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**SOUTHERN GULF ISLANDS ELECTORAL AREA  
COMMUNITY ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY COMMISSION**

**Tuesday, March 19, 2024 at 8:00am**

**Held by Zoom Video Conference**

**MINUTES**

**SGI CESC Commissioners:** Paul Brent, Director, Chair (Saturna), Mike Hoebel, Vice Chair (Galiano), Marcus Farmer (Mayne), Rob Fenton (Pender), Barbara Johnstone (Pender)

**Staff:** Justine Starke – Manager, SGI Service Delivery, Melody Pender – Recorder/Pender Liaison; SGI Liaisons: Emma Davis (Galiano), Katie Dentry (Saturna), Kat Ferneyhough (Mayne)

**Guests:** Ed Andrusiak, Janey Rowland, Michael Cowan – Southern Gulf Islands Community Resource Centre Society; Roz Kempe – Gulf Islands Food Co-op

**1. Territorial Acknowledgement/Call Meeting to Order**

Chair Brent provided the territorial acknowledgement and called the meeting to order at 8:16am.

**2. Approval of the Agenda**

**MOVED** by Commissioner Fenton, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Farmer to accept the Agenda as presented.

**CARRIED**

**3. Approval of Minutes from January 16, 2024 and February 6, 2024**

**MOVED** by Commissioner Fenton, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Farmer to accept the minutes from January 16, 2024 and February 6, 2024 as presented.

**CARRIED**

**4. Financial Report**

The Financial Statements were shared with the Commission. There is 98% of the yearly budget remaining. The Financial Report was received for information.

- Rural Islands Economic Partnership has requested \$2,500 from the SGI Community Economic Sustainability Commission for the 2024 Virtual Forum taking place in November 2024. There is precedent to support this with a sponsorship letter.

**MOTION:**

The Commission agrees to sponsor the Rural Islands Economic Partnership to put on the November 2024 Virtual Forum in the amount of \$2,500.

**MOVED** by Commissioner Hoebel, **SECONDED** by Chair Brent.

**CARRIED**



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## 5. Southern Gulf Islands Liaisons Update – Justine Starke, Liaisons

**Justine Starke** – Currently working with regional housing to implement the rural housing program including negotiating a memorandum of understanding with the SGI Tourism Partnership Society for their annual contribution beginning in 2024. Also working with Salt Spring Community Commission to support a workshop to bring together the housing sector on Salt Spring for a discussion of their current and long-term needs, and a similar workshop will hopefully be held for the SGIs.

**Kat Ferneyhough (Mayne)** – Discussed a proposed new community hub office space on Mayne Island next to the Trading Post.

**Emma Davis (Galiano)** – Parks and Rec commissioner orientation that was held in January now has a video link posted for review. Islands Trust voted to keep the Galiano office last week. The Galiano Food Bank has relocated from the church to the old south Galiano firehall space. The Galiano Community Transportation Society submitted an application to the Rural Transit Solutions Fund for funding for an electric bus and waiting to hear the result. Mayne and Galiano have applied for the Ready Set Roll CRD program to support active transportation for school communities.

**Katie Dentry (Saturna)** – Saturna is requiring more housing for seniors. Seedy Saturday event was a success for the seed library. There are two new EV chargers at the Arbutus Point campground next to the ferry that are available for the public for a fee.

**Melody Pender (Pender)** – Aqualink did not get their REDIP grant, so they will not be operating unless another funding option becomes available. Two other groups in the SGI's were declined.

## 6. Food and Agriculture project discussion – Barbara Johnstone/Ed Andrusiak

Two possible actions that the CESC could take to support Food and Ag were presented:

- a) Explore with the CRD extending a food lands access service to the SGI electoral area. Funding to support farm land retention and funding to support farmers to continue farming the lands.
- b) Provide \$3600 from the previously allocated funding for contract for services to fund a coordinator for 60 hours/month over a two month period to work with food growers, food processors and food programs on the SGIs to obtain suggestions and develop ideas for how to best use the currently available funds, and draft a report of the recommendations for implementation to present to the Commission.

Several ideas to support food and ag were discussed including adapting a farm stand app to improve data and marketing for farms, mobile food processing, mobile abattoir, meet the farmer opportunities. Justine Starke suggested that the Commission is able to support specific projects and the initial phase of developing a cohesive SGI food and ag program, not provide long-term funding, therefore funding the data gathering work is within the scope of the Commission.



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**MOTION:**

That the Community Economic Sustainability Commission provide \$3600 to fund a coordinator for 60 hours/month over a two month period to work with food growers, food processors and food programs on the Southern Gulf Islands to obtain specific comments about suggestions gathered so far and any new suggestions, then at the end of that term provide recommendations for current priorities to the Commission for use of available funds.

**MOVED** by Commissioner Farmer, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Hoebel.

**CARRIED**

**7. Housing NOW – Southern Gulf Islands Community Resource Centre Society – Janey Rowland/Ed Andrusiak**

The 2023 year end review was submitted to the Commission. With the funds allocated by the CESC, Housing NOW was able to develop privacy policies, personal data storage protocols, a redesign of the homeshare program's online documents with increased registrations, and a larger advertising and community engagement strategy. Three long-term tenancies and four short-term tenancies were supported in 2023. Rental price over budget was the greatest barrier to facilitating more homeshare connections. Duration of tenancy, location and pet policies were other factors that limited options.

The 2024 Housing NOW Statement of Work was submitted and will be reviewed and brought forward to the May meeting.

**8. Sustainable Funding Initiative – Southern Gulf Islands Community Resource Centre Society – Katie Dentry/Michael Cowan/Ed Andrusiak**

Continuing to build a lot of momentum in the third year of the program with 71 clients that seek support in grant-writing, funding opportunities, workshops received positive feedback. Monthly non-profit newsletter is well-received and organisations appreciate the sharing of grant opportunities. Supports for businesses, students and individuals were also communicated in the newsletters. Over \$200,000 has been raised for local non-profits through direct grant-writing support. A statement of work for 2024 has been submitted to the Commission with increased allocation for strategic grant-writing supports. A proposal for developing a grant-writing hub and a rebate for grant-writing services are also possibilities to expand the grant-writing capacity of SGI non-profits.

**MOTION:**

That the Community Economic Sustainability Commission accept the proposed Statement of Work for the Sustainable Funding Initiative – Southern Gulf Islands Community Resource Centre Society.

**MOVED** by Chair Brent, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Farmer.

**CARRIED**



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9. **Old/New Business** – None discussed.

10. **Next regular meeting - May 21, 2024**

11. **Meeting Adjournment**

***MOVED*** by Commissioner Fenton, ***SECONDED*** by Commissioner Farmer that the meeting be adjourned at 10:00am.

**CARRIED**