



Islands Trust Conservancy Board Minutes of a Regular Meeting

Date: Tuesday, November 19, 2024
Location: Electronic Meeting and Physical Location
Islands Trust Victoria Office
200 - 1627 Fort Street, Victoria, BC

Members Present: Risa Smith, Chair
Lisa Gauvreau, Vice Chair
Charles Kahn, Trustee (left the meeting at 11:30 a.m.)
Susan Yates, Trustee
Tanner Timothy, Trustee
Tobi Elliott, Trustee

Staff Present: Carolyn Stewart, Acting ITC Manager
Corlynn Strachan, Administrative Assistant/Recorder
Jemma Green, Covenant Management and Outreach Specialist
Kathryn Martell, Ecosystem Protection Specialist
Micaela Yawney, Communications Specialist
Mike Richards, Strategic Fund Development Specialist
Nuala Murphy, Property Management Specialist

Staff Regrets: Erica Wheeler, Species at Risk Program Coordinator

Members of the Public Present: No members of the public were in attendance

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. Chair Smith acknowledged the meeting was being conducted in the traditional territory of the Coast Salish peoples and provide a territorial acknowledgement.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

2.1 Review of Agenda and Introduction of New Items

There were no additions to the agenda.

2.2 Approval of Agenda

By general consent the agenda was approved as presented.

3. RISE AND REPORT DECISIONS FROM PREVIOUSLY CLOSED MEETING

ADOPTED

Chair Smith reported on the following item from the ITC Board October 1, 2024 closed meeting:

The Islands Trust Conservancy Board granted the request of Sallas Forest Strata, Sidney Island, by issuing a temporary waiver of terms 3.2 (b), 3.2 (j), and 3.2 (k) of covenants ES065747 (Dragonfly Pond), ES65743 (Woodpecker Pond), and ES065749 (Kingfisher Pond) for the purposes of using an excavator to extract invasive *Crataegus monogyna* (hawthorn) trees and dispose of the biomass on site by burning, subject to the following terms, as amended:

1. Every effort is made to minimize the area of soil impacted by excavator;
2. No other motorized vehicles are permitted in the covenant areas;
3. Preference is given to disposal of hawthorn in brush piles as close to treatment sites as possible and large enough to reduce the risk of regenerating cuttings;
4. The number of burn piles is minimized;
5. Burn pile locations must be pre-selected in consultation with Islands Trust Conservancy staff to avoid impacts to native plants, wildlife, and habitat structures;
6. The work must occur during the months of September–February to minimize impacts on natural values, and must be completed by the end of February 2026;
7. The coordinates of excavated trees, brush piles, and burn piles are documented and provided to the Islands Trust Conservancy Board; and
8. Every effort is made to work with Parks Canada to have experts in heritage management attend during the excavations.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

4.1 Draft Islands Trust Conservancy Board Meeting Minutes of October 1, 2024

ITC-2024-054

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board regular meeting minutes of October 1, 2024 be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

5. FOLLOW UP ACTION LIST

Received for information.

6. BUSINESS

6.1 Items for Approval

6.1.1 Proposed ITC Board Meeting Schedule from January 2025 until March 31, 2026 - Request for Decision

Acting Manager Stewart requested Board members clarify the Board's intention for the Islands Trust Conservancy liaison meetings with the Executive Committee, in terms of length of meeting and joining regular Executive Committee meetings for two of the proposed meetings.

ADOPTED

Discussion ensued around the format used in 2024 and the board agreed that ITC Board members would attend two regularly scheduled Executive Committee meetings for one hour and the ITC Board would host the Executive Committee for an in-person, 2-hour liaison meeting in July.

ITC-2024-055

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board adopt the proposed meeting dates from January 2025 until March 31, 2026 as presented.

CARRIED

ITC-2024-056

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board direct staff to schedule the 2025-26 Islands Trust Conservancy Board meeting dates of January 21, May 27, October 7, and November 18, 2025, and January 20, 2026 as electronic meetings, and list the Victoria office board room as the public meeting location.

CARRIED

ITC-2024-057

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board direct staff to schedule three in-person meeting on March 18 and July 22, 2025, and March 17, 2026.

CARRIED

6.1.2 Islands Trust Conservancy Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program (NAPTEP) Covenant Monitoring Report 2024 – Request for Decision

Covenant Management and Outreach Specialist Green presented the request for decision and provided the following highlights:

- All 26 NAPTEP covenants that we monitored were found to be in compliance.
- Four long-standing trespass cases are yet to be resolved.
- Most covenants are in need of some stewardship attention.
- Trespass and stewardship needs are going to be prioritized and addressed as budget and staff capacity permit.

Discussion ensued on:

- Off-leash dogs in the McRae Covenant and placing an article in the local Gabriola newspaper regarding off-leash dogs in covenants.
- ITC capacity for monitoring covenants
- The need for additional funding to develop the NAPTEP program.
- Sending surveys to NAPTEP covenant holders.
- Promoting the NAPTEP program to Trust Council and show how important these covenants are - to get more support.
- Engaging effectively with First Nations on covenant restoration.
- Halting acquisitions and covenants versus other creative monitoring options.

ADOPTED

- Owl's Call, Salt Spring Island, was the only covenant out of 27 not monitored as monitoring is contracted out by the owner.

ITC-2024-058

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board accept the Islands Trust Conservancy Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program (NAPTEP) Covenant Monitoring Report 2024 and direct staff to address compliance and ecological concerns as identified in the report.

CARRIED

6.1.3 Five Year Plan/First Nations Engagement Update – Request for Decision

Acting Manager Stewart suggested that the Conservancy Board submit a letter to the Minister of Municipal Affairs explaining the need for an extended timeframe and commented that when Director Frater hires the new Policy Advisor, we see if there's any chance of using some of that person's time to assist with this project.

Discussion ensued on:

- Clarifying if the Trust Area Services auxiliary position will support Island Trust Conservancy with the Five Year Plan.
- The timeline for First Nations engagement letters and follow up with the upcoming replacement of the ITC Manager in January 2025.

ITC-2024-059

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy (ITC) Board direct staff to prepare and submit a letter from the ITC Board to the Minister of Municipal Affairs that:

- reiterates the ITC's desire to undertake meaningful First Nations engagement;
- explains the ITC's staff capacity challenges;
- provides the Board's proposed ITC Plan engagement outline (November 2024), and
- seeks the Minister's support for the updated timeframe for development and submission of the next ITC Plan.

CARRIED

ITC-2024-060

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the ITC Board requests that Director Frater consider if a portion of the new Trust Area Services Policy Advisor position, supported by Trust Council in September 2024, can be targeted to assist ITC staff with the Five Year Plan/First Nations Engagement project or if ITC can seek similar funding for an ITC Policy Advisor position for this and other policy requirements.

CARRIED

6.1.4 Martin NAPTEP Covenant Application, Salt Spring Island - Request for Decision

ADOPTED

Ecosystem Protection Specialist Martell presented the request for decision noting the covenant is a smaller size than the usual, however, she feels that it meets the criteria for an exemption to that policy, particularly because of the opportunity to be engaged in a covenant with the restoration component and an ecocultural connection.

Discussion ensued on support of the application.

ITC-2024-061

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board approve the conservation proposal submitted by Tara Martin, to place a NAPTEP covenant on approximately 1 ha of Salt Spring Island, PID: 000-363-740, Lot A, Section 39, South Salt Spring Island, Cowichan District, Plan 35768, subject to review of First Nations responses and to Ministerial approval, to protect woodlands and herbaceous habitats, maturing dry Douglas-fir forest, and connectivity with adjacent protected areas.

CARRIED

6.1.5 Soil Moisture Research at Link Island Nature Reserve, Gabriola Trust Area - Request for Decision

Property Management Specialist Murphy advised that the Swiss family would like to install soil moisture and temperature data loggers at four representative monitoring locations to allow information to be collected on the regional annual cycle of winter's wet season and summer dry season.

Discussion ensued on support for this request and the importance of monitoring climate change.

ITC-2024-062

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board approve soil moisture research at Link Island Nature Reserve by the Swift family subject to First Nations consultation and the covenant holders approval.

CARRIED

6.1.6 Islands Trust Conservancy Nature Reserve Monitoring Report 2024 - Request for Decision

Property Management Specialist Murphy presented the request for decision, noted there was an error in the resolution on the report, and requested the resolution wording be changed from "and direct staff to address compliance and ecological concerns as identified in the report" to "and direct staff to address the recommendations as identified in the report." The original wording referenced "compliance" which is not relevant for nature reserves.

ITC-2024-063

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

ADOPTED

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board accept the “Islands Trust Conservancy Nature Reserve Monitoring Report 2024” and direct staff to address the recommendations as identified in the report.

CARRIED

Chair Smith commented that on page 89 of the report, under Ruby Alton Nature Reserve, Salt Spring Island, the last two sentences state “there are many house maintenance issues that should be dealt with in the next year funds allow. A revised management plan for this nature reserve is required” and advised that a revised management plan for this nature reserve is currently in preparation and actions related to the reserve should be identified in the final approved management plan.

6.1.7 2025/26 Budget Request - Request for Decision (addendum item)

Acting Manager Stewart advised the ITC budget request that went to the Financial Planning Committee in July had an error that was recently found. The Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) contribution toward salaries and benefits showed as \$110,000, however, it should have been \$102,418. Hence, the Board needs to increase the budget request for Islands Trust Conservancy salaries and benefits by \$7,582, to correct the error.

Discussion ensued on the budget line for First Nations engagement which shows \$20,000 for the current fiscal year but no budget amount for next year. Manager Stewart clarified the 2024/25 amount is intended as capacity funding that would be provided at the front end of the engagement process as a one-time contribution covering the whole project. First Nations can use it over the time period as they want.

ITC-2024-064

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board request an increase of \$7,582 to its proposed 2025/26 Salaries and Benefits budget (Islands Trust Contribution) due to an error in its early submission relative to the amount available from the Environment and Climate Change Canada Contribution Agreement for Salaries and Benefits in 2025/26.

CARRIED

Trustee Elliott advised, as a representative of the Financial Planning Committee and Executive, the budget will need to be reduced, and commented there was an alternative resolution that the ITC Board could have requested staff to look for other reductions and provide a briefing.

Discussion ensued on:

- Whether or not the Board wants staff to look for budget reductions.
- Removing the increases of \$3,000 for ITC Board training and conferences.
- Prioritizing having a Trust Area Services Policy Advisor for one year to forward First Nations engagement.

ADOPTED

ITC-2024-065

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board indicates to Trust Council and Financial Planning Committee that it considers the Trust Area Services business case for an Auxiliary Policy Advisor for 2025-2026 is critical to support ongoing intergovernmental and policy work, and

that ITC requests that a portion of an Auxiliary Policy Advisor position be dedicated to support the Conservancy's engagement with First Nations on the Conservancy's mandate and a renewed five-year plan, and,

that in light of increasing budget requests from the Conservancy, the Board indicates that its request for an increase to Board training (\$3,000) to support education on Indigenous Conserved and Protected Areas, could be de-prioritized for this fiscal.

CARRIED

6.2 Items for Discussion/Direction

6.2.1 35th Anniversary of ITC Communications & Engagement Strategy – Briefing

Islands Trust Conservancy Communications Specialist Yawney presented the briefing.

Board members commented this is a clear, well-rounded, and creative engagement strategy and thanked ITC Communications Specialist Yawney for her work on this.

6.2.2 Gambier Island Local Trust Committee Request regarding Use of Squamish Language on ITC Nature Reserve Signage on Gambier Island – Briefing

Property Management Specialist Murphy presented the briefing.

Discussion ensued on responding to the Local Trust Committee now and adding this to the work plan to be done next fiscal.

6.2.3 Annual Holiday Campaign Update

Strategic Fund Development Specialist Richards advised the annual holiday appeal this year will launch in time for Giving Tuesday on December 3rd. This will be an electronic campaign to previous donors. With next year's 35th anniversary celebration, it is more likely we can garner gifts for our Acquisition funds and the Opportunity funds, therefore, this appeal will focus on this Covenant Management and Defence fund.

6.3 Correspondence

6.3.1 N. Maddocks - Weather Modification Manipulation Not Climate Change Email, dated 20204-09-22

Received for information.

ADOPTED

6.3.2 Trust Council Letter to Minister Kang - Request for Provincial Review of Islands Trust, dated 2024-10-16

Discussion ensued on:

- Ravi Kahlon has been appointed Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs, therefore Minister Kang will not be receiving this letter.
- The letter implicates the Conservancy, however, the Conservancy was not included in this request, and the importance of consultation on such an important initiative.
- The Bowen Island Municipality was also not included in the request, and Mayor Leonard is addressing Trust Council in December. There is a letter regarding this from Bowen Island Municipality to Executive Committee (EC) on the November 20th EC meeting agenda.

Chair Smith commented she would compose a response letter and provide it to Board members for input, and that she could address Trust Council (TC) at the point on the TC agenda where the Conservancy is scheduled.

ITC-2024-066

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board request Chair Smith write a letter on behalf of the Islands Trust Conservancy to Trust Council regarding the request for a Provincial review and would appreciate consultation.

CARRIED

6.3.3 S. Brands Emails to Executive Committee, dated 2024-10-25 and 2024-11-05

Received for information. Chair Smith advised she is drafting a response.

6.4 Updates for Information

6.4.1 Public Acquisitions Report

Received for information.

6.4.2 Public Covenants Report

Received for information.

6.4.3 Budget Report

Received for information.

6.4.4 ITC Briefing to Financial Planning Committee

Received for information.

6.4.5 ITC Quarterly Report to Trust Council - 3rd Quarter Update 2024-2025

ADOPTED

Received for information.

6.4.6 Salt Spring Island LTC Planning Referral Notice: PLDVP20240185 and Staff Response

Manager Stewart advised this was another planning referral received recently with a short turn-around time to provide comments. Staff provided comments within the timeframe and it is provided for the Board's information. Recognizing the often short turn around time, Manager Stewart said she would like direction on if the Board continues to want to receive every referral or if the board wants to delegate commenting on non-controversial referrals to staff.

Discussion ensued on:

- A recent referral on Salt Spring that relates to crown land and a Trustee from Salt Spring who was wondering if the Conservancy had seen the referral.
- That the Board is not ready to defer responsibility of referrals to staff, and Board members want to see all referrals.
- Referrals could be sent to Board members with a draft response through email to determine if Board members want to address the referral as a Resolution without Meeting (RWM) without discussion, or have a special meeting when discussion is required.

Direction to staff was that the Board wants to continue to review all referrals. Staff will establish a process using regularly scheduled meetings, RWMs and/or Special Meetings.

6.4.7 Executive Committee Update

Trustee Elliott reported on the following:

- Executive Committee meets November 20th with a heavy agenda, including preparation for Trust Council's December meeting.
- The new Islands Trust Chief Administrative Officer, Rueben Bronee, will attend and address Trust Council in December.
- The Policy Statement amendment project is proceeding through Committee of the Whole discussions and the process is slow. It will go out into communities for engagement in the future and should also be referred to Islands Trust Conservancy before it is finalized.

6.4.8 Financial Planning Committee Update

Trustee Yates reported that no changes to the proposed Island Trust Conservancy budget were requested by Financial Planning Committee.

6.4.9 Trust Council Update

See Executive Committee update.

ADOPTED

6.4.10 Governance Committee Update

Trustee Gauvreau reported on the following discussion from the Nov 5th Governance Committee meeting:

- A trustee remuneration policy review is being undertaken to ensure that Islands Trust is following best practices. The Committee is reviewing the Trust Council policy and the UBCM Council and Board Remuneration Guide. The committee will forward recommendations to Trust Council with a goal to update that policy.
- Following up on a recommendation of the 2022 Governance Review, the Committee reviewed and approved a business case relating to the creation of a full-time Corporate Secretary to better support operations at Trust Council. The business case has been forwarded it to Financial Planning Committee for inclusion into the 2025-26 budget.
- The Committee reviewed and approved a business case relating to the need for regular review and updating of policies to align with best practices.
- The Committee meeting schedule for 2025/26 was set. All meetings will be continue to be held electronically.
- The Committee supported a suggestion of creating a governance manual to help streamline and organize policies in a user-friendly way.
- The next meeting is January 29th.

6.4.11 Salish Sea Conservation Forum, Galiano Island, October 18, 2024

Chair Smith reported she attended the forum on behalf of the Galiano Conservancy and noted that Trustee Elliot, three ITC staff, and Kate Emmings also attended. Chair Smith asked staff to note any highlights for the Board.

Staff Green reported that she was extremely grateful that the Galliano Conservancy coordinated and hosted the event. The forum was organized as a series of eight workshops and they did a really good job with the concurrent sessions. She attended workshops on forest restoration, integrated landscapes, deer management, voluntary conservation and stewardship on private lands, and reconciliation. They were all interesting and she was able to take away key points to apply to covenant management. There were opportunities for discussion between organizations and co-covenant holders. She commented it was a really successful event and looks forward to future forums.

Staff Martell reported the forum was excellent and it was excellent to be able to attend in person. It was helpful for Islands Trust Conservancy to be able involved with the local conservancy to strengthen our connections. She noted that in the reconciliation talk someone pointed out that the core needs of Indigenous Peoples were not being addressed well enough. This was a really valuable moment reminding the group that we need to always remember that we are still operating within colonial structures and we need to be more mindful and change them. We also need to explicitly acknowledge more frequently how harmful those practices have been and are.

ADOPTED

Trustee Smith commented the connections were unbelievable, there have been lots of follow-ups since then, and she hopes someone will do it again because these connections are very important. Trustee Smith also commented there was a very emotional moment during the reconciliation session and that the question of whether land trusts, as inherently colonial structures, are compatible with reconciliation or not. Trustee Smith noted many people are very interested in this idea and advised if any Board members wants to have a conversation about that, to let her know.

Trustee Elliott also reported on the forum and suggested there is potential to have speaker Dr. Tara Martin do a webinar on forest ecosystems, through the Islands Trust Conservancy.

6.4.12 Reconciliation and Organization Change Report

Trustee Yates reported on a webinar she attended in January 2023, sponsored by the Conservation through Reconciliation Partnership and Sustainability Network, and hosted by Chloe Dragon Smith from the Dene Nation in Northwest Territories. She felt it was a very good webinar. Trustee Yates advised she will forward her notes to Board members by email.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND DELGATIONS - None

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1 ITC Board Chair Update

Chair Smith provided a reminder that there will be an election for Chair and Vice Chair in January 2025, and advised she will be stepping down as Chair. She noted that she wanted to provide notice to other members so they could consider whether they would like to be the Chair for 2025. Chair Smith will remain on the board, however, has too many other commitments to continue with the extra work required of a Chair.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held electronically on January 21, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

10. CLOSED MEETING

10.1 Motion to Close the Meeting

ITC-2024-067

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the meeting be closed to the public in accordance with the Community Charter, Part 4 Division 3, section: 90 (1) (d) the security of the property of the Islands Trust Conservancy board; (e) the acquisition, disposition or expropriation of land or improvements, if the board considers that disclosure could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the Islands Trust Conservancy board; (i) the receipt of advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose; (k) negotiations and related discussions

ADOPTED

respecting the proposed provision of a service that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the Board, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the Islands Trust Conservancy if they were held in public; and that staff be invited to remain in the meeting.

CARRIED

11. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent the meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Risa Smith, Chair

Certified Correct:

Corlynn Strachan, Administrative Assistant/Recorder