

Concerned Citizens of the Saanich Peninsula
North Saanich Mayoral Candidate Questionnaire
and Survey Responses
2018

1. Statistics from the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing reveal that the District of North Saanich had the 2nd highest cost per capita for Administration Services within the CRD for 2016 and 2017. Would working with the incoming Chief Administrative Officer to reduce the cost of Administrative Services be a priority of your term as Mayor?

Dorothy Hartshorne:

Yes

Geoff Orr:

I am not familiar with the per capita Administrative Services statistic mentioned in the question. I have visited the BC Government website and accessed Schedule 201 and 402 for 2017. By combining data from each I am able to calculate the per capita expenditures for the various municipalities in the CRD. Perhaps you have access to another data source that already has this information summarized?

The District's budget process includes Legislative & Admin, Corporate Services, and General Government. The actuals for 2017 total \$1,703,420 which differs substantially from the figure of \$2,948,238 listed as General Government in Schedule 402?

I do support benchmarking North Saanich against other CRD municipalities. The important aspect of this comparison, however, is understanding how each municipality has allocated costs to the various business sectors such as General Government, Development Services, Infrastructure Services, Parks & Recreation, etc.

Once we have this understanding Council in concert with the Chief Administrative Officer may wish to review why North Saanich is higher or lower than other municipalities. I support having this conversation with the new CAO.

CCSP note to address above response:

"The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing collects financial data from local governments in B.C. through annual financial reporting. The quality of information contained in the schedules depends on the input from local governments and their auditors."

Source: Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Province of British Columbia

2. [Bylaw 1255](#) permits a variety of commercial uses for the 12 acre Sandown Commercial zone. How would you ensure this bylaw will remain unchanged?

Dorothy Hartshorne:

I am only one vote of seven but I would provide the leadership to support the bylaw remaining unchanged.

Geoff Orr:

As Mayor, I do't believe I could ensure (or guarantee) that the C-5 Sandown Commercial Zone - Permitted Uses in Bylaw 1255 will remain unchanged. As the question states the C-5 Zone permits a variety of uses (28 in total).

If the owner or applicant were to make an application to amend or add to the permitted uses this would first be reviewed by staff and then brought forward to Council with recommendations.

Council as a whole would consider whether to advance or deny the zoning bylaw amendment.

3. Up to eight adjoining properties in the industrial area located near the Mills Road and McDonald Park Road intersection have requested to be included in the North Saanich Sewer Service Area. This would require an amendment to the Official Community Plan. Will you, or will you not support this amendment?

Dorothy Hartshorne:

If the owners make an application, are willing to bear the associated costs and there is capacity in the sewage treatment plant.

Geoff Orr:

The properties in question are already included in the North Saanich Servicing Area (NSSA) as shown in the OCP Figure 2 Regional Context Map. As a result an Official Community Plan amendment would not be required to add these properties to the NSSA.

The properties would, however, need to be added to the OCP Schedule E - Municipal Services map and also added to Sewer Service Area #3. Staff have indicated that Schedule E currently requires housekeeping amendments to property reference the previously sewer areas in Deep Cove and McDonald Park and the recently added Sandown commercial land.

I would support this amendment subject to confirmation that sufficient conveyance and sewer reserve capacity is available. Many of the properties in question were identified by Vancouver Island Health Authority as having compromised or failing septic systems when the Deep Cove force main was being designed back in the 2005-2007 period.

4. North Saanich taxpayers are now responsible for the multi-million dollar infrastructure, reclamation and drainage expenses for the Sandown project. Some of these expenses were paid directly to the developer to carry out the work even though the Phased Development Agreement had specified those expenses were the responsibility of the property owner. Drain issues were known as far back as 2000 yet no cost estimates for these expenses were included in budgets or in the 2011/12 Sandown Business Case presented to the community. A requirement of this project is to take the sewer infrastructure under the Pat Bay Highway yet no estimates have been provided for this additional cost. In addition taxpayers will be responsible for future road infrastructure costs required to service the commercial shopping centre since Council accepted the proponents traffic report over the independent Traffic and Land Use Report commissioned earlier by the District. Taking into consideration the significance of these expenses would you request a Provincial Audit of this project?

Dorothy Hartshorne:

I am currently a member of the Audit Council for the Auditor General for local Government. If I am elected I would have to resign this position and, with the support of my council, would be willing to put the Sandown project forward for consideration.

Geoff Orr:

I would not support a Provincial Audit of the project without understanding why we might request an audit, if we can request such an audit, and what the benefit of doing such an audit would be.

To clarify a few of points made above. An estimate for 'drainage' was included in the 2011/12 business case but the total for this work was \$100,000 in comparison to the ~\$800,000 recommended by staff in the fall of 2017 after receiving the engineering reports associated with the drainage and reclamation plan. Estimates for eliminating the bottleneck under the Pat Bay highway at McDonald Park Road were documented in the engineering reports provided to staff and Council in October 2017. Council 'may' be asked to approve and fund future road infrastructure improvement 'if' such improvements are deemed necessary.

5. The investment in Jubilee Park is expected to reach over \$700,000. No community consultation took place for this project. To date the first 2 phases of a proposed 4 stage investment is already \$50,000 over budget. Do you support further expenditures of public monies on this project, and would you do things differently for taxpayer funded projects in the future? (please explain)

Dorothy Hartshorne:

The project should be completed but the budget would need to be reviewed and adhered to. Communication with residents needs to be greatly improved to address precisely this type of issue. To find out how they want their tax dollars spent I plan on striking a standing committee comprised of community members with expertise in communications. Included in the mandate of this committee will be instructions to review the best way to actively engage and deliver information residents regarding projects like this.

Geoff Orr:

I do support a better process for communication and engagement on future Capital projects of this nature. The time lag between approval of Jubilee Park Phased concept and associate construction of phase 1 and 2 led to some of the issues related to residents' understanding of project scope, design and cost.

I strongly endorse that proper consultation is undertaken using International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) spectrum.

6. The Sandown agricultural covenant is a one-party agreement between the District of North Saanich and the Agricultural Land Commission (ALC).

This covenant was meant to ensure "agricultural only use" yet the recent Sandown Farm Plan is recommending "non-farm use" applications be submitted to the ALC in Phase 1. Considering that in 2012 the ALC sent communication to the Chief Administrative Officer stating "a covenant held by the District can be removed by any Council of the day", and that the Farm Plan is already recommending non-farm uses, would you support and pursue adding two independent conservation organizations to the agricultural covenant agreement to better assure the 83 acres will be protected "for agricultural use only in perpetuity" and, would you also consider implementing a third-party covenant agreement for the 12 acres included in the land swap?

Dorothy Hartshorne:

At this time I am not willing to commit to any definitive legislative actions in regard to Sandown but I would be interested perusing the above suggestions further.

Geoff Orr:

I would support consideration of adding a third party to the agricultural covenant for both the Sandown agricultural land and the 12 acre District land added to the ALR. I don't have enough information to know why adding a fourth party to the covenant is necessary or beneficial.

Are you also asking if the covenant should be modified to include the words 'in perpetuity'? If so, I don't have enough information to determine whether the additional words are necessary, typically used, or provide any additional security.

CCSP note to address above response's:

A Section 219 Covenant is an agreement (promise) by the local government to the ALC and is registered with the Land Title Office. There are many ways in which this covenant can be amended or removed in its entirety.

"Many covenants are a threeway agreement between the landowner, the local government and a conservation organization as this provides the best long-term protection and the best use of resources to manage and monitor the land. An organization holding the conservation covenant is responsible for monitoring compliance with the terms of the agreement, and has the right to enforce the restrictions under provincial or territorial laws and to require restoration should the terms be broken."

Source: Habitat Acquisition Trust

7. The North Saanich website has been under construction for more than one year. Four community meetings are held throughout the year but not all Council members attend each meeting. A Newsletter is mailed to homeowners three times per year but we often hear complaints that the content is not informative or is after the fact. In most instances citizens are not informed, not consulted or feel they are ignored. How would you improve communications and meaningful consultation with the citizens of North Saanich?

Dorothy Hartshorne:

The second part of my answer to question 5 applies here as well. I plan on striking a standing committee comprised of community members with expertise in communications. The mandate of this committee will be to review the current communications style and determine the best way to actively engage and deliver information to residents.

Geoff Orr:

For the past 15 years I have advocated for communication of timely, comprehensive, and accurate information; most recently as a Councillor and prior to that as the President of the North Saanich Residents Association.

This is an important issue for all of the acclaimed Councillor. Along with the new CAO and Director of Corporate Services I will encourage Council to establish a culture of communication that considers intent, resource implications, cost, tools used, and outcome.

8. It has been suggested that direct contract awards (sole sourcing) without going through the competitive procurement or bid process may not provide taxpayers with the best return for their money. Do you support direct contract awards?

Dorothy Hartshorne:

Up to a specific maximum dollar limit only. That limit would be determined from information gathered from research of other comparative sized municipalities sole sourcing policies.

Geoff Orr:

I support direct award of contracts if staff can demonstrate that all the conditions set out in the recently amended purchasing policy (10000.6) are met. Direct award for substantive contracts should be the exception and not the norm. I am amenable to a review of the policy in year 1 or 2 of the term. I am prepared to discuss the matter with the new CAO and Director of Financial Services.

9. The District of North Saanich and the Town of Sidney share services of the Vancouver Island Regional Library branch located in Sidney. Do you support a second Vancouver Island Regional Library branch on the ALR land at the Panorama Recreation Centre?

Dorothy Hartshorne:

The location is logical considering the success of the library at Commonwealth Centre however I need to do more research on this issue. I would like to see the user stats and projections before I commit to a specific library location.

Geoff Orr:

Please visit www.geofforr.com Platform for more information and my position on this topic.

10. Do you support having a referendum any time there is a change that is outside the scope of the Vision, Goals, Objectives of the North Saanich Official Community Plan?

Dorothy Hartshorne:

I don't support changes outside of the scope of the OCP. Neither do I support governance via referendum. I support governance through community engagement.

Geoff Orr:

I think this question is too subjective and vague. As it is worded my answer is no.

Should Council advance an application or project that is contrary to the guidelines as expressed in the OCP then Council is bound by certain legislative requirements. The decision to go beyond the legislative requirements (ie referendum) rests with Council and I would encourage Council to consider this approach on a case by case basis.

11. Unlike Central Saanich, the North Saanich Letters Patent exclude Reserve Lands in the municipal boundary therefore First Nation people living

in North Saanich are not eligible to vote. The Minister of Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing will consider a boundary extension upon receiving evidence that the Municipal Council has requested the boundary extension; that property owners and residents of the boundary extension are aware of and have been provided an opportunity to express their opinion on the proposed boundary extensions; and the majority of municipal electors do not object to the proposed extension. Would you initiate this process to ensure North Saanich is an inclusive community. If 'yes' when would you initiate this process?

Dorothy Hartshorne:

If the residents of North Saanich expressed their willingness to move forward I would commit to consulting with our First Nations neighbours on their interest in this extension.

Geoff Orr:

I am prepared to initiate this boundary extension conversation with Tseycum and Pauquachin First Nations as part of enhancing our relationship with both nations. It is critical that the Tseycum and Pauquachin leadership feel that such a change is desirable, warranted, and of sufficient priority.

12. Given the recent media coverage indicating the Province of BC will enact legislation supporting LNG projects, are you in favour of a Liquefied Natural Gas facility in the Saanich Inlet?

Dorothy Hartshorne:

No

Geoff Orr:

No

13. With the exception of personnel matters, would you be in favour of abolishing 'in-camera' meetings of Council?

Dorothy Hartshorne:

I would be willing to look at the current policy surrounding in camera items to determine the appropriateness of releasing them from the in-camera forum.

Geoff Orr:

No. There are many valid reasons beyond personnel matters that warrant in-camera consideration. Council must be prepared consider a matter in public if the majority of Council feels that the justification is weak. I support better reporting of in-camera meetings and resulting Rise and Report motions.

Section 90 (1) of the Community Charter lists the reasons a meeting may or must be closed to the public.

A part of a council meeting may be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered relates to or is one or more of the following....(* includes quote to the Community Charter Section 90 (1) (a) to (o) which has been omitted due to length - the complete response is available upon request).

The Community Charter identifies ten reasons that an item may be considered for 'in-camera' discussion. I do support careful review of whether an item does satisfy the legislative requirement.

14. Members of Council and the public have raised concerns there are too many Council meetings each week and as a result they feel overwhelmed or find it difficult to keep informed. Would you be in favour of limiting public Council meetings to one Committee of the Whole meeting or one Council meeting each week?

Dorothy Hartshorne:

Yes as long as the work load can be reasonably addressed in that time frame.

Geoff Orr:

The intent is to have only one Council or COW meeting per week. There are instances where we have to hold both on the same evening. I do support careful review of what matters come before Council and when. As Mayor and in conjunction with the CAO, I will take an active role on behalf of or with input from Council in setting agendas and carefully considering how we schedule these meetings.

15. The majority of municipalities within the CRD do not charge their residents to drop off green waste products. Some communities turn their green waste into wood chips and compost and make those products available to their residents. This establishes good recycling practices, helps keep properties tidy and reduces the need for backyard burning which improves air quality, protects our natural environment and creates a healthier community. Would you implement a similar free green waste program for the residents of North Saanich?

Dorothy Hartshorne:

I am only one vote of seven but I would provide the leadership to support this type of program.

Geoff Orr:

Possibly. I have been an advocate for a review of our green waste and burning permit process during this past term. I support additional efforts to reduce burning and increase beneficial use of the green waste compost.

16. The Sandown Farm Plan recommends significant capital investment and long term subsidies provided by the taxpayers of North Saanich. Studies reveal that subsidies to agricultural producers should only be employed to change behaviour and solve specific problems otherwise it will stifle innovation and make producers both less competitive and more dependent on government as well as undermine efforts to promote efficiency and more sustainable agriculture.

Local farmers and residents have raised concerns that subsidizing the Sandown agricultural land will unfairly undermine small local farms and

markets and those business' will not be able to compete. How would you ensure that no unfair advantage is given to any one agricultural group or business over another?

Dorothy Hartshorne:

The Sandown Community Farm should not be subsidized by taxpayers. Sandown needs to operate as a business venture with the fiscal responsibility held by the non-profit operator not the municipality. The community farm needs to be fiscally sustainable and other than the monies invested in the infrastructure required at start up, any further monies that North Saanich invests should be treated as a loan to the non-profit operator and repaid with interest. On repayment, those monies should be reinvested in the Agricultural fund and made available equally to all local farmers.

Geoff Orr:

As Mayor I will advocate for a much more comprehensive conversation with the entire agricultural community. We should not have a situation where one agricultural 'group' feels unfairly treated or disadvantaged.

17. Do you recognize the benefit of an Integrated Management Plan (IMP) for Shoal Harbour and would you actively pursue cooperation with other levels of government to develop such a Plan for Shoal Harbour?

Dorothy Hartshorne:

Yes

Geoff Orr:

Yes. I support an Integrated Management conversation to start of the process and will introduce this concept at our Initial Strategic Planning session.