



File No.: 6500-20 – Water
Sustainability

DATE OF MEETING: June 30, 2020
TO: Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee
FROM: Jason Youmans, Island Planner
Salt Spring Island Team
COPY: Gary Holman, SSIWPA Co-Chair
SUBJECT: Unspent Special Property Tax Requisition Funds

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee direct staff to draft a Request for Decision for Islands Trust Council proposing amendment to Trust Council Policy 6.3.2 that would authorize the use of unspent special property tax requisition funds from previous fiscal years on LTC projects connected to the original project for which the funds were sought, while that original project remains ongoing.**

REPORT SUMMARY

This report recommends that the LTC consider direct staff to draft an amendment to Islands Trust Council Policy 6.3.2 that would clear the way for the LTC to allocate unspent special property tax requisition funds acquired for water sustainability coordination on projects arising from that coordination work.

Of immediate concern is that the LTC may wish to provide financial assistance to the Capital Regional District (CRD) to obtain a water availability and climate change assessment of Weston Lake (and potentially other lakes) and for water availability work related to the aquifer supplying the Cedar Lane Water District.

BACKGROUND

Presently, the LTC has accumulated almost \$85,000 (see Appendix 1) in unspent special property tax requisition funds related to its coordination of the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance (SSIWPA). These unspent funds have accumulated since the 2016/17 fiscal year.

The use of special property tax requisition funds is guided by Clause 6.3 of [Islands Trust Policy 6.3.2](#). This clause states:

- 6.3 Any funds, generated through the special requisition, which are unspent at the conclusion of the fiscal year, will be held in reserve for the LTCs use in the subsequent fiscal year to:
 - 6.3.1 complete the previously approved initiative or program; or
 - 6.3.2 undertake a new program, subject to a further resolution of the LTC to do so.
- 6.4 Unspent funds cannot be used to offset a general property tax requisition.

The LTC will recall that at its February 18, 2020 meeting, Islands Trust senior staff provided a [memo](#) outlining how special property tax requisition funds may be deployed under Policy 6.3.2. In general terms, this memo did not support the use of unspent special property tax requisition funds for any purpose other than that for which the funds were originally sought – in this case the coordination of water sustainability initiatives on Salt Spring Island – unless the original project was concluded.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

Staff understand that there is a desire from trustees to deploy unspent special property tax requisition funds in the service of projects that will advance water sustainability on Salt Spring Island. Given the prevailing interpretation of Policy 6.3.2, staff recommend that the LTC direct staff to draft an amendment to this policy so that unspent special property tax requisition funds may be used to support water sustainability initiatives that do not fall directly within the coordination function authorized by [Trust Council Bylaw No. 154](#).

There is sound policy support for LTC involvement in certain freshwater-related projects, such as a Water Availability and Climate Change Assessment of Weston Lake:

- SSIWPA has identified among its [2020/21 freshwater priority plan](#) a “Water Availability and Climate Change Assessment” for Weston Lake. The CRD is prepared to fund part of this work from surplus funds in its Salt Spring Stormwater Service. However, CRD would like funding support from Islands Trust.
- Weston Lake is specifically identified in the Salt Spring Island OCP as a water body deserving LTC’s attention for further analysis and planning:

B.5.3.2.17 The Local Trust Committee should support a Weston Lake watershed management plan, a study of the improvement (or replacement) of the water distribution system and the installation of water meters for all users.

The OCP also contains policies that the LTC should assist community water system operators in determining their supply potential.

C.3.2.2.5 The Local Trust Committee will continue to cooperate with community water system operators to ensure water supply issues are considered before zoning changes are made. The Committee should also continue to assist in the development of better estimates of projected water demands and supply potential. The Committee could consider zoning changes that would limit land uses with a high water demand. The Committee particularly recognizes that this Plan could critically affect the North Salt Spring Waterworks District’s ability to meet future needs and will cooperate with the District to address this issue.

C.3.2.2.8 The Local Trust Committee will consult, assist and cooperate with water districts in supply and demand management by providing data and supporting efforts to coordinate activities.

NEXT STEPS

If the LTC accepts staff’s recommendation, staff will draft the recommended policy amendment and include it in a Request for Decision for LTC review at a future meeting.

If the LTC does not accept staff’s recommendation, staff will proceed on the assumption that the only valid use of unspent special property tax requisition funds is the coordination over water sustainability initiatives through SSIWPA and will recommend that unspent funds be used for that purpose during the next budget cycle.

Submitted By:	Jason Youmans, Island Planner	June 18, 2020
Concurrence:	Stefan Cermak, Regional Planning Manager	June 18, 2020

ATTACHMENTS

1. SSIWPA Income Statement, 2020
2. Islands Trust Policy 6.3.2