

Denman Island Residents Association
Public Meeting November 13, 2023

Present: Ron Shepherd (chair), Andrew Pringle, Jenny Balke, Frieda Werden, Chris Danks plus 15 residents

1. The public meeting was called to order at 7:30 P.M.

2. There was a motion to adopt the agenda with the addition of a Waste Management update - moved, seconded and all in favour - MOTION PASSED.

3. There was a motion to approve the minutes from the last two public meetings on September 11'th and October 16'th - moved, seconded and all in favour - MOTION PASSED.

4. **DIRA Executive Report**

There will not be a meeting in December. The schedule for 2024 will be similar to 2023 with 6 public meetings and will be posted when available.

5. DIRA Trails Committee:

The trails committee has about 20 members, most are over 65. At least one work party is scheduled for every month, weather permitting. The network of trails maintained exceeds 30 km with 16 km in Boyle Point. Trail clearing priority is to cut back side vegetation and overhead branches. Drainage is another trail issue, work parties are constantly clearing big puddles at this time of the year (fall).

New signs have been installed in Boyle Point.

The Denman Island Provincial Park is not yet an official park, so no signs have been posted yet.

Currently working on a Trail Self Reporting System where the trail user, with a cell phone, can connect with trail volunteers to report obstacles.

A grant was obtained from BC Parks to improve access to Betty's Beach with steps.

A big expansion to the Cross Island Trail has started. The Owl Cr. to Gravelly Bay portion is expected to be complete by the end of December 2023. The trails committee will continue to maintain the entire trail.

6. DIRA Wildlife Advisory Committee:

The domestic animal control presentation is postponed.

The committee has 1 new member and 2 of the older members want to reduce their participation.

The committee's main goal is to look after any wildlife 7 days per week, 24 hours per day. Wild animals killed (most are deer) on Denman roads are removed to a safe site to prevent scavenging wildlife from also being killed on the roads. In 2023 there were 2 deer killed on the road. There were no complaints about illegal hunting.

If a dog is running loose someone from the committee will speak to the owner. If the dog continues to run free, a conservation officer will be notified and may issue a fine and in extreme cases remove the dog.

A black bear was first reported on Denman on Sept 18'th, it's still here in November and has been reported all over the island.

On Oct 27'th a sheep was killed and a few days later 2 goats were killed by the bear.

Domestic animals need to be protected in a secure area at night with an electric fence outside.

Islanders need to manage bear food, which requires a continuing education program.

Some communities are designated as "Bear Smart" and the committee will write to the Wildlife Conflict Manager to determine whether a Bear Smart Program is possible on Denman.

There were over 14,000 calls to BC Conservation Officers regarding black bear issues in 2023. Conservation officers have been notified but are not coming to Denman to remove the bear, unless the situation becomes critical.

7. DIRA Waste Management Committee

A mailout went to every household on Denman updating acceptable items at the depot.

The recycling depot manager will resign due to health issues and a new manager is in training.

The recycling centre and bottling depot advertised for new staff and are evaluating the applications now.

8. Ferry Advisory Committee

The last meeting on Friday Sept 29th was a virtual meeting due to recent staff intimidation at some in person meetings and one employee was attacked. Residents were reminded to be respectful of staff.

4 new island class vessels have been ordered, but none will be assigned to Denman.

BC Ferries has indicated they would like to see a reservation system started at all terminals. Denman is opposed. Hornby is in favour.

Service to Hornby improved this summer with 2 ferries running between Buckley Bay and Denman and the larger Quinitsa running between Denman and Hornby, except on weekends with only one ferry between Denman and Buckley Bay.

DIRA recently sent a letter to the Premier's office and the Ministry of Transportation requesting a direct ferry to Hornby.

BC Ferries is planning for 2050 via a survey on their website.

Hornby wants shared deck space on all sailing but Denman is opposed.

Due to differing objectives Denman members on the Ferry Advisory Committee are in favour of splitting into separate committees. Hornby members have not been asked.

Motion to adjourn meeting, all in favour.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 P.M.