

To: Regional and Corporate Services Committee

Date: 2020-05-12

From: Meghan Jackson, Parks Technician II

File No: 2320-30-21671

**Subject: 2020 Gatehouse Operations at Island 22 and Dewdney Regional Parks**

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### RECOMMENDATION

**THAT** the Fraser Valley Regional District proceed with regular gatehouse operations at Island 22 and Dewdney Regional Parks for the 2020 season while following the Provincial Health Officer's orders and guidance from the BC Centre for Disease Control.

#### STRATEGIC AREA(S) OF FOCUS

Foster a Strong & Diverse Economy  
Support Healthy & Sustainable Community  
Provide Responsive & Effective Public Services

#### PRIORITIES

Priority #5 Outdoor Recreation  
Priority #4 Tourism

### BACKGROUND

Annually, during the peak season of June to October, park users are required to purchase a parking pass at both Island 22 and Dewdney Regional Parks. Parking fees help to off-set the cost of staffed gatehouses, which provide on-site support for customer service, boat launch operations, and general site security. During this season, these parks are open from 6 am-sunset, and during an approved fishery, the gates open at 5 am to accommodate those who wish to get an earlier start. Special passes for overnight stays of vehicles on weekends are also permitted during July and August for Island 22 Regional Park. There is overnight security on-site during these times; however, the gate remains closed. In addition to collecting fees for parking passes, the gatehouse operators also provide information to the public and report boating violations and other suspicious activity to the appropriate authorities.

As a result of COVID-19, the Provincial State of Emergency and orders issued by the Provincial Health Officer, FVRD staff are monitoring and adjusting to the situation to determine how best to support the health and safety needs at the gatehouses and of the public in the parks.

### DISCUSSION

In light of COVID-19, staff have reviewed financial and operational implications at both regional parks during these unprecedented times. The benefits of the gatehouses are invaluable to customer service and overall safety and security at these parks. Gatehouse staff provide a presence, monitor onsite

activities, and greet and provide information to park users. This is especially important in peak times to ensure coverage in all the parks, and even more important with the role that parks have in providing a place for people to recreate in the COVID-19 pandemic framework. The Island 22 and Dewdney gatehouses cost over \$80,000 to operate annually. Overall, except for sockeye fishery years (which has recently occurred every four years), staffing the gatehouses at both parks costs more than is collected in parking pass revenue. Last year this represented a net loss of just over \$10,000. Given these figures, FVRD Parks could not afford to staff these sites without the revenue generated from parking passes.

Ensuring a healthy and safe workplace for gatehouse operations is a priority. As such, the Provincial Health Officer's orders and guidance from the BC Centre for Disease Control will be followed, as well as the recommendations being provided by WorkSafeBC. Ultimately, the FVRD will take steps to reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19 during gatehouse operations. Measures that will be considered include:

- Only allowing one person in the gatehouse at a time to ensure physical distancing is practiced
- Implementing barriers to reduce the spread of the virus such as plexiglass on the gatehouse window, increased frequency of washroom cleaning, and not accepting cash
- Increase gatehouse cleaning, provide the necessary supplies and reinforce personal hygiene messaging
- Educate gatehouse staff on health and safety measures to prevent transmission of infectious disease
- Implementing boat launching and parking protocols to ensure social distancing amongst visitors

These measures will be based on current recommendations and may be subject to change. The latest guidance from public health officials will be followed, and measures adjusted accordingly.

## **COST**

Maintaining seasonal gatehouse operations at Island 22 and Dewdney Regional Parks will not represent a significant change in costs, which were already included as part of the approved 2020 budget. Additional expenses for any physical barriers, cleaning supplies, PPE or additional cleaning will be minimal.

## **CONCLUSION**

Staffed gatehouses are an integral part of park operations at Island 22 and Dewdney Regional Parks, and have been for over a decade. Ensuring a healthy and safe workplace for continued gatehouse operations during this pandemic is a priority, and the FVRD will take the utmost actions to ensure this workplace is as healthy and safe as possible while providing service to the public.

**COMMENTS BY:**

**Stacey Barker, Director of Regional Services:** Reviewed and supported.

**Kristy Hodson, Acting Director of Financial Services:** Reviewed and supported.

**Jennifer Kinneman, Chief Administrative Officer:** Reviewed and supported.