



Sorrento-Blind Bay Incorporation Advisory Committee
Thursday, December 12, 2019

MEETING SUMMARY

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

TIME & PLACE: **Wednesday, December 12, 2019**
6:00 pm – 8:30 pm
Sorrento Centre, 1159 Passchendaele Road, Sorrento

PURPOSE: The primary purpose of the meeting is to review the Current State Report, which outlines the governance system and the local services in place today in Sorrento-Blind Bay.

The Incorporation Committee, which includes the Electoral Area C Director as non-voting ex-officio, will provide oversight and direction on the study process. Once a report is prepared by the consultant, the committee will present the findings to the CSRD Board and then make a recommendation to the Directors on an incorporation referendum or giving further consideration to dividing Electoral Area C into two separate Electoral Areas. This was supported as an alternative option, should an incorporation process not proceed.

*A decision on incorporation would have to get the approval of the electorate through a **referendum vote** before any change could be made.*

The 'default option' of dividing Electoral Area C into two electoral areas, is in the event that incorporation of Sorrento-Blind Bay does not go ahead.

PRESENT:

Committee Members:

Brian Butcher (Blind Bay)
Patrick Earley (Blind Bay), Vice-Chair
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), Chair
Larry Stephenson (Blind Bay)
Paul Demenok, Director, Electoral Area C (non-voting ex-officio)

ABSENT:

Tim Van Den Heuvel (Blind Bay)

ALSO PRESENT:

Allan Neilson, Neilson Strategies
Sherry Hurst, Leftside Partners
Lynda Shykora, Deputy Manager, Corporate Administration Services, CSRD

PUBLIC ATTENDEES: Approximately 14 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 welcomed the public to the meeting.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA, WITH ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM 6A – Communications.

Moved by Michael Shapcott, Seconded by Darlene Lincoln:

That the agenda for the Dec 12, 2019 meeting be approved, including the additional agenda item 6A – Communications.

Vote of Committee: CARRIED

2. Volunteer Recording Secretary

Tracy Lundberg-Schimpf volunteered to serve as a Committee Recording Secretary for tonight's meeting and hopes other members will share the duty at future meetings.

3. Adoption of Incorporation Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes – November 13, 2019

Moved by Larry Stephenson, Seconded by Lorrie Kelsey:

THAT: the meeting summary of the November 13, 2019 Sorrento-Blind Bay Incorporation Advisory Committee be adopted.

Vote of Committee: CARRIED

4. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Election of Chair.

CSRD staff called for nominations for position of Chair.

Tracy Lundberg-Schimpf nominated **John Smith** for the position of Chair.

John Smith accepted the nomination.

Call 2 more times for further nominations. **John Smith declared elected Chair.**

Election of Vice-Chair.

CSRD staff called for nominations for position of Chair.

Tracy Lundberg-Schimpf nominated **Patrick Earley** for the position of Chair.

Patrick Earley accepted the nomination.

Call 2 more times for further nominations. **Patrick Earley declared elected Vice-Chair.**

John Smith assumed the Chair at this time.

5. Review of Previous Meeting (November 13, 2019).

For the benefit of public attending, Allen Neilson provided a brief overview of the first Committee meeting held on November 13, 2019.

6. Current State Report

Sherry Hurst presented an overview of the Current State Report, as described in the Agenda attachment, which is Stage 2 of the Incorporation Study Work Plan:

➤ Stage 2 (Committee Meeting No. 2)

Description of Current State

Research to ascertain 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 relate to that of the Sorrento-Blind Bay incorporation boundary area, as well as the two separate electoral areas under the default option.

Findings were presented in the form of a *Current State Briefing Paper* which were reviewed with the Committee.

Questions from Committee, and response(s) from consulting team:

Should the incorporation of Sorrento-Blind Bay go through, why are the potential impacts on the remainder of Electoral Area C not included in the report?

That information is not part of this study/committee's mandate. The Province of BC must ensure there are no negative impacts on the remaining unincorporated area.

Why, should Electoral Area C be split into two, does the report show more votes as two regions (5) than we currently have as one region (4)?

Each electoral area is assigned one vote per 2500 people (voting strength per Director on the CSRD Board). If an area has a population of 2502, then they would be given two votes. The number of votes would change as per the current census. So the number of votes may change just based on the population distribution that occurs changing one area to two.

Do the current electoral areas have different tax rates?

Taxes for each electoral area are dependent on what services are provided. Some services cover all areas and the rate for those is the same in each area. Some services are unique to an electoral area. Any new services must be voted and approved by area residents. Regional districts itemize the cost of each service on annual tax notices versus incorporated areas (municipalities) just have a mill rate that is a percentage of property values.

If we want to increase service, for example: transit service, that would mean more taxes?

Yes

How do we plan for waste management/recycling services?

The Province of BC's Environmental Management Act mandates regional districts to prepare and update solid waste management plans at least every 10 years. Those plans reflect a long term vision of how each regional district manages its solid waste, including diversion and disposal. CSRD's plan is now 9 years old.

What are local community commissions? Do we get money to have them?

They tend to be used, very rarely, in BC. Normally they are an interim stage before becoming a municipality. They function almost like a mini council for a particular service. We believe the funding available is minimal for them (possibly \$5000?). The only one we are currently aware of is for a water service in the Okanagan Similkameen Regional District.

Does Electoral Area C have bylaws that are unique to them?

Yes, Electoral Area C has its own land use/zoning and Official Community Plan.

6.A) COMMUNICATIONS

How do we better inform the public of what is happening during this study?

- Direct people to the CSRD website for the detailed incorporation materials.
- Engage people in the public processes (the committee meetings, the various ways that people can input into the process).
- Chair is spokesperson on behalf of Committee with the assistance of CSRD Communications Coordinator.
- Provide updates/news releases after each meeting and prior to the next meeting so public is fully aware of what has occurred and what will be presented going forward.

- May be helpful to have a Frequently Asked Questions publication as some committee members are hearing common misconceptions about the process.
- Suggestion to keep a binder of all the reports/documents/minutes at the CSRD office and the Okanagan Regional Library, South Shuswap branch for the public to view.

Moved by Michael Shapcott, Seconded by Brian Butcher:

THAT: the Chair, in consultation with the CSRD Communications Coordinator, and considering the suggestions of the committee, develop and implement a communication plan specific to the Incorporation Study.

Discussion: Michael Shapcott offered to have the Incorporation Study documents available for the public to view at the Sorrento Centre administration office.

Vote of Committee: CARRIED

7. Next Meeting

Committee Meeting No. 3: Committee **AGREED** to the date of Wednesday, **February 12, 2020**, Venue confirmed for: Cedar Heights Community Centre from 6 pm – 8:30 pm.

- Committee Meeting No. 3 is the beginning of presentations on: Stage 3 of the Incorporation Study, 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. Stage 3 will be the most time-consuming stage of the study process. Five to six months will be needed to undertake all of the necessary research and analysis, which will entail five Committee meetings — Committee Meetings 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 — to present and discuss the separate *Fact Sheets* with the Committee.
- For each meeting, public is welcome to attend. Each Committee meeting will include an opportunity for public attendees to ask questions or to provide input.

Committee Meeting No. 4: Committee **AGREED** to the date of Monday, **March 16, 2020**, venue suggested: Sorrento Memorial Hall from 6 pm to 8:30 pm.

8. Questions from Public in Attendance

At 8:15 pm, community members were invited to ask questions or to provide comments. Allen Neilson responded to the following questions posed:

How did this incorporation study start? Why are we doing this?

Incorporation has been under discussion for almost 20 years. It comes from people both in Sorrento and Blind Bay that have been dissatisfied with the current decision-making process. There has also been discussions back and forth with the province. In 2016, CSRD received funding from the province to do a governance study. This process took over year and looked at the current state of governance and service

delivery in the south Shuswap, consider the concerns and interests of residents and identify future governance options for Electoral Area C. The report can be found here:

<https://pub-csrd.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=3116>

A number of factors were considered when determining the best option including: geographical boundaries, current government services, population density, future development potential, road networks, property assessments and agricultural land.

The option which best met the criteria for consideration for further study by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs was the formation of one municipality comprised of both Sorrento and Blind Bay.

A boundary study was then commissioned:

<http://www.csr.bc.ca/sites/default/files/reports/Electoral%20Area%20C%20-%20South%20Shuswap%20-%20Boundary%20Analysis%20-%20Final%20Report%20%28January%2C%202019%29.pdf>

The Province of BC's Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing has now funded the Sorrento-Blind Bay Incorporation Advisory Committee and study which is looking at two options: the incorporation of Sorrento-Blind Bay vs the division of the current Electoral Area C into two separate electoral areas.

Why can't we just stay the way we are? Can't we just assign two directors to our current electoral area?

With the population growth of the area, the status quo was not an option. Electoral Area C has a population of approximately 8000 while some electoral areas have only 500. It would be extremely unusual for the province to allow an electoral area to have two directors. Difficult to govern that way should the two directors disagree.

Can our property be taken out of the proposed boundaries of this potential incorporation area?

You can submit a written request to the CSRD Administration for the consulting team to review for exclusion but it would be unlikely for that to happen.

How do we have a say in this process?

Come to the meetings, submit questions/comments to the committee, keep informed. At the end of the process, the committee will either recommend incorporation or two electoral areas as being the best choice. Should the recommendation be incorporation, and the CSRD Board of Directors agree with that recommendation, there will be a referendum and you will have a vote.

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.

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Chair

Note:

The agenda documents (Nov 13 2019 Committee Meeting Minutes and the Current State Report) are available for public reference on the CSRD website: www.csr.bc.ca