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**Feb. 2025, HICEEC First Edition**

**Here Today, There Tomorrow**

As you know (after all, you’re reading it right now) HICEEC publishes a regular column in the *First Edition*, to keep the community informed about our work. But we also keep copies of the past few years’ columns on our website. To check out our archived articles, go to <https://hiceec.org/our-updates>.

**Beulah Creek Housing Taking Shape**

We are excited to share that the 26-unit Beulah Creek housing project is officially under way. To help keep the community informed, a brief current summary of the project is available on our website, at: <https://hiceec.org/housing-and-information>

**Community Marketing – The Time to Join In is Now!**
Don’t miss your chance to be part of a collaborative marketing effort that amplifies the Hornby message: “What you do matters.” By placing your ad in the *Visitor Guide* and online, you’ll help promote respectful tourism and encourage visitors to engage with our island thoughtfully and with care. The deadline for ad placement is **February**, so act now to showcase your business while supporting sustainable tourism. For more information, visit: <https://hiceec.org/hornby-visitor-guide>
To get listed on [www.hornbyisland.com](http://www.hornbyisland.com), email: karen@hiceec.org

**MRDT Funds Available**

Funds collected through Municipal Regional District Tax—the “pillow tax” collected from visitors—can be used for events, sports, and initiatives. Visit <https://hiceec.org/mrdt> for the information package.

**Work on Workforce Housing**

HICEEC has submitted an application to secure 10 hectares of Crown land for the Affordable Housing initiative. The HICEEC Board expresses deep appreciation to Katherine Ronan for her role in this. Without Katherine’s tireless work and research, this project would not have moved forward.

**The Ferries: Don’t Call It Bait and Switch**

Looking back, 2023 brought some hope for Hornby ferry service. The larger Quinitsa replaced the undersized Kahloke from May through mid-January 2024, providing needed capacity. The Kahloke was also deployed on the Denman route during “banker’s hours” on weekdays in July and August, to supplement the cable ferry. Those changes were praised as bringing the best summer ferry service in 30 years. Many were optimistic about continued improvements.

However, 2024 has been a significant disappointment. The Quinitsa was only available on the Hornby route for half the year, from mid-April to mid-October. Worse still, the tandem service on the Denman route remained a stopgap measure, only available weekdays in July and August. Islanders continue to miss this connecting ferry on Denman year-round.

Many now feel betrayed, regretting the optimism brought about by the 2023 improvements. The optimism seems to have been exploited, with BC Ferries reducing service levels just a year later. As for 2025, no one knows, as BC Ferries has yet to communicate its plans.

In November, BC Ferries announced the retirement of the community Ferry Advisory Committees (FAC), which have been essential in facilitating direct engagement between ferry staff and the communities they serve for over 30 years.

It’s time for us to stand up and voice our concerns. If we don’t, we risk being left with fewer answers and less involvement in decisions that affect our lives. Our community deserves better, and it’s up to us to demand accountability and solutions.

You can write to:

* Premier David Eby - premier@gov.bc.ca
* Minister Mike Farnworth (Transportation & Transit) - Minister.MOTI@gov.bc.ca
* Josie Osborne - Josie.Osborne.MLA@leg.bc.ca
* BC Ferry Authority Board - info@bcferryauthority.com
* Eva Hage, BC Ferry Commissioner - info@bcferrycommission.ca
* Nicolas Jiminez, BC Ferries CEO - nicolas.jimenez@bcferries.com
* Claire Trevena, BCF Authority Board mid-island rep.: ClaireTrevena@bcferryauthority.com

**Submitted on behalf of the volunteer Board:**
John Heinegg, John Grayson, Jack Hornstein, Katherine Ronan, Donna Tuele, Sheila McDonnell, Stu Amos, and Marilyn Kopansky