

Municipal Status Committee – Chaired by interim chairman Al Brunet

Meeting October 14, 2014, Shawnigan Lake School

Present: Jim Green, Marcie Green, Glen Sanders, Lois Walker, Brent Beach, Bill Camden, Ron Cuthbert, David Camden, Ian Ceasar, Rick Restell, Al Brunet. Names of other interested persons was read to the group.

The mandate of the committee, as outlined by the SRA, is that it be a wholly independent committee of the board with its own chair, with the responsibility of producing a report in its own time, advising the SRA on what recommendations to make to its members.

Object of the exercise is to study the possibility and consequences of a “Shawnigan Only” bid for Municipal Status. It was felt we stay open to the idea of including Mill Bay and Cobble Hill if a request is made, but that we should proceed on our own in the meantime.

First order of business was to have everyone introduce themselves; declare their stand on the issue and what talents they could bring to the table.

The feeling was unanimous that it was time to do the required study. It must be accurate and designed in such a way that it would be in compliance with the requirements of the provincial government. We must avoid duplication of effort, starting from, and being guided by, previous studies which are readily available. Thought was also given to seeking out people who are opposed to the idea in order to ensure that all questions are asked and answered.

Among the topics loosely discussed were the incorporation of View Royal and its similarities to Shawnigan, Fire and Police protection, involvement of the Improvement District, creation of a new OCP, Taxes, possible creation of “mini-CVRD” office, cross-over authority between CVRD and Improvement district (i.e. burning bylaws), the possibility of a petition to the government once information has been given to the residents, and the creation of a mission statement.

The need to work closely with, and keep informed, bureaucrats and Deputy Ministers at the Provincial level was stressed as we would prefer a cooperative rather than confrontational approach.

It was noted that Electoral and Improvement District boundaries are different from each other and there would be a need to work on what boundaries would best serve an incorporated Shawnigan. It was also agreed that an increase in taxes is the largest “fear-factor” and that the committee needs to address that idea clearly and accurately and present a good transition plan.

The decision was to skip the November meeting because of the election at which time the position of a permanent chair, an executive committee and the structure of the group would be dealt with.

Prepared by Al Brunet

