

CRD Board Chair's Remarks

November 13, 2019 – check against delivery

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you again for the upcoming year.

I choose the word SERVE purposefully because that is how I continue to view the Board Chair role. My personal leadership philosophy is greatly influenced by the idea of being a servant leader. I believe a leader should be a servant first, leading from a desire to better serve others.

Last year I said I viewed the role of Board Chair as being somewhat similar to a train locomotive. Sometimes I would pull, sometimes I would push. And I think I've done that this past year.

Together we created and unanimously adopted a Strategic Plan to guide us for the next four years. We unanimously declared a Climate Emergency and asked staff to bring forward measures to help us increase our response to this important issue.

Two weeks ago we adopted a provisional budget to address the issues we have deemed significant. Since that time I have taken on the role of explaining and supporting the decision WE made collectively. While not everyone will agree with our decisions, it is important the public understands our decision-making.

This past year I have enjoyed the task of talking to our residents and the media about the CRD. It is evident to me we have more work to do in order to better explain how the CRD functions.

When residents understand what we do and how we operate there is often a clear recognition of the value we provide to the region. This outward-facing approach to communicating with the public is something I hope to continue in this role.

But let's start looking towards 2020.

Given the significant and vital work of the Parks and Environment committee, and after consulting with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the committee, I am going to create two committees like we have had before. One for Parks, one for Environment.

But in order to not have an increase of committees, I will not be re-populating the Transportation committee. After talking to the Chairs of this committee I am going to see this topic return to its former 'shome, the Planning and Protective Services committee until the province releases its much-anticipated Transportation Strategy.

When the province is ready I will call a special Committee of the Whole meeting to receive the report. Then we will determine how want to proceed; either by keeping the topic at the PPS committee or re-constitute a Transportation committee.

Directors will recall we identified Transportation as a high priority in our Strategic Plan before the province announced it would develop a South Island Strategy. It is clear that governance is not going to be a part of this current process and we will need to turn our collective heads towards this topic again if we want to see progress in coordinated Transportation planning.

I have consulted staff on these changes and they are supportive of my approach.

During this past year I have greatly valued the work of committee chairs. It is my intention to reappoint most Chairs and Vice-Chairs to their current roles unless they do not want to continue in that role. Obviously a few changes will result with the aforementioned committee adjustments.

If a Director wants to move to a different committee, that may be possible. A committee preference form will be sent out this week. However, I will be looking for movement onto a committee only if there is someone currently on the committee who is looking to move off a committee. I do not feel comfortable removing someone from a committee just because someone else wants on.

Going forward I am also going to request all Committee Chairs include their Vice-Chairs in the agenda review and committee planning meetings they have with staff. It is important that our Vice-Chairs are being prepared for the meetings in a way that is meaningful and not only if the Chair is going to be absent. It builds capacity in the organization and stronger relationships by having our Vice-Chairs better engaged in our work.

During the next 12 months we will see our committees and Board dive deeper into achieving our Strategic Initiatives and I am optimistic to see real progress made.

I hope 2020 will see significant process in our First Nations Relations objectives and I look forward to our Forum of Councils later this month. 2020 will also see the Wastewater Treatment Project become operational. The recent establishment of the Arts Facilities Select committee should also see us make progress on discussing our regional Arts Facilities and potential partnerships in the region.

These are just 3 areas of many that I am excited about for this upcoming year. I suspect you too will have a list of what you are excited about seeing achieved by the CRD.

While elections are usually the time to send a signal as to what type of leadership you want and what priorities to pursue, I want to extend an open invitation to all members of the Board to know they can always give me feedback on what we (AND I) can do better.

Thank you for your support in re-electing me Chair. I promise to lead by serving you to the best of my abilities. Now let's get on with our meeting!