

**REPORT TO THE FIRST NATIONS RELATIONS STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2019**

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**SUBJECT**      **Proposed Amendment to Bylaw No. 3828, the “Capital Regional District Board Procedure Bylaw, 2012” to add Territorial Acknowledgement**

**ISSUE**

To recommend that the “Capital Regional District Board Procedure Bylaw, 2012” (Procedure Bylaw) be amended to add territorial acknowledgment as a Board and committee agenda heading, to bring the bylaw in line with current practice at CRD meetings.

**BACKGROUND**

The Procedure Bylaw, in section 15, mandates the order of business at CRD meetings, including regular and special Regional and Hospital Board, standing committees, advisory and select committees, and local area community commissions. The Procedure Bylaw does not currently include territorial acknowledgment as an agenda heading.

Since the inauguration of the 2019-2022 Board, it has increasingly become common practice for Chairs to start Board and committee meetings with a territorial acknowledgment. CRD Board Chair Plant has encouraged this practice and in January 2019, provided a memo to Board Directors attaching a Guide to Territorial Acknowledgment for CRD Directors (Appendix A). The guide was developed by staff in the First Nations Relations Division to provide practical guidance on how to deliver a territorial acknowledgment, including sample wording and recommended pronunciation of names and territories.

While many committee and commission Chairs have adopted the practice of including a territorial acknowledgment at the outset of meetings, some Chairs have commented that despite their best intentions to do a territorial acknowledgment they have simply forgotten at the beginning of a meeting because it is not included in their agenda.

**ALTERNATIVES**

That the First Nations Relations Standing Committee recommend to the Board:

Alternative 1:

1. That Staff be directed to prepare an amending bylaw to the “Capital Regional District Board Procedure Bylaw, 2012” to add Territorial Acknowledgment to meeting agendas; and,
2. That the amending bylaw be referred directly to Board for readings and adoption without further review by committee.

## Alternative 2:

This report be received for information.

## **DISCUSSION**

In October 2019, the CRD Board adopted a Statement of Reconciliation that reinforced CRD’s commitment to respecting First Nation laws, traditions and customs. A territorial acknowledgment is one way to honour and demonstrate awareness of the relationship First Nations have with the land, including traditional territory on which CRD property is located.

A consolidated version of the Procedure Bylaw is attached at Appendix B. Section 15 of the Procedure Bylaw mandates the order of proceedings and business at CRD Board and committee meetings.

Staff are proposing an amendment to the Procedure Bylaw that would make a territorial acknowledgment the first item of business at every CRD meeting that is subject to the provisions of the Procedure Bylaw. Staff are not recommending that the bylaw amendment include proposed language for the territorial acknowledgment for two reasons:

1. There are over 20 nations who have expressed attachment to the land and waters within the CRD. The acknowledgement should be tailored to the peoples and core territory at the specific location where the meeting is held;
2. Speakers who wish to do so, should have the latitude to personalize territorial acknowledgments to deliver it in a way that is authentic and personally meaningful.

While most Directors are familiar with the practice of preparing a territorial acknowledgment, either from CRD meetings or at their home municipality, staff acknowledge that not all meeting Chairs will be comfortable with how to do a territorial acknowledgment if they have not done one in the past. This is particularly true for advisory committees or local area commissions in the Electoral Areas where meeting Chairs operate with less staff support than is provided at Board and standing committees meetings.

To support Directors and meeting Chairs, staff in the First Nations Relations Division will continue to provide guidance, with a particular focus on the Electoral Areas, to help identify the core territories and peoples that have a historic relationships to the land at all locations where CRD meetings are held.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications to amending the Procedure Bylaw. Any additional staff support required from the First Nations Relations Division is incremental to work already being done to advance the CRD’s commitment to reconciliation and is identified in the Division’s 2019 Service Plan.

## **CONCLUSION**

An amendment to the Procedure Bylaw to add territorial acknowledgment is a small procedural change CRD can make to promote greater recognition of the history of the place we live and work, and its significance to the First Nations in this region. Incorporating a territorial acknowledgment into meeting procedure is formalizing a practice that is already taking place in many CRD meetings. Delivering a territorial acknowledgment will not, in and of itself, advance reconciliation

if the message it is not delivered with meaning and intention, but incorporating it as a regular part of meeting agendas will create the space for CRD Chairs, committee and commission members to learn, understand and publically recognize the historical connection First Nations peoples have to the land.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the First Nations Relations Standing Committee recommend to the Board:

1. That Staff be directed to prepare an amending bylaw to the “Capital Regional District Board Procedure Bylaw, 2012” to add Territorial Acknowledgment to meeting agendas; and,
2. That the amending bylaw be referred directly to Board for readings and adoption without further review by committee.

Submitted by:	Kristen Morley, JD, General Manager, Corporate Services & Corporate Officer
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

KM:

Attachments: Appendix A – Territorial Acknowledgment – Guide for CRD Directors dated Jan. 2019

Appendix B - Bylaw No. 3828, the “Capital Regional District Board Procedure Bylaw, 2012 (consolidated)