

SOUTHERN GULF ISLANDS ELECTORAL AREA
COMMUNITY ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, May 28th, 2020 at 1:00pm
Held by Microsoft Teams

SGI CESC Commissioners: Deb Goldman, Chair (Mayne) Ian Elliott, (Pender) Mike Hoebel (Galiano), Paul Brent (Saturna), David Howe (SGI Director), Justine Starke (CRD Staff) Melody Pender – Recorder

Guests: John Reilly, CRD Manager, Housing Planning; Christine Culham, CRD Senior Manger, Regional Housing; Ed Andrusiak, SGI Liaison: Jean Daniel Cusin, Katie Dentry, Emma Davis

1. Approval of the Agenda

MOVED by Deb Goldman to approve the Agenda as presented, **SECONDED** by Mike Hoebel

CARRIED

2. Adoption of Minutes April 28th, 2020.

MOVED by Mike Hoebel to approve as presented, **SECONDED** by Paul Brent

CARRIED

3. Treasurer Report – Ian Elliott

Financial report circulated in advance.

Adoption of Financial Report.

MOVED by Deb Goldman to approve as presented, **SECONDED** by Paul Brent

CARRIED

MOTION by Ian Elliot moved to put forward our 2021 CESC provisional budget request as the same as 2020, plus the cost of living increase as determined by CRD Finance, **SECONDED** by Paul Brent

CARRIED

MOTION by Ian Elliot moved to recommend that the \$20,000 in our budget earmarked to support the Tourism Partnership be dispersed as per agreement, **SECONDED** by Paul Brent

CARRIED

4. Directors Report: no report

5. SGI CESC Housing Strategy

- Christine Culham, Senior Manager, Regional Housing CRD and John Reilly, Project Manager, Program Housing and Initiatives CRD presented.
- Christine gave an overview of CRD housing.
- Christine asked each of the meeting attendees “from your perspective, in your own geographic area, what are the major gaps or needs?”
- Paul on Saturna said that housing for young families and young singles have a difficult time affording housing or building due to lack of employment on the island. Christine asked what employment young people would need to do to live on the island? Paul explained that young people have 4-5 jobs. It is still hard for them to generate enough income as they would on Vancouver Island or the mainland.

- Mike on Galiano said they have some existing seniors housing, and some active projects to supply housing for young families that live on island year-round. There is an acute, severe, shortage of rental housing. He is part of a group that is working on finding funding to improve the situation. On Galiano, 50 affordable rental units are needed.
- Deborah on Mayne (also chair of Mayne island housing society). The housing needs assessment done in 2018 is still applicable. The need for rental housing is critical on Mayne. In June 2018, they conducted a renter's survey and of 40 rental homes, 30 people responded. Some findings included that 75 percent of people were paying more than 30 percent of their income on rent. There are people in the summer who are couch surfing, tenting, in shacks, and without housing. Seasonal housing is common. Instability in housing is common which makes it difficult to create stability in the economy. There is no seniors housing on Mayne island. They are anticipating a need for 20 units of housing at this time. They are working on a housing project for 10 units at this time.
- For rental units, some people can afford market rates but there is no rental stock. Overall, on all islands, professionals have a difficult time living on the islands due to a lack of housing.
- John talked about creating a housing strategy. They are currently in the process of service planning. The primary focus in the coming year is to look at the housing data and better understand how to move forward. An internal project team is being put together and a project charter will be put forward in the coming year. In 2021, some funding (\$30,000) for feasibility work will be available.
- John is interested in some of the existing ideas from the SGI's such as land acquisition and supporting projects that are already going forward.
- Christine spoke to the temporary workers related to tourism and the type of housing required to speak to their needs.
- Christine said that the residential tenancy act changed. Seasonal housing or "term" housing is no longer legal. Some housing was taken off the market for this reason which has contributed to further depletion of the rental market.
- Christine mentioned that there was a call for proposals for the community housing fund from BC housing recently. As part of the housing strategy it would be beneficial to have someone from BC housing on the meetings.
- Planning and feasibility will be taken offline after the meeting.

6. Island Economic Reports: previously distributed

7. SGI CESC Economic Resiliency and Recovery Plan update

- Initiative through the CESC for economic recovery is taking place through the SGI CRC with many other community partners.
- Invitations have gone out for the sector consultation meetings. The purpose of the meetings is to find out from the community if they are interested in a regional strategy and if there is buy in to work together.
- The sector consultations will take place in the first week of June.
- The SGI CRC island coordinator staff are on until the end of June. We have taken up a lot of time for the community engagement part of recovery. The recommendation is that action is taken immediately after the report is available after the sector consultation meetings (on June 8th) to get the next steps determined as soon as possible.
- Deborah mentioned the strategic framework that was done with Justine and the liaisons and this should be remembered as well as the findings from the sector

consultations.

- Melody shared that they have heard from some sectors that have their own governance systems in place, and may not be interested in support.
- Jean Daniel mentioned that he has observed a fatigue with surveys and data collection on Mayne.
- Findings from the sector consultations will be discussed at the meeting on June 8th.

8. CESC Membership

- Justine Starke reported that there is overlap membership with the SGI CRC and the CESC that is now at 100% overlap.
- The Commission is a public body and has a requirement to do its business within its meetings, and those meetings need to be properly constituted and advertised. A quorum of the CESC is two members, and anytime you have a quorum present it is considered to be a meeting if you are advancing CESC business.
- When you are having a meeting where all commissioners are in attendance, you cannot ignore that you are commissioners. If all commissioners are in a meeting and advancing business you need to be cognizant of reporting properly.
- Recommendation that one commissioner be designated to attend working group meetings, so you do not have all commissioners present. Another option is to work through your island coordinator to get actions completed.
- Justine recommended that individuals follow up with CRD staff to understand any possible conflicts of interest.
- It is important that CESC does not get involved with vendor selection. It can request work be undertaken and assign a budget, and then staff carry out the selection of contractors in accordance with procurement requirements and the management of the work.
- Deb advised that we are anticipating having more membership on the SGI CRC board and they will not have overlapping commitments with the CESC.
- Paul asked for clarification around recusing themselves as commissioners during SGI CRC meetings.
- Deb said that there is a mitigation with the SGI CRC board, with the CESC members recusing themselves. The commissioners, board members, liaisons are all involved with the current initiative. This conversation will be taken offline
- Justine recommended to appoint someone to act as the commissioner during the meetings for the current initiative with the SGI CRC.

9. New Business:

- Emma mentioned the issues with connectivity particularly during Covid.
- Justine observed that there is grant funding for connectivity infrastructure plan, and they will be developing a plan that will support ISP's in delivering greater connectivity.

MOVED by Deborah Goldman for adjournment, **SECONDED** by Mike Hoebel

10. Next regular meeting – proposed June 16th, 2020 at 2pm.

Pender Island Economic Report - May 28th, 2020

The Pender economy continues to adapt to the Covid-19 regulations as we enter into the re-opening phase.

The local and regional economic recovery plans will be very helpful in assisting local businesses with re-starting or increasing business activity as we move towards summer.

The Community Resource Centre continues to assist persons and businesses with information regarding accessing government programs.

The Island population are doing all they can to support local business and I expect that this support will increase as businesses continue to come back towards full activity.

Respectfully, Ian Elliott

SGI-CESC Mayne Island Report

May 28, 2020

Deborah Goldman

Mayne Island community is slowly, and with caution, moving into phase 2 of the Pandemic response. Recognizing that the average age of residents is 65yrs old and many residents of all ages have co-morbidity, the community members seem to be continuing with home-based activities, social distancing, and some more adventurous are accessing commercial and food services, as well as the farmer's market which has opened up again for the season. Those most at risk are not venturing off the island unless necessary.

Retail, Restaurants, Commercial Services: Grocery stores continue to be open with restricted hours, safety rules, and other stores that have been closed are gradually opening again, with restrictions to maintain health and safety. Home Hardware: no change to email orders and parking lot pick up, no shopping in store. Some restaurants continue with only take out, one is opening the deck for patrons to sit and eat their take out, and another planning to open next week with table service. People are requested to wear masks, access hand sanitizers, and maintain distance. Many establishments have barriers at the cash.

Health care/ Personal Services: Restricted services available, and not all will be opening in the near term. ie: hair cutting but no esthetic services, no ancillary healthcare services yet, although home nursing care has been provided by phone consult.

Primary medical care: emergent concerns only. Set up for pandemic treatment, working with EOC.

Other services avail: gas station, auto repairs, construction, yard-care, services that can be done outside. **Recycling services and garbage pick-up** have been available weekly throughout.

Part time island residents are beginning to return to the island, and some **tourists** may also be visiting.

Accommodation providers are concerned about the lack of business ahead and have expressed confusion about recommendations coming from the Provincial government. SGITP has been a helpful resource for those providers and SGITP seems to be providing more information to the Tourism community.

Ferry travel has increased. Concerns have been raised by islanders who have not been able to get onto a ferry due to the scheduling changes, which includes one boat for the 4 islands. The Ferry Advisory Committee is aware and Mayne Islanders have been requested to take the late morning ferry rather than the early ferry, if possible.

CESC pandemic response on Mayne Island: The two CRC coordinators and the CRD Liaison are actively involved with the Pandemic response service organized through the SGI CRC, sponsored by the SGI-CESC. Also, there is active coordination with MI Chamber to provide

information and services to the business community. Efforts have been made to roll the survey out to businesses who are both members of the Chamber and non-members, sole proprietors and non-profits.

We are looking forward to the next phase of inter-island sector consultation and identifying what services or activities might be useful going forward.

Come back gift card campaign has been introduced to the community – many businesses have some web-based presence already. Early days in this project which will benefit from additional promotion.

Cultural: Concerts continue to be provided through Facebook, art promotions also as well as web-based shows. New art gallery is ready to open. Quilter's show is posted on the internet.

Food bank is very busy, need has increased 6 fold.

Farmer's Market opened on schedule for the May long weekend, food products only, and will continue weekly. Measures in place to ensure safety. The May Day festivities, music, and parade were cancelled on the opening day of the Farmer's Market. Fewer vendors, and fewer shoppers.

Emergency Services update meetings occurring bi-weekly discussing pandemic preparations, readiness, and interventions. All is in place for potential health emergency on the island, and for other emergencies as we are now moving into the high risk fire season. The meeting membership has broadened to now include other stakeholders, and service providers, such as the CESC, MI-CRC coordinators and the Chamber.

Meetings with Adam Olsen, MLA: Adam hosts monthly meetings with business leaders from Saltspring and SGI's to share information, and influence interventions. Recognition and concerns that island economic sustainability is heavily reliant on seasonal tourism and the tourism industry, and all other commercial island activities that benefit from tourism, is flagging due to the current pandemic restrictions on travel. While the islands require more broad-based economies for healthy economic survival, getting through this current situation is of utmost concern. Visioning to a new normal is part of the discussion.

Galiano Report for SGI CESC meeting (May 28, 2020)

Mike Hoebel

Montague Provincial Park campground is already fully booked through July. This suggests there will be significant numbers of visitors coming to Galiano over the next few months, and that will be of concern to some residents.

Results of the business survey conducted throughout the SGIs by the SGI CRC found that 8 of the 18 Galiano businesses that responded to the survey had closed due to the pandemic, and half of these were unsure that they would be able to reopen if the pandemic situation improves. Two thirds of the businesses were not sure they would be able to adapt to “physical distancing” once they reopen.

A similar survey was conducted that focused on non-profit organizations, and two of the eight organizations that responded on Galiano had to close down their operations, while the others had all scaled back their activities. Many had lost major sources of revenue through not being able to rent their premises to other groups, or from having to cancel fundraising events.

All three Galiano grocery stores are open and well-stocked. One limits customers to three at a time in the store. Five Galiano restaurants are open and offer take out, and two also provide outdoor seating for sit down meals. Five other retail stores are open, but two of these only allow pick up of goods ordered online, and others limit the number of customers in their store at any one time. The Galiano insurance office is not open for walk ins, but does deal with customers by phone. The island laundromat is open by appointment only.

The Food Bank is now open each Friday, and the food hamper delivery program continues to operate on a weekly basis. The GalianoHelps fund was created to help residents for whom the government pandemic relief funding programs aren't sufficient, or they don't qualify. The fund is operated in partnership with the local church and it has received more than \$20,000 in donations from islanders, who receive tax receipts from the church.

The Rural Islands Economic Partnership's “Islands COMEBACK’ gift certificate purchase program has just gone live, and with the strong support of the Galiano Chamber of Commerce, a number of Galiano businesses are participating.

Saturna Island Economic Report May 27, 2020

General Store: They are operating from 11am to 5pm. They've advised that their revenues are substantially improved versus last year. They are awaiting the summer months to do relevant comparisons because summer months have generally boomed whereas this year, its less likely to boom as much.

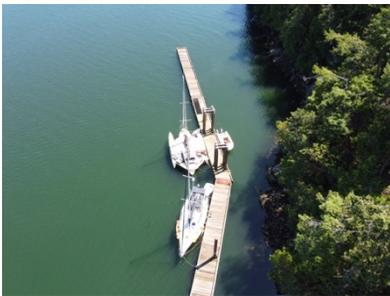
Our pub closed for May but intend to open in June, although they aren't sure precisely when. The pub has the infrastructure and protocols in place but are having some difficulty with staffing levels – government funding has somewhat reduced the enthusiasm to return to work and there is the fear associated with working in higher density areas.

Our home delivery dinner service continues (some funding by the CRD) on Tuesdays and Thursdays at \$10 per meal, and this is well subscribed.

Our café operates only on Friday and Saturday nights for takeout service – again this is fully subscribed. Previously the café offered lunch and breakfast on Wednesdays and Fridays as well.

Our contractors are all working, at least those that choose to work. Same with home repair, landscaping, window washing and other types of maintenance. Our small tech sector is booming – lots of demand.

Our NGO's (Lions Club, Community Club, Women's Service Club, etc) are all pretty quiet, most if not all events cancelled. The Lions hope to reschedule a couple of events but their wood-chopping initiative continues apace, which contributes about 50% of their annual income. Alternatively, their bus/shuttle program is severely curtailed, reducing costs. The Community Club is supported principally through revenues provided by the Saturna Lamb BBQ, which has been cancelled. They will be looking for donations and selling T-shirts this year as an alternative and expect about 50% of the net revenue based on that. And while the lamb BBQ formerly provided financial support to Saturna's medical clinic, that clinic is now on the property tax roll.



Our dock extension is in! Completed today! It will add 180 feet of moorage which is unimpeded and is not constrained on one side like our existing dock area.

The other initiative that launched on Saturna was SCIG (Saturna Community immunity Garden), which is almost fully planted. This idea was germinated in mid-April, construction began in mid-May and is virtually complete. It will deliver food first and foremost to support our food bag programs. Saturna Parks and Recreation and many residents (and non-residents) have supported the garden with construction work, materials and funding.

