

**Remarks by DONNA SHUGAR to All Candidates Meeting (Roberts Creek Director)
Roberts Creek Hall
26 October, 2011**

Opening statement

Good evening and thank you all for coming and participating in our democratic process.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the Sechelt and Squamish Nations for sharing their traditional territory with us and allowing us to gather in this place.

Thank you to the Roberts Creek Community Association for hosting this very important meeting, for keeping the issues in the public eye and helping to facilitate discussion by making events like this possible.

It has been a great privilege to have served you as your representative for Roberts Creek on the Sunshine Coast Regional District Board for the last 6 years. I have learned a lot, both about political process and about myself.

I have learned about the importance of listening and although I believe I am a good communicator and a persuasive speaker, being a good listener is more important.

I have learned that I can collaborate with people who have different points of view without compromising my principles.

I have learned that there are things we can control and things we can only influence and we need to recognize which is which.

I have learned that our environment, our economy, our social and our cultural needs are interconnected and they need to be in balance to support each other and remain healthy.

I have learned that our common ground is that we all want a world that is as good for our children's children as it is for us.

How do I translate this into actions that serve you, the people of Roberts Creek, as well as the residents of the entire Sunshine Coast Region? Because as an SCRD Director I wear 2 hats, one as your representative ensuring that the needs of Roberts Creek are met, the other as a member of a regional government with regional responsibilities.

I believe in thoughtful planning as a foundation for action. The SCRD Board has engaged our staff, the other local governments and, most importantly, you, the public in a number of essential planning initiatives. We are now poised to put that good work into action.

Our We Envision discussion paper is a call to action for building a sustainable community and provides a road map with tangible goals, targets and actions that address the challenges of the future and help to shape a community our children will cherish.

Our Community and Corporate Energy and Emissions Plans are helping us to meet our reductions targets under the BC Climate Action Charter through a series of actions from conservation to expanding local renewable energy opportunities and supporting the green building sector.

Our recently adopted Zero Waste Management Plan provides us with clear guidance for reducing waste, improving our recycling services and developing public education programs so we can more effectively partner with you to achieve our zero waste goals.

In September at UBCM we presented our Integrated Transportation Study to the Ministry of Transportation. This plan outlines the priorities for making our road networks safer and more efficient, improving our transit services, and continuing to improve cycling and pedestrian routes.

The Roberts Official Community Plan is over 15 years old and has been under review. A Draft of the new Plan will be given first reading tomorrow night. I believe it is a smart plan that will help us to realize our goals of

retaining the rural and forested character of Roberts Creek, remaining an inclusive, welcoming and diverse community, encouraging local food production, keeping our environment healthy and ensuring there are housing options for everyone.

We have developed a Financial Sustainability Policy that guides the budget and other financial planning processes to ensure the wisest use of your tax dollars.

Over the last 6 years I have been a powerful advocate for what I believe are important values in Roberts Creek. I will continue to work on:

The preservation of our stunning natural environment.

Protection of our drinking water and biodiversity.

Enhancing local food production.

Attracting young families to our community.

Enhancing a vibrant local economy based on small scale, low footprint enterprises.

Programs for vulnerable youth.

Outdoor recreation through the development of trails and beach accesses and Dakota Ridge.

Reducing car use through smarter land use planning, better transit and safer bike lanes.

Improved recycling services based on what will work for you.

And facilitating the development of housing that working people can afford.

I am excited about the work ahead. I believe that I have the knowledge, the experience and the skills to move forward with our shared agenda to make this community livable and sustainable not only for us but for future generations.

Please join me at the Gumboot Cafe on Saturday mornings 9:30-11:00 am to explore these and any other issues that are on your mind. Check out my website creekdirector.ca.

And make sure you vote!

Closing statement

You have had the opportunity to hear the candidates and you now have a bit more of a sense of our personalities, our style and our values. We have all talked about some of the specific issues that face us right now and some of the things we would like to work on. But over the next 3 years new issues will emerge, issues none of us could have predicted, and you need to make sure that you have chosen the person sitting around that Board table who best reflects your values, who can engage in the most productive and meaningful dialogue and who will bring you into the conversation.

I believe I have served you well over the last 6 years. I have listened to you, I have engaged with you and I have been a good negotiator. I have kept you regularly informed through my monthly newsletters. I have made myself available at my Gumboot Office. I have answered your questions and responded to your concerns.

These are tough times of environmental and economic crisis. And while many of the solutions are beyond the scope of this order government, we have a very important role to play at the local level. Some people say you have to make a choice between jobs and environmental protection. I don't think that is true. We can have a green economy in which we are not destroying the very things on which all life depends.

I want to end by quoting the late Jack Layton: Love is better than anger. Hope is better than fear. Optimism is better than despair. So let us be loving, hopeful and optimistic.

Lets work together to make a difference.

Make sure you vote on Nov 19 or at the advance polls Nov 9 or 16.