

Cortes Island (Area I) Regional Director's Report

The upcoming December Board meeting marks the end of my first year as Regional Director. It offers one of those moments to sit back and reflect. I was the only new Director elected from the nine rural areas in the district. The vast amounts of advise, guidance, support and wisdom these individuals have given me throughout the year has made a very challenging job easier to grasp and understand. My heartfelt thanks go out to each of them.

For anyone new to the area, the Regional District is responsible for land use planning and local services (911, fire, garbage pickup, recycling, etc.). Anything beyond this falls under the mandate of either the provincial or federal governments. Below is a quick recap and update of the important issues Cortes faced in the past year.

Waste Management Contract—This issue came to light the day after the election—well before I was even sworn into office! A number of difficulties were worked out through the year, which kept The Waste Management Centre functioning smoothly.

After going through the normal contract process Cortes Waste Management was, once again, awarded a new contract. **Hank's Beach and Bartholomew Road properties sold.** Hank's Beach resold to Renewal Land. 33 acres purchased by island residents. Two parcels purchased and logged by G5 Management Inc., currently up for resale. **Beach Access Trails**—The community identified five beach accesses for development. Trail building was anticipated to start this fall. However, a last minute, unanticipated problem regarding liability insurance came up. The Regional District staff continues to work toward resolution. **Squirrel Cove Postal Outlet**—Approved, open and operating. **Plutonic Power**—The Provincial Government passed Bill 30, which outlined the conditions an Independent Power Project must meet to be considered a public utility. Plutonic Power met the three conditions and was approved. **Whaletown Creek Commons**—The acquisition of this parcel of land for community purposes has a long history. The current landowners are aware of the interest as expressed by both the community and the Regional District. The property was taken off the market this summer. The community is actively fund raising to facilitate the realization of the community vision. **Squirrel Cove Geoduck Application**—Integrated Land Management staff have written a report regarding this application, which has been forwarded to the adjudicator. The adjudicator is not bound by any particular time frame for making their decision and I have received no indication of when the decision may be made. **BC Ferry Fares**—The need for affordable, reliable ferry transportation continues to be the goal of the Ferry Advisory Committee. Chairs of all the FAC's are attempting to have input into the service fees for the second performance term of the Coastal Ferry Services Contract. To assist in that goal a resolution was passed unanimously at the November Board meeting outlining the effects the high fare increases have had on coastal communities and requesting a number of actions from the Minister of Transportation, Kevin Falcon. The complete resolution can be found elsewhere in this publication. **BC Hydro Meeting**—This meeting was cancelled due to coastal wide damage from the mid-November windstorm. Representatives from both BC Hydro and Telus will attend when the meeting is rescheduled. Let's hope the weather is more cooperative.

I look forward to my second year in office. The steepest part of the “learning curve” should be over and I can begin to draw from personal experience to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

On a lighter note: The holiday season is fast approaching. I wish everyone a joyous celebration and the very happiest New Year ever. Enjoy.

Feel free to contact me about these or any other issues 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.

Respectfully submitted by Jenny Hiebert—Regional Director Area 'I' (Cortes)