



Islands Trust Conservancy Board

Minutes of a Regular Meeting

Date: Tuesday, January 21, 2025
Location: Electronic Meeting and physical location
Islands Trust Victoria Office
200 - 1627 Fort Street, Victoria, BC

Members Present: Lisa Gauvreau, Chair
Tanner Timothy, Vice Chair
Charles Kahn, Trustee
Risa Smith, Trustee
Susan Yates, Trustee
Tobi Elliott, Trustee

Staff Present: Carolyn Stewart, Acting ITC Manager
Corlynn Strachan, Administrative Assistant/Recorder
David Marlor, Director of Legislative and Information Services
Erica Wheeler, Species at Risk Program Coordinator
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
Rueben Bronee, Chief Administrative Officer

Staff Regrets: Clare Frater, Director, Trust Area Services

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m.

2. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Trustee Kahn acknowledged that the meeting was being held in the traditional territory of the Coast Salish First Nations.

3. INTRODUCTION OF NEW ISLANDS TRUST CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Chair Smith welcomed Chief Administrative Officer Rueben Bronee. Chief Administrative Officer Bronee provided an introduction and commented that he comes to the Islands Trust after 26 years in the core BC Public Service, and he looks forward to learning more about the tremendous work the Conservancy does.

ADOPTED

4. ELECTIONS

4.1 Election of Chair

Policy 3.1.2 Islands Trust Conservancy Board and Committee Elections states the elections for Chair and Vice Chair will be held at the first regular meeting of the Board of each calendar year.

Director Marlor reviewed the election process and asked for nominations for the Islands Trust Conservancy Board Chair. Trustee Elliott nominated Trustee Gauvreau and Trustee Kahn seconded the nomination. Trustee Gauvreau accepted the nomination.

Director Marlor called a second and third time for nominations and, hearing none, declared Trustee Gauvreau acclaimed as Islands Trust Conservancy Board Chair.

4.2 Election of Vice-Chair

Director Marlor asked for nominations for the Islands Trust Conservancy Board Vice-Chair. Trustee Elliott nominated Trustee Timothy and Trustee Yates seconded the nomination. Trustee Timothy accepted the nomination.

Director Marlor called a second and third time for nominations and, hearing none, declared Trustee Timothy acclaimed as Islands Trust Conservancy Board Vice-Chair.

5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

5.1 Introduction of New Items

The following additions to the agenda and reordering of items were presented for consideration:

- Add item 11.1 Trustee Smith Attendance at the Financing Conservation of Private Lands Conference to New Business
- Add item 11.2 Priority Acquisitions Fund Proposal to New Business
- Add item 11.3 Off-leash Dogs in the McRae Covenant and Placing an Article in the Gabriola Sounder to New Business
- Move item 9.2.2 Work Plan Briefing to 9.1.1 and change the remaining numbering

5.2 Approval of Agenda

By general consent, the agenda was approved as amended.

6. RISE AND REPORT DECISIONS FROM PREVIOUSLY CLOSED MEETING

Chair Gauvreau reported on the following items from the November 19, 2024 Islands Trust Conservancy closed meeting:

- The Islands Trust Conservancy Board approved Part II of the Sallas' invasive plant management plan for Burnt Snag (ES65741), Dragonfly Pond (ES065747), Kingfisher Pond (ES065749), and

ADOPTED

Woodpecker Pond (ES65743) covenant areas, and issued a temporary waiver of covenant terms 3.2(d) and 3.2(k) subject to terms and conditions, consistent with the approved Forest Restoration Strategy of the Sidney Island Ecosystem Restoration Plan.

- The Islands Trust Conservancy Board approved spending up to \$2,000 from existing budgets towards the cost of an Ecological Gifts Program appraisal for a Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program (NAPTEP) covenant on Gabriola Island.
- The Islands Trust Conservancy Board approved the decisions to:
 - obtain a hazmat analysis for the Ruby Alton Nature Reserve house;
 - engage a demolition contractor to provide an estimate of demolition of the house and all structures.

7. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

7.1 Draft ITC Board Regular Meeting Minutes from November 19, 2024

By **general consent** the Islands Trust Conservancy meeting minutes of November 19, 2024 were adopted as presented.

8. FOLLOW UP ACTION LIST

- **Crystal Mountain Society (Item 1 from 25-May-2021)**
Ecosystem Protection Specialist Martell advised that the Galiano Local Trust Committee has passed a resolution that involves consulting with the Islands Trust Conservancy about whether Islands Trust Conservancy could be an intermediary landholder in the transfer, and this might come to the Board for an official response, noting that Islands Trust Conservancy can only provide advice and guidance but cannot take on the land for transfer to the Penelakut.

Acting Manager Stewart provided the following updates:

- **Ruby Alton Management Plan (Item 6 from 01-Oct-2024)** - The rise and report has been completed and this item will be removed from the next Follow up Action List report.
- **Stewart Brands Response Letter (Item 5 from 01-Oct-2024)** - The response letter to Stewart Brand's letter has been drafted by Chair Smith and will be sent to the Ecosystem Protection Specialist for review.
- **Staff to prepare and submit letter to the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Item 4 from 19-Nov-2024)** - The letter has been drafted and is with Director Frater for review. Discussion ensued on removing the topic of Islands Trust Conservancy staff capacity challenges in the letter, rephrasing the letter to focus on the positive work the Conservancy is doing, and on the growth required to do so. Board members requested to see the letter prior to submission.

9. BUSINESS

9.1 Items for Approval

9.1.1 2025-26 Annual Work Plan – Briefing

ADOPTED

Acting Manager Stewart provided an overview of the work plan items, commented 90% of staff time is taken up with day-to-day operations, and noted the intent of this plan is to provide the new Acting ITC Manager and the Board with a sense of what work is required over the next fiscal year.

Discussion ensued on:

- Board members thanked Acting Manager Stewart for her clear, organized, insight.
- Structural capacity issues of the Conservancy and considering long range organizational planning as a conversation with Executive Committee and Trust Council.
- Whether or not the Conservancy should continue initiating covenant and acquisitions applications as they are received, and not taking on additional work unless there are significant changes to the budget and capacity concerns.
- Assigning a Board member to attend First Nations meetings to listen to First Nations feedback, help the Board gain understanding of First Nations interests, and engage with First Nations effectively.
- Updating the Ruby Alton process in the Work Plan by hiring a demolition company that completes all work as one package, including estimate, hazmat, permits, demolition, and removal.
- Setting the long-range organizational planning item as a discussion item on the next Islands Trust Conservancy-Executive Committee joint meeting agenda, scheduled April 23, 2025.

9.1.2 Letter of Support for Raincoast Conservation Foundation's application to Intact Insurance's Climate Resilience Grant - Request for Decision

Raincoast sent a request asking for support for a grant they are applying to from Intact Insurance Company. They are planning to do work on climate change adaptation; particularly fire management, including technical training targeted to local governments, staff, and elected officials.

Discussion ensued on support for the request and a spelling error was identified on the letter. It was suggested that “Biogeoglimcatic” be corrected to “Biogeoclimatic”.

ITC-2025-001

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board approve the letter of support for Raincoast Conservation Foundation’s application to Intact Insurance’s Climate Resilience Grant and direct staff to provide it on behalf of the Islands Trust Conservancy Board.

CARRIED

9.1.3 Owl’s Call NAPTEP Covenant, Salt Spring Island, Monitoring Report 2024 – Request for Decision

ADOPTED

Covenant Management and Outreach Specialist Green presented the request for decision.

ITC-2024-002

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board accept the third-party 2024 monitoring report for Owl's Call Natural Area Protection Tax Exemption Program (NAPTEP) Covenant, Salt Spring Island and direct staff to add a summary of this report to the 2024 Islands Trust Conservancy NAPTEP Covenant Monitoring Report as an addendum.

CARRIED

Trustee Smith declared a conflict of interest, as she is a on the board of the Galiano Conservancy, and recused herself from the meeting at 11:04 a.m.

9.1.4 Galiano Conservancy Association – Vanilla Leaf Nature Reserve Project - Request for Decision

Property Management Specialist Murphy presented the request for decision.

Trustee Yates declared a conflict of interest, as she is a member of the Galiano Conservancy, and recused herself from the meeting at 11:08 a.m.

ITC-2024-003

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board approve the request by the Galiano Conservancy Association to include Vanilla Leaf Land Nature Reserve, Galiano Island, in Galiano Conservancy Association's application for a Section 11 Change Approval under the Water Sustainability Act. Any work to be done in Vanilla Leaf Land Nature Reserve will be subject to further information and approval by the Islands Trust Conservancy Board if and when the application is approved.

CARRIED

Trustee Yates rejoined the meeting at 11:12 a.m.

Trustee Smith rejoined the meeting at 11:16 a.m.

9.1.5 Development Permit Referral, Bowen Island Municipality: DP-2024-0196, 1273 Hikers Trail Road - Request for Decision

Property Management Specialist Murphy presented the request for decision.

Discussion ensued on:

- Using stronger language about requiring signage so the applicant ensures there is no trespassing onto David Otter Nature Reserve.
- Emphasizing that David Otter Nature Reserve is a nature reserve closed to the public.

ADOPTED

- Revising the resolution to ask the applicant to hire an arborist to determine if there are any danger trees, and avoid those danger trees in any new infrastructure.
- Whether or not Islands Trust Conservancy has authority on where the owner can place their infrastructure on the property.
- Recommending that infrastructure be out of the path of potential danger trees because David Otter Nature Reserve is closed to the public with no neighbouring infrastructure close by, so no danger tree management is done currently.

ITC-2025-004

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board direct staff to draft a letter to the Bowen Island Municipality regarding Referral BO-DP-2024-0196 indicating that, based on the information provided and proposed recommended measures to avoid and/or minimize potential impacts, the Board has the following comments to add to ensure the project will not negatively impact the David Otter Nature Reserve (DONR):

- The south boundary of the applicant property which abuts DONR, is considered a 'rear lot line', which requires a setback of 7.5 m; no infrastructure should be built within this setback.
- The applicant needs to arrange an analysis, conducted by an agreed upon qualified arborist, with agreed upon timing, to determine if any trees currently on DONR may cause a danger to the new infrastructure, and what work they would do on their land to avoid any danger.
- The applicant needs to ensure that no trails or infrastructure lead onto DONR, or are so close to the boundary that they might encourage people to trespass onto DONR. The applicant will install boundary signage and possibly barriers.
- The applicant must ensure protections are put in place to protect Northern Red-legged Frog (*Rana aurora*) during construction. They are known to be present in DONR and are very likely to be on the applicant's property as well.
- DONR is part of the federal Ecological Gift Program and Bowen Island Municipality holds covenants on DONR protecting it further (Covenants BA146488, BA146494, and BA146495). The importance of protecting DONR should be of primary consideration in assessing this application.

CARRIED

9.1.6 Rezoning Application Referral, Bowen Island Municipality: 561/564 Collins Road – Request for Decision

Covenant Management and Outreach Specialist Green and Ecosystems Protection Specialist Martell presented the request for decision.

Discussion ensued on:

ADOPTED

- Using the alternative recommendation as ITC is not generally interested in taking on covenant land that includes public trails.
- Investment of staff time when there is not actually a proposal ready yet.
- Eliminating the chance to have the conversation to help them develop the application could result in an application that is not great.
- Whether or not the board would see the application again in the application process.
- Rewording item c regarding creating a new trail, insert “potential negative impacts” of creating a new trail.

ITC-2025-005

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board direct staff to respond to the Bowen Island Municipal Council referral regarding bylaw 671 and 672, indicating:

- a. The southern parcel of this property is adjacent to a conservation covenant held by Islands Trust Conservancy. Any residential development on this lot risks direct and indirect intentional and unintentional impacts on the surrounding protected areas, potentially reducing their ecological integrity and biodiversity. However, the ITC Board does not have any specific concerns with this rezoning and subdivision application, and finds that ITC interests are unaffected by bylaw 671 and bylaw 672;
- b. ITC Board commends BIM's 50% protection goal for rezoning applications, and emphasizes that ecological conditions and biodiversity values should be prioritized when determining protected area locations and boundaries. The ITC Board encourages BIM to pursue park land dedication to better protect valuable habitat, particularly for the southern portion of the property where there is a potential to expand or buffer Crippen Regional Park.
- c. BIM should consider the impacts of creating a new trail through an undeveloped area on biodiversity and habitat integrity, and if a trail is approved protection measures should be required to limit impact.
- d. Should BIM and the landholder decide to pursue conservation covenants as the habitat protection mechanism, with ITC as the covenant holder, ITC offers the following comments:
 - i. The landholder could submit a Conservation Proposal to the ITC Board for consideration, as per the ITC policies and requirements outlined on the ITC webpage.
 - ii. ITC prioritizes areas for protection based on the Regional Conservation Plan, analysis of regional conservation and biodiversity values, and considering staff and organizational capacity at the time of application.
 - iii. Generally, the ITC Board does not accept proposals for protected areas less than 2 hectares in size, although exceptions may be made if the property contains significant habitat for species at risk or a significant number of species at risk, if the property adds an area to an existing adjacent or nearby protected area, is an islet or small island, or

ADOPTED

contains an ecosystem that is not represented in existing protected areas in that local trust area.

- iv. The ITC's priority with covenants is the protection of ecological values and in general ITC is not interested in taking on covenanted land that includes public trails.

CARRIED

ITC-2025-006

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy amend point c. on resolution ITC-2025-005 to the following wording: BIM should consider the potential negative impacts of creating a new trail through an undeveloped area on biodiversity and habitat integrity. If a trail is approved protection measures should be required to limit impact.

CARRIED

ITC-2025-007

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board direct staff to respond to Bowen Island Municipal Council regarding a conservation proposal indicating that the landholder would need to submit a Conservation Proposal to the ITC Board for consideration, as per the ITC policies and requirements outlined on the ITC webpage, before the Board can confirm if it would consider taking proposed covenants on.

CARRIED

9.1.7 2025/26 ITC Budget Request – Trust Council Resolution – Request for Decision

Acting Manager Stewart presented the request for decision and asked if there were any additional changes requested, given Trust Council's request that its committees look at their budgets again.

Discussion ensued on:

- Clarifying the allocated budget amount for the Species at Risk (SAR) Program contribution, the reduction in the amount, and that it looks like we are replacing the SAR grant funds with core budget.
- The need for additional funding to cover professional services (contracted work) and the rising costs of legal work.
- The salaries and benefits line item, including budget amounts for the Team Lead position (which is still vacant), potential savings in the salaries and benefits budget due to unfilled ITC positions, and the expectation that ITC will not fully utilize the salaries and benefits budget in 2024-25, with any unused funds not being carried over into 2025-26. The amounts have gone to offset other requests.
- Both the communications budget and the training budget amounts were reduced, which impacts plans to invite a specialist or expert to speak on Indigenous protected and conserved areas.

ADOPTED

- There appear to be no further areas to cut from the budget, and the plan is to move this budget forward for discussion at the Financial Planning Committee meeting. Trustee Yates noted she would be unable to attend, and Trustee Elliott offered to step in.
- Board members questioned if the ITC Board member who sits on the Financial Planning Committee is unavailable can an alternative representative be appointed to attend in their place? Due to time limitations, this question was not addressed.

ITC-2025-008

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board provide an updated 2025/26 budget request to the Financial Planning Committee and Trust Council that addresses the changes and comments made by the Board November 19, 2024 (resolutions ITC-2024-064 and ITC-2024-065).

CARRIED

Acting Manager Stewart mentioned that today is her last day with ITC, and since Director Frater is away, she requested the Administrative Assistant to forward this briefing to the Director of Financial and Employee Services after the meeting.

9.2 Items for Discussion/Direction

9.2.1 Invitation to Join the Centre for Land Conservation's Land Trust Certification Pilot Program – Briefing

This item was deferred.

9.2.2 North Pender Island Bylaw 235 Referral – Briefing

This item was deferred.

9.3 Correspondence

9.3.1 ITC Board Letter to Trust Council regarding Consultation on Provincial Review Request and the Role of the Conservancy, dated 2024-11-25

Received for information.

9.4 Updates for Information

9.4.1 Public Acquisitions Report

Received for information.

9.4.2 Public Covenants Report

Received for information.

ADOPTED

9.4.3 Budget Report

Received for information.

9.4.4 2024 Work Plan Update

Received for information.

9.4.5 Emergency Danger Tree Removal, Ruby Alton NR, Salt Spring Island - Briefing

Received for information.

9.4.6 Executive Committee Update

Trustee Elliott provided the Executive Committee update to all members by email, and did not provide a verbal update due to a time constraint with the meeting.

9.4.7 Financial Planning Committee Update

There was no update provided.

9.4.8 Trust Council Update

There was no update provided.

9.4.9 Governance Committee Update

There was no update provided, as there has not been a Governance Committee meeting since the last ITC Board meeting.

10. PUBLIC COMMENTS AND DELEGATIONS

There were no members present as attendees.

11. NEW BUSINESS

11.1 Trustee Smith attendance at the “Funding our Future: Financing Conservation on Private Lands” conference, Feb. 27, 2025

Trustee Smith advised she had received an invitation to this conference, felt it would be good to have representation from the Conservancy, and commented there is no cost for attendance though there is the expectation of some travel.

Acting Manager Stewart confirmed there is money remaining in the board training budget for this amount.

ITC-2025-009

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

ADOPTED

that the Islands Trust Conservancy Board support the attendance of Trustee Smith at the “Funding our Future: Financing Conservation on Private Lands” conference on Feb. 27, 2025, in Esquimalt, to a cost not to exceed \$300.

CARRIED

11.2 Priority Acquisitions Fund Account Discussion

Acting Manager Stewart advised the ITC Board of an idea to establish a Priority Acquisitions Fund that would act as a source of funds for ITC to use if a priority acquisition arises that ITC may wish to acquire. This would be similar in nature to the Opportunity Fund that ITC currently uses to help others acquire lands in the Islands Trust Area. There is no specific project at the time that donations are made. Donations are to help ensure funds are available when a project comes forward.

Acting Manager Stewart commented that the Board’s approval is required to set up a new fund, and it would be a prime time to launch this fund as part of the 35th anniversary celebrations.

Discussion ensued on:

- The practice of securing more land without an ITC Plan and that this may not be the best timing for this without having a five-year plan in place.
- Engaging with First Nations about the future of conservation and securing lands in partnership with First Nations.
- Speaking with Director Mobbs regarding this fund.
- Board members commented they are supportive of more information and suggested that staff provide a briefing.

Acting Manager Stewart advised she would pass this information on to Director Frater and the new Acting ITC Manager.

11.3 Off Leash Dogs in McRae NAPTEP Covenant, Gabriola Island

Trustee Yates commented that there are concerns regarding off-leash dogs in the McRae NAPTEP covenant on Gabriola Island.

Covenant Management and Outreach Specialist Green advised that staff notified the Gabriola Historical and Museum Society (the landholder) of these concerns in the annual monitoring report, and that staff recommended additional signage and are working on an article for the local newspaper. To date there has been no response from the landholder.

12. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on March 18, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. This meeting will take place in person in the Victoria boardroom.

13. CLOSED MEETING

13.1 Motion to Close the Meeting

ADOPTED

ITC-2024-010

It was MOVED and SECONDED,

that the Islands Trust Conservancy 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 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 remain in the meeting.

CARRIED

14. ADJOURNMENT

By general consent, the meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

Lisa Gauvreau, Chair

Certified Correct:

Corlynn Strachan, Administrative Assistant/Recorder