

Hi everyone:

Council Chamber was full for the Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting on Tuesday. Represented were the Gibsons Landing Harbour Authority, the Gibsons Community Initiatives Association, the Gibsons and District Chamber of Commerce, the Gibsons Landing Community Association, the Sunshine Coast Conservation Association, Community Futures and some interested citizens. The agenda item attracting all the interest was the GLHA's Stage 2 application to ICET for the expansion of Gibsons' small craft harbour. This topic had stirred up a little tempest at last week's Council meeting.

At the Mayor's request, the Harbour Authority explained the changes in the financial structure of the project (cost increases since the stage 1 application two years ago and redistribution of revenue sources due to the new federal Community Adjustment Fund program), and GCIA's Economic Development Coordinator explained the calculations behind the predicted economic benefits to the community. Interestingly, none of these changes were substantial, as had been alleged at the previous week's Council meeting. The Mayor raised a question about contingency plans should all of the requested funding not come through. The possibility of other grants and staging the expansion were presented as two possibilities.

The issue of how the planned expansion of the small craft harbour will be integrated into the harbour area master plan being undertaken by the Town was discussed. Paul Gipps noted that the harbour area master plan process will include public and Harbour Authority participation, and that the consultants ought to take account of the Harbour Authority's expansion plan for the small craft harbour. The Mayor said that there is a good possibility the two processes could dovetail nicely.

Councillor's Rowe's motion to reassert the Town's support of the Harbour Authority's application to ICET for funding for the harbour expansion was approved.

Councillor Curry raised a concern that too much process could slow the harbour expansion project to the point that it might not be completed within the time frame allowed by the Community Adjustment Fund.

Councillor Koopman asked that the issue of GCIA's letter be dealt with - that the Town should give support to community organizations undertaking projects that require grants from senior levels of government before the grants are requested. The Mayor had referred earlier to a letter from Gipps to the Harbour Authority (August 2007) in which he conveyed the Town's approval in principle of the small craft harbour expansion subject to

considering the impacts of the project, which task will be given to the Planning Committee. The Mayor has difficulty with carte blanche approval without complete plans. He said that he doesn't want to be obstructionist, but the Town has other interests in addition to the small craft harbour, the issues are complicated and the Town has to be very careful. Nevertheless the Mayor thinks that Council is very supportive of this project. He didn't say that he is. While the Committee of the Whole reaffirmed the Town's support for the Harbour Authority's fundraising efforts, it is still not clear what level of detailed project planning is needed, and what process is to be followed, to obtain the Town's support for other projects.

The Mayor addressed concerns about perceived conflict regarding his roles as Mayor of Gibsons and Chair of ICET. He made it clear that he doesn't participate in ICET deliberations regarding projects proposed in the Town, thereby removing himself from any potential conflict. While this may be satisfactory from the Mayor's point of view, he removes himself from a position in which he can promote Gibsons' economic interests, and that is not helpful to our town.

Have a happy Dominion Day! See you in July.

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