made a decision, a decision that may take one or two years to be reached. Subsequently, this decision could even be further appealed to the Federal Court. In the meantime, we have to live with the risk that the existing installation might break down at any moment and that it will be replaced by a bus, a solution that is hardly optimal for the schoolchildren.

Development Corporation (SDV in French, or VDC in English)

The function of the SDV has undergone some changes following the shift of the Tourist Tax being collected by the Municipality. The main task of the SDV is the organization of local events. Its finances are based on individual contributions and on subsidies provided by the Municipality. After the introduction of the new tourist tax, several R2 resigned from the SDV. It should be noted that the goals of the SDV and those of the R2 are not the same. We encourage membership in the SDV and we encourage everyone to support the many local events, such as the "*Taste of the World*" (ethnic food tasting) the "*Dérupe*" (popular foot race), the 1st of August celebration (Swiss independence day), the village festival, the setting up of a historical tour with audio guide etc.

Activity of Vercorin Tourisme SA

As far as the preliminary project of the Creux du Lavioz is concerned, a broad consultation process has been put in place which has allowed a large participation of the local population and the secondary residents (owners of second homes and renters of second homes). This consultation was very positive and the main lines of the preliminary project were not questioned. Here are the main activities:

- A report was prepared by Garaventa to evaluate the different equipment variants and in particular the best way to connect the Espace du Lavioz to the ski area.

- The leveling of the terrain in the extension of the refreshment bar terrace was carried out in the fall and will be completed in spring 2022.
- An opportunity to rent a synthetic ice rink has allowed for a test of the equipment this winter on the surface of where the tennis courts are located.
- In agreement with the other partners (Commune and Société de la Télécabine de Vercorin SA), Vercorin Tourisme has decided to contribute to the free access to the Lavioz tourist facilities for all starting this winter. An amount of CHF 15,000 (taken from the proceeds of tourist taxes) will be paid annually by Vercorin Tourism. This is a contribution to the operating costs of the Espace du Lavioz of approximately CHF 55,000 per year, which are covered by the Société de la Télécabine. These costs include the operation of the facilities (personnel and energy), grooming, snow production and park maintenance. Information panels on the free access have been placed at the Espace du Lavioz.

Work at the Creux du Lavioz began in 2021 and will continue in 2022. The 2nd stage of the project will be carried out in the form of studies concerning the feasibility of raising the refreshment bar building, the educational path and the ski lift connecting to ski area No. 1. Also planned are the redevelopment of the Sigeroulaz-Tracui trail and the development of mountain bike trails.

Regional Mobility and Discussions Organized by the Prefect of Sierre

The Prefect of Sierre, following studies by consulting firms specialized in regional transportation and after round table discussions with various representatives of the R2 in the region, will submit in the coming weeks the draft of a regional public transportation project to the Federal Authorities in Bern. The aim is to obtain financial support from the Federal Government to strengthen the regional public transport infrastructure for the resident population and tourists.

This project foresees a tourist transport hub in Noës with a new CFF/SBB stop there, a large parking lot to leave one's car before going to the surrounding resorts and also possibly a cable car from Noës to Crans. To facilitate the use of public transport, a guest card for tourists (and perhaps also for local residents) is planned, a card which would give free or greatly reduced access to public transport in the region for the duration of the tourist stay.

The Prefect also plans to hold a face-to-face roundtable discussion with members of the various regional R2 Committees as soon as the Covid pandemic has petered out, to explain his vision for regional public transport and to listen to the various points of views that will certainly be expressed on that occasion