

Mayor's Report April 6, 2009

SQCRD

The regional district office has been staffed by John Holland CAO, 2 finance clerks, the recycling supervisor and a part time proposal writer. This small staff is now enhanced by a new position of Deputy Administrator and John Farrell formally Gwaii Forest administrator has been selected. His knowledge of the islands, relationships with the Haida Nation and the island communities will be a benefit to us. John will be starting in early May.

The budget as well has been adopted. Residents of Queen Charlotte will be paying \$70,428 up from \$66,481 in 2008 (\$3,947). Solid waste remains a major drain on resources and our debt has increased over the past year. We have also agreed to hire an on island solid waste/recycling manager. Interviews for this position will take place shortly. Tony Sperling the landfill engineer reported on the environmental issues within our land fill and a Ministry of Environment representative attended our meeting. We will be moving forward to close out sections of the land fill and address drainage and debris issues.

SQCRD through Towns for Tomorrow was granted \$400,000 for Sandpits' Community Hall project and an infrastructure planning grant of \$10,000 for a Bike Path study for the islands.

CANADA POST ISSUES

Our mail service or lack of it remains a problem. Skidegate Health centre is one of many who is finding that their accounts payables are late resulting in extra fees. The Haida Gwaii museum was missing packages – what can we do? I will pass these issues on to our MP Nathan Cullen and forward it as well Stockwell Day who requested to be kept informed. I also suggest that everyone utilize priority or express post as though it often takes longer than 5 business days, you can demonstrate your attempt to pay on time and have the monies for express or priority post refunded if it does not arrive on time.

LAND ISSUES

The Official Community Plan will designate future areas of expansion as well as zones of commercial and industrial activity. In line with that we are asking the provincial government to release land for our maintenance yard, an industrial/commercial site and as well residential properties. It is a long process and you will be receiving progress reports along the way.

NWRHD

Meeting in Terrace with our COO Marina Ellinson was productive in establishing our relationship with Northern Health. Ms Ellinson has been on island and will be returning in May with Cathy Ulrich CAO. For those of you who have been a frustrated caller on the hospital's ancient telephone system, the good news is that a new phone system is on its way.

NORTHERN SAVINGS CREDIT UNION AGM

NSCU Mike Tarr CEO led the meeting with a positive financial report for the credit union. Ms. Grosse, the Masset manager spoke of her work in Ghana helping others establish working financial cooperatives which was very inspiring. The empty old credit union building was discussed briefly but as of yet there are no significant offers.

COMMUNITY FUTURES AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

Thank you to Art Lew for inviting myself and others to a video conference on issues for rural and remote areas changing economy. Tomorrow is part 2 with some ideas that hopefully we can apply through our own council and MIEDS. Our council is welcomed to join me.

PORT MULTIPLEX OPENING

Virtually all of council that was on island went to Port Clements to take part in the celebrations. The idea of multi use is the wave of the future and Port Edwards is examining the feasibility for its own combination of school and council building. The Port Clements building is architecturally pleasing and yet very practical.

Congratulations to Port Clements and the very many volunteers who worked on the project over a decade to bring it to fruition.

MINISTER OF FORESTS PAT BELL

The Minister was on island today to meet with his forestry department on island and to announce the funding package for Queen Charlotte and the money is already collecting interest in the bank. I joined them for lunch and discussions with local elected officials.