

Cortes Island (Area I) Director's Report

It sure is nice to have weather that truly has the promise of summer. Today was outstanding—the temperature, the sunlight, the light breeze—all created a perfectly beautiful day. Thoughts wandered toward, “If only every day could be like this one.” Oddly, as glorious as the day was I only managed a quick tour of the garden. The iris, columbine and rhododendron are blooming. The only drawback to the sudden hot, sunny weather is the rhododendron flowers fade too quickly.

My meeting schedule has temporarily ebbed but things continue to develop, progress, and some find conclusion. I hope you find the two discussed below of interest.

Skate Park Audit (4q2)

In May 2005, the Quadra Island RCMP received a complaint alleging misappropriation of funds earmarked by the Southern Cortes Community Association (SCCA) for the construction of the skateboard park. The RCMP recommended that an audit be conducted on the SCCA financial records. In October 2005 the Regional Board approved an audit and engaged Meyers Norris Penny (MNP) to perform a forensic examination of the accounting records of the SCCA skateboard park project for the period of April 1, 2000 to March 31, 2005. Their findings are summarized as follows:

- Record keeping for the skateboard park was thorough with clear audit trails and supporting documentation;
- The skateboard park project appears to have been managed effectively by the SCCA Board;
- The project ran over budget due to the increase in building requirements to satisfy the RDCS' liability concerns;
- MNP found no evidence of misappropriation of funds during the period of time covered by the audit.

In conclusion MNP stated, “The record keeping for the skateboard park project was thoroughly performed with invoices attached to all the cancelled cheques and bank statements. A clear audit trail was available for all transactions examined.”

MNP also examined the minutes of the SCCA Board of Directors meetings. They found it was evident an accurate update of the progress of the skateboard park was being presented at their monthly meetings. MNP further concluded that the SCCA Board managed the skateboard park project in an effective manner.

The findings of MNP are in keeping with those released by the RCMP in November 2005. The RCMP found no evidence of any criminal activity and concluded their file. A copy of the MNP audit report has been forwarded to the RCMP for inclusion in their file.

In April of this year the SCCA issued a cheque to the RDCS in the amount of \$8000. These funds were in excess of those needed for the skateboard park. The funds were returned to the Area I (Cortes) Park Budget and will be used in the current development of beach accesses. The community should be proud of the commitment and efforts these volunteers have faithfully preformed on our behalf. A big “Thank-you!” to all the volunteer's that keep the many island organizations running so smoothly. Your time, effort, dedication and commitment are truly appreciated.

Beach Access Development Update (4q1)

On March 31, 2005, Ray Boogaards (General Manager of Park Services), Beth Rees, (Manager of Parks Planning), and Susan Bullock (Manager of Recreation Programs) came to Cortes to view the five beach accesses identified for development by the working committee. The Regional District staff gathered information necessary to draft management reports of each of the sites. These reports were received and approved by the Community Services Committee on May 15 and will proceed to the Board at the end of the month. These reports will be presented to the community during a public meeting at Manson's Hall on June 14—7:30 pm. Financial reports for each access will also be completed and presented at that time.

The identified accesses are Seascape Road, Hayes Road, Gnat Road (in Squirrel Cove), Cove Road (adjacent to the ferry landing) and Moon Road (off Highfield Road). All landowners adjacent to these sites have been sent an invitation to attend this public meeting. All interested residents are encouraged to attend this important public meeting. Please join staff from the Regional District Parks Department and Ministry of Transportation to discuss the value of the proposed sights, the drafted reports, and the support the community has for this initiative. I hope to see you there.

Holiday Time!

Brian and I will be leaving June 15 for a camping trip. I plan on leaving my laptop and cell phone home--given I won't have access to electricity to keep them charged and functioning this seems the only reasonable thing to do. While we are away you won't be able to communicate with me. John Sprungman, my alternate director, will attend planning and services meetings mid-June. If you need any RD information, please call 1-800-331-6007 where you can receive help from RD staff. I expect to return on June 24 with just enough time to read all the agendas for the Board and Committee of the Whole meetings at the end of the month. Until then feel free to contact me at 935-6488 Monday through Friday 9:00 am to 4 pm. If you get the answering machine try my cell phone -- 202-6488. You can also email me at brijen@oberon.ark.com anytime.