



**Sorrento-Blind Bay Incorporation Advisory Committee
November 13, 2019**

MEETING SUMMARY

(The Meeting Summary is considered draft until ratified by the Committee at its next meeting)

TIME & PLACE: **Wednesday, November 13, 2019**
6:00 pm – 8:30 pm
Cedar Heights Community Association Hall
2316 Lakeview Drive, Blind Bay

PURPOSE: To set the stage for the fifteen-month Incorporation Study on which the Advisory Committee is embarking. A review of the purpose of the study, the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved, the proposed work program and timeline, and the key findings from the 2017 and 2018 work that led to the study.

The Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSR D) Board of Directors has formalized the appointment of members to the Incorporation Advisory Committee, effective October 17, 2019 and expiring upon completion of the Final Incorporation Study, February 28, 2021.

PRESENT:

Committee Members:

Brian Butcher (Blind Bay)
Patrick Earley (Blind Bay)
Rose Fritz (Blind Bay)
Sandra Heschuk (Sorrento)
Lorrie Kelsey (Blind Bay)
Darlene Lincoln (Blind Bay)
Tracy Lundberg-Schimpf (Blind Bay)
Rex Porter (Sorrento)
Michael Shapcott (Sorrento)
John Smith (Blind Bay)
Larry Stephenson (Blind Bay)
Tim Van Den Heuvel (Blind Bay)
Paul Demenok, Director, Electoral Area C (non-voting ex-officio)

ALSO PRESENT:

Allan Neilson, Neilson Strategies

Sherry Hurst, Leftside Partners

Kailey Laidlaw, Senior Planning Analyst | Governance and Structure, Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing

Lynda Shykora, Deputy Manager, Corporate Administration Services, CSRD

PUBLIC ATTENDEES: Approximately 40 members of the public in attendance.

1. Call to Order at 6:00 PM

Lynda Shykora (Deputy Manager, Corporate Administration Services, CSRD) called the meeting to order and facilitated introductions of Committee members, Electoral Area C Director (Paul Demenok), Ministry of Municipal Affairs staff, and the Neilson Strategies consulting team members.

Director Demenok thanked the Committee members for putting their name forward to serve on the Incorporation Study Committee, and commented on the significance of this study process in the community. Director Demenok acknowledged Alternate Director Jennifer Dies with thanks for her role in the Committee selection process.

By Consensus it was agreed that the Election of Chair and Vice-Chair be brought forward to Committee Meeting No. 2, December, 2019. Ms. Shykora to serve as Chair for the duration of tonight's meeting. Delaying election of the Chair and Vice-Chair provides an opportunity for the Committee to be fully informed at tonight's meeting on the Incorporation Study process and the role of the Committee.

2. Committee Minutes and Recording Secretary

- CSRD staff noted there are no minutes to adopt being this is the first meeting, however, a volunteer recording secretary for the meeting must be appointed.

By Consensus, it was agreed that the appointment of a Recording Secretary be brought forward to Committee Meeting No. 2, December, 2019.

3. Purpose, Work Program, and Timeline

The work plan for the Incorporation study was provided in detail, on each stage of the process, and the timeline (key dates). It was noted that there is a 'default option' of dividing Electoral Area C into two electoral areas, in the event that incorporation of Sorrento-Blind Bay does not go ahead.

Work Program Description:

➤ Stage 1 (tonight's meeting)

Inaugural Committee Meeting

The process would begin with the inaugural meeting of the Sorrento-Blind Bay Incorporation Study Committee to discuss:

- the purpose of the *Study*
- the roles of the Committee, the consultants, the CSRD, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing, and the public
- the deliverables to be provided over the course of the *Study*

- the proposed work program, including key dates and timeline

At this first meeting — Committee Meeting 1 — briefly review findings of the *Electoral Area C (South Shuswap) Governance Study*, and the *Electoral Area C Boundary Analysis Study*. As part of this review, we would identify and explain the Sorrento-Blind Bay incorporation study area, and would outline the default option of two electoral areas in place of the existing Electoral Area C. The inaugural meeting would also provide an opportunity for the Committee members to select a Committee Chair and Vice Chair. The Chair, supported by the Vice Chair, would be responsible for chairing Committee meetings, and for presenting information on behalf of the Committee at key points in the study process.

➤ **Stage 2 (Committee Meeting No. 2)**

Description of Current State

At Stage 2, we would undertake the research necessary to outline the current state of service provision, governance, service funding, and property taxes in the incorporation study area compared to the current state under the default option. A considerable amount of research on current state factors was undertaken during the *Governance Study* in 2017 for the whole of Electoral Area C. The research findings would need to be updated and re-packaged to break out the study area, as well as the two separate electoral areas under the default option.

We would present the updated research findings in the form of a *Current State Briefing Paper* which we would review with the Committee at Committee Meeting 2.

➤ **Stage 3**

Service & Issue Fact Sheets

Stage 3 would involve the development and presentation of a series of *Fact Sheets* to outline the services, governance, financial, property tax, and other implications associated with the incorporation of Sorrento-Blind Bay. One separate *Fact Sheet* would be produced for each of the local, sub-regional, and regional services currently provided to residents in the study area by the CSRD.¹ Separate *Fact Sheets* would be produced for local services provided by regional agencies (e.g., Okanagan Regional Library), provincial ministries and agencies (e.g., Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, BC Assessment), and by non-profit and private groups.²

¹ In some cases, there may be an opportunity combine two or more similar services into single *Fact Sheets*.

² Examples of local services provided by the province include policing (i.e., RCMP), local roads, and subdivision approval. Examples of privately-provided local services include water distribution and sewage collection.

Each service *Fact Sheet* would begin by reviewing the individual service as it is provided today in the study area. Five questions would be addressed, including:

- what is the scope of the service provided
- who makes decisions
- who delivers the service
- what is spent on the service
- who pays for the service (and how much)

The *Fact Sheet* would then outline the changes to service's governance, delivery, cost, and tax impact that could be expected in the study area as a result of a decision to incorporate a Sorrento-Blind Bay Municipality. Following this outline, the *Fact Sheet* would profile the service under the default option that will exist in the event that incorporation does not proceed. The *Fact Sheet* would end with a comparison table of the property tax implications, associated with the individual service, for study area residents under the incorporation and default options.

Separate issue-specific *Fact Sheets* would be developed to identify and describe the implications of incorporation for the local governing body (i.e., the make-up, role, and authority of a municipal council), implications related to sources of revenue (including the availability of grants), the process through which incorporation would be implemented, and the financial assistance that would be provided by the provincial government to facilitate the transition to municipal status. Of particular importance to the Committee would almost certainly be the level of provincial assistance to expect regarding local roads. This item would be highlighted for discussion.

Stage 3 would be the most time-consuming stage of the study process. Five to six months would be required to undertake all of the necessary research and analysis. Five Committee meetings — Committee Meetings 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 — would be needed over the course of Stage 3 to properly present and discuss the separate *Fact Sheets* with the Committee. One meeting would be held each month.

➤ **Stage 4**

Operating Budget & Sample Property Tax Notices

Using the information from the *Fact Sheets*, the consultants would produce a multi-year operating budget for a new Sorrento-Blind Bay Municipality. The budget would include, but would also extend beyond, the transition period over which provincial financial assistance would be provided. Sample property tax notices for residential, business, and agricultural properties would also be prepared to compare the total (i.e., all services) projected property taxes under incorporation, against the property tax situation under the default option.

Importantly, the operating budget and accompanying property tax notices would be constructed to project the financial and tax changes that would be expected to occur simply as a result of the decision to incorporate. The budget and tax notices would not include the impacts of potential future decisions taken by a new municipal council to change the number, scope, or level of services provided within the study area. Any such decisions, or lack thereof, would be the prerogative of the new council, guided by the needs and wishes of the new municipality's electors.

The operating budget and property tax notices would be presented to the Committee at the end of the presentation of *Fact Sheets* at Committee Meeting 7.

➤ **Stage 5 (Due Date Summer, 2020)**

Presentation of Preliminary Report

The information and analyses from the earlier stages of the *Study* would be brought together into a *Sorrento-Blind Bay Incorporation Study: Preliminary Report*. The report would be presented to, and reviewed with, the Committee at Committee Meeting 8.

➤ **Stage 6 (Autumn, 2020)**

Community Engagement

All of the Committee's meetings would be advertised and open to the public. Space would be made available at each meeting to allow for questions from residents in attendance. In addition, all materials produced for the *Study* would be posted on a dedicated portion of the CSRD's website for the *Study*. Materials would include:

- copies of the final reports for the *Electoral Area C (South Shuswap) Governance Study*, and the *Electoral Area C Boundary Analysis Study*
- the *Sorrento-Blind Bay Incorporation Study* terms of reference
- the *Current State Briefing Paper*
- the individual *Fact Sheets* for the services and key issues
- the multi-year operating budget and sample property tax notices
- the *Sorrento-Blind Bay Incorporation Study: Preliminary Report*
- the Committee's meeting calendar, agendas, and minutes

The dedicated page on the CSRD's website would be created at the outset of the *Study*, before Committee Meeting 1. The bulk of community engagement, however, would not occur until after the presentation of the *Preliminary Report* at Committee Meeting 8. It is after this meeting that the Committee would have all of the information and impact analyses with which to properly engage the public.

Engagement would proceed in accordance with a comprehensive *Community Engagement Strategy*. The *Strategy* would be developed and presented for Committee discussion, refinement, and approval at Committee Meeting 8. In addition to the *Study* website, the *Strategy* would provide for:

- one comprehensive mail-out to every residence in the study area, to highlight key findings from the *Study*, to advertise community open houses, and to outline possible next steps (e.g., referendum process)
- four community open houses within the incorporation study area³
- a facilitated panel discussion on the pros and cons of incorporation, featuring leaders from other British Columbia jurisdictions that either chose to incorporate, or chose to remain unincorporated, following restructure studies
- a series of information sheets, available online and in hard copy, to highlight the service, governance, financial, property tax implications associated with a decision to incorporate, and with the default option

³ Each open house would display poster boards and information hand-outs, feature a presentation by the consultants, and provide ample time for Q&A.

- an information sheet to outline the referendum process and timing that would occur based on a recommendation from the CSRD Board to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- an information sheet to outline the incorporation process and timing that would be followed as a result of a referendum decision to incorporate
- social media notices using existing CSRD platforms

Committee members would be encouraged to attend each of the four community meetings. Following each of these events, a de-briefing with the Committee would occur.

➤ **Stage 7 (Due Date year end 2020/early 2021)**

Presentation of Final Report

Based on input provided by the community through the engagement process, the consultants would produce the *Final Report* for the *Study*. The report would include the information from the *Preliminary Report*, but would also feature a complete synopsis of the community engagement process and findings. Finally, the report would present a proposed Committee recommendation to the CSRD Board of Directors on an incorporation referendum.

The *Final Report* would be circulated to Committee members electronically for review. If deemed necessary by the Chair, the Committee would be brought together for Committee Meeting 9 to discuss the report's contents and proposed recommendation. Following Committee endorsement, the *Final Report* would be submitted to the CSRD and the Ministry. The Board Chair, supported by the consultants, would then present the *Final Report* to the CSRD Board at an open Board meeting. The Board at that time would determine what recommendation to make to the Minister regarding an incorporation referendum.

➤ **Stage 8**

Summary & Next Steps

Following an incorporation referendum, the consultants would produce a summary document to report on the *Incorporation Study*, the process followed, the findings from the impact analyses, the community engagement process and findings, and the outcome of the referendum. Next steps would be listed. The document would be provided to the CSRD for distribution.

During review of the above work plan, Allan Neilson responded to several questions from the Committee:

Q. What about futures services through incorporation?

A. Need to be cautious about not to presume what services (other than legislated) will be provided by a new municipality what the service levels might be. This Committee will help in this determination in terms of what a reasonable level of service(s).

Q. Will incorporation help make the community happier and healthier?

A. A sample template of a service fact sheet was displayed - the intention being to present neutral information. The Committee will be presented with a set of several fact sheets for each of the upcoming meetings to discuss budget, longer term budgets and beyond the Province's financial assistance package.

Prior to the community engagement, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing staff confirmed it would be consulting with First Nations and will relay the feedback to the Incorporation Committee.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Allan Neilson reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the Committee, the parties involved such as the CSRD Board and staff, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, and the consulting team. Noted that an important role in this process is the community.

5. Background Studies

Allan Neilson presented an overview of the key points and findings from the 2017 *Electoral Area C (South Shuswap) Governance Study* that prompted the CSRD Board of Directors to request provincial support for a *Sorrento-Blind Bay Incorporation Study*, as well as an overview of the 2018 *Area C Boundary Analysis* which established the Sorrento-Blind Bay incorporation study area.

In regards to the Boundary Analysis, Mr. Neilson outlined each of the 4 scenarios and the factors that formed the outcome and preferred option for a proposed Sorrento-Blind Bay incorporation area.

Q. For newly incorporated areas is there research on success such as 5 – 10 years following Incorporation?

A. Allan Neilson responded to several questions from Committee members and added that the Committee may ask for the consulting team to add other issues such as social issues, housing, etc., to explore and present to the community.

Q. Will there be longer term capital costs with current road services, roads, water services, fire hall operations, etc.?

A. These costs will be identified.

Q. In regards to the many vibrant non-profit associations and organizations in the area, will these groups be included in the community consultation?

A. The Committee may wish to meet, being cognizant of work plan/budget factors, to consult with various community groups on a specific basis. An area association could provide input directly or as invited.

For the public's information, it was noted that the above background study documents are available on the CSRD's website.

6. Next Meeting

Committee Meeting No. 2 is scheduled for Thursday, December 12, 2019 at Sorrento Centre, 6 pm – 8:30 pm. Public is welcome to attend. Each Committee meeting will include an opportunity for public attendees to ask questions or to provide input.

7. Questions from Public in Attendance

At 7:50 pm, community members were invited to ask questions or to provide comments. Allen Neilson responded to the following questions posed:

- The timing of the community engagement given the number of seasonal residents;
- Reference to mandate of the Agricultural Land Commission and how Agricultural Land Reserve lands are affected in the proposed boundary;
- Concern with roads and the condition of them (poor); and the cost of both maintenance and longer term work; A condition assessment (and future costs) is needed now;
- What is the municipality's financial responsibility to the CSRD;
- Invasive / zebra mussels are really the key issues;
- Why not add a second elected representative now, for the Electoral Area;
- Concerned about how emergency services will turn out, ie fire, ambulance, policing, and phone exchanges, noting the RCMP dispatch from both Salmon Arm and from Chase;
- Will there be a fact sheet on governing a new municipality;
- Can the municipality have a different set of services than what the Committee envisions;
- Seniors have no access on-line to see the agendas and the Incorporation information.

The public was informed that for every Committee meeting a public notice will be advertised in the local paper, and that paper copies of the agenda will be available at each meeting.

8. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Chair

Note:

The following documents were included in the agenda package for Committee's reference. For public reference, the documents are available on the CSRD website: www.csr.bc.ca

- *CSRD Policy A-67: Code of Ethics Policy*
- *Sorrento-Blind Bay Incorporation Study: Consultant Terms of Reference*
- *Sorrento-Blind Bay Incorporation Study: Proposed Work Program*
(Letter to CSRD from Neilson Strategies Inc., dated September 9, 2019)
- *Electoral Area C (South Shuswap) Governance Study*
- *Area C Boundary Analysis.*