

June 27, 2019

Proposal for Cortes Island Community Hall Service Moving Forward

Campbell River, BC – The Strathcona Regional District Board is moving forward with a proposal to establish a service to fund community halls on Cortes Island.

Earlier today, the Strathcona Regional District Board authorized that Bylaw No. 341, which would establish a community hall service for Cortes Island, proceed to a vote of the electors.

This direction follows extensive consultation with the Cortes Island community, including a forum on June 6, 2019 at which time residents and ratepayers were invited to provide input on the community hall service initiative and in particular, the rationale, boundaries, cost, method of taxation and implementation schedule.

The meeting was well attended by members of the community and considerable discussion was generated regarding the community hall service initiative.

Based on the comments, questions and concerns expressed through the public forums, it was apparent that the community hall service bylaw should include:

- the Whaletown and Mansons Landing community halls and not establish separate taxation areas for those facilities;
- all of Electoral Area B (Cortes Island) and not exclude specific areas or types of properties;
- the upper limit for annual requisition should be set at \$80,000 based on the current operating needs expressed by the halls, the need to cover repayment of referendum (assent voting) costs, and the service's share of Regional District overhead for managing the service;
- there should be provision for dealing with cost inflation over time; and
- taxation should be based on assessed values of real property rather than a uniform parcel tax.

“We are pleased to move forward on Cortes Island business items” says Strathcona Regional District’s Chair Michele Babchuk. “We are cognizant that this has felt like a very long process for the citizens of Cortes Island but expect that voting opportunities will take place in Fall of 2019. “

The Strathcona Regional District is a partnership of four electoral areas and five municipalities providing services to approximately 44,000 residents.

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