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Reprint from Volume 20 Number 22

November 13, 2008

## **Election tactics? Release of in-camera minutes**

At an Trust Executive meeting on Wednesday, November 5, the issue of releasing in-camera minutes contrary to the policy of the Islands Trust was discussed.

On October 24, Galiano Local Trust Committee members had voted in a Resolution Without Meeting (RWM), to release certain documents from a July 20, 2005 in-camera meeting, minutes which are normally subject to solicitor/client privilege.

The minutes had to do with Islands Trust staff advice to former trustees, Sheila Anderson and Louise Decario to pursue bylaw enforcement cases against three Forest lot owners who were deemed in contravention of Galiano's bylaws for constructing buildings. The minutes were only one section of the record on those bylaw infraction issue.

Whisper campaign based on the commencement of these prosecutions may have caused the defeat of incumbents Anderson and Decario in the November 2005 local election. Decario is a candidate in Saturday's election.

The RWM to disclose in-camera minutes was proposed by Roy Smith and seconded by Michael Sharp. Roy Smith is currently candidate for CRD Director and Michael Sharp is

running again as Islands Trustee.

Gary Steeves, the third member of the Galiano LTC, says that he voted against the resolution to breach confidentiality for three reasons:

- he saw no good public policy reason to do so;
- the Islands Trust has a policy that in-camera documents are subject to solicitor/client privilege; and
- at the last Trust Council, rules for conduct of election campaigns were adopted. In his opinion, the release of these documents contravened that agreement.

The question he asked was, "If there were not an election would you be doing this?" He thought not.

Galianoites are asking, if not an election smear, why were the entire materials about the bylaw infraction and enforcement issue not released last month?

At the public part of Trust Executive's meeting, Chair Kim Benson indicated she would ask Chief Executive Officer, Linda Adams about the release of the minutes.

Such a contravention of policy may set a damaging precedent for the Trust Area. ☞

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'This article was published (November 13, 2008) in 'Island Tides'. 'Island Tides' is an independent, regional newspaper distributing 17,500 print copies in throughout the Gulf Islands and the Canadian Strait of Georgia from Tsawwassen to Campbell River, BC.'

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