

## Open Letter to Cortes Islanders

January 21, 2019

By now most of you have heard the news: **14 Cortes residents filed a petition (Jan 2/3 2019) to initiate a lawsuit to remove our Regional Director, Noba Anderson, from office.**

**The primary allegation in this petition is that Director Anderson solicited bribes and delivered kickbacks in return.** A quote: *Anderson took money from her constituents for personal gain and a number of those same constituents received gifts and grants in return.* (Campbell River Mirror, Jan 7 2019). According to the signatories, this bribery took place in the late spring of 2018. During that time a GoFundMe page was established by Lovena Harvey to ask the community to support a fundraising effort for Noba's dad Bernie -- an elderly man suffering from dementia who burned down his small cabin and was lucky to survive the fire. The cabin was completely destroyed, and so were all his possessions.

Money collected via the GoFundMe page was placed in a separate bank account in Bernie's name. Noba used it to cover part of the cost of adding a bedroom for Bernie to her house, as he now requires more supervised care. 28 people contributed. \$2700 was raised locally to help Bernie. The petitioners allege that donors to this GoFundMe effort had connections to island organisations which receive GIA funds from SRD, and that Director Anderson preferentially directed funding to these organisations in response to bribes received.

We, the undersigned, believe these allegations to be unfounded and mean-spirited. While some of us disagree with Noba on various issues, and not all of us voted for her in the last election, we feel that this lawsuit is politically motivated and not in keeping with Cortes community spirit.

We are asking you to consider seriously whether you truly find these allegations against our Director -- and against several of our community organisations and their members-- believable. We ask you to consider the following questions, regardless of whether you voted for Noba Anderson or for George Sirk in our last election:

### 1. Defamation of our Regional Director...

Most of the 14 signatories to this lawsuit are political opponents of Director Anderson. SRD has also been apprised of these allegations against her. Their CAO, David Leitch, with the agreement of the SRD board, has hired a private investigator to look into the matter. This investigator has been interviewing Cortes residents during the first half of January. **Was this costly response appropriate, given such flimsy and partisan allegations?**

### 2. Irregular Process at SRD Affects Cortes Issues...

Regional Director Leigh, representative for Oyster River, explained her vote to further delay our tax service referendum as follows: *She said she had heard concerns from Cortes residents via email.* (Campbell River Mirror, Nov 28 2018) **Does this mean some people on Cortes are lobbying a Regional Director other than their own, to influence SRD votes on Cortes affairs?** RD Leigh has not made the number or contents of these emails public, has not entered them into the SRD record as Correspondence Received, and has not shared them with our own Regional Director.

### 3. Delays and Inconsistencies in Referendum Process...

A clear majority desired a tax service referendum in petitions and delegations in 2017; the October 2018 vote favoured proceeding with a referendum by the same margin. In the summer of 2018, SRD promised that if the October vote passed, SRD would expedite the process with a deciding vote in the spring of 2019. However, in November, a further indefinite delay was imposed. **Why has SRD delayed that referendum at considerable cost to the taxpayer?**

### 4. Voter Harassment on Cortes Island...

In December 2018, RCMP appeared on Cortes Island, questioning individuals about their length of residence and ID. They said a complaint had been filed alleging "illegal voting" in our most recent election, and that they had been given a list of names. Only nine names were given to the RCMP and as of this date we know of none who were disqualified from voting. **Is this a case of partisan voter harassment?**

For quite some time now there has been apparent resistance at SRD to proposals brought by RD Anderson, even when they reflect the majority opinion of her constituents. SRD appears to be influenced somehow by minority opinion on Cortes. This seems to be encouraging more and more extreme and un-Cortes-like political tactics from Director Anderson's opponents, culminating now in an attempt to remove her from office.

If you are concerned, as we are, about any or all of the above questions as indicators of an erosion of our democratic process and community spirit, we encourage you to join us in expressing your opinion in an individual letter to the SRD: [administration@srd.ca](mailto:administration@srd.ca)  
Please address your letter clearly to SRD Board of Directors.

We feel SRD needs to explain... why secret lobbying is permitted; why Cortes issues are handled differently from those of other SRD Areas; why they have imposed so much delay and expense on a simple referendum issue; how much they have spent on their acceptance of weak allegations against our RD; plus any other questions you may have about this situation.

More complete information may be found at this URL:

[http://www.daclarke.org/Cortes/RDNA\\_Litigation.html](http://www.daclarke.org/Cortes/RDNA_Litigation.html)

or by contacting De Clarke who is hosting these documents and can help you access them. At this URL, you can read the complete text of the original petition.

Yours for a kinder and more democratic Cortes,

Aaron Ellingsen  
Adam McKenty  
Adam Schick  
Amanda Glickman  
Amber Sprungman  
Amy Bockner  
Amy Robertson  
Andrew Baskin  
Andrew Smyth  
Andrew Weil  
Andy Ellingsen  
Angela Hales  
Ann Hiatt  
Anna Ochsenbein  
Anne-Lise Hollier  
Ashe Biela  
Ashley Zaratany  
Barry Glickman  
Becky Knutson  
Bernice McGowan  
Bill Dougan  
Bill Weaver  
Bill Wheeler  
Blanca Scanlon-Sharpe  
Bob Katzko  
Bob Tracy  
Brian Genn  
Brittany Baxter  
Carie Fischtein  
Carina Verhoeve  
Carol London  
Carole Thacker  
Carole Waddell  
Caroline Baker  
Carrie Saxifrage  
Catharine Bushe  
Caz Ratcliffe  
Cec Robinson  
Chris Napper  
Chris Walker  
Christine Robinson  
Connie Brill  
Dan Peters  
Dana Bass Solomon  
Daniel Nagle  
David Hiatt  
David Hughes  
David Rousseau  
De Clarke  
Denise Wolda

Derek MackMumford  
Devon Johnston  
Diane Brussel  
Diane Elliott  
Dilani Hippola  
Donna Dryer  
Dr Peter Elliott  
Elinore Harwood  
Elizabeth Anderson  
Emilie Hansen  
Emilie Wapnick  
Fawn Baron  
Gabriel Dinim  
Gail Ringwood  
Gary Cork  
George Lerchs  
Gerry Watson  
Gillian Nagle  
Giorgio Giovinazzo  
Glenna Foerster  
Grazyna Trzesicki  
Hannes Grosse  
Hannu Huuskonen  
Hanyu Wasylw  
Hayley Newell  
Heather Ogilvy  
Heidi Gerrard  
Helen T  
Cliffon-Wooldridge  
Henry Verschuur  
Howie Roman  
Hubert Havelaar  
Ian Le Cheminant  
Ian Ross  
Ian Watson  
Irene Blueth  
Iris Steigemann  
Isabel Steigemann  
J Wayne Roberts  
Jane Newman  
Janet Turpin  
Jason Andrews  
Jean Le Cheminant  
Jessica Pinder  
Jodie Brady  
Joe Grassi  
Joel Doyle  
Joel Solomon  
Johanna Robertson  
John Preston

John Shook  
John Sprungman  
Jon Knowles  
Jonas Fineman  
Joy Kerfoot  
Juli Nelson  
Kai Harvey  
Karen Hansen  
Kate Archibald  
Kate Maddigan  
Kirsten Vidulich  
Kristen  
Schofield-Sweet  
Kristina Purcell  
Laura Heslin  
Lella Gmeiner  
Leonard Woywitka  
Lisa Gibbons  
Lloyd Yendall  
Lore MackMumford  
Lovena Harvey  
Lucas Biela  
Lynne Barker  
Manda  
Aufochs Gillespie  
Margaret Verschuur  
Mark Braaten  
Mark Vonesch  
Martha Abelson  
MaryClare Preston  
Matt Cusciana  
Maureen Williams  
Max Thaysen  
Maya Buckner  
Meinsje Vlaming  
Michelle Mailey  
Mike Malek  
Mike Moore  
Miki Bellemare  
Miranda Cross  
Mitchell McCoy  
Myann Woolley  
Nancy Kendall  
Natasha Meredith  
Nori Fletcher  
Norm Gibbons  
Odette Auger  
Paul Kirmmse  
Peter Henbury  
Peter Jackel

Phil Allen  
Priya Huffman  
Ralph Garrison  
Ray Kendall  
Rex Weyler  
Richard Andrews  
Richard Gaudette  
Richard Yensen  
Rick Bockner  
Risa Salsberg  
Roland Boudreau  
Ron Bazar  
Ron Wolda  
Rose Fitcyk  
Rose Wooldridge  
Roy Hales  
Ruth Riddell  
Ryan Harvey  
Sachia Kron  
Sadhu Johnston  
Sandra Wood  
Scott Knutson  
Sean Sprungman  
Serene Watson  
Sherry Sprungman  
Sheryl Thompson  
Siobhan Robinson  
Sonya Friesen  
Steve Brady  
Steve London  
Steve Ringwood  
Sue Ellingsen  
SueJohn Allen  
Susan Blackburn  
Suzanne Minogue  
Tamara McPhail  
Tammy Allwork  
Theresa Hargrave  
Thomas Huffman  
Toby Roman  
Toni Smorodin  
Tony Toledo  
Travis Pawlak  
Valerie Wernet  
Victoria Watson  
Wendy Havelaar  
Xuan Ly Betz  
Yifan Li  
Yvonne Kip

