

Trustee Report

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What in the news? Ferries, that's what. Although it seems like they not so much news anymore, more like a constant nightmare. Are they Trust business? Absolutely. One of the Trust Policy Statement's three main goals is to "sustain island character and healthy communities" and we all know how devastating the ever-increasing fees have been to our community. If you go to the Trust website and view the dropdown menu under Trust Council, you will find links to our BC Ferries Advocacy written material. Add to that the many media interviews our chair, Sheila Malcolmson, has given, the hours and hours of work done by Trustee Tony Law and the Ferry Advisory Committee and the many, many hours of work put in by our very own transportation consultants, Brian Hollingshead & Eva Hage. And then add the many meetings attended, discussions had and surveys filled out by citizens of communities up and down the coast and it is easy to see that the government has had plenty of input on this topic.

But are they listening? Not that I can see. I foolishly thought Saturna had been spared when we were not included in this last round of consultation meetings, but they seem to have changed their minds. Now we find out that there are going to be weekend service cuts for Saturna from mid October to mid May. Speaking of these cuts the BC Ferries website says "The following routes do not require a survey" but they did kindly offer us a 300-character space to comment on these changes. Wow! Thanks a lot guys!

Up and down the coast the story is the same; we say these are our highways and the government refuses to even consider returning ferries to the Department of Transportation or give us subsidized transportation routes, just like the rest of the province.

So now what? A protest on the legislature lawn, that's what, on Tuesday March 11th from 11:30 to 1:30. For further information go to: www.bcmarinehighway.org and www.bcferrycoalition.com If they won't listen to reason, I guess it's time to try something else.

Now, back to your Local Trust committee, where we do listen. Last summer Paul and I finally finished up the top projects on our work program left over from the previous term. We had some ideas about what we would like to address, but we wanted to hear from you. So we sent out a questionnaire asking you some questions about Saturna and we held a Community Information Meeting as a follow up to that questionnaire and with that information we decided what we would tackle next.

We added these three subjects to our work program; a review of Community Amenity Density, Secondary Suites and Short Term Vacation Rentals. At our Nov. 13 LTC meeting we discussed preliminary reports on all three topics. We made some changes and sent it back to our planners who came up with three draft bylaws, which we discussed at our meeting on Feb. 13. So it's your turn again. We will be mailing information packets, which will include the draft bylaws, fact sheets and links to the all information on our Islands Trust website, to all Saturna

Island property owners and to as many renters as we can reach. There will also be information on ways to share your point of view with your trustees.

And there will be an invitation to a Community Information Meeting about these three draft bylaws, which will be held on April 5 at the Rec Centre. The meeting will run from 12:30 to 3:30, convenient for ferry travellers and also near the lunch hour so we can once again bribe you to attend with free food. The April Scribbler, as well as the usual notice boards, will also have information about the meeting.

This will be your opportunity to have your say about these three draft by-laws. If you want to know more about them now, please check the Saturna Island page of the Islands Trust website and follow the “Projects & Initiatives” link or the “November 14, 2013 Project Charters Reviewed” link. Either will give you all of information we have sifted through so far. So whether you can come to our meeting or not, please let us know your thoughts.