



Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee

Minutes of Special Meeting

Date: May 22, 2025
Location: Electronic Meeting

Members Present: Laura Patrick, Chair
Tobi Elliott, Trustee
Susan Yates, Trustee

Staff Present: Stephen Baugh, Island Planner
Narissa Chadwick, Island Planner
Warren Dingman, Bylaw Enforcement
Lisa Millard, Meeting Administrator
Carly Bilney, Recorder

Others Present: The meeting was open to the public via livestream.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Patrick called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Chair Patrick acknowledged that the meeting was being held on the territory of the Coast Salish First Nations.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The following addition to the agenda was presented for consideration:

- Add in-camera session regarding bylaw enforcement on Mudge Island

By general consent the agenda was approved as amended.

4. BUSINESS ITEMS

4.1 2024/25 Annual Report – Approval of Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee Section - Request for Decision

GB-2025-032

It was Moved and Seconded

that the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee approves the attached text on page 4 of this agenda for inclusion in the 2024/25 Annual Report for approval by Trust Council and submission to the Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs.

CARRIED

ADOPTED

4.2 Major Project: Gabriola Island Comprehensive Official Community Plan and Land Use Bylaw Review - Resource Stewardship, Freshwater and Environmental Discussion and Options for Community Engagement – Staff Report

The Planner reviewed the report and made the following comments:

- Staff is working to integrate key feedback from focus groups and the survey
- This meeting is intended to seek additional feedback from Trustees
- From now until mid-June there is opportunity for staff to integrate additional input before seeking endorsement of policies
- Further community engagement will occur over the summer

Discussion ensued about policies related to resource stewardship and the following comments were made:

- A desire to develop small commercial nodes apart from the main village has been expressed for years, and including it in the Official Community Plan may make it happen
- Appreciation was expressed for the high level of engagement and knowledge from participants in the focus groups
- The section on agriculture is scarce and more research is needed in this area
- Staff could assemble a group to specifically address agriculture-related policy; the Gabriola Agricultural (Agi) Co-op and Gabriola Island Land Stewards Society (GILSS) should be specifically invited to share ideas
- The Official Community Plan could link to ancillary plans (e.g. Transportation Network Plan, Wildfire Resiliency Plan and Forestry Management Plan)
- Advocacy policies need specific wording about who might take on tasks that are outside the jurisdiction of the Islands Trust
- There are a number of valuable reports developed by the community that need to be acknowledged; the Official Community Plan can acknowledge the existence of and support for these plans
- The fire department suggested the Wildfire Hazard Development Permit Area (DPA) be highly educational so that those who are not within the DPA can still utilize the information
- Consideration of how policies integrate or overlap (e.g. local food production and freshwater protection) is work that will be done later in the process

Discussion ensued about freshwater policies and the following comments were made:

- Concerned interest has been expressed about addressing the interrelationship between liquid waste management and groundwater; the policy includes language that identifies the importance of exploring potential adverse affects

ADOPTED

- Staff from Islands Trust and Snuneymuxw First Nation will work together to develop the Official Community Plan policies including a Cultural Heritage section
- Policy language is vague about what constitutes a “large amount” of groundwater and should be given further consideration
- Support was expressed for addressing climate change in each section of the Official Community Plan as it relates to each topic
- With climate change and sea level rise, the setback to the sea aspect of septic systems and drain fields should be considered
- Trustees decided the density bank tool is not a useful mechanism because it does not create affordable housing densities
- There is need for focused discussion and community engagement about land-use designations including multi-use zoning
- The Official Community Plan provides opportunity to create enabling policy and could include a vision of collaborative land-use
- Multi-use zoning should be in the Official Community Plan

Discussion about environment-related policies ensued. Desire was expressed to have updated Development Permit Areas and accompanying Development Approval Information Areas. The process for creating a Development Permit Area was outlined including data gathering and analysis, considering options based on the analysis, and determining boundaries. The following comments were made:

- If the Official Community Plan is to be completed by the end of this term, there will be capacity to finalize only one or two Development Permit Areas
- In the absence of a Development Permit Area, there could be regulations that relate to environmental concerns in the Land Use Bylaw
- Consideration needs to be given to how to prioritize Development Permit Areas (e.g. which topics have the most existing data)
- Support was expressed for prioritizing the creation of Development Permit Areas for the shoreline, critical groundwater aquifers and wildfire hazard areas
- The Official Community Plan should have strong shoreline protection language and not allow hard shore armouring
- Subdivision requirements in the Official Community Plan should maximize environmental protection

GB-2025-033 It was Moved and Seconded

that the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee direct staff to provide an assessment of Development Permit Area potential related to the Official Community Plan project.

CARRIED

Discussion continued and the following comments were made:

- There is need for consistency in the policy language between sensitive ecosystems and sensitive areas

ADOPTED

- Consideration should be given to including definitions (for nearshore environment, for example)

GB-2025-034

It was Moved and Seconded

that the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee request staff prepare draft policy language related to resources stewardship, freshwater and the environment, as discussed at the May 22, 2025 Local Trust Committee Special Meeting, for broader public review.

CARRIED

The Planner reviewed the proposed next steps for engagement. Discussion followed and the following comments were made:

- Many residents had not seen the survey suggesting communication efforts are not working
- It may be difficult to garner participation from community members over the summer
- Contacts should be leveraged through the community groups that contributed to the visioning process
- Strong support was expressed to seek input from the Agi Co-op and the Gabriola Island Land Stewards Society at a joint meeting
- The website needs to be the clearest avenue for seeking input from community members

GB-2025-035

It was Moved and Seconded

that the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee endorse the Official Community Plan project summer 2025 engagement plan as presented in the staff report dated May 22, 2025.

CARRIED

GB-2025-036

It was Moved and Seconded

that the Gabriola Island Local Trust Committee request staff explore options for stronger web presence related to the Official Community Plan project and direct resources as appropriate.

CARRIED

5. CLOSED MEETING

5.1 Motion to Close the Meeting

GB-2025-037

It was Moved and Seconded

that the meeting be closed to the public in accordance with the Community Charter, Part 4, Division 3, s.90(1)(f) for the purpose of considering:

ADOPTED

- (f) law enforcement, if the council considers that disclosure could reasonably be expected to harm the conduct of an investigation under or enforcement of an enactment; and that the Recorder and Staff attend the meeting.

CARRIED

The regular meeting was closed to the public at 11:10 a.m.

5.2 Recall to Order

The meeting was recalled to order at 12:01 p.m.

5.3 Rise and Report

Chair Patrick rose and reported that open Mudge Island bylaw enforcement files were put into abeyance until the Bylaw Enforcement Review project is completed at Trust Council. She noted this does not preclude any new complaints from being submitted and files can still be opened.

6. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent the meeting was adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

Laura Patrick, Chair

Certified Correct:

Carly Bilney, Recorder