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SLRD ADOPTS PAID MATERNITY AND PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS

New policy in place as of September 29, 2022

Pemberton, BC –The Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) has adopted a paid maternity and parental leave policy for its Board of Directors.

Work to develop the SLRD Paid Maternity and Parental Leave for Board Members Board Policy began in May, 2021, following a request for consideration from District of Squamish SLRD Director, Jenna Stoner. The policy was adopted at the [Board meeting on September 29, 2022](#) (continuation from the September 28 Board meeting).

Under the policy, SLRD Board Directors will be eligible for up to six months of paid maternity and parental leave.

“It’s fantastic to be able to support this initiative,” said SLRD Board Chair, Jen Ford. “The conversations have been meaningful, and the work has been thoughtful and thorough. I’m proud of our team – from Director Stoner, for bringing this forward, to the Board for their unwavering support and, of course, to the SLRD staff for bringing it all together in such a meaningful way. This is the legacy work of which we can all be proud.”

With this decision, the SLRD becomes one of the few regional districts in the province to provide paid maternity and parental leave for elected officials. The Regional District of Central Kootenay and Regional District of Fraser-Fort George adopted similar policies earlier this year.

“I’d like to thank Director Stoner for raising this issue,” said District of Squamish Director, Karen Elliott. “It takes courage to be a young person in politics and to prioritize your family, along with your role to serve your community and region. I applaud her for bringing this forward to the Board, and I thank the Board for making this a more inclusive table moving forward.”

Director Stoner also expressed appreciation for the Board, and for SLRD staff, in their work to bring this project to fruition, and noted that this type of policy will have a lasting, positive impact.

“I am so pleased to see this move forward,” Stoner said. “A lack of parental leave policies was one of the main reasons I almost chose not to run in 2018. There is no doubt that having policies like this one in place will make our locally-elected governments more diverse, inclusive and representative of the communities we serve. I would like to thank the Board for their support on this, and staff, as well, for their commitment to this important work.”

Electoral Area D Director, Tony Rainbow, who also previously served in the capacity of Board Chair, noted the importance of this policy in raising the level of engagement moving forward.

“There are many obstacles that get in the way of people choosing to pursue the work of local government, at the elected official level,” he said. “It’s fantastic to be able to help lessen the impact of one of those obstacles, and make running for local office more accessible in the future,” he said.

The SLRD is governed by a [10-member board of directors](#), consisting of four electoral area directors and six municipal directors (one director from the District of Lillooet, one director from the Village of Pemberton, two directors from the Resort Municipality of Whistler and two directors from the District of Squamish).

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About the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District

Located in southwestern BC, the Squamish-Lillooet Regional District (SLRD) is a local government federation consisting of four member municipalities (the District of Lillooet, the District of Squamish, the Village of Pemberton and the Resort Municipality of Whistler) and four unincorporated, rural electoral areas (A, B, C, and D). Headquartered in Pemberton, which is the approximate geographic centre of the region, the SLRD delivers a wide range of local, regional and sub-regional services to approximately 47,245 residents (2021 Census).

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