

GENERAL LOCAL ELECTIONS

On October 15, Pender Islanders will go to the polls to vote in our local elections. The Pender Post Society has invited the candidates for North Pender Local Trust Committee, South Pender Local Trust Committee, SGI CRD Director, and School Trustee representing Pender Island to submit a photo and a 500 word statement outlining their positions. These are their unedited replies.

Candidates for North Pender Local Trust Committee

Aaron Campbell



Born in North Vancouver, I spent large chunks of my summers and holidays boating with my grandparents through the Southern Gulf Islands. Thirty years later, having the opportunity to raise my daughter on Pender Island, was an opportunity too good to be true. Being able to grow a farm and community space at the same time clinched the deal for us.

One of the most unique amenities of Pender Island is our strong sense of community. I have never seen a group of people unite behind a common cause as I have on Pender when one of our own gets sick or comes on hard times. There is an incredible volunteer network of folks who give their time daily for the benefit of our community.

I have had the pleasure of being a First Responder for Pender Island Fire Rescue over the last four years. With this, I have experienced the sense of community which comes from working with people who share a common vision for community care. This only helps to reinforce the uniqueness of Pender Island.

As a farmer, I have seen first hand the challenges a changing climate has brought to an already difficult industry. We need to work towards solutions that lessen the impact on our Island's resources, while allowing us to expand our infrastructure to accommodate housing for the people who need secure homes and staff essential services.

People are frustrated and disillusioned with more rules and governance. Frankly, I believe it is in danger of eroding that very sense of community that makes Pender so special. We need to protect our uniqueness and the environment surrounding it while navigating the inevitable growth needed to strengthen our infrastructure. Over governance, lack of public consultation, and a seeming disregard for why people moved to this special place, have put the Trust and residents at odds. More rules won't fix anything; community engagement and common sense will.

Deb Morrison



I have served on the Islands Trust this past four years to protect and preserve our North Pender island environment and rural community as well as more broadly working across the Islands Trust Area with the same goal. I do not consider myself a politician but instead a public servant. This is an important distinction to me as I do not serve to further myself but instead for our community, our natural ecosystems, and the future residents of these islands. Regardless if I am elected or not, I will continue to do such work in all ways I can as this is my home and I care about this place a great deal.

Overall, I would say my management style as a Trustee for North Pender has been conscious conservation. I have tried to balance development pressures and our need to be a thriving and sustainable rural community with our needs to ensure careful protection of our natural ecosystems and agricultural land resources. In my role as a North Pender Trustee I have:

- Supported active enforcement efforts around the removal of derelict vehicles - enforcement of a longtime bylaw - which could be damaging to groundwater quality.
- Initiated a land use bylaw review and community consultation process to bring our land use bylaws - the stuff we can enforce - into alignment with our official community plan - our community created a plan of what we want to see here. This is almost finalized but I also agreed to extend the first reading of this into the new term to ensure that the community is behind this work as it is refined.
- Initiated and guided a study of groundwater sustainability which was completed and is informing the land use bylaw work.
- Revised STVR guidelines to make them less about off island investment, more contained in areas of the island that support such use, and that folks operating them can provide more fire safety and water conservation information to guests.
- Ensured that correct Indigenous consultation was engaged with respect to

James Island subdivision

- Addressed a multitude of land use applications that included the relocation and environmental monitoring of waste management facilities and the concrete mixing facility.

In addition to my role locally on the island, I have participated extensively in the Trust Council work. All Trustees are part of this 26 member council that influences policy across the whole Islands Trust Area. In my work on this council, I co-wrote and sponsored the Islands Trust climate change emergency motion, have constantly questioned spending in the planning department - asking for clarity and transparency, I voted for the governance review of the trust, and I sat as Chair of the Trust Programs Committee and have worked to try to get a reasonable version of a new Trust Policy Statement into place - something I think we are working toward but have not yet achieved. In all this work I seek to constantly work with other trustees and the community. A simple, throw it away mentality to existing policy changes means that what is currently in place remains and frankly what is currently in place in a lot of cases is so completely out of date and offensive as to be the real source of our problems. I am often a voice for change within the Trust Council and believe that working within this system can be extremely productive so long as we do not become complacent and always seek the best towards our stated mandate and our community needs.

As the only incumbent running for North Pender, I may be the focal point for feelings around any number of decisions made in the past four years - positive or negative, and any understandings of those decisions - accurate or inaccurate. For example, people may make claims about what I have or have not done over the past four years and try to attack my character; in these situations I ask that you reach out to me for any clarifications needed, I'm a pretty open book when you talk with me directly. Also ask questions of those you talk with - what solutions are being offered by different candidates? What experience do they have in dealing with complex local planning and management? What are

their motivations for running for office? Who is backing them or informing their decision making? Talk with each other, with past trustees, with informed folks about what options we have. Whatever you do - please get out and vote, exercise your right to have great local voices acting on your behalf.

I hope this fall finds you all engaged in local politics, actively talking about issues that concern us all, and making decisions about voting not on a personal level but for our community as a whole.

Stay well and safe Pender.

Dr. Deb Morrison, 250-539-8200

Mary Beth Rondeau



I was born and raised in Vancouver and spent many family vacations in the beautiful Gulf Islands. For me, awareness of the importance of the Coastal Salish Peoples and Nations has always been part of living in this area. Before retiring, I spent 25 years in local government planning departments in Vancouver and Surrey as a senior urban designer/city architect.

Community Vision

Through listening to the Pender community, it's clear we share a common vision: we value the natural, rural beauty of this place and want to preserve it. A common vision like this can be the basis to move forward with a shared plan for

North Pender Island. Throughout my career, I have worked with communities to facilitate their visions and goals. Any community plan must be led first by the residents and include First Nations and other stakeholders.

Environmental Sustainability

As an architect, environmental considerations are important to me and in my career, I have worked with teams to apply environmental science to planning policies. In the context of the controversial revisions to the Islands Trust Policy Statement, it is vital to identify environmental objectives that can have real impacts on slowing climate change. And these need to be in balance with other community objectives. In addition, my planning experience has instilled in me a reasoned and cautious approach to imposing prescriptive bylaws onto this rural context.

Supporting a Vibrant Island Economy

Services such as a grocery store, drug store, restaurants/food, tradespeople, artisans, and others, are island amenities. Inadequate housing for workers is increasingly the reason businesses are curtailing hours, shutting down unexpectedly, leaving many wondering what is ahead. I will work to support our island businesses and economy.

Supporting Affordable Housing Options

The community has spoken strongly about the lack of affordable housing, not just on Pender, but throughout the Gulf Islands. I support the creation of a diversity of housing initiatives, focusing on lower income options (following the recent SGI Housing Strategy, Feb 2022) and working in cooperation with regional and provincial governments.

Reducing Taxes and Increasing Cost Efficiency

The overall budget of the Islands Trust has expanded 30% in the last decade. While running a government in 13 separate trust areas is a challenge, it is the expansion of scope beyond the original mandate of the Trust that has generated much of the increase. Islanders are voicing concerns with the laborious, conflict-laden land use decision processes, as well as concerns about

the inequitable bylaw enforcement. I support going back to basics for land use processing in a timely, efficient manner which will help staff as well as those requesting land use decisions.

Much of the expansion of the Islands Trust focus has been into areas already well-served by senior governments. Asking the small population of the Islands Trust Area to pay for a repetition of services already provided by regional districts, the province and federally, is too much.

Candidates for South Pender Local Trust Committee

Dag Falck



South Pender is my home. After living for five years in Trincomali on North Pender, in November 2019 my lovely wife Elina and I moved to our almost 14-acre property here on South Pender. I have two adult children and a grandson living off island.

After attending several Trust meetings for South Pender, I found things did not seem to be running smoothly. I witnessed a poor process and lack of listening and consideration of residents' views, so I decided to see if I can help, and put my name forward for South Pender Trustee. In preparation to write a few words about myself, I reviewed *The Pender Post* candidate statements from October 2018. I found that I agreed with most if not all statements, yet time

must have stood still, as the same issues and lack of satisfaction are still present according to most people I've talked to.

Most of us on South Pender really want to work together in harmony with nature and also get along as a community.

To restore more cooperative relationships, we need to slow down. As your Islands Trustee, I will conduct meetings where we can actually talk to each other, listen to each other's point of view, and come to an understanding. I will move away from the adversarial process and build towards a spirit of genuine teamwork on South Pender. We are intelligent, capable people, and can work toward solutions that fit our island.

Let's work toward true collaboration!

The current Islands Trust structure seems to be top-down, encouraging division and adversarial communications. I will work towards re-creating the Trust so that it becomes a tool for the Island's residents and property owners to protect the environment and our rural island character. Regulations and bylaws are meant to support community decision making, not override it.

Although change can feel daunting, I have the skills to help get us there.

Before I retired in April this year I worked over 30 years in the organic food and farming industry. The last 18 years I was the Organic Program Manager for Nature's Path Foods, North America's largest organic breakfast cereal company, a Canadian family-owned business. I was the President of the Canadian Organic Trade Association for 10 years. Locally, I was the Chair of the Trincomali Improvement District Trustees from 2017 to 2020.

First thing is to design a process including visioning, creative brainstorming, evaluation, and then goals and implementation. Missing the complete process will never lead to cooperation or collaboration.

I strongly believe we must structure our process to be more appropriate for reaching our goals. I have honed my skills in both being able to see the large picture and having the stamina to attend to the small details. I have worked extensively with contentious issues and

challenging topics with a wide variety of stakeholders with diverse interests.

I can be reached at 250-307-4992 (call or text), or email dagfalck@gmail.com.

For more information: <https://dagfalck.wixsite.com/dag-falck>

Kristina Peszel



Listening to the Community and Caring for the Environment

I am a full-time resident and property owner on South Pender since 2020. My husband, Marty Evans, is third generation on South Pender Island (his family has been here since 1919) and he has owned his property for the past 23 years. Marty is an active member of South Pender's community serving on the Pender Fire Board. We have four adult children, three daughters, a son and two young granddaughters all living in BC.

I am a passionate, active community member contributing my time and energy where needed and getting involved with community programs. Some of you may have already seen that I am deeply committed to South Pender and willing to work hard on your behalf to make sure your collective voices are heard; for example, organizing the recent poll on South Pender on Bylaws 122 and 123.

I strongly believe in the necessity for balance between the need to protect our unique rural environment and the social and economic needs of our community. As such, I will strive to protect property owners' rights while preserving South Pender's delicate environment. Decisions that will have a lasting effect on our way of life should not be rushed, nor should they be driven from outside of our South Pender community.

My commitment is to provide the necessary time and space on new policies and ideas by encouraging public participation through open, collaborative, and inclusive discussions. While recognizing that consensus may not always be easily achieved, various perspectives and alternative solutions will be encouraged so that we can maintain a cohesive and united community. Both formal and informal discussions should continue until the community is satisfied that the topic has been fully addressed, consensus on the best solution for all stakeholders has been reached and everyone has had ample opportunity to fully deliver their input.

If I am elected as your Trustee to represent South Pender, I will work hard on your behalf to assure that the voice of our community is listened to, heard, and understood at local meetings and with the Islands Trust Council. I am dedicated to finding equilibrium between the needs of our natural environment and the needs of our vibrant community as both are what makes South Pender uniquely beautiful.

During my career, I was a Proposal Manager with OSI Maritime Systems Ltd. (delivering integrated navigation and tactical solutions designed for naval and maritime security operations) and MDA (Canada's largest space technology developer and manufacturer).

These companies provided me with direct experience working with various levels of government. My position required that I be proficient at working collaboratively with others to facilitate finding good solutions to complex problems. I have been trained in and have experience with conflict resolution, negotiation, and public speaking, and I have a specialty in process streamlining. I would be honoured to serve as your

Trustee for South Pender and appreciate your support during the upcoming election.

Should you have any questions or comments, I can be reached at kristinapeszel@hotmail.com or on my cell at 778-885-7464.

Cameron Thorn



Re-elect Cameron Thorn Experience, Commitment & Vision

It has been my privilege to serve our community over the past four years as your Trustee for South Pender Island. I am seeking your support for re-election in the October 15, 2022, election.

Background

My family and I have been part of the South Pender community for the past 16 years and have a strong connection with and commitment to this special island. We are privileged to be part of a vibrant community located within one of the most treasured natural environments in British Columbia. My commitment to support the values of our community and protect our beautiful island lies at the heart of my decision to seek your support for re-election as trustee.

My Master's studies in Public Policy and Administration at UVIC and my 25 years of experience working within government and the private sector in land

use planning and real estate development give me a deep understanding of land use stewardship and the relationship between the built form and the character of a community. I am Vice-President Development with a Vancouver based real estate firm and work collaboratively with local governments to build transit oriented, sustainable communities in the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island. Collectively these experiences and the lessons learned as a Trustee in the last term make me a strong candidate to represent the interests of South Pender Island.

Reasons to re-elect me as your Trustee

Experience:

- South Pender Trustee since 2018
- Extensive experience in land use planning, architecture and design, business and, government process
- Effective communicator experienced in finding collaborative outcomes through community engagement

Commitment:

- Promote respectful dialogue on issues and ensure that all voices are heard
- Work collaboratively with my co-Trustee to serve the interests of South Pender
- Protect our Island's rural character and ecological integrity

Vision:

- Provide strong, principled leadership in accordance with community values and our Official Community Plan
- Promote non-bureaucratic, balanced and practical solutions in responding to issues facing our community
- Build common ground across our community through a focus on shared values

The Islands Trust:

If re-elected as Trustee my energies would be primarily focused on South Pender. However, I would also pursue improvements to, and efficiencies in the function and operation of the Islands Trust organization. As Trustee I voted in support of an independent review of the governance and management policies at the Islands Trust, and I strongly support the findings and recommendations in

the Governance Review Report. While I support the broad preserve and protect mandate of the Islands Trust, I oppose the recent Trust push and proposed Policy Statement to undertake a range of policy initiatives that go well beyond the mandate in the Islands Trust Act.

If you re-elect me as Trustee, I will strongly represent the interests of South Pender in any interactions with the Trust Council, Trust management and staff.

I welcome your questions or comments. You can contact me at cameron@cameronthorn.com or (604) 317-8174.

Candidates for CRD Director Southern Gulf Islands

Paul Brent



I've been a local on the Gulf Islands since the 1990s and made the move to live full-time on Saturna with my family over 15 years ago. I came here to experience the great outdoors, but I stayed for the community.

I'm a volunteer, an experienced executive level leader, a trustee, and the incumbent CRD Director for the Southern Gulf Islands. I've used my background in transportation and finance to consult remotely, leaving me time to help on the ground in the communities I love.

Whether you drive a truck or a Tesla, there's a place for you in the future I see

for the Gulf Islands.

I'm working to create interconnected communities, those with affordable and accessible housing, access to high-speed internet, and improved transportation networks. The Southern Gulf Islands have become inaccessible for so many, and this reality is jeopardizing our renewal.

I'm driven to work with CRD staff to get the Southern Gulf Islands Housing Strategy funded and operational, but we need to partner with the Province and collaborate with multiple levels of government and island housing groups to get more done. In the short term (months, not years) I'll work to see a pilot project for RVs or tiny homes here, and have our islands lead as a model for rapid housing solutions possible for other rural and remote communities.

Increasing active transportation use by improving safety and convenience for cyclists, pedestrians, e-bike users, and reviving shuttle services, are concrete ways we can reduce fossil fuel emissions and mitigate the climate crisis. But improving transportation represents more than just one emergency on the islands.

A cycling accident on Pender in August is a horrific reminder that we needed better roads and trails a long time ago. I'll be supporting the transportation referendum, so that people can move around these islands with the peace of mind that their loved ones are going to come home safe.

Emergency services, preventative care, and routine check-ups are services people should not have to travel off-island for. While it's understandable that a portion of our taxes fund the hospitals we rely on for higher level care, I believe that some of the money we pay should be used to improve the medical clinics on the islands.

I see economic empowerment as a key component of meaningful reconciliation and I'm proud of the work I've been a part of on the CRD and elsewhere to reduce barriers for Indigenous-led businesses and organizations. Diversity is necessary to sustain our magical way of life on Pender and across the islands.

Maintaining the sense of community

that drew so many of us here depends on a welcoming place for young people, those with different skill sets from a variety of backgrounds, and people of varying income levels.

I'm eager to continue this work and I hope you'll join me. Let's get at it.

Ben McConchie



My family roots trace back to the 1920s when the Kirk family homesteaded on Armadale Road on North Pender Island/S,DA,YES. I have been fortunate to work as a music educator and your North Pender Island Trustee during the past four years. As a father of five in a blended family, I will work to ensure a solid future for my children to be able to live in the Southern Gulf Islands.

The Capital Regional District (CRD) includes 13 municipalities and the Southern Gulf Islands are one of three Electoral Areas. Many important decisions are at a board table with 26 representatives who may have never visited the islands or be familiar with our unique challenges. I will embrace the responsibility to represent the people of the SGI at the regional level: to listen to islanders; to advocate for the SGI; to ensure that our issues, concerns, and needs are voiced and resolved; and to

see that our island community projects and efforts are supported by the CRD. Islanders can rest assured that I'll be strongly supporting island groups, projects, and initiatives in addition to participating in CRD discussions and action on the larger issues like housing, medical care, transportation and climate change

I also will ensure that islanders are aware of the varied funding opportunities available to them to support arts and culture, economic development, recreation, ecosystem restoration, climate action, housing, capacity building, energy systems, and more.

SGI local service area decisions are made by volunteer commissioners and committee members -creating the ultimate in grassroots local democracy. The CRD Director sits as a member on all of them, helping them to find solutions and access support with CRD staff. I will bring my experience working in the community and serving in local government to listen carefully and bring solutions to the table.

I am hearing from some islanders that with the steadily increasing cost of living, an increase in taxes at this time may be a hardship for working people and many who are on fixed incomes. I will be cognizant of that and diligent to ensure that we are getting the best possible value for the tax dollars we are already contributing. Fiscal responsibility will be a top priority for me - you can count on me to follow through with actions, not just words.

As director, I will be honest, open, approachable and accountable. I will listen carefully and do all I can to support thoughtful, informed decision making. I will also be a strong advocate to senior governments.

Most importantly, I will conduct the public's business transparently, improve engagement and understanding and regularly report on both our challenges and our progress working together. I do not see the role of director as a remote government bureaucrat, but rather as a fellow islander and stakeholder dedicated to maintaining and improving life in our beloved island communities. benmconchie.com, 250-885-5534

Candidate for SD64 School Trustee

Greg Lucas (Acclaimed)



Hello Fellow Pender Folk

My name is Greg Lucas and as your returning school trustee, I would like to extend my gratitude and acknowledgement from the beautiful islands we share on the traditional Territories of the Coast Salish, Indigenous speaking peoples.

My Partner Angela, daughter Sadie and I, have lived on this island for just shy of twenty years and if there has been one constant it would be the beauty and strength of place and people in our close knit community. From day one our family felt welcomed by many of our elders and legendary characters alike and realized we lead privileged lives.

As a volunteer member of Pender Island Fire Rescue as well as Island School Trustee, I find myself feeling fortunate to be doing work that matters. My fellow trustees and I across our Southern Gulf Islands work hard to give back while advocating for Education and well being in our district that continues to most importantly, reflect all of our students graduating with pride and purpose.

The challenge is to adapt and respond with programming, resources, schools, support staff, teachers and principals alike, which empower student equity,

regardless of economic status, politics, religion, background, ethnicity, identity and or learning challenges to create equality. This hasn't been easy these past four years, amidst the challenging changes, decisions and effects brought by COVID and an inherited one million dollar deficit brought largely by rising costs and smaller family and student population. Our district had to downsize school costs in order to remain fiscally responsible, within our shared gulf islands, while also being held responsible by the Ministry of Education. The good news is we are no longer in debt.

After extensive community consultation, liaison with other districts and deliberation we had several options ending with a tough vote to move away from the traditional middle school model and reinvest in our Pender School to allow for a second high school option, thereby allowing for large savings on our heavy inter-island transportation costs. No option was without cause and effect, but I feel confident in our ability to grow, thrive and adapt amidst rising costs and changing demands our students and communities will continue to face.

As our board chair shared last week, "Now we can afford to dream within our means." For example, here at home, we have a new speech and language pathologist, part time counselling, new shop class and tech department, cooking/kitchen class, science room, improved library and study/meeting space, beautiful post and beam "outdoor classroom, frisbee golf course, as well as new computer resources, three new electric buses ordered for our district and a new to us van/bus for field and sports trips for our Pender Students. We continue to grow our programming to meet future demand with strategic developments such as our new online programming dubbed *64GO* led by Principal Lyle Ruehlen, early learning programming, Strong Start, French Immersion, Gulf Islands Centre for Ecological Learning, Indigenous Education, Gulf Islands School of Performing Arts and a brand new \$10 a day preschool program backed by federal financing.

We have been busy as a collective school board and as your school district trustee and representative, I always try to remember the criteria of “how will it affect our students, how can we help increase our student’s opportunities? What challenges are our parents and students facing?”

How can we do better?

By listening, by weighing tough decisions carefully, by not shrinking from challenge, by speaking up and out, by putting in the time and effort and by continuing to grow as an adult, just as we expect our students in school to do. That’s how I bring my best as your school trustee.

This fall we can anticipate the development of a new strategic plan for our district and more community consultation, new programming such as the compulsory Indigenous education course, roll out of the BC pilot program, called “Framework for Enhancing Student Learning,” and we will continue to further work within our facilities and school programming to better reflect our BIPOC and SOGI population. This fall I look forward to getting back to work as your Pender Island School Trustee.

Huy ch q’u Huy tseep q’u

Thank You