

DIRA Public and General Meetings
Public Meeting
June 9, 2025

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Present: Andrew Pringle (Acting Chair); Tony Gregson (acting Secretary); Sam Borthwick (Director), Ron Wilson (Director), Graham Isbister (Director), and fourteen other residents.

PART A: Public Meeting: Denman Island Recreation Commission

The meeting was called to order at 7:37.

By way of preamble, Andrew Pringle explained that because the CVRD is aware that Denman Island residents do not have access to recreation facilities in the Valley, they set aside a fund (of about \$20,000) to provide grants to organizations that provide on-island recreation activities. Some of these are DIRA committees, others are independent. The DIRA board maintains an arms-length relationship in the award of recreation grants.

2025 Recreation Grants Report

Georgette Hollingsworth reported on the Recreation Grants recommended to the CVRD for their approval. Against total requests of \$29, 390 from six applications. Awards of \$23,682 were recommended.

- **See Annex A: 2025 Recreation Grants Report**
- The CVRD must approve all the grant recommendations.
- A single cheque for the total amount of the grants is sent to DIRA for distribution to individual applicants, DIRA and independent committees.
- Each of the applicants will be notified of the rationale for the grant decision and applicable accountabilities.
- The Commission aims at continuous improvement. A review of the application process is in the works.
- There were no questions.
- Moved by Graeme Isbister; seconded by Edi Johnston to approve the report;
CARRIED.

The Recreation Commission meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM.

PART B: DIRA Public Meeting

1. A motion to call the meeting to order was carried.
2. A motion to approve the agenda was passed with the addition of two reports:
 - a. Bill Mee Boat Launch.
 - b. Dog issues.

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3. A motion to approve the minutes of April 14, 2025, was passed with all in favour with one correction: the CVRD, and not the Islands Trust, manages noise complaints.
4. Executive Report: Board Member Updates:
The current composition of the board is as follows:

Executive Positions:

President: Jenny Balke
Vice President: vacant
Treasurer: Stirling Fraser
Secretary: Andrew Pringle

Executive Members:

Christine Danks
Ron Wilson
Graeme Isbister
Sam Borthwick
Tony Gregson

Committee Reports

Pesticide Free Committee

Anne Page, Chair, delivered the following report:

The original plan of the CVRD was to use pesticides, but they were persuaded by the committee (in particular. By now former resident Peter Thomsen), that manual removal was more effective. The original focus was downtown where broom invasion was most visible, and on some of the other roads. After the initial start, the committee has gradually shrunk until there is only one remaining member who does everything.

The CVRD continues to give money to the Committee which is also loosely affiliated with the Broom Busters Group who have members in many communities. Broom Busters recommends cutting at ground level rather than pulling the roots because the soil is less disturbed and the seeds have less chance of germinating.

This year:

- **Broom Busters** was engaged to cut along Lacon and other roads. One cutter in particular was outstanding. The broom piles left along the roads will be picked up by on-island volunteers and will be composted or used for fodder by local farms. This is a win-win

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situation because the broom does not leave the island and is returned to the soil in one form or another.

- In addition, Pesticide has had particularly good **volunteer groups** who cut broom along less-travelled roads and other public lands.
- There is a **broom drop-off** for people who cut broom on their own land on June 14th at the Firehall, \$10 a load (the cost of small loads can be negotiated). The cost is reasonable and does not cover the whole cost of the contractor to haul the broom to farms. A second drop-off, advertised in the Flagstone, is scheduled for Saturday, June 28th, from 4 to 6 PM.
- **Chair resignation:** Anne announced that she has notified DIRA that she is stepping back in September as Chair of the Pesticide Committee, as well as coordination of the annual broom pull. Since the committee has been reduced to one member, there is a danger that the committee will cease to exist unless new members step forward.

Chair duties include CVRD liaison for funding, coordination of the annual broom pull, promotion, and partnership with the Denman Conservancy Association who have similar views on invasive species.

In response to questions:

- **Danes Road broom piles:** Timely pickup of broom piles which will become a fire hazard in areas like Danes Road will be requested of the contractor.
- **Spartina spray removal:** The committee was not aware of the recent use of pesticides to remove invasive species of spartina¹ (cordgrass) over the whole of Baynes Sound even though the eradication plan was announced in the papers months ago. Neither did the information come to the attention of the DIRA board, either. This is unfortunate given the extraordinarily successful manual removal on Denman Island several years ago and shows the importance of the Pesticide Committee.

Ann was heartily thanked by the meeting for all her work.

Andrew Pringle reminded the meeting that the DIRA Board is not responsible for setting up committees or for keeping them going, but that it does have funds that could be used to advertise for more members if needed. A DIRA committee is legally required to have at least three members.

Bill Mee Boat Launch

On behalf of the Boat Launch Committee, Andrew Pringle gave the following report:

¹ Spartina anglica, Spartina densiflora, and Spartina patens

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The boat launch belongs to the CVRD and is funded on an annual basis. A new boat launch is being built at Shingle Spit on Hornby. The CVRD wanted to raise the annual fee of \$75, where the current fee was \$25. After lobbying by Ron Shepherd and the Bill Mee Committee, the new fees are as follows:

- Membership \$35 per year
- \$10 single launch
- \$2.00 for canoes and kayaks

Waste Management

Committee member Andrew Pringle gave the following report:

- **Safety Assessment:** A study is underway to bring the Recycling Centre up to the safety standards required by WorkSafe BC. The study will see all employees trained in first aid; safety equipment, such as face and hearing protection will be brought up to WorkSafe BC standards. The study is necessary because the Recycling Centre is a high hazard area. A serious accident could incur substantial liability.
- **Building Assessment:** The CVRD is looking into the question of putting money into the building. The Recycling Centre and Bottle Depot has no water, heating, or bathroom and was never intended for the purpose it now serves.

Wildlife Advisory - Dog Management Issue

Edi Johnston introduced the following motion:

That DIRA send a formal request to the CVRD to reconsider a feasibility study that would enable Denman Island to be included in their Animal Control bylaw and notify HIRRA [Hornby island Residents and Ratepayers Association] and the Local Denman Trustees in hopes of gaining more support.

- For more information, SEE **Annex B Motion for the June 9th, 2025, DIRA Meeting**

In response to questions:

- The aim of the motion is to ultimately bring Denman and Hornby under the authority of the CVRD animal control bylaw. At present, the only recourse is the conservation officer who is all over the island dealing with wildlife issues and has no time to deal with dog issues. Animal control could talk to the owners and confiscate the animal if necessary.

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- Hornby started the process, and the feasibility study will take some time, so a resolution is a long way off, but it is the only recourse.
- Area A Director Daniel Arbour intends to bring the issue forward.
- More statistics on the problem might be useful because animal control is quite a process and could involve considerable resources with requirements such as dog licenses and the possibility of altercations with enforcement officers.
- In terms of prevalence, the Wildlife Advisory Committee hears many complaints about dogs chasing or attacking deer.
- Denman is already under the noise control bylaw where dog barking is concerned. Animal control would not be dealing with that sort of issue.

The motion was called and carried.

HIRRA and DIRA were urged to submit separate letters to the CVRD.

Other Reports

Proposed Denman Road Committee

Frank Freketich reported on the revival of a Denman roads committee.

- By way of background, the old committee was formed because the public roads contractor, MCON, was not doing a decent job, but it petered out. A meeting with the current contractor, Mainroad, and a government official in April was the impetus for a new committee.
- Terms of reference have been drawn up by Peter Spurr. There are to be ten people on the committee.
- The committee will make a call for issues.
- Issues raised by the meeting included:
 - Speed bumps to control speeding between ferries.
 - Exit from Pickles Rd onto Denman Rd.
 - Digital speed signage
 - Erosion on Lacon Rd.
 - The Big Hill in the Cross Island Trail.
- Committee cannot deal with enforcement.
- Committee intends to apply for recognition as a DIRA committee at the next public meeting in September.

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Climate Change: Presentation on Reducing Energy Usage

Ron Wilson announced a BC Hydro presentation on September 27th on ways to reduce energy usage.

Islands Trust

Trustee Sam Borthwick updated in the meeting on the following topics:

- The housing project is continuing. There will be community information meetings, and a public hearing yet to be scheduled.
- Denman now has a dedicated island planner which should normally be the case but was not when Sam started as Trustee.
- Sam gave a high-level outline of the process of bylaw change.
- He spoke on the use of AI in drafting Trust bylaws and creating content in general, an issue he has raised with Trust Council and the subject of a recent Flagstone article.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was carried at 8:43 PM.

Document History

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Annex A: 2025 Recreation Grants Report

Denman Island Recreational Grant 2025
June 9th, 2025

Submitted by: Georgette Hollingsworth, Chair,
 Committee members: Jennifer Villard, James Bartram, Sharon Clarke,

Firstly, I'd like to thank all those who participated in Denman Island Recreational grant process this year.

This year the Denman Island Recreational grant was for: \$ 23,682.00
 The committee received 6 grant applications, which were reviewed at length. We're pleased to say, that all applicants were deemed to be offering valued recreational programming to our island residents.
The total amount of funds subscribed amounting to: \$ 29,390.00

This meant we were oversubscribed, with a shortfall of: \$ 5708.00

After careful considerations, the committee is pleased to allocate the recreational grant funds as follows:

Applicants	Funds Requested	Recommended Allocations
Denman Island Community Education Society	\$ 15000.00	\$ 14,000.00
DIRA Community Dock	\$ 4640.00	\$ 4682.00
Graham Lake Swim Dock	\$ 1250.00	\$ 1250.00
Denman Island Pickleball Club	\$ 1500.00	\$ 1500.00
Ben Rempel Memorial Run	\$ 1000.00	\$ 1000.00
Inner Island Dance Collective	\$ 6000.00	\$ 1250.00
	\$ 29,390.00	\$ 23,682.00

Going forward,
 Recommendations and feedback will be emailed to each applicant, explaining the rational for the grant funds allotted, and the accountabilities where applicable.

In effort for continuous improvement, the rec grant committee plans to conduct a review of the existing Application Package.

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Annex B: Animal Control Feasibility Study Motion

Motion for the June 9th, 2025 DIRA meeting.

In regards to a solution for the ongoing and frequent issue of “dogs at large” on Denman, back in September 2020, the Hornby Residents and Ratepayers Association sent a letter to the Comox Valley Regional District requesting that the CVRD work with HIRRA and DIRA to undertake an Animal Control Bylaw feasibility study in 2021.

In October 2023 the CVRD Chief Administrative officer recommended that a study be done and that \$12,000 be included in the 2021- 2025 budget. There was no direction at the next budget meeting to proceed with the feasibility study and that both HIRRA and DIRA were told to resubmit the request.

At the October 2023 DIRA Exec. meeting, the DIRA Chair indicated that a letter would be sent to the CVRD requesting that the 2020 animal control feasibility study be reviewed. Unfortunately, no DIRA correspondence was ever sent.

Motion- that DIRA send a formal request to the CVRD to reconsider a feasibility study that would enable Denman Island to be included in their Animal Control bylaw and notify HIRRA and the Local Denman Trustees in hopes of gaining more support.