Dear Mr. Tarry:

Re: Request for Board Approval – North Shuswap Incorporation Feasibility Study Phase I

This letter is to advise of the Board’s response to the letter received by the Columbia Shuswap Regional District (CSRD) on April 20, 2016 in which the North Shuswap Incorporation Feasibility Study Group requested Board approval to enter into the Phase 1 Background Research. Please be advised that the Board passed the following resolution at its May 19, 2016 regular Board meeting:

THAT: the Board acknowledge receipt of the letter and corresponding proposal dated April 2016 from the North Shuswap Incorporation Study Group (NSISG) seeking approval from the Board to undertake a Phase I Incorporation Study for the North Shuswap region, with the project to be funded entirely by the Study Group;

AND THAT: staff be directed to send a letter to the NSISG that incorporates the following points:

1. Given that the NSISG is willing to fund on its own the Phase I work-plan prepared by TRUE Consulting, CSRD Board approval is not required for the NSISG to undertake the proposed Phase I Background Research Study;

2. The CSRD Board is unwilling to “formally endorse” the Phase I study proposed by the NSISG because it does not believe that incorporation is a feasible or realistic option at this time. However, the CSRD has no objection if the NSISG wishes to proceed with the Phase I study, and the CSRD is willing to make some staff resources available to provide assistance to NSISG and its consultants;

3. In our view, NSISG’s proposal is focused on baseline data collection that is consistent with the approach taken in other areas of the Province as a starting point for governance analysis, although more typically the work is led by local government(s) from the outset, not local citizens or community organizations.

4. It is our expectation that the results of the baseline inventory will demonstrate that incorporation is clearly not feasible, and this could benefit the community in the long term as this request could be put to rest, and the focus could shift to addressing valid community issues identified during the data collection process through more realistic means.

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5. Finally, in reviewing the proposal, we have noted a few areas of caution that the Study Group may wish to consider:

- The proposal presupposes incorporation as the only final outcome that may be desirable. A range of solutions may be possible to address valid community issues and concerns. Results of the diagnostic study may determine that this is not a preferred outcome (e.g. tax impact from cost of road maintenance is too great) and that other solutions could be pursued, such as new servicing arrangements or local committee structures;

- The proposal currently describes three phases of the study. Any next steps following completion of the baseline inventory report (i.e., Phase I) would need to be determined jointly by the CSRD and the Ministry of Community, Sport, and Community Development (Ministry), not by local citizens or community organizations. The Ministry would also expect that any steps taken beyond baseline data collection would need to be led by the CSRD (i.e., public consultation, committee establishment, completion of additional governance studies, etc.);

- The proposal articulates the committee as an Incorporation Committee, which is problematic. If the process were to proceed to public consultation and an analysis of governance options, the Ministry and CSRD would then jointly determine appropriate committee structure, functions, and selection process. This could potentially be addressed by clearly separating the function of the local citizens ‘workgroup’ from the potential functions of a future local governance committee, which may or may not include these particular individuals.

- Section 3 - Task 3 identifies an ‘email survey/consultation’ with potential groups. This is the first and only reference to this being part of the process in your document — any need for public/stakeholder consultation on study results would need to be determined jointly by CSRD and Ministry following completion of the Phase 1 report.

- Section 3 - Task 4 – should not predetermine if Phase II is required – this would be determined by the CSRD and Ministry following Phase I.

If you have any questions about the resolution passed by the Board, please contact me at chamilton@csrd.bc.ca or 250-833-5905.

Yours Truly,
COLUMBIA SHUSWAP REGIONAL DISTRICT
Per: C. Hamilton
Chief Administrative Officer

Charles Hamilton
Chief Administrative Officer

cc: Electoral Area 'F' Director, Larry Morgan
Ministry of Community, Sport and Cultural Development
The Kicker