

Letter to the Editor of The Island Tides – Christa Grace-Warrick – May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011 Edition  
[http://www.islandtides.com/assets/reprint/IslandTides\\_May5\\_11.pdf](http://www.islandtides.com/assets/reprint/IslandTides_May5_11.pdf) (page 4)  
The letter was not printed in its entirety and therefore paints a different picture.  
Below is the entire letter from John Money, former Saturna Island Trustee.

April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2011

Dear Editor,

I am very concerned reading the different messages from the Islands Trust and various Trustees stating their budget increase, or as they put it "raise in taxes", is less than 1%. I find calling it a tax increase rather than a budget increase is smoke and mirrors. The fact is that they pulled a large amount of money out of their contingency fund leaving the Islands Trust exposed if they get involved with a large lawsuit. They also voted themselves a significant raise and benefit package much of it kicking in next year.

In truth, they have raised their budget more like 7% or 8% at least. The poor Trustees getting voted in this fall are going to have to deal with this shortfall legacy left them, pretty much dooming them to a large increase in taxes or budget in their first year.

Another thing that disturbed me is an attitude that was spoken from a Trustee in which they said that they represented the Island Trust and its mandate and not the voters that put them in and that this is the position of the majority of Trust Council. They added that nature trumps community no matter what.

In my mind community and its health are as equally important an amenity as the sea gulls and the fir cones.

In our community we are losing our young people, our school is in trouble, our pub and restaurants struggle to survive, and our aging population can't find people to help them look after their properties. The Fire Department and Emergency Services have difficulties finding members less than 60 years of age.

The Islands Trust wants to only talk about affordable housing, not the economies that our young people so desperately need before they can even start thinking about buying an affordable house. Preserving and protecting and trying to block development have driven land prices through the roof and continues to do so. It is good for the developers and those wealthy people who come to the islands and want the drawbridge pulled up behind them; but not good for the health of our communities.

I hope that some of these problems will become election issues as the policy seems to be that during an election is the only time the Islands Trust politicians are willing to listen to the voters.

Sincerely,  
John Money