

# DISTRICT QUARTERLY

April-June 2010



The District of Sooke's Council Newsletter

Newsletter #23

## District of Sooke

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## Mayor's Message:

Spring is here...Sooke always looks the best in springtime. Council has been very busy since the last newsletter. We have been working on a new amenities policy, the completion of Stage 3 (Sewer) and Stage 2&3(Rainwater) of the Liquid Waste Management Plan and of course the Official Community Plan. These plans will lay the foundation for infrastructure projects and provide staff with direction for budgeting. Speaking of budgets, the Finance Committee has recommended the 2010 operating and the 5 year capital plan budget to Council. At the time of writing this the increase is 4.81%, which includes funding for many capital projects that the community and Council have been planning for. The public open house to review the budget is April 19<sup>th</sup> and Council must adopt the budget by May 10.

Council was pleased to honor 32 volunteers at the District of Sooke's volunteer appreciation celebration Sunday March 21<sup>st</sup>. It is the fabulous volunteers we have in this community that make Sooke such a great place to live. I encourage everyone to drop by the District office to view the display as it shows how this community was built by contributions from all these wonderful people. Sooke is the Volunteer Capital of the World.

Council would also like to thank the over 65 volunteers that built and worked the fabulous display we had at the Richmond OZONE during the Vancouver 2010 Olympics. They worked long hours in the cold, rain and sunshine, but always had a

smile on their faces and I believe they enjoyed every minute. Richmond advised us that there were 500,000 residents and guests that went through the BC Streets. It was definitely money well spent in order to showcase Sooke to the world.

Council would like to congratulate Chief Gordon Planes on being re-elected as Chief of the T'Souke Nation and his new Councillors Larry Underwood and Bonnie Hill. We look forward to working with them.

Council would like to thank Juan de Fuca Regional Director Mike Hicks for his funding contribution to the school crossing guards and for his vision and hard work with CRD Parks in acquiring the forest lands in the Jordon River area.

I would also like to thank the property owners in the area of the new downtown for agreeing to work with staff in the planning of the new town center. We appreciate your willingness to participate.

The construction of the new hotel and conference centre is coming along on time and the owners have announced that Ric's Grill will be the food supplier for the restaurant and the lounge as well as food service to the conference center. We look forward to the opening in January 2011.

Mayor Janet Evans

## Official Community Plan 2010 Update

The Public Hearing for Bylaw No. 400, *Official Community Plan, 2010* was held on March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2010. The OCP has now been forwarded to the Capital Regional District Board for approval of the Regional Context Statement. Upon approval, the District of Sooke Council will consider third reading and adoption of the bylaw -- tentatively scheduled for May, 2010.



## Business Licence Update

As of January 1, 2008, in accordance to Bylaw No. 301, *Business Licence Bylaw, 2007*, all businesses operating in the District of Sooke are required to be in possession of a valid Business Licence or a valid Inter-municipal Business Licence. Business licences can be obtained from the District of Sooke office, or online at [www.sooke.ca](http://www.sooke.ca). These licences are valid for one calendar year (January – December) and must be renewed each year. Business Licence renewals were due on January 31, 2010. *Renewal payments made after March 31, 2010 will be subject to fines.*

In an effort to ensure an appropriate standard of health and safety is being maintained at all public places of business, District staff will be starting a program of routine site visits throughout 2010. Should it be determined that a business is operating without a valid licence or in contravention to any Bylaws or Amendments relating to businesses in the District of Sooke, fines may be issued. At present, there are 464 businesses licenced in the District of Sooke. In 2010, our goal is to increase this number through the business licence program to the benefit of the entire business community and facilitate growth in our community.

Offence	Fine
No business licence	Fine equal to double the applicable licence fee
Operating in contravention of Business Licence	\$200.00
Failure to notify change of business address	\$50.00

## Pre-authorized 2011 Tax Payment Plan

You can prepay your 2011 property taxes on a monthly basis starting August 3, 2010. This is an optional payment plan which provides an opportunity to make equal monthly payments for property taxes. Payments will be processed and collected on the first business day of each month commencing in August of the year preceding the tax due date and ending in May of the year in which the taxes become due. Application form and additional information may be obtained from the municipal office or online at [www.sooke.ca](http://www.sooke.ca).

## Electronic Home Owner Grant

Did you know that you can claim your 2010 Home Owner Grant Online? You will need to use your property folio number and access code printed on the tax notice. Then visit our website [www.sooke.ca](http://www.sooke.ca) before the property tax due date. The 2010 Property taxes are due by July 2, 2010. You should expect to receive your tax notice by the third week of May.

## Community Grants

The Community Grant Review Committee is searching for groups to put forth proposals for local projects. If you have a project in mind that you would like to pursue please obtain an application form, along with the rules for eligibility, application procedures and conditions of funding on our website [www.sooke.ca](http://www.sooke.ca) or come by the municipal office at 2205 Otter Point Road. Deadline for submission of applications is April 30<sup>th</sup> of each year.



displays representing 82 communities at BC Streets. Visitors were immediately attracted to Sooke's breath taking display, and enjoyed the many interactive aspects to the experience. The fibre-glass replica of the winning catch of the 2009 Sooke Salmon Classic Fishing Derby was a huge hit as visitors took countless photographs holding it in front of our Sooke Banner. In addition, the model killer whale was also extremely popular with tourists from abroad who were keen to see the animals on the West Coast. However, visitor interest did not stop at these two main attractions, as daily one could see each guest scanning the forest, ocean and boardwalk for other little creatures and artifacts.

Over 65 Sooke area volunteers brought a wealth of energy, pride and knowledge throughout the 17 day event. Each day, volunteers spent countless hours promoting our region, taking pictures of guests, and distributing business cards to persuade the visitors to lead them to our Sooke 2010 website. The pride and passion for our home that they showed throughout the experience truly embodied the special emotions our entire nation felt during the Vancouver 2010 Games. The District of Sooke is proud to have been able to take part in this Olympic booth and would like to thank the members of the community who made it such a great success!

## Olympic OZONE– BC Streets

The 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games brought the nation together around one common theme, "pride." This theme was most evident during Sooke's participation in the BC Streets Pavillion during the Olympic games. Community volunteers, and the Sooke Fire Department volunteers came together to design, create and execute a Sooke Pavillion at the Richmond BC Streets that left the general public in awe of our community's beauty, culture, and pride.

Over 132,000 local and international visitors took in 7 different

## Finance Committee Presents District of Sooke 2010-2014 Financial Plan

On March 23<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> the Finance Committee for the District of Sooke reviewed in detail the proposed 2010 – 2014 Financial Plan. Based on the proposed financial plan, the Finance Committee recommended to the Committee of the Whole on April 6<sup>th</sup> a 4.81% increase in property taxes for the municipal portion of the tax bill.

This 4.81% includes a 1.74% increase in the transfer to the Capital Program. Currently 11.7% of municipal property taxes are transferred to the Capital Fund which is only 3.3% lower than the 15% target. It is this capital transfer that enables the District to provide the amenities (sidewalks, boardwalks, street lighting, park improvements, etc.) that the residents have been requesting.

In 2009 the District of Sooke experienced a slowdown in development activity that translated into a drop in licences and permitting revenue but in 2010 the District is anticipating a recovery in development activities in line with historical levels. In order to compensate for the increase in development activity the proposed 2010 – 2014 Financial Plan includes the hiring of a Building Official (a position not replaced during the slowdown in 2009) and a new Firefighter.

The proposed 2010 – 2014 Financial Plan includes funding for the following operational highlights:

- Hiring of a new Building Official and Firefighter;
- \$10,000 increase in the funding to the Sooke Community Association for operation of the Sooke Community Hall;
- \$35,000 for a Zoning Bylaw review after final adoption of the Official Community Plan, 2010;
- \$5,000 for Emergency Social Services;
- \$13,441 increase in the volunteer Firefighter training budget;
- \$8,000 for an affordable housing strategy;
- \$5,000 towards a Wildfire Interface Management Plan; and
- \$20,000 for the Sooke Region Tourism Association.

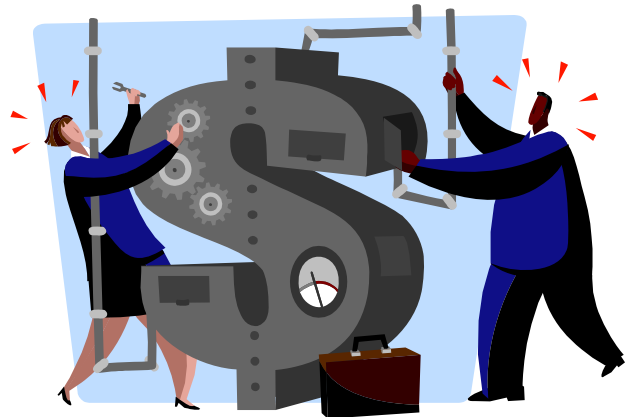
The proposed 2010 – 2014 Financial Plan includes funding for the following capital highlights:

- \$765,000 to purchase the 13.8 acre Sooke River Road property across the road from the Fred Milne fields;
- \$50,000 for a new emergency operation command vehicle (50% funded by the provincial JEPP program);
- \$150,000 in 2010 for the design of the Phillips Rd to Charters connector, and \$2.98 million for construction in 2011;
- \$1,005,000 for construction of the Public Boat Launch using a \$605,000 infrastructure grant, \$200,000 contribution by Prestige hotel and \$200,000 from the District of Sooke;
- \$280,000 to reimburse the General Fund for the purchase of the Public Boat Launch in 2009.

In addition to these capital projects in 2010, the proposed Financial Plan included funding over the 5 year period for construction of a new main street (tentatively called Waterview Street) in the Town Centre between HWY#14 and the Sooke Basin, a Church Rd to Otter Point Rd connector road to Grant Rd., a Galloping Goose connection over the Sooke River and a possible boardwalk extension.

"The District of Sooke remains focused on providing meaningful amenities that can be enjoyed by all the residents of Sooke" said Mayor Janet Evans, Chair of the Finance Committee, "The projects listed above can be accomplished within the 4.81% municipal tax increase without any borrowing. It is estimated the municipal property tax increase will cost the average residential property owner \$47 in additional property taxes in 2010."

Residents wishing to provide input on the 2010 – 2014 Financial Plan can attend the Open House on April 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm in the Council Chambers. Public Input can also be dropped off at City Hall. Copies of the financial plan are available on the District website at [www.sooke.ca](http://www.sooke.ca) or copies can be picked up at Municipal Hall.



### Upcoming Council Meetings April 2010

#### Regular Council April 26, 2010 Committee of the Whole

April 6, 2010 (Tuesday)

April 19, 2010

#### Financial Plan Open House

April 19, 2010 6:00 pm

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are at 7:00 pm in the Council Chambers. Agendas are available at the Municipal office or online [www.sooke.ca](http://www.sooke.ca).

## Volunteer Recognition Ceremony

The Mayor and Council were pleased to have the opportunity to demonstrate their appreciation and recognize outstanding volunteers for many years of service at the District of Sooke Fifth Volunteer Recognition Ceremony held March 21, 2010 at the Sooke Community Hall. Following the presentations guests had the opportunity to enjoy light refreshments, visit with friends and view the volunteer profile exhibit. The exhibit is available to view in the Municipal Hall main foyer. Volunteers are an essential part of building a community and enhancing the life of this region. The District of Sooke is fortunate to have so

### Congratulations to the following Recipients:

			David Nash
Debbie Anderson	Ian Cartwright	Carol Harding	Lynda Nex
Roy Anderson	Marie-Ann Davidson	Karl Jacobsen	Rod Nyberg
Matt Barney	Eric Day	Betty Jameson	Gordon Patterson
Cliff Beange	John Farmer	Don Lassey	Diana Peers
Kevan Brehart	Judithe Ann Gatto	Ellen Lewers	Dan Poirer
Doug Brownsey	Scott Gertsma	David McClimon	Steve Sorensen
Rose Byrne	Francois Gething	Richard McLeod	Bill Wilson
Dr. Chris Bryant	Barry Gifford	Tom Money	Angus Stanfield



## Sunriver Garden Begins to Bloom

March has been a very busy month at the Sunriver Community Garden on Phillips Road. The Food Community Health Initiative (Food CHI) has been responsible for developing and managing the community garden since February of this year. More than fifty local families have already registered to care for garden plots for the season, and names are now being taken for a waiting list.

Some major milestones in establishing the garden have been reached this month. Hedging and bulbs have been planted along Phillips Road, a parking area has been established, and the signage and deer fencing has been installed. There are numerous work parties planned over the next month, and planting is anticipated to begin in mid-April. If you would like to get involved with the Sunriver Community Garden please contact Jess 250-589-2577 or Phoebe at 250-642-4342.

## Sooke Purchases Sooke River Frontage for Park

The District of Sooke is pleased to announce the purchase of a 13.8 acre riverfront property which will serve as an important public link in the District's parks and trails system. Located on Sooke River Road across from Fred Milne Park, this property has been identified for a future Galloping Goose Trail bike transfer station and parking area, a bird sanctuary, and a nature walkway/boardwalk. Overall, the riverfront park is intended to be a protected site for the sensitive river marshland.

The Sooke River property was purchased for \$765,000 using \$365,000 from the Park Land Reserve fund and \$400,000 from the proposed sale of three residential lots to be subdivided off the former Pineridge Park on Rhodonite Drive. Pineridge Park is a 1.6 acre property that is being subdivided into a 1.15 acre park with new playground equipment and three single family lots for sale to acquire strategic parkland parcels such as the Sooke River property. Other parks are currently under consideration for closure and sale—Cinnabar Place Park, Talc Place Park, Opal Place Park and Charval Place Park — see [www.sooke.ca](http://www.sooke.ca) for more information.

"Over the last 10 years, all four District of Sooke Councils have talked about decommissioning and selling certain parks to raise funds for the purchase of key parkland," Mayor Janet Evans said. "In our Parks and Trails Master Plan, it shows how committed the public and Council are to acquiring important pieces of land in the community for all residents to use." The 2010 five year financial plan includes capital projects such as the development of John Phillips Memorial Park, Pineridge Park and the new Sooke River Park. This is in line with the goal of the Parks and Trails Master Plan to develop an outdoor recreation network that grows and evolves alongside the District's growing population.

## Te'mexw Treaty Negotiations

### Public Information Meetings

The Te'mexw Treaty Association (which includes the T'sou-ke First Nation) and the governments of Canada and British Columbia are negotiating a treaty under the B.C. treaty process. We invite you to meet provincial and First Nations treaty negotiators, learn about the negotiations and have your questions answered.

Wednesday, May 19, 2010

Sooke Municipal Hall

2205 Otter Pt Rd

Sooke, BC

Time: 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

For more information, please contact "Te'mexw Treaty Association 250-889-9877 Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation 1-800-880-1022



## SEAPARC Programs for 50 Plus

SEAPARC recently received a grant from Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program. With this funding, SEAPARC plans to expand on the programs and services currently offered to our 50 plus residents.

Carrie Sjoström has been hired as the Senior Volunteer Programmer and is currently working with a core group of community members in developing the Senior Volunteer Committee. The Committee will recruit and promote senior volunteers, aid in the development of a senior volunteer data base, discuss new initiatives, offer information sessions within the community and participate in community events aimed at promoting senior volunteerism.

The Committee will research and promote training opportunities for those seniors interested in delivering recreation and health programs. The committee will also identify and develop recreation programs that will be led by senior volunteers in the community. We are planning to launch these new programs in September 2010. If you are interested in being a 50 plus volunteer leader please call Carrie Sjoström at 250-642-8001 or email her at [csjoström@crd.bc.ca](mailto:csjoström@crd.bc.ca).

### **TWO SURVEYS TO TRY ON WWW.SOOKE.CA**

#### Legalizing Secondary Suites Survey

The District of Sooke is considering a secondary and small suites legalization program. We would like to hear from the community and invite everyone to take part in the Secondary Suites Survey on the District of Sooke website! There are many issues to consider, including:

- Life/safety matters (health conditions and fire rescue);
- Affordable housing alternatives;
- Aging in place opportunities;
- Improved enforcement; and
- Share of infrastructure costs and taxes.

#### Sooke to Port Renfrew Cultural Mapping Project Survey

##### **SHARE YOUR VIEWS . . . TO HELP CREATE OUR CULTURAL FUTURE!**

The Sooke Fine Arts Society is working in cooperation with the District of Sooke, Sooke Community Arts Council and Sooke Region Tourism Association on a cultural mapping project. The purpose is to develop an inventory of the area's arts and cultural resources and to gain a better understanding of residents' participation in, and thoughts about, cultural and heritage-based activities and facilities.

This mapping initiative is an initial step to support long-term planning for arts, culture and heritage within the Sooke Region. For purposes of this survey, the Sooke Region is understood to include all the communities from Beecher Bay to Port Renfrew. Residents are invited to share experiences and thoughts about the cultural opportunities and facilities available in the Sooke Region.

Paper surveys may be picked up and dropped off at District of Sooke, Sooke Region Museum, SEAPARC, Sooke Library, Sooke Fine Art Gallery, South Shore Art Gallery, Stick in the Mud Coffee Shop, and the Reading Room Café. Summarized survey results will be shared and discussed at a public forum to be held in mid - June. A final report on this ArtsWave Cultural Mapping Project will be available on the Sooke Fine Arts Society website [www.sookefinearts.com](http://www.sookefinearts.com) after June 30th, 2010.

All survey responses are anonymous. Individual responses cannot be identified. Full or partial responses to the survey questionnaire are welcome. If you don't have an opinion on a question, or don't wish to answer it, please feel free to leave it blank. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete, if you choose to respond to all the questions. You are cordially invited to enter the draw at the end of the survey to win two tickets to the Sooke Fine Arts Show – Purchaser's Preview Evening, July 22, 2010, (value \$50). Thank you for your input!

For further information, please contact: Rebecca George, Project Manager -Tel: 250 - 664-7200 -Email: [rebeccageorge@shaw.ca](mailto:rebeccageorge@shaw.ca).



**New for 2010!**

## Neighbourhood Contest

in 2009, the District of Sooke received 3 blooms in the Communities in Bloom program and won the "Community Involvement" award! Following on our strong showing last year—and our claim as "Volunteer Capital of Canada"—the District of Sooke announces our participation in Communities in Bloom 2010 by launching a neighbourhood contest.

Neighbourhoods are encouraged to have a fun and friendly competition on who can make their street look the best in 2010. Now that the nice weather is here, get outside, talk to your neighbours and plan out how your street can look its best.

If your street is interested in joining this fun and friendly competition, please contact Bonnie Sprinkling, 250-642-1620. Local judges will tour the community in July and judge the neighbourhoods using National Program materials. The street with the most participation will be offered a "block party" to celebrate in September.



## Sooke RCMP

It has been a busy year for the local RCMP detachment. The detachment faced serious challenges during the year with numerous vacancies. Total calls for service in the District of Sooke during the past year were down from the year before, from 4722 to 4456. Policing priorities for the year were: Youth and Substance Abuse; Road Safety Enforcement; Property Crime; and Police Community Relations. We were successful in addressing all of those issues. The detachment is in the process of finalizing their priorities for the upcoming year.

The new Detachment Commander, S/Sgt. Steve Wright finally arrived on December 1st. S/Sgt. Wright has over 28 years operational policing experience. Sooke is his 5th Detachment. His other postings were in Kelowna, Ucluelet, Comox Valley, and Whistler. One of S/Sgt. Wright's priorities is to increase the number of volunteers in the Citizens Patrol program in an effort to assist police in dealing with the ongoing vandalism and theft problems.

A well known and much liked member of our detachment, Cst. Tom Davies has experienced serious health issues and will not be returning to work. We are happy to report that he is doing well on his road to recovery but will not be well enough to continue regular police duties. Sooke is about to lose another very popular member due to transfer. Cpl. Scott Hilderley who is well known, has been transferred to Westshore Detachment where he will be taking over the Community Policing section. *Staff Sergeant Steve Wright*

## Sooke Fire and Emergency Services



Do you know how many years the average volunteer firefighter in Sooke stays with the fire department. The answer is between 3 and 4 years, unless of course you are Deputy Chief William J. Stephenson. On March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2010, Bill decided that he had put in enough time and with 62 years of volunteer service in the fire department under his belt, it was time to step down and hang up his white helmet. Bill, the longest serving firefighter in British Columbia, joined the Sooke Fire Department as a lad of 16 years of age in December 1948. Over the years, Bill has seen many firefighters come and go, many changes to the fire trucks and firefighting tactics and even

several changes of fire stations. In fact, Bill was the only firefighter in Sooke to have served a portion of his time in each of the three #1 Fire Stations that have been constructed over the years. As the existing main fire station is named in honour of Bill, the current complement of firefighters have agreed that Bill is an honorary member for life and can continue to be a part of the firefighting fraternity without having to worry about waking up in the middle of the night for a call or running into a burning building anymore. Thank you Bill, for an incredible and lasting contribution to the fire service.

With this recent retirement added to several others in past months, the Sooke Fire Rescue Service is beginning a recruiting drive for new volunteer firefighters. Applications are now available for the September recruit class. Stop by the fire station to pick up yours today. Applicants must be in good health, 19 years of age or older and have a valid drivers license. No experience is necessary. More information is available on our website at [www.sooke.ca](http://www.sooke.ca).

The fire department has requested the addition of one more career firefighter in the 2010 budget. Faced with an average 15% increase in call volume and a continued shortage of volunteer firefighters during the daytime hours, it is felt that this will provide the best solution for the community. With the inclusion of this additional staff member, Sooke Fire Rescue Service will switch from having paid staff on duty only five days a week to a full seven day a week, 365 day a year coverage. If approved, two firefighters will be on duty in the station from approximately 6:30 am to 5:30 pm every day. Working a 4 day on / 4 day off rotation, the four firefighters will be immediately available to make an initial response to all emergency and non emergency calls. These firefighters will also be able to provide additional public education and safety programs for the community and will allow greater flexibility in delivering training sessions to the volunteer firefighters. If this additional position is approved, the fire department has also agreed to take on the roles and duties of the Emergency Operations Coordinator and Emergency Support Services Program. The Fire Chief position will continue to be a Monday - Friday position to cover administrative duties as well as assisting the firefighters at emergency scenes. Volunteer firefighters will continue to back up their career partners whenever they are available.

The fire department has been very active in the community promoting fire safety through a variety of educational programs. This has included fire safety training for daycare providers, seniors, students, commercial cooking operators and much more. If you are interested in a fire extinguisher training course or other safety related program, we have a wide variety of courses to offer and they are all provided at no cost. Did you know we can assist you with installing your child's car seat? Contact the fire department (250 642-5422) or check the website for more information.

*Fire Chief Steve Sorensen*

### SOLAR LIGHTS

#### REWARD . . .

A local company, HBM Canada Manufacturing Inc., has been conducting a pilot project with solar lights on the railings of the accessible walkway in Ed Macgregor Park. Last week, the lights were destroyed at the cost of approximately \$5,000 to the company.

The District of Sooke and the RCMP are asking the public for help in finding and convicting the person or persons who destroyed the new solar lights. The sum of \$500 will be awarded to the person/s who provide information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for the damage.