

**Lasqueti Island's Trust All-Candidates Meeting  
September 30, 2022**

Held at the Lasqueti Island Community Hall

**Minutes** recorded by Emily Carnes

**Nominees:** Mikaila Lironi, Tom Weinerth, Tim Peterson, Injah West, Pachel Smith

**Moderators:** Lisa Johnson, Hilary Dunker

**The following is an abbreviated and paraphrased interpretation of the statements of the candidates and is not an exact transcript.**

**Please refer to the full transcript for clarification or more information.**

**Meeting called to order at 7:02**

Land Acknowledgement from Hilary

Moderator's Introduction of Candidates

**Opening Statements:**

Tom Weinerth introduced his platform focusing on affordable housing.

Dave Olsen reviewed his background with the APC and focused on reducing government overreach, reducing the Trust budget.

Injah West acknowledged the Day of Truth and Reconciliation and endeavours to pursue engagement and preservation of our community.

Tim Peterson prioritizes continuing reconciliation, completing the community plan and fostering public engagement and input, and preserving core values.

Pachel Smith appreciated the community interest and noted his interest in preserving our way of life on Lasqueti.

Mikaila Lironi outlined a diverse background and acknowledged the importance of balancing development and preservation

David Rogers refers to the OCP for guidance and advocacy for Lasqueti as a unique locale.

**Questions from Audience:**

**Will you change the OCP draft before it goes to public hearing?**

Tom: Yes. Lots of things need work. Glossary & definition of terms for clarity, as this is a legal document and should not be vulnerable to interpretation.

Dave: Agrees with Tom and would like to make it more specific. Will incorporate changes made by the LCA.

Injah: Agrees with Tom on clarity, yes it needs more revision

Tim: Work of LTC on refining the draft is not complete and more public consultation is warranted. Encourages formation of a new APC.

Pachiel: Wants to make sure the OCP reflects what the community wants. Leery of partisan planning.

Mikaila: OCP will be a guide for years to come. Emphasized the importance of lasting reflection of true community values.

David Rogers: Has been involved in OCP and concerned the input was brought forward without sufficient community engagement. Considers openness to interpretation a potential benefit.

**If you were elected, who would you like to be the other trustee?**

David Rogers: Would work with anyone. Has experience working with different temperaments and will respect the will of the community.

Mikaila Lironi: Happy with any running mate.

Pachiel: Also happy to represent Lasqueti with any other candidate.

Tim Peterson: Responsibility to work with community nominated candidates is inherent to the role.

Injah: refrain

Dave Olsen: A pleasure to work with any of the other candidates

Tom Weinerth: Will talk to anyone about anything, will work with anyone. Acknowledges the willingness to be a trustee as a positive attribute.

**Given that any elected official has the obligation to work in the system they are elected to, what are you willing to do to limit the growth of the islands trust bureaucracy and will you be willing to reach out to other islands trust councillors about this issue?**

Dave Olsen: Wants to limit the growth of the islands trust. Cited discrepancies in the Islands Trust behaviour, wants to shrink government.

Injah: Promise to attempt to maintain maximum community influence, so, yes.

Tim: growth of bureaucracy may be self-propelling, working with other trustees is one of the best ways to limit that democratic sprawl

Pachiel: Acknowledged financial hard times and recognizes the Trust shouldn't make this worse, rather, it is a conduit to get our wishes communicated to the government.

Mikaila: Many islands have similar concerns, great idea to consult and work together with other islands trust councillors. Important for our trustees to have a strong voice.

David Rogers: Prefers teamwork and looks forward to seeking allies, maintaining a financial situation that is appropriate, involved in thought process of being informed by the community.

Tom Weinerth: Concerned that the Trust is moving into a vacuum and the preparedness of the Trustees is paramount. Working together with other islands is the only way to limit loss of local autonomy.

**When you are faced with a decision that is against your personal principles but is of the will of the community, will you act and vote to represent majority community wishes or will you stand by your personal convictions and opinions?**

Mikaila: It is my duty to represent everybody, if it's a majority, my hands are tied.

Pachiel: Yes I have strong beliefs, but I'm here to represent the island and that is most certainly what I will do.

Tim: the job of trustee is to represent the electors of this position. I can't imagine the island would be in stark contradiction to my own beliefs but if they were, I would consider resigning.

Injah: Agree with other candidates, always community first. Would cast personal convictions aside.

Dave Olsen: This question is speculative. I cannot see myself disagreeing. In this role I'm going to be leading consultation and the way I facilitate is to hear and to listen.

Tom Weinerth: Political convictions are different than personal principals. I can't see the community disagreeing with my political convictions. My obligation and job is to represent the community's wishes and not my own.

David Rogers: I have experienced this myself and I represented the person I was responsible for, with conviction, thought it was against my own opinion.

### **Do any of the candidates have ideas on solving the worsening long term problem of people leaving their vehicles in the false bay area for months?**

Injah: It's a complicated problem. Clearly the current method isn't really working. Give those people grief in person.

Tim Peterson: Recalled the APC plan for parking. The LTC doesn't have jurisdiction about this, we could organize public lobbying of the MoTi, other than that it is ad-hoc

Pachiel: Yes this is an aggravating issue, but likely will not be solved by the Trust. Look towards community solutions, changing attitudes, and recognition.

Mikaila: Yes this is an issue, and for health reasons for some. Respect the 3-day sign, someone with a tow truck and a large piece of land.

David Rogers: the only way to solve this problem is to have the community get behind having the violating vehicles removed. This is outside of the mandate of the Trust and would be turned back to the community.

Tom W: The APC addressed this problem for years, made a plan, etc. It doesn't work because there is no enforcement. No one wants to complain or inform on their neighbors. It's up to the community to enforce parking regulations.

Dave Olsen: Chaired the Waste Management Advisory committee, came up with a recommendation for a one-off one-on plan which was sent to be included in the Community Plan. Community meetings would allow us to regularly visit this issue and come up with a concrete plan that is community driven.

### **If elected, how will you interact with the staff of Islands Trust?**

Pachiel: Very important to work with the staff, ultimately they will help and guide us through things. However, I am going into this with scrutiny. Diplomatic but also paying attention.

Tim: Staff will make a lot of recommendations for things that work in other jurisdictions but are not applicable on other islands. Staff is there for support to help the decision makers advance their agenda. Nothing wrong with standing your ground and demanding what it is that you want.

Injah: Polite and respectful but wary.

Dave Olsen: New staff is coming. Without question, polite and courteous, that's how things get done. A lot of emails and calls. If we are prepared for our meetings and well-informed, we can

perform the role we really need to perform, which is us directing the staff. Reflecting what the community wants and telling the staff how to do it.

Tom W: Sometimes the staff feel disrespected and their actions reflect this. Read and study and come prepared to have meaningful conversations with the staff, they appreciate it.

Dave Rogers: Individuals can be easily spoken to with no interruption, the staff are just people, they have problems just like we do. We need to work with them because we have no choice, and we need their cooperation.

Mikaila: Not sure the staff have an agenda per say, but they are knowledgeable, and they have to deal with people who are not prepared. Prepared to do homework, come prepared, and stand up to the staff.

**Do you believe Climate Change should be declared an emergency and, if so, what do you propose to do in order to adapt to the change on Lasqueti in order to mitigate the risks.**

Tim: It has been declared an emergency not by the LTC, but it could. Mapping has been a stark illustration of what significant sea rise would look like. Some of the mitigation is being done, such as maintaining forest cover.

Pachiel: A very important issue, one that us Lasquetians are fairly aware of. Not sure what the trust imposing things on the community would do. Not necessarily more bureaucracy to make this happen.

Mikaila: Climate change is important, we have come up with emergency plans as the VFD and FR, but climate change is largely a personal thing. We are aware of this here on this island, but know we can do better.

David Rogers: yes, there is an emergency factor. Some things the community have already put into place have addressed this such as firesafe, property cleanup and personal responsibility. This is community minded. I believe it boils down to personal plan for whole community as individuals.

Tom W: The danger for Lasqueti I see as two parts: fire and storm surge. The community and perhaps the trust could initiate projects to mitigate risks in these two areas.

Dave Olsen: I would use the power of the trust to make us all ride bicycles all of the time. I like to approach things with evidence. If the sea level is rising, if it is rising, we need to deal with it. Hopefully we deal with it as a community because if we deal with it as a bureaucracy its going to be very expensive.

Injah: I do not think we should all ride bicycles all the time. We run generators, etc, though it is important to take steps to reduce environmental impact. Forest fire safety is priority.

**Why do you choose to live on Lasqueti and not somewhere else?**

Tim: we really care for each other and this is a beautiful place to live

Injah: this is home, I wasn't built for big city life and I love this community and every one here

Dave Olsen: Fell in love with the community at arts fest. A strong women's community, artist community, fresh air, forest, and independence. The lack of gov't oversight, choosing to do what we want as long as it doesn't screw up our neighbors, it's the best place to live. Forest and Community.

Tom W: Arrived on a float plane and this is my home. Every place else is ugly to me. Our lifestyle, independence, no RCMP, as long as we can keep it together we won't have these things. This is a green and beautiful paradise and that's why I live here.

Dave Rogers: I've been seeking this lifestyle all my life. The city is not my natural environment – on Lasqueti, I'm home.

Mikaila: Ease of living, tightknit community like a huge extended family. We take care of each other and know everybody. It is special to me and nowhere feels like home like Lasqueti does.

Pachiel: I was born in a little cabin on this rock and I'll probably die in a little cabin on this rock.

### **Do you think its important to participate in Trust council committees and if so, why?**

Pachiel: yes, it is important. This is another avenue for us to bring the needs of our island to the government. Every avenue we have should be taken and explored.

Mikaila: Agree with Pachiel. The more we are able to influence, the more chances we have to make changes and know what's going on in the world and with the other islands besides us.

Dave Rogers: Agree with other candidates. If you're not at the table you can't make the decision. If you choose not to attend the meeting you basically by default failed. Definitely in favor of attending.

Tom w: It might be important but I don't intend to join committees, my focus is Lasqueti, however The Islands Trust Council is very important and I will work to network with other trustees to participate and use my influence to ensure the islands trust policy statement is compatible with our community's wishes and desires.

Dave Olsen: The committee aspect is nebulous, there are many committees. They are specific to promoting the Islands Trust, that's why they exist. I'm not going to be part of any of those committees, I represent this island only. I want to focus on our issues.

Injah: I believe change can be enacted within the committees as there numbers are fewer.

However, as my first time round I do not plan to volunteer for any of these committees.

Tim: as Injah expressed, these are smaller groups that advice Trust Council. There is potential to amplify your voice and the voice of the people you represent. Can help shape recommendations that go before Trust Council.

### **What is your view of Truth and Reconciliation?**

Injah: its about coming to term with the events of the past and fostering healthy relationships going forward. Reconciliation must support aboriginal peoples, acknowledge the violence of colonialism. As individuals, we can start with knowledge and educating ourselves on the truth of the subject.

Dave Olsen: Basically what he said. It's obviously a very serious issue, thanks to Dana's work I have personally been educated by her work. False narratives have been corrected, the knowledge and history is overwhelming to me. As a gov't representative a huge part of the job is to rekindle those relationships that have been horribly broken in somewhat recent years.

Tom W: We have a moral obligation in this issue. White settlers came here and took everything. They stole it. We have a moral obligation to redress that historical wrong. I don't like to think about it, it is depressing what has happened to the Native population and the culture that used to exist here. It was wiped out by disease after disease until they didn't have a chance. We are now at a state of civilization where we can address reconciliation and I totally support it.

Dave Rogers: I grew up in the arctic and attended school as the only white student. The people in the community accepted me, and my community has now had a problem with people accepting them. So I am really very seriously concerned.

Mikaila: Wearing an orange shirt is a start, but it is every day for Indigenous people. Substance dependency, homelessness, and other societal challenges plague indigenous communities. There is much work to be done and no simple solutions.

Pachiel: this is a very large issue and an important one for us. Important that we've started opening dialogue and working with tribes that have Lasqueti as part of their area. We need to learn from them what actually happened and to learn from them to know what we can actually do to help.

Tim: Truth precedes Reconciliation. The truth contains a lot of really painful details that are unpleasant to dwell on, regarding the treatment of first nations by our government and settlers. Reconciliation as the next step is important, thank you to Dana and XLAP for fostering these relationships, I see first nations as important partners and allies for us.

### **How many times have you attended the islands trust meetings?**

Mikaila: I read the last 250 pages of the last Island's trust meeting and I'm still here. Have not attended in person yet but looking forward to being involved.

Dave Rogers: Have not attended a lot of meetings, they are extremely important. Also got through the 250 pages of the last meeting. I plan to be much more attentive and participatory.

Tom: I attend all the meetings and read all the agenda packages. I don't just read them, I study them, and cross correlate so I understand how they relate to each other and our bylaws. As a trustee you have to be informed.

Dave Olsen: I've been paid to attend meetings as a minute-taker and have been present at meetings unpaid, I've been to about 50. I read the agenda package cover to cover.

Injah: I've not attended any meetings but I plan to attend even if I do not get elected.

Tim P: Not an easy question because I'd have to calculate meetings over the last 8 years. Suffice to say I haven't missed any.

Pachiel: Probably 4-6 meetings, none of them recently. But if elected I'd certainly come prepared.

### **Do you support bylaw enforcement to uphold the Island's Trust Preserve and Protect mandate?**

Dave Olsen: my understanding of the process is that a complaint is made, bylaw enforcement investigates it, and they write a report to the local trust committee with a recommendation from their point of view. Bylaw enforcement is supposed to represent our community plan.

Tom W: Not sure I support the methods that are being used now because they are so ineffective. They just don't work. You have to inform on your neighbor and I believe they want two reports before they do enforcement, and they don't really do that, they just wander around and give people trouble. I believe all of the mandate should be enforced, and it isn't being. But it should be, and in another method than asking our neighbors to inform on one another.

Dave Rogers: I agree wholeheartedly with Tom. The complaint driven process is basically designed to create strife in the community. I would like to see a different process of being able to bring attention to violations, at the present time that is not available. The bylaws in place to

preserve and protect are there by design of the community. Yes, I believe they should be enforced.

Mikaila: We don't want to inform on our neighbor, but what is the other option. Bylaw officer? I'm all for upholding laws that make sense for our community and keep us unique and protect and sustain our way of life. I'm not sure what is the best way to do that.

Pachiel: without enforcement the bylaws are pointless in and of themselves. But, I do agree that I don't think the current methods are very effective.

Tim: my perspective is that our bylaws are ours and should be reflective of what is in our OCP. If we don't like the bylaws, we need to change them. For example, rental bylaws. The complaint driven model is not ideal, however the other model is proactive enforcement by outside bylaw officers, I don't know that anyone would think that was better, it's a tough one.

Injah: agree with pachiel, the bylaws have a purpose and are pointless without enforcement.

### **A claim has been made that some candidates have put their nominations forward for the salary. Why have you put your name forward?**

Dave Rogers: This is not the reason I am running. I come to the table with serious ability and experience.

Tom: if I am nominated for this position it will end up costing me money. I'm here because I want to preserve our community. This is not something I planned to do, I am doing it because I detected a deficiency in the LTC interaction with the staff. I want to push our agendas forward.

Dave Olsen: I'm going to try and reduce our salaries. I'm running because I see the gov't expanding, I see the IT setting itself up to greatly expand in the next few years. I want to be part of the pushback of this. I have no desire to be a trustee, I just want to keep our independent lifestyle safe and stop gov't overreach.

Injah: Has anyone seen the salary? It is definitely not why I'm running. I want to make a positive change within this community from the inside.

Tim: The salary is not a reason to run, it doesn't even come close to the time and energy it takes to do a good job as a trustee. Categorically it is no.

Pachiel: I view this as a community service. It is time for me to step up and help the community more because I've lived here a long time and I've picked up tools that I feel can be useful and this is a way I can offer the community my support.

Mikaila: If you want to become PM, you have to start somewhere. So, here I am. I have a lot of work on Lasqueti. The reason why I am running is because I have a unique skill set that is very well suited to this position. I was asked my several elders on the island to run, and after giving it some thought I felt it was a good idea.

### **What do you vision to help with the lack of rental property on island and to help young people get established on Lasqueti?**

Tom: This is a serious problem. I support the ten-acre minimum but we have to have affordable long term rentals for young people on the island. The OCP highlights the need, I think it's time to start enacting ways to make this happen in the community.

David Rogers: Agree with Tom that this is a complicated and deep issue, not just Lasqueti-wide but country and world-wide. A situation that the community has to come forward and explain

how they want to see our young folks stick around. We need to figure out ways to support them without actually paying for their housing.

Mikaila: As for young people getting established, I don't think it's a good idea to come here if you don't have any skills. As for the rental issue, I look at other islands, with way more people, and the same problem for young people. Vacancy taxing, incentives for building more cabins on available acreage, there are more opportunities than increasing density.

Pachiel: this is one of the most important issues facing us here. We can look to other places in the world to find solutions that work and take steps forward on this. This is one of the most important issues we face as a community.

Tim: the Trust has very limited power to address this issue. Increasing density does not necessarily increase available housing for young people. We need to address this in a community-based way. There is available density, we need to come up with creative ways to get younger people here on properties.

Injah: I agree with Tim, it's going to take a creative mind. Renting out guest cabins as a hot topic in the community. The Trust's power is either to maintain the bylaw or remove it entirely. B&B reducing rentals is also an issue, it's a complex task.

Dave Olsen: my personal approach would be not to further involve bureaucracy in addressing this issue. Platform includes more community meetings and less trust meetings. Agreed this may be the #1 issue.

### **Closing Remarks:**

Dave Olsen: How a person responds to a situation is as important to the situation itself. Having a good attitude and facilitating comfortable conversation. My main focus is to represent this community's needs and wishes at the forefront. Sustainable response to housing and other pressing needs that our community has. Maintaining character and understanding that makes Lasqueti different. 8840 [davidcliffordrogers@gmail.com](mailto:davidcliffordrogers@gmail.com) Thank you very much for being here.

Mikaila: Land-use planning helps develop communities. Engaged community response, I will stand up to outside pressure and make strong arguments. I don't believe in dividing the community, I believe we can work together. I'm willing to work with everyone in the community and in the trust, even if we disagree. Thank you.

Pachiel: exciting to see how many candidates are stepping up - this is how democracy should be. Great advantage to having a local election is that we already know everybody and no one is a stranger. Our contributions and actions in the community show our true intentions. Our reputations precede us, good and bad. I hope to have your vote on Oct 15<sup>th</sup>. Thank you and if you have any questions I'm happy to talk with you.

Tim: Thank you all for coming and for great questions, thank you moderator and team, thank you to fellow candidates for engaging in this act of democracy. We face challenges from development aging housing young families much that falls outside the jurisdiction of the islands trust look at community-based solutions outside of gov't channels. Our Islands Trust representative must be willing to advocate for these. Appropriate not to make rash changes. As your trustee I will work towards solutions that best fit our community vision and ideals.

Injah: Will educate myself on any and all issues that have been brought to my attention, and not to worry I will not be quitting my day job. I do not aspire to be a politician but aspire to make a difference in my community. Thank you to moderator and team and for questions, I'd love to talk in person [injahsemail@gmail.com](mailto:injahsemail@gmail.com) 250 240 4162

Dave Olsen: All candidates and everyone in this room likely want the same thing. Leave Lasqueti alone and let us remain what we are: different and difficult. I will get the OCP review done and honour all the hard work put in by countless hours from volunteers. I will be proactive and work to reduce the budget. Cut our meeting schedule and salaries. I will proactively try to reduce their policy statement and remove anything that will affect us negatively. It is long past time to push back and a critical time to elect someone who will take the lead on this and have the skills to do it. If you want to do me a favor, don't vote for me.

Tom W: I believe local trustees should move slowly, make sure they have the community behind them before they do anything. The next few years are going to be critical for our island. It is important for all of us that we have a strong trust committee that is informed and willing to do the hard work of staying informed and on top of the issues. The question of affordable rental housing is one that will have to involve the whole community and slowly evolve. Neighborhood meetings, coming together, reaching consensus, and bringing the community together. Our strength is in our diversity. One of my main mission will be to involve the community in the RLUB review and OCP finalizing. Thanks to all for putting this meeting on and for coming out.

**Meeting adjourned 8:55**