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Agenda Item #8
REPORT #JDFWSC 2011 - 05

**REPORT TO JUAN DE FUCA WATER DISTRIBUTION COMMISSION
MEETING OF TUESDAY, 3 MAY 2011**

SUBJECT COMMUNITY ALLOTMENT GARDENS

ISSUE

At the April 5, 2011 Juan de Fuca Water Distribution Commission meeting, the Commission approved the concept of a reduced water rate for the Sun River Allotment Gardens and directed staff to draft a clear set of guidelines that would enable staff to deal with future requests for Community Allotment Garden status.

BACKGROUND

The Sun River Allotment Gardens is a 2.5 acre parcel of land that provides the following benefits to the community:

- makes larger plots available for farming produce;
- a portion of the produce from the gardens is provided to a local food bank and 5 social health agencies;
- the T-Sou'ke Nations have a plot to grow food;
- a community orchard has been planted;
- BC Hydro has donated money for raised bed plots for the elderly;
- there is a demonstration/teaching plot with 2 teaching sessions per week; and
- a gazebo provides a meeting place.

In order to provide a reduced water rate for the Sun River Allotment Gardens, it is necessary to amend Fees and Charges Bylaw No. 3570 to create a new rate category for Community Allotment Gardens, and also to include a definition for Community Allotment Gardens. The attached Bylaw No. 3781 includes these amendments.

In order for staff to review and approve future requests for Community Allotment Garden status and application of the lower water rate, the following procedure has been developed:

Procedure for Approval of Community Allotment Garden Requests

Where a municipality has requested that an allotment garden receive the water rate designated for Community Allotment Gardens, the General Manager may approve the request based on a review of the information provided. The General Manager shall use the following criteria to determine whether Community Allotment Garden status should be granted:

1. The allotment gardens shall be non-profit.
2. The allotment gardens shall provide a community benefit through a combination of the following:
 - a. A formalized relationship with a food bank or local charity, where a portion of the food grown is provided to the charity;
 - b. A portion of the site is used for demonstration of farm methods and community education;
 - c. A portion of the site is used for raised gardens for the elderly or physically challenged.
3. Proof of the above criteria shall be provided on a yearly basis.

The water service to a Community Allotment Garden is subject to all the requirements of the Bylaw and CRD Integrated Water Services Engineering Specifications and Standard Drawings. The water service shall be considered the same as a farm property service and as such, the owner will be responsible for supply and installation of the appropriate backflow preventer, as well as maintenance and testing of the backflow preventer on a yearly basis.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Juan de Fuca Water Distribution Commission:

1. Recommend that the CRD Board give three readings and approval to the attached Bylaw No. 3781, to provide a definition of Community Allotment Gardens and a special water rate for Community Allotment Gardens; and
2. Authorize staff to review and approve future requests for Community Allotment Garden status using the above Procedure for Approval of Community Allotment Garden Requests.



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Concurrence



Tim Tanton, P. Eng.
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Attachment