

Sept, 2019 First Edition

HICEEC REPORT

A tax for us

Discussions continue around instituting the MRDT (Municipal & Regional District Tax)—a 2% or 3% “hotel tax” that would be charged on top of the 8% tax on short-term accommodations that the province enacted last year. Revenues generated from visitors by this additional taxation would be available for local spending, according to the program outlines.

Need a new skill?

Do you have ideas on new workshops for the HICEEC “Skills Development” workshop program? So far in 2019, HICEEC has hosted a grant-writing workshop for non-profits, professional vehicle Class 4 driver training, and the CVRD Septic Owners’ System Maintenance workshop.

In line for better online

HICEEC and the Denman Island Internet Committee continue to work on getting funding for a Digital Roadmap and Implementation Plan—public consultation and planning that will lay the groundwork for implementing the recommended course of action. Evidence of a cohesive, prepared community will enhance the opportunity at the “big ask”—the multimillion-dollar grant needed to upgrade the Island’s digital infrastructure and actually get fiberoptic cable to every household on Hornby.

Bus business

Service was expanded this summer to include bikes and dogs, with their appropriate owners. And though the bus was free, riders were generous in their contributions to the donation box; we expect there will be enough funding to continue bus service on weekends into September.

We’d like to drive home a big thanks to bus sponsors: Union Bay Credit Union, Thatch Pub Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park, Hornby Island Residents & Ratepayers Association (HIRRA), the Coop Store, LePage Realty (Donna Tuele), and Fords Cove Store & Cabins.

And a “saving the planet” badge to the Bus Steering Committee members: Daniel Arbour, Sheila McDonnell, Alex Ortwein, Garth Millan, Al Dickie, Peter Mills, Scott Towson, John Nemy, James Emerson, Karen Ross, and John Heinegg. To the volunteer team, too:

- Daisy/HomeGrown Websites, for the online route and map at hornbybus.com
- Hilary McDonnell Wood, for the Hornby Bus Facebook page

Also, a shout out to our driver/manager, Ron Langevin, and awesome drivers Thomas Vandermolten, Scott Towson, and Garth Millan.

Looking to the next year:

- The CVRD is continuing a “pilot project” level of sponsorship and we are looking for increased ridership to move to a more committed level of CVRD funding
- A cross-Denman connecting bus is being investigated
- Keep the dream alive for an electric bus
- Continuing investigation to integrating bus services (BC Transit, School District 71, Hornby Bus, charter services, etc.)

Rocking the Boat

If you traveled down to Shingle Spit this summer you likely saw the road signs that HICEEC installed for July and August, placed at spots corresponding to a full ferry load and advising travelers on how many sailings their wait is likely to be, as well as displaying the BC Ferries customer service phone number. The signs were an effort to mitigate traveler angst and to provide encouragement for feedback to BCF.

HICEEC also wrote to BC Ferries asking for:

- A live feed from the BCF traffic camera located on the pole by the Thatch
- Public Wi-Fi access at the Gravelly Bay and Hornby terminals
- Signs asking vehicles waiting in line to move over to the shoulder of the road
- Hash marks on the road, by driveways affected by the ferry line-up, to designate No Parking zones

Ambassador program launched

Visitors who patronize Hornby businesses often have questions about our island. To help front-line staff, and accommodation hosts, with the answers, we’ve created a 4-page document explaining basic community facts and values, and detailing business hours. Did you get your copy? It is available for download at <http://www.hiceec.org/community-marketing.html>

What else are we working on?

Hornbyisland.com EVENTS calendar; Hornby Denman Visitor Guide; participation in CAST; support for shoulder season economic enhancement including the new bcseaside.com regional website; support for the Festival Society and Farmer’s Market internet; Ferry Advisory Committee; etc.

Submitted on behalf of the volunteer HICEEC Board: John Heinegg, Katherine Ronan, Carlyn Bishop, Jason Griggs, John Grayson, Jeff Zamluk, Jim Bulmer, and Jack Hornstein.