



Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee Minutes of Special Meeting

Date: Thursday, February 26, 2026
Location: Electronic via Zoom

Members Present: Timothy Peterson, Chair
Laura Patrick, Local Trustee

Members Regrets: Jamie Harris, Local Trustee

Staff Present: Chris Hutton, Regional Planning Manager
Warren Dingman, Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement Manager
Rob Pingle, Planning Technician
Carly Bilney, Recorder

Others Present: Earl Rook, Capital Regional District Salt Spring Island
Local Community Commission Chair
Gayle Baker, Capital Regional District Salt Spring Island
Local Community Commissioner
Brian Webster, Capital Regional District Salt Spring Island
Local Community Commissioner
Ben Corno, Capital Regional District Salt Spring Island
Local Community Commissioner
Gary Holman, Capital Regional District Salt Spring Island
Electoral Area Director
Stephen Henderson, Capital Regional District Senior Manager
Southern Gulf Islands and Salt Spring Local Community
Commission

There were seven (7) members of the public in attendance

1. Territorial Acknowledgement – Call To Order

Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. He acknowledged that the meeting was being held in the territory of Coast Salish First Nations.

2. Approval Of Agenda

A suggestion was made to change Section 3.2 (SSI Housing) to SSI Housing/OCP Update.

By general consent, the agenda was adopted as amended.

3. Special Meeting Matters

3.1 Protocol Agreement Update Verbal Discussion

Commissioner Henderson provided an update on the Protocol Agreement that was prepared by the Capital Regional District. He explained that it is currently in the draft stage and undergoing review by the Islands Trust legal team, and that the aim is not to revise the protocol, but to prepare a new letter of understanding. Discussion ensued and the following comments were made:

- A comment was made that policies between the Local Community Commission and the Local Trust Committee are intimately linked and there should be a mechanism for having supporting policies that help both organizations
- Comments were made about the referral process and the need to ensure local elected officials are included in referrals
- A comment was made that both organizations have their own guidelines that may not always intersect and clarity about where work can be done together would be useful

3.2. SSI Housing/OCP Update Verbal Discussion

Commissioner Henderson provided an update on the Integrated Housing Strategy. Discussion ensued and the following comments were made:

- The Planner noted there is a legislative requirement in the adoption process to refer to other agencies, including the Capital Regional District, for a 60-day formal referral period, and he indicated the Local Community Commission could wait for an invite from the Local Trust Committee before submitting recommendations
- The Planner reported that the project consultants for the Official Community Plan review will not be renewing their contract for the next fiscal year
- A Commissioner commented that the Integrated Housing Strategy is expected to be completed in time to inform housing policy in the Official Community Plan review process; and the departure of the project consultant may provide an opportunity to better align the timing of the Integrated Housing Strategy, the Trust Policy Statement and the Official Community Plan review
- A suggestion was made to have a joint meeting of the Local Community Commission and the Local Trust Committee to workshop specific details of the draft Integrated Housing Strategy and the Official Community Plan

Discussion ensued about a request made for data related to legalized cottages and suites. The following comments were made:

- A comment was made about the importance of understanding what current changes allow in order to effectively consider new land use changes, and the Planner indicated that is a substantial data analysis
- The Planner noted the value of zoning analysis for density or potential is looking at what the current housing need is and what the community is willing to zone and designate, how much density, and where.

- A comment was made that there is data about how many legal suites have been approved, and the number is quite small
- A suggestion was made to look for incentives to encourage land owners to renovate or build suites

3.3. Short Term Vacation Rentals Verbal Discussion

Commissioner Henderson provided an update on short term vacation rentals since Salt Spring Island opted into the legislation and since the Province instituted a registration process. He outlined discussions held about the feasibility of business licensing and the proposed next steps including more consultation and public engagement prior to 2027.

In response to a question from a Commissioner about whether the provincial registry has assisted in the enforcement of the land use bylaw, Bylaw Compliance and Enforcement Manager Dingman made the following comments:

- The provincial registry has been a very helpful tool to determine the total number of operations and who is actually a resided owner complying with the regulations
- The Local Trust Committee will decide on next steps about how to proceed with enforcement at the next meeting
- There are some operations that are not registered and should be, and some that are not lawful that the province can deregister or remove from online listings
- There are currently 226 operations registered with the provincial data portal
- Provincial staff members have been very helpful
- The provincial enforcement team has not received any complaints from the Gulf Islands regarding operations

A Commissioner expressed support for more thorough analysis of information and suggested the number of short-term vacation rentals will likely be much higher during the busy season.

3.4. SSI Harbour Management Verbal Discussion

Commissioner Henderson indicated the Local Community Commission is planning another Harbours Workshop for (tentatively) April 16 with the hope that federal, provincial and Islands Trust representatives will participate. In response to a question from a Trustee, Commissioner Henderson noted that First Nations were invited to the workshop last year and were in good attendance though capacity funding was not provided.

A Commissioner commented on recent efforts by the federal government to clean up Ganges Harbour.

3.5. Watershed Protection Verbal Discussion

Commissioner Henderson reported on a meeting between Local Community Commission and Capital Regional District staff to discuss the Salt Spring Island Water Protection Authority (SSIWPA) report and actions that have since been taken.

In response to a question about the possibility of reconvening a SSIWPA-like group in the future, a Trustee commented that while it remains an identified priority project of the Local Trust Committee it has been removed from the 2026-2027 budget because it cannot be resourced by staff.

3.6. Future Joint Meeting Schedule Verbal Discussion

Discussion was held about possible topics for the next meeting agenda, and the following comments were made:

- A suggestion was made to incorporate a housing discussion into the next meeting in a workshop format
- A comment was made that the Local Community Commission housing strategy should be far enough along for thorough discussion at the next meeting

Discussion was held about advocacy of the Speculation and Vacancy Tax. The following comments were made:

- Director Holman commented that the Capital Regional District Board requested inclusion in the Speculation and Vacancy Tax for the electoral area, and the Local Community Commission passed a motion requesting that the Trust considers joint advocacy
- A Trustee noted that the Local Trust Committee passed a motion to send a letter to the former Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs to consider the tax, a letter was sent to the Minister of Finance and a response has since been received.
- A Trustee noted the issue has not moved forward due to federation versus Local Trust Committee issues, and, as it has been years since Trust Council has weighed in on the issue (in 2017), there may be opportunity for an updated position from Trust Council
- A Commissioner commented that the Speculation and Vacancy Tax issue is specific to Salt Spring Island and does not spread across the Trust Area
- Director Holman indicated he would forward the last correspondence with the former Minister of Finance who outlined criteria to be considered regarding the tax
- Some Commissioners expressed support of joint advocacy by the Local Trust Committee, the Capital Regional District, and the Local Community Commission
- A Trustee expressed a need to understand data about how the tax would impact Salt Spring and to ensure it does not worsen the equity issue on the island

4. Adjournment

By general consent the meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Timothy Peterson, Chair

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

Carly Bilney, Recorder