

# Shawnigan Residents Association

## AGM

Hugh Wilkonson Theatre, Shawnigan School

November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015 (7:30 – 9:30pm)

## Minutes

- 7:35pm **Al Brunet (MC)** - announced there would be a minor 10-minute delay
- 7:36pm **Rose Henry** – Coast Salish elder (matriarch) volunteered to tell a story and sing a song. Her theme was “water is life, like blood is life”. Her drumming personified the heart beat of mother earth.
- 8:00pm **Al** offered some housing keeping comments and introduced Graham Ross-Smith, who conducted the election of the new board.
- 8:05pm **Graham Ross-Smith** introduced this new board asking them to stand and be recognized:
- he then asked the members of the SRA in the audience (which virtually meant everyone in attendance...estimated at approx.. 150) to vote on the slate of 13 proposed board directors (*see attached for Board names and bios*). The board as proposed was approved, with no further nominations from the floor.
  - Graham then sought approval for the four executive positions, which were also approved:
    - President – Calvin Cook
    - Al Brunet – Vice President
    - Treasurer – Dewar McCarthy
    - Secretary – Grant Price
  - Graham announced he was moving to Brentwood Bay, and acknowledge all the SRA board directors he has worked with over his 7 year involvement the SRA.
- 8:15pm **Sean Hern (a lawyer with Farris, Vaughan, Wills & Murphy LLP)** was introduced and gave an update on the SRA's legal actions to prevent the dumping of contaminated soil in the Shawnigan watershed. His comments included:
- Evidence that came to light suggesting Active Earth (the engineering firm for SIA) would loose if the permit was denied, and would get money if the permit was approved...an apparent conflict of interest for a firm hired to provide independent professional engineering advise.
  - Sean is hoping to conclude “document disclosure hearings” before Xmas, then get approval for the Judicial review to occur over a two week period starting Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016.
  - Some potentially good news was provided by the Ministry of Environment (MoE) as they communicated with SIA saying: *“In consideration of recent events, the Director is currently considering reducing or suspending the operations to Cobble Hill Holdings Ltd. until a thorough independent assessment of water management works (collection and treatment works, procedures, etc.) and activities is completed, and that all remedies are made to ensure compliance with the permit. Specifically, that all surface water (contact and non-contact water) is contained on the property and treated in accordance with the permit, and that the authorized works have been restored or corrected to prevent unauthorized discharges. A determination on whether to*

*reduce or suspend operations will be made after consideration of a suitable response from the company.*

- Before taking questions Sean concluded that his role was to present information and get a fair hearing”, while ours was to continue pressing our rights through writing letters, making phone calls, lawfully rallying...etc. He won’t stop, if we don’t.
- Sean was given a standing ovation.

- 8:40pm **Dr. Bruce Fraser (Chair of the Shawnigan Basin Society – SBS)** gave a short update on the activities of the SBS, including their initiative called “Foreshore to Forest”, and a presentation on Wednesday Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00pm at the Shawnigan Lake Community Centre to discuss, in detail, the “state of the basin” as presented by Herb Hammond, an ecologist; Mar Martinez, a biologist; Dr. Bruce Fraser, an ecologist; and Kelly Musselwhite, the SBA executive director.
- 8:49pm **AI** promoted membership in SRA, and encouraged donations...noting that “donations between \$20 - \$10,000 would get you the gift of a t-shirt”.
- 8:51pm **Sonia Furstenau (CVRD, Area B Director)** was introduced and received a standing ovation. Sonia then gave an update on the CVRD legal hearings to assert their rights to enforce zoning bylaws, which have been ignored by the MoE in approving SIA’s permit to dump contaminated soil on their mining site in the Shawnigan watershed. The hearing, originally expected to last 5 days, has so far gone on for 4.5 days, and are expected to last another 4 days, shortly. She also mentioned:
- She had a modestly promising meeting with Minister Mary Polak
  - She received a call from the Auditor General Office, interested in discussing her comments and experience with the “professional reliance model”. This is the model whereby the MoE got to rely on (without questioning or doing their own independent studies) Active Earth engineering reports for SIA, and using it to approve the initial permit.
  - Water testing at the SIA site continues
  - CVRD engineers are doing their own testing of water flows, and water management systems at SIA site
  - She ended up with words that in effect said “don’t give up” .....
- 9:04pm **Calvin Cook (President of the SRA)** gave a big THANK YOU to Shawnigan Lake School for their ongoing support and assistance. He then offered further words of encouragement and pledged to continue the fight for clean water and no dumping of contaminated soil in our watershed.
- 9:09pm **Dewar McCarthy (Treasurer for SRA)** gave his **financial report (attached)**, and expressed his own challenging with water quality. He suggested to Bruce that the SBS could be a repository for comments from residence who are experiencing water quality issues.
- 9:22pm **AI** again encourage people to join the SRA and donate....and then adjourned the meeting. (note: due to time constraints, **Grant Price’s Water Report was not presented, but attached** for your information).

**Adjourned 9:30pm.....next AGM in the fall of 2016**