



Islands Trust

Mikaila Lironi Islands Trustee

March has been a busy month as an Islands Trustee. We started off the month with a very intense 3 days of Trust Council meetings, where we voted in favour of telling the Province that we no longer wish to have municipal-type jurisdiction over tree cutting. Judging from those who spoke to me on Lasqueti, none of them wanted government to be able to tell you what you could do or could not do with the trees on your property. So big win for us!

Trust Council decided to initiate a review of our Bylaw Enforcement practices by the Office of the Ombudsperson. As well as being independent, it has the added benefit of no additional cost to taxpayers. The new provincially mandated Accessibility Committee was also initiated and will be up and running by September.

The Financial Planning Committee worked hard to keep the budget increases to a minimum. It's a difficult balance: having enough money to accomplish projects that benefit communities while contending with inflation and avoiding creating financial hardship for communities. The increase to the tax base was one of the lowest in the province at 2.06%. The staff is unionized, so their salary increase of 6.5% was negotiated by the Province, and out of our direct control. Even with this increase, most Islands Trust staff makes less than many other employees in similar positions. They make a choice to work for Island Trust, and do a great job being kind and helpful to new trustees who don't always know how to navigate the bureaucracy at first.

I fell ill with Covid but managed to attend our LTC by Zoom. As I was not at my best, I'll leave that topic up to Tim.

Wishing you a great planting season, and hope to see you at our next LTC meeting in May.

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