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**July 31, 2022**

**Executive  
Thetis Island Residents' and Ratepayers' Association  
Thetis Island, BC  
V0R 2Y0**

**Dear TIRRA Executive:**

I am writing regarding the voting process at the Thetis Island Residents' and Ratepayers' Association General Meeting held July 23, 2022 at Forbes Community Centre. I left the meeting confused about what had just transpired and embarrassed that my name had been mentioned in association with the process.

As the chairperson of another Thetis Island BC Society, I feel that the meeting notification and voting process were inconsistent with the BC Societies Act. I have also read the TIRRA Bylaws and find them very barebones, inflexible and inadequate for the type of decisions, especially financial ones regarding taxation, on which TIRRA members are being asked to vote.

I believe the following were problematic.

1. According to the Act, *a society must not have bylaws that contain a provision that is inconsistent with the Act*. I believe that **the notification process for the meeting was inconsistent with the Act** which states:

***Notice of general meeting***

***77 (1) Written notice of the date and time and, if applicable, the location of a general meeting must be sent to every member of the society.***

*(a) at least*

*(i) 14 days before the meeting, unless subparagraph (ii) applies, or*

*(ii) the number of days before the meeting specified in the bylaws, if the number of days so specified is at least 7 days, and*

*(b) not more than 60 days before the meeting.*

I would argue that **the TIRRA bylaws which require only posting of the notice at the ferry terminal and the community centre is inconsistent with the Act.**

Furthermore, and I was unable to find how many members TIRRA has, but regardless, also from the Act:

“(2) Notice of a general meeting of a society that has more than 250 members is, if permitted by the bylaws, deemed to have been sent under subsection (1) if

*(a) notice of the date and time and, if applicable, the location of the meeting has been sent, to every member of the society who has provided an email address to the society, by email to that email address, and*

*(b) notice of the date and time and, if applicable, the location of the meeting*

*(i) is published, at least once in each of the 3 weeks immediately before the meeting, in one or more newspapers identified in the bylaws*

Members are all asked to include their email addresses on the TIRRA membership form so **it should not have been a problem to notify members by email.**

2. **The notification that was sent out did not include a motion.** While the question about recycling which members were asked to vote on was not described in the notification as a ‘special resolution,’ (although it had all the hallmarks of one) even an ‘ordinary resolution’ should be clearly articulated to the membership in advance. The Act states:

*78 Notice of a general meeting must include the text of any special resolution to be submitted to the meeting.*

And from the Model Bylaws:

**3.3** *A notice of a general meeting must state the nature of any business, other than ordinary business, to be transacted at the meeting in sufficient detail to permit a member receiving the notice to form a reasoned judgment concerning that business.*

I argue that not including a motion for such an important financial decision meant the **members did not have sufficient detail to form a reasoned judgement.**

3. **The Motion was improper and confusing:** At the 2022 TIRRA AGM, the membership clearly voted to restart recycling. Why then, was one of the options being voted on ‘Garbage only?’ This question had already been decided. Without the complication of a 3-choice motion or series of motions, a simple two-way choice

between 'Parcel Tax and User-pay' and '100% Parcel tax supported' would have been clear and decisive. Instead, it ended up in a confusing series of motions and votes, such that even the President did not appear to know what she was voting for.

4. **The vote was not properly conducted.** The word 'circus' comes to mind. I note that the TIRRA bylaws include only 'show of hands' as a method of voting. Obviously, by the number of repeated votes taken on the same motions, multiple people walking through the room doing the counting and the final decision to divide members on either side of the room, voting by 'show of hands' was inadequate in this situation. I also argue that this limitation needs to be addressed by a revision of the TIRRA Bylaws. For example, from the BC Societies Model Bylaws:

*At a general meeting, voting must be by a show of hands, an oral vote or another method that adequately discloses the intention of the voting members, except that if, before or after such a vote, 2 or more voting members request a secret ballot or a secret ballot is directed by the chair of the meeting, voting must be by a secret ballot.*

I, for one, was uncomfortable with the voting process, in particular the physical separation of members onto two opposing sides. The move was divisive to the Thetis community and if somehow, 'standing' equates to 'show of hands' in the TIRRA bylaws, it was nevertheless not the right way to conduct a democratic vote. For a vote this contentious and of financial importance to every property owner and resident of Thetis Island, a secret paper ballot with a ranking of choices would have been the most democratic method of voting and needs to be included in the TIRRA bylaws as an option.

In summary, every effort should have been made to ensure potential voters were adequately notified so that they knew what was being asked of them, and that the democratic voting process was carried out in a way that was respectful to members and inspired confidence in the outcome. The July 23 General Meeting failed in these fundamental ways.

I ask you, as the TIRRA Executive, to:

1. Accept that mistakes were made, annul the July 23 vote and hold another vote using a secret ballot with two choices, 'parcel tax and user pay' and '100% parcel tax supported.'
2. Revise the TIRRA bylaws to provide more options, flexibility and accountability to the policies and procedures of the Society.

Sincerely,



**Ann Eriksson, TIRRA member**