

# Roberts Creek SCRD Director's Newsletter, September 2018

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In person: Gumboot Café, Saturday Mornings, 10-12

*(If you have trouble with any of the links below, copy and paste them into your browser)*

What a different feel in the woods after a bit of rain over the weekend. A reminder that the **bears** have designs on our fruit trees and likely our garbage cans at this time of year. Watch out for shaggy creatures meandering along our roadways, be they our furry friends or kids on their way to and from school.

### Local Government Elections Ahead

There will be a new SCRD Director for Roberts Creek, as family commitments have led to me not putting my name forward as a candidate for a second term. Local Government **Elections take place across the Province on October 20<sup>th</sup>**, with advance voting opportunities on October 10 and 17<sup>th</sup>. The period for candidate nominations closes September 14<sup>th</sup>, and the campaign begins on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Roberts Creek has a history of high voter turnout relative to other areas. School District 46 Trustee Elections take place at the same time. This year, you will be able combine a trip to the polling station at the Hall with your Art Crawl outings around the coast.

<http://www.sunshinecoastartcrawl.ca>

Information for voters around nominated candidates, poll locations and timing, voter eligibility, ID requirements, mail in ballots, and the like is posted here:

<http://www.scrd.ca/General-Government>

### Water

Water provision will be discussed at length in the upcoming election. **Sorting the facts from the opinions** is one of the challenges for electors on any issue, and with this topic in particular, there are no shortage of opinions. In an effort to ensure the facts are accessible, I've collated links below to some SCRD resources that I have provided here in the past.

**Want the short version moving forwards?** In about 6 months, the 2018/22 SCRD Board should have a **"menu" of Comprehensive Regional Water Plan Supply projects** in front of them, including:

-the long-awaited results of BC Parks' process to enable (or not) the **Chapman Lake Project**, and any attached conditions

-results from 4 exploratory **Groundwater** wells

-a **Reservoir** Feasibility Study (currently projected earliest completion 2026)

Combined with an **updated water supply demand analysis** (with a 2050 horizon), the above will provide factual information around the 3 proposed CRWP projects. Until those 3 pieces are known, much is speculation. Along with water volumes figures, **financial, ecological impact, engineering, licensing, fire suppression, public health, staff health and safety, food growing, emergency resilience and other factors** will need to be taken into consideration.

The Board will also need to make some **Water Sourcing Policy** decisions, (which water gets used when...see the Framework report below), along with the annual opportunity to amend the Drought Management Plan's water restrictions accordingly.

Want more details? You can "jump into" the water here:

**2 page summary of current Water Infrastructure projects:**

<http://www.scrd.ca/files/File/Infrastructure/Water/2018-May-17%20CRWP%20Implementation%20Executive%20Summary.pdf>

Want to dive deeper?

**An SCR D Power Point presentation that fills in some more gaps**

<http://www.scrd.ca/files/File/Infrastructure/Water/2018-MAR-01%20Water%20-%20Special%20ISC%20Powerpoint%20Presentation.pdf>

Wade into this one?

**Water sourcing Policy Framework** (Page 1 of this Agenda)

[http://www.scrd.ca/files/File/Administration/Agendas/2018/2018-MAY-17\\_ISC\\_Agenda\\_Package.pdf](http://www.scrd.ca/files/File/Administration/Agendas/2018/2018-MAY-17_ISC_Agenda_Package.pdf)

*If these links continue to be problematic for you in this format, I have posted the same article, with fully functional links at the top of this page <https://robertscreekmark.com/news-blog/> My next career will not be in web design.*

## **Water Meters**

These measurement tools are a fundamental part of the water provision picture.

The defeat of the recent Alternate Approval Process with regards to Sechelt water meter financing was disappointing, and may result in further delay of projects or costs to the taxpayer. The current Board will have a funding options report in front of them shortly.

To present a choice between either supply projects or water meters is unnecessarily polarizing. There is no reason why they can't be **implemented simultaneously**, and indeed they are. Of note is that the CRWP projected a \$7million dollar taxpayer benefit over 25 years associated with the savings from meters, and senior government grant applications (say for supply projects) are enhanced by evidence of a robust demand management program.

It would be very difficult for a sitting Rural Area Director to vote to abandon the 3<sup>rd</sup> (Sechelt) phase of Coastal meter implementation. **Roberts Creekers have already spent time, effort and in some cases significant private funds to stem leaks** on their property and can take some credit for the associated 20-30% water savings to date.

While **infrastructure delays, Climate Change and increased environmental (Chapman Creek) flow requirements have driven much of our current water situation**, growth is clearly part of the picture. Water Plan anticipated a 2% annual growth rate on the coast, but in reality growth has averaged about half that.

Lots of information to digest. No one said being an informed citizen was easy. Enough water-related items for now!

### **Tiny Home Pilot Project**

“Tiny Homes” are drawing attention as an option to help address the housing affordability crisis and for those who choose a small footprint lifestyle. Recently, the SCRD Planning and Community Development Committee approved the development of a 3-year “Temporary Movable Small Home” pilot project for Rural Areas on the coast. Subject to septic and building department approval, eligible properties would be those currently zoned for further build-out, but who haven’t yet exercised that option. Building costs are often cited as a barrier to cheaper housing, and this flexible alternative to a full-scale building has the potential to address some of our housing spectrum needs on the Sunshine Coast.

Details of the program will be developed over the next year with the opportunity for public input built into the process. The full staff report can be found on page 146 of the September 6th Planning and Community Development Committee Agenda (Part 2) found here: <http://www.scrd.ca/agendas-2018>

Those exploring different aspects of small houses may also be interested in this one-day conference coming up on November 17 in Vancouver:  
<http://www.smallhousingbc.org/summit/>

### **Cannabis Land Use Regulations**

As discussed here previously, Local Governments, RCMP, and other organizations and businesses across the country have been challenged by the pace of Cannabis Legalization, currently slated for October 17th . With Provincial regulations still falling into place, many local governments, including the SCRD, are seeking to avoid scenarios where existing operations can claim “legal non-conforming” status because they were doing business on Oct 18th. Such a scenario can result in significant legal costs to the taxpayer, and limit a community’s ability to enact change.

With that in mind, the SCRD Board recently gave 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> reading to an amendment to Zoning Bylaw 310 that would to **prohibit non-medical cannabis production facilities and retail outlets in Residential and Rural zones**. The Board waived the requirement for a Public Hearing of the amendment, based on time constraints.

There are currently many moving parts for the industry, and senior governments' approach to date has challenged the "craft-level" producers that form a large part of our local economy. At the same time, the regulatory shift should provide the **opportunity to address some neighbourhood-level concerns** with regards to smell, fire, electrical drawdown and other issues.

We need to have **informed discussions in our community** with regards to where we want to direct cannabis production and retail, and to provide more business certainty to those involved in the industry. Those discussions can happen in the Fall and Winter as part of the Zoning Bylaw 310 review discussed below, and further down the road as any site-specific proposals come forwards.

It should be noted that the proposed regulations **would not impact the 4 plant Personal Use home growing provisions**, and that the **medical-use regime is going to continue for a while** in parallel with the emerging non-medical regulations.

The Board's policy on bylaw enforcement is complaint-based, involves several stages, and starts with staff working with the property owner to help them get into compliance. Any images of Bylaw officers engaging in surprise visits down driveways to destroy crops might be classified as ...paranoid (sorry, couldn't resist). As with all issues, come and see me at the Gumboot or drop me an email (anonymous, if you prefer on this issue) with questions or concerns. This is a very complex, multi-faceted issue, and unfortunately, local governments are finding themselves in a reactive position.

The full report and proposed Bylaw amendment is available here on Page 135 of the September 6th Planning and Community Development Committee Agenda (Part 2) found here: <http://www.scrd.ca/agendas-2018>

## **Zoning Bylaw 310 Review**

Our main land-use zoning Bylaw 310 is undergoing an extensive review process. Themes of **Housing Affordability, Home Based Business and "Backyard" Agriculture** have been identified. Until now the process has only involved SCRD Staff, consultants and Advisory Committee members but soon the public will be invited to provide input via workshops and surveys and the like.

Opinions will be sought on specific questions around the keeping of chickens and bees, the sale of food produced on site, the range and scale of home businesses, cannabis production and retail, housing diversity and density, and more. Keep your eye out for these advertised opportunities this Fall and Winter.

## **Provincial Advocacy**

This week, Board Members are at the annual **Union of BC Municipalities Conference** in Whistler, where elected officials from across BC will attend workshops, network, meet with senior government officials, and debate Resolutions. This year, the SCRD Board will put Resolutions on the floor with regards to Multi-Stakeholder Watershed Governance, Cycling Infrastructure, Medicinal Cannabis, and a Review of the Local Government Act as a means of addressing the inequities between Municipalities and Regional Districts. There will be further meetings with the Ministry of Transportation (Shared Infrastructure), Ministry of Environment (Solid Waste Management), and the Ministry of Health (Long term Care).

## **Proportional Representation**

Also ahead for voters in the fall is the Referendum on Proportional Representation as a voting system for future provincial elections. The referendum will be held via mail-in ballot between October 22nd and November 30th. Elections BC's explanation of the referendum is here <https://elections.bc.ca/referendum/what-are-we-voting-on/> and this quick video from The Tyee gives an overview of the 3 possible models being proposed, along with the option of maintaining our current First Past the Post system. <https://thetyee.ca/News/2018/07/03/BC-Options-Proportional-Representation-Explained/>

## **SCRD September Newsletter Topics**

This month's edition of the **SCRD's "Coast Current" Newsletter** is found below. It includes the Fall and Winter Recreation Guide, a link to the SCRD Recycling Directory, a water meter success story, the schedule of September SCRD Committee and Board meetings, and more:

<https://secure.campaigner.com/CSB/public/archive.aspx?args=MzAzODIyMzk%3d>

*Can't get enough of this stuff? A reminder that my website has archives on a variety of topics. <https://robertscreekmark.com/news-blog/>*

*Note also that a hard copy of this Newsletter is posted in the glass case beside the General Store, and hard copies are available in the Roberts Creek Library Reading Room.*