

Message from the Mayor

On behalf of Council, I am pleased to report on the Village's accomplishments and Council's priorities.

I want to begin by extending a warm Nootka Sound welcome to our new residents. I am delighted that you have chosen to make Tahsis your home. I am confident that the quality of our life here will surpass your expectations. The natural environment, the sense of community, the services and amenities, the outdoor recreation opportunities, the affordable cost of living and an extraordinarily safe municipality make Tahsis the perfect place to live, work and play. I hope you will immerse yourself in the community and help us to continue to nurture, promote and develop Tahsis.

This past year we saw several changes and improvements in Tahsis. I will not list them all but I want to highlight the most notable.

The November 2014 municipal election resulted in a Council with considerable experience and a high degree of dedication to move the Village ahead on a number of fronts. Your Village Council is responsible for maintaining, preserving and enhancing the social, environmental and economic vibrancy and viability of our community. And, as stewards of your tax dollars, we take seriously our responsibility to make wise investments in infrastructure development, maintenance and repair and the efficient and effective delivery of your municipal services and programs. Beyond Council, many residents of Tahsis contribute to public life and service through their involvement in a multitude of groups and organizations. Your hard work, energy and creativity make Tahsis such an awesome community.

Like many BC local governments, Tahsis has to comply with 2010 changes to provincially mandated drinking water standards. The Village retained an expert hydro-geologist who identified water well locations on Village lands as an alternative to treating our surface water from McKelvie Creek. In August 2015 we received Island Health permission to begin the construction of a water well system to serve as the Village's primary water source. The well project is estimated to cost about \$428,000 which is largely paid for from the Federal Gas Tax Fund. The cost of building a filtration system, as many communities have had to do, would have cost Tahsis between \$2 million to over \$4 million dollars. We are extremely fortunate to have an abundant source of pure water in the Tahsis River delta aquifer which will serve our community for decades to come. We are committed to sharing information about the well and the water quality testing with all Tahsis water users.

Living in earthquake, tsunami and wildfire zones makes emergency preparedness an absolute necessity. In 2015 we established and convened a meeting of our emergency preparedness committee comprised of representatives of the RCMP, BC Ambulance Services, Strathcona Regional District, Island Health, Tahsis Volunteer Fire Department, Captain Meares Elementary and Secondary School and the Village's Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, Graham Bosecker and Emergency Support Services Director, Chuck St. Denis. With support from SRD,

we have new emergency satellite phones and technical assistance in developing our Emergency Operations Centre activation plan. Emergency Preparedness will continue to be a priority in 2016.

For many years, Tahsis and Zeballos have sought to build a connecting trail or road to link our communities by land. In 2015, this vision took a major step forward with the first meeting of the working group focused on developing what we are calling the "Community Unity Trail". This would be a community based shared use trail system lead by Tahsis, Zeballos and the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation. With start up support from the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Development and Island Coastal Economic Trust, momentum has built up among trail user groups, like ATV clubs, as well as key stakeholders like Western Forest Products and BC Hydro. You can expect to hear more about the "CUT" in 2016.

Finally, 2015 saw staff changes at the Village office. While we are always sad to lose long serving and valued members of our staff, we have been very fortunate to attract well qualified new employees into key positions.

In closing, I am grateful to our professional and dedicated staff and my fellow Council Members. We are fortunate to live in a community of active citizen engagement. Cynicism and disenfranchisement are the greatest risks to our democratic system. Our local government is and will continue to be a model of democracy in action by being responsive to and reflective of the community. I encourage all to take an active role in our community and let us know what is on your mind. We are your government.



Mayor Jude Schooner