

MAYORS REPORT JANUARY 19, 2009

HAIDA GWAIL HIGHER EDUCATION SOCIETY

The society continues to move forward with its pilot project which will bring SFU students to the island in the spring. Planning for courses in 2010 also continues.

CANADA POST CORPORATION

Mail was brought to the islands on January 9th by seaplane - 3 bags into QC and more into Masset. Letters have been sent to the British Columbian Senators, Members of Parliament, Speaker of the House asking for their assistance in regaining our basic service. MP Nathan Cullen has been collecting stories of the impacts of our lack of service. We need to continue to pressure our government and Canada Post to inform them and demand adequate service.

BC FERRIES

The Hawk Air flight was smooth and a pleasure but the wait time for security and ferries makes the journey 5 ½ hours. At the end of the week the project was moving ahead of schedule but was still very much dependent on weather and tides.

No further word on the Kwuna.

TORCH RELAY COMMITTEE

With membership from around the islands, we are moving forward on planning the event and a celebration surrounding the lighting of the torch. Our aim is to involve our youth, encourage “physicality” and have a great island party.

NWREGIONAL HOSPITAL DISTRICT

Elections for the executive of the board resulted in Mayor Cress Farrow (Smithers) as chair and the 2 vice chairs are Harry Nyce, Nishga representative and myself. This meeting was an introduction of the protocol, procedures and regulations governing the hospital district and a discussion of the issues of each area and community. There are many commonalities – distances to travel for medical care, need for drug and alcohol and mental health treatment and programs, aging infrastructure, seniors care, recruitment and retention of health personnel to name a few. With many infrastructure projects needed and the funding formulae of 40% contribution from the hospital district, there are some major challenges ahead of us.

ISLAND DIRECTORS COMMITTEE MEETING

Directors discussed and recommended support for the Sandspit Community Hall upgrade, letter to the province to support added funds to Coast Sustainability Trust, and forest workers funding. Support for returning a MOT employee to the islands and a planning grant for feasibility study of bike paths on the islands were also recommended and approved later at the SQCRD meeting. We also heard from CUPE representative on the benefits of not contracting out the landfill and transfer stations.

SQCRD

CUPE had a presence at the meeting with pickets, and media. We had explained the night before that we were not making a decision but still gathering information. To note the SQCRD contracts for garbage pick up now and while having 3 employees at the landfill and recycling. We are exploring if there are efficiencies in service and/or expenses with a different arrangement. It is important to understand that the regional district cannot devolve itself of the responsibility of the land fill no matter how they administer and manage it and that none of the directors have any intention of eliminating recycling. CUPE agrees that the status quo is not working. SQCRD directors would be remiss not to explore all options available to us as our costs are increasing and we need improvements to the system.

The Superintendent of Waste Management reported on notification of future recycling regulations which will increase our island need for storage space.

Requests for funding were approved for the Dodge Cove Recreation Society, PR youth Soccer Association and sponsorship of the 50th All Native Basketball annual tournament. We also agreed to a strategic planning session in the spring.