

Tofino Ratepayers Association



Nov. 30, 2019

Re: Upcoming Dec. 3 Open House

Hello Members

First, I want to remind everyone about the upcoming Open House and Town Hall, Tuesday, Dec 3rd from 4-7pm at Tofino community Hall.

What can we accomplish at such an event? I know some of you are disappointed because of what appeared to be a poor reception afforded our position at the last council meeting. Some have even suggested a boycott of the meeting. However, seriously, I think we go, and we go in numbers.

Council is not used to people showing up in numbers to their Council meetings. We represent a significant body of concern and it crosses political lines. When you attend such a meeting and make what you feel is a meaningful presentation, you feel like you deserve more of a response.

Our absence at the town Hall would allow others to define our position for us and probably in less complimentary terms than we deserve. Did anyone else pick up on that tinge in comments on Facebook such as "Can you trust who is telling you these things?" or on the radio "Some people are opposed to any taxation." Lines used to dismiss us, to communicate to those not familiar with our position and concerns, that we are not to be trusted and are extreme. This is divisive language. Let's not play into that. That exchange only shows weakness, and a lack of substance. We should go to this Town Hall and present our views with dignity and confidence and expect a thoughtful response.

If you can not attend, write to council, email to Mayor and Council and express your views.

It occurs to me there are two kinds of approach to the town hall.

One is to go item by item through the budget and identify waste, duplication, inefficiency and items that are not of priority etc. I encourage people to do that. It is important. Remember, from the ratepayer's mission statement: **Taxes, only when necessary, should be affordable, fair and transparent. Spending should be efficient, effective, purposeful and address Tofino 's priority issues.**

The other is the macro approach. To that end I will attach the graph presented at our AGM, which shows the past twenty years of 7.5% compound annual growth that a Tofino property owner pays in taxes and the next twenty years if things stays on the same course. Ask council what they are going to do to prevent what the graph is indicating? What plans, strategies, guidelines, priorities etc. are they going to put in place to change the pattern. Do you think the community can survive \$18,000 taxes/ year for a plain three-bedroom, two bath detached single family house? Many homes with suites or VCR's will be significantly higher. We know what the next five years is forecast to be. It will easily exceed the previous average of 7.5%/year. Owning a smaller condo will not escape the tax bite. Their taxes will double and double again in the next twenty years unless something changes.

Add in what is likely to come, in the near future, new water treatment facilities, increased sewer user fees, new water sources, the ever-expanding upkeep on new trails and tourist facilities, transit? Gymnasium? Arena? Pool? A larger municipal bureaucracy? New municipal hall? Then there is the ACRD

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and what new levies they may impose. The list is likely to go on. There is plenty of opportunity to match the last twenty years of increase in the next twenty What is going to change?

So, everyone, please go to the Open House/ Town Hall event on Tuesday Dec 3rd at 4-7pm or write your Councillors and Mayor. Let's be happy warriors. The 151st member contacted me this afternoon to sign up.

Cheers Jack Gillie