

Denman Island Residents Association
MINUTES
Public Meeting
Denman Island Community Back Hall
September 8, 2025, 7:00 PM

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Document History

Status	Date	Responsibility	Note
Draft	2025-09-14	Tony Gregson	Email distribution to members

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Present: Jenny Balke (Chair); Ron Wilson (Vice-Chair); Andrew Pringle (Secretary); Sam Borthwick (director); Graham Isbister (director) ;and Tony Gregson (director); and sixteen members.

1. **Call to order:** 7:31 PM

2. **Approval of Agenda:** A motion to approve the agenda was approved with no additions.

3. **Approval of Previous Public Meeting Minutes:** A motion to approve the minutes of June 10, 2025, was approved with no changes.

Action: Minutes of June 10th should be circulated to all members,

Agreed: Public meetings will now be held on the 2nd Monday of each month as used to be the case. Knowing there is a regular date for the public meeting each month should make it easier for people to remember and attend. **Due to Thanksgiving, the October meeting will be 3rd Monday, October 20th.**

4. **Change in Executive Members**

Ron Wilson agreed to be become Vice Chair at a special meeting of the Executive on August 5th following the departure of Rosa Telegus who is continuing to work with the Waste Management Committee.

Tony Gregson has offered to take over from Andrew Pringle as Secretary if and when Andrew may move from Denman and is trying out the duties for now by taking minutes and updating membership records.

5.. **Web Site denmanresidents.com**

Action: Members are invited to make suggestions about the update of the content of the DIRA website which has recently completed a design upgrade.

6. **DIRA 55th Birthday Celebration**

Jenny talked about the history of DIRA which was started in 1970, succeeding the Denman Island Ratepayers and Residents Association.

- Over 120 people have served on the DIRA board over the years.
- There was a celebration at the Saturday market.
 - Bob French was recognized for the longest term of service (17 years) on the Executive.
 - Des Kennedy gave a talk on the history of DIRA.

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- Other directors were honoured for their contribution including Doug Wright, Frank Freketich and Ron Shepherd,
- Members are encouraged to step forward and try out participation on the board for a term.
- There is a continued issue of getting the participation of young people.

Committee & Liaison Reports

Waste Management Committee

The Recycling Depot now has a new manager, Ian Avery.

Pesticide Free Committee

With the anticipated September resignation of Ann Page announced at the last public meeting of June 10th, Pesticide Free now has no committee members. The role of the committee is to coordinate a program of work carried out by contractors funded by the CVRD. The committee role is not onerous, but despite public appeals, no one has stepped up. Pesticide Free is therefore ineligible for DIRA membership and CVRD program funding.

Action: Bev Hollingsworth volunteered to help draft members while not assuming the position of chair. Three committee members are the minimum requirement. It is urgent because budget submissions must be made in October.

Proposed Roads Committee

Frank Freketich read out the Terms of Reference for the proposed new Roads Committee announced at the public meeting of June 10th.

The committee has three areas of focus: improvement, maintenance, and safety.

- There are about eight members.
- They have established liaison with Ministry of Transportation and Mainroad.
- Given the large number of issues, Road Committee will try to push the biggest issues where action is most urgent.
- Issues that have so far come up include:
 - data on cross-island ferry traffic
 - how often are roads graded?
 - application of dust suppressant
 - speeding
 - ferry lineups

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- why Denman has less paving than many other islands.

There were a lot of questions from the meeting.

- The verge of Northwest Road is difficult to walk because of unmown grass.
- Lacon Road verge is not maintained to a safe standard width where it has been ditched or otherwise disturbed.
- Is there data about where accidents happen most frequently?
- Why isn't snow plowing done everywhere?
- Why is maintenance not kept up on some roads?

A motion to accept the terms of reference for the Roads Committee was carried.

Wildlife Advisory Committee

Animal control: The meeting learned that HIRRA (Hornby Island Residents and Ratepayers Association) was voting tonight on a formal request from DIRA to the CVRD to reconsider a feasibility study that would enable Demman Island to be included in their Animal Control Bylaw.

Recreation Grants

As part of an effort to provide more insight into the value of recreation grants, the Recreation Grants Committee was asked if grant recipients could address a DIRA public meeting on the usage of their award. On this occasion, the Dock Committee (represented by Edi Johnston) explained how the grant went towards maintenance costs including such items as liability insurance, utilities, infrastructural inspections, painting, parking lot gravelling, and snow removal for the ambulance. The funding enables them to put whatever money they can generate from dock fees towards long term projects such as the need for another breakwater.

Climate Action

Apart from a reminder of the urgent necessity of taking climate action, Ron Wilson outlined several upcoming events:

- **Draw the Line and Pick a Path, Sept.20th:** Denman's contribution to the global day of climate action protest will take the form of a climate fair in the Covered Recreation Space from 2:00 to 4:00 PM. There will be tables for water conservation, food sustainability, living off grid, and waste management, amongst others.

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- Ron noted that the Old School now has two heat pumps, one for the main and another for the Free Store with \$30,000 raised mainly from the community.
- The old oil tank is going to be taken over by the Denman Island Bus Service.
- Many thanks to Frank Frehetich and Gloria Minchin for coordinating the fund raising campaign.
- **Eco Trust Canada Presentation:** September 27th at 2:00 PM in the Community Hall by Denman resident Michael Anthony who can also help people build DIY air filters. Eco Trust focuses on equitable justice and sustainability.
- **PMO Letters:** Members were urged from the floor to write the PMO, which has to respond, concerning their climate change concerns. The call comes from West Coast Environmental Law which has heard that the Liberal Caucus meeting in Alberta next week is only hearing from the oil industry and not enough from environmentalists.
 - Ron Wilson added that [Seniors For Climate Action Now](#) has a service that will expedite transmission of letters.
- The most important thing about climate action, it was pointed out, is just to keep talking about it.

Neighbourhood Emergency Preparedness

Edi Johnston said she is stepping down as chair of the committee, and unless someone comes forward to take her place, the committee will fold on October 1st. None of the emergency coordinators is interested. Edi has been chair for five years and developed a group of neighbourhood coordinators who try to be personally prepared to prepare their neighbours. It is unclear if the CVRD would be interested in stepping in.

Public Input Forum

Islands Trust Update

Trustee Sam Borthwick gave an update on the Trust Policy Statement consultation process. Members were urged to review the draft policy and make comments on the Trust website and write letters to himself and Trustee David Green. The Policy provides high level guidance to local bylaws that would take effect over time but will not result in any immediate change on island.

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Sam also talked about the application of AI in Islands Trust work. He does not think bylaws should be drafted by computers and is very concerned about the huge energy consumption of AI. A motion is coming forward to Trust Council with discussion in December. Members were urged to get in touch with their views.

City West Update

Peter Spurr, member of the Hornby/Denman Internet Committee (which is not the former DIRA Internet Committee) gave an update on City West's progress. The information comes from a briefing given by the CEO of City West on completion of the installation of fibre-to-home on Denman.

- City West will be moving their equipment by end of September from Hornby onto Denman where they will be working until end of the year.
- The 2021 census listed 881 dwellings; the news release that City West put out earlier this year when they got the money to complete the installation on Denman, said they had road connections in front of 759 homes, so "its not as if they are doing nothing".
- Also important to keep in mind is that Denman, working with Hornb, first got the money, installation began on Denman, lasting about a year. This year City West has been working on Hornby which is why there has not been a lot of activity on island.
- The work on Denman will consist of continued installation of the road infrastructure to the "flowerpots" in front of houses so that a home connection can be completed.
- Most of the cable will be on poles rather than buried. They will also be dealing with situations where it is necessary to drill under the road in order to connect houses on the opposite side to the cable.
- Areas to be completed by year-end are expected to be:
 - Northwest Road
 - Wren Rd to Lake Farm
 - Coho Landing
 - North Central Rd
 - Swan Road from Beadnell
 - Owl Crescent
- Two areas are still waiting on pole approvals: extension of East Road and the Danes Rd-Point Rd area. If these approvals are not received, then work could be delayed when City West returns to Hornby at year-end.

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- After some problems with outages, Denman's cable connection will now be more secure with increased redundancy. Where Denman is connected to Vancouver and Hornby to Prince Rupert, there will also be a connection between both islands. Redundancy will further be reinforced by a connection from Texada.
- City West has now added a security program which can be found on their website.
- City West is pushing the CVRD to ensure that the 20 percent of net revenue on the service to be retained by the CVRD does not go into general revenue for purposes other than the internet service.

The meeting adjourned at 8:48 PM.