

Trustee Notebook *David Graham*



As I write this month's Trustee Notes, our Federal Election dominates the Canadian News, and our local news publications. Politics, for many of us, is just not a subject we care to spend much time thinking about, and yet without people stepping up to do the work, society might devolve into something even more odious than the status quo.

So why am I talking about it?

The next opportunity to vote for your Denman Island Trust Committee Trustees is a year and a half away, and the question as to who will consider putting their names forward and meet the election nomination process which will start Sept 1, 2026, or 15 months from now, is the reason I am talking about it now.

I truly hope my co-trustee, Sam Borthwick runs again. A better Trustee you will be hard pressed to find. I will not be running again, I will have been a Denman Trustee for 13 years and that means someone will have to come forward, be elected and be somewhat prepared to do the work for four years. Most first term Trustees feel a little lost with the political environment. It takes a few meetings to get use to the language and processes which guide the decision making role of being a Trustee.

What is the work of a Trustee?

For those who may be new to Denman, the Islands Trust itself might not be on their radar. It happens to be a unique form of "Land Use Planning" local government; in fact it's the only one in Canada.

A quick Google search will give you plenty to read for those interested. The election in mid-October 2026 will be your opportunity to vote for two islanders who will work on land use issues focused on Denman. As local trustees, they will also sit at quarterly meetings of all the elected trustees from the other islands making up the Trust Area. Topics considered at these quarterly meetings deal with trust wide topics, rather than individual island issues.

Trustees are paid. My yearly remuneration is about \$14,000. The time required to do the work varies by the complexity of issues under consideration and how you process information etc. The Denman Local Trust Committee (DLTC) meets in person, on Denman, every two months. Agendas can be large and can take many hours to digest prior to these five hour meetings.

I ran for the position of Denman Trustee, this last term, specifically to continue the work of reviewing our housing policies and regulations which are part of our Official Community Plan Bylaw (OCP) and Land Use Bylaw (LUB). The housing policies and regulations guide and direct what can be built on residential lots and have not been reviewed in many years. The option of working class people to buy or even rent on Denman is certainly different than it was when my wife and I settled here 30 years ago. This fundamental change in who can afford to live here means that organizations and individuals providing services, such as Home Care and General Store employees are in a constant search for people. The demographic shift to retired people also means that the need for many of these services is growing.

If you are still reading, and possibly interested, the best way to become familiar with what Trustees do is to attend a few meetings. All meetings are open to the public, occur during regular business hours and happen in the Activity Centre Lounge. We start at 10am, break for lunch at 12pm and wrap up, usually by 3 pm. I would be happy to meet and talk more about the Trust, its mandate and my impressions about being a Trustee. Email me at Dagraham@islandstrust.bc.ca to set up a chat.

The next meeting will be **May 20th**, followed by July 15th, October 21st and December 16th.

2025 Denman Island Recreation Grants

Applications are now available for the CVRD Recreational Grants for Denman Island non-profit Groups which provide sports and fitness related activities. Applications may be picked up at Abraxas Books (under "R" for Recreation) or online at: www.denmanresidents.com Link to "Committees and Services."

All completed applications can be returned to Abraxas Books (under "R" for Recreation) or via email to gstholti@gmail.com

Please note Abraxas Books closes at 4pm. Deadline for submissions is May 28, 2025, at 4pm.

Funds available \$21,000

Committee members: Georgette Hollingsworth, Jennifer Villard, James Bartram & Sharon Clarke