

Board of Directors Highlights

Q3 Board Meeting Report – December 2025



GVHA Board Highlights provides a brief summary of items from each quarterly Board meeting. The summary is not inclusive of all agenda items.

Message from the Chair – Mark Mawhinney

There is a nautical term “pay the devil” which originates from the “devil” which is the longest seam in a ship’s hull and “paying” means applying pitch (or tar) to seal it and make it watertight. The phrase is often used to reference a difficult or demanding job. Being a board member of this wonderful organization is a privilege. There are many moving parts, lots of very compelling opportunities and some challenges along the way. I’m a pragmatic optimist – an optimist in that I know that the future will always be brighter than the present and the past, a pragmatist in knowing that the path is not a straight line. Below you’ll see some of the outcomes from our last quarterly board meeting and, I think, that you will agree the board continues to carry a significant workload, but is also very excited about what the future holds for the GVHA. For that, and for their wisdom, guidance and “payment to the devil”, I want to highlight how appreciative I am for our board. My very best wishes also to all of you for a wonderful holiday season.

Board Director Transition

December 9 was Songhees Member Director Neʔəmtənat?̓s (Florence Dick’s) last GVHA board meeting as her term ends on December 31. Florence’s time on this board has been more than service. She has strengthened our discussions, broadened our understandings and increased our sensitivities. She’s spoken from the heart and with candor. She reminded us that reconciliation is not a moment time, but a process. It manifests in relationships, trust, patience and in listening and learning. We thank her for her contributions.

We look forward to welcoming new Songhees Member Director Councillor səpəxʷəléniyé? (Jeannie George) onto the board on January 1.

Geoff Dickson was re-appointed to a second term as Destination Greater Victoria Member Director.

CEO Transition and Recruitment

GVHA’s Board of Directors has appointed Don Krusel as Interim Chief Executive Officer, effective immediately. Don has served on GVHA’s Board of Directors as Treasurer and Chair of the Audit and Finance Committee for the past three years and will take a leave of absence from the Board to support the organization through this ongoing transition period.

The Board has retained [Boyden Consulting](#), a leading executive search firm, to conduct the formal search for a permanent Chief Executive Officer. The search will begin imminently and will consider both internal and external candidates, ensuring GVHA identifies a CEO with the experience and vision to lead the organization through its next phase of growth and strategic development.

Director Cruise & Port Development Recruitment

Recruitment is under way for Director, Cruise & Port Development. GVHA is seeking a strategic, collaborative, and entrepreneurial leader who brings both vision and practical know-how. They offer deep industry insight—whether from cruise, travel, transportation, or port/marine sectors—and understand how to balance commercial growth with stewardship of Victoria’s vibrant working harbour. For more information or to be considered for this executive opportunity, visit [PFM Executive Search](#).

Strategic Planning

In 2023, the GVHA Board and leadership team collaborated with Berlineaton to develop a new strategic framework, including updated Vision and Mission statements. In the spring, GVHA once again partnered with Berlineaton to refine a five-year Strategic Plan that will establish clear priorities, measurable outcomes, and strong internal alignment. The Board and leadership is actively engaged in this planning process. We expect to endorse the final plan in Q4 and will share it with the Member Agencies at that time.

Committee Report Highlights

Audit & Finance Committee (AFC) Don Krusel, Chair

The committee reviewed the Q2 financial results, noting that most annual revenue has been realized following the conclusion of the cruise season. Year-to-date total revenue is \$27.55 million, representing a variance of 0.05%. EBITDA is forecast at \$8.7 million, which is \$1.61 million above budget. The committee also reviewed and discussed proposed changes to the Long-Range Plan. Leith Wheeler provided an update on the Restricted Reserve Fund, which is tracking ahead of target.

First Nations Economic Development Committee (FNED) Susan Brice, Chair

The committee received the co-management report and a presentation from the consultant. The report is intended as a foundation for ongoing dialogue, with any path forward to be agreed upon by all partners. Reflections were shared on efficiency, capacity, and clarity in decision-making structures. FNED considered an application from the Songhees Nation; however, the request exceeded the remaining available funds. Following extensive discussion, the committee passed a motion to decline the application and directed staff to review the program guidelines to ensure equitable distribution of funds between the Songhees Nation and the xʷsepsəm (Esquimalt) Nation.

Human Resources & Governance Committee (HRGC) Mark Collins, Chair

HRGC is overseeing the CEO transition, including the recruitment process, and has retained Boyden to conduct the search. In addition to the CEO transition, the committee reviewed board expenditures to date, staff compensation planning, director recruitment, the risk register, and proposed policy changes.

Infrastructure Planning & Development Committee (IPAD) Geoff Dickson, Chair

The committee received an update on capital projects and expenditures to date, with the majority of capital spending expected to occur in the final two quarters of the year. The shoreline stabilization project at the Camel Point heliport was completed ahead of schedule. The warehouse repair assessment has been finalized, confirming that while the roof is structurally sound, it requires replacement. Work on the dolphin and fender systems at Ogden Point is currently underway. The committee also reviewed and discussed the long-range plan.

Sustainability Committee (SC) Gail Stephens, Chair

The committee received updates on several initiatives, including the annual Greenhouse Gas Inventory, the Clean Marine audit, and the Underwater Noise Mitigation and Management Plan. GVHA has installed three new reef balls at Fisherman's Wharf and will be installing two bottle-fill stations at public locations. The Sustainability Committee reviewed and discussed the draft Sustainability Plan, which will be finalized and presented to the Board in Q4.

Recent Events

GVHA, with its famous decorated orca, took part in the 43rd Peninsula Co-op Santa Claus Parade through downtown Victoria on November 29.

GVHA hosted its annual Holiday Harbour Lights event on December 4 in the Inner Harbour which attracted thousands to the Lower Causeway and Ship Point Pier.



Santa arriving at the annual Holiday Harbour Lights event, thanks to RCMSAR for transporting him with care!



Staff posing with Santa (Marinas Manager, George Milne) at the Holiday Harbour Lights event.



GVHA at the Santa Claus Parade