



May 5, 2017

Mr. Floatie to retire today in Seattle

Construction underway on McLoughlin Point wastewater treatment plant

Victoria, B.C. - Victoria Mayor Lisa Helps, who chairs the Core Area's Liquid Waste Management committee, and Paul Nursey, President and CEO of Tourism Victoria, are heading to Seattle to join a long-anticipated retirement party for Mr. Floatie — the mascot associated with the region's practice of releasing sewage into the Salish Sea.

Mayor Helps and Tourism Victoria have been working with their Seattle counterparts and government officials for the past two years to demonstrate their unwavering commitment to achieving sewage treatment for the Capital Region — and to retiring Mr. Floatie.

The Capital Regional District Board reached a decision to proceed with the construction of a tertiary sewage treatment plant at McLoughlin Point in September 2016. The construction phase of the project has now begun at the McLoughlin Point site. News of this infrastructure project is being celebrated by residents and businesses on both sides of the border.

Mr. Floatie's retirement party in Seattle is being hosted by Canadian Consul General James Hill.

"The federal government has been an active and engaged partner in advancing this resolution. It has been a long-standing issue for both Canadians and Americans," said Consul General Hill. "We look forward to deepening our positive bi-lateral working relationship in the Salish Sea, as coastal marine communities sharing common waters, interests and values."

Victoria Mayor Lisa Helps became chair of the Core Area Liquid Waste Management committee for the Capital Regional District in May 2015.

"My focus was to build a sewage treatment plant in the Capital Region and get this social, economic and environmental black-eye dealt with at last. I wanted to retire Mr. Floatie for good," said Mayor Helps. "The patience and the supportive pressure that our neighbours in Seattle rightfully brought to bear on this issue resulted in the plant now under construction — with a higher level of treatment than previously planned."

"We are travelling to Seattle to thank our neighbours, and to bid farewell to Mr. Floatie — who, by the way, ran for Mayor of Victoria early on in his 'poop' persona career. His tenacity over many years helped elevate this dark cloud and make it an issue beyond our region. I'm so pleased to celebrate Mr. Floatie's retirement in Seattle, and to rekindle our mutual economic interests on both sides of the border."

Washington State officials and Seattle media have pushed for decades for the Capital Region to treat its sewage. Efforts included running awareness campaigns and threatening tourism boycotts.



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"Victoria has always been a very attractive destination for people from Seattle. We are thankful for their efforts to keep this issue in the public eye and that we can now share the great news that construction has begun on an advanced sewage treatment at McLoughlin Point," said Paul Nursey, President and CEO of Tourism Victoria. "Tourism Victoria has long advocated for wastewater treatment in Greater Victoria, and we fully support the laws and regulations in place to protect our environment."

A creation of James Skwarok, a Victoria elementary school teacher, Mr. Floatie made his debut on April 1, 2004, at the University of Victoria to announce the birth of the movement People Opposed to Outfall Pollution (POOP). During Mr. Floatie's formative years (2004-2007), he attended many public events on behalf of POOP to advocate for sewage treatment.

Mr. Floatie garnered international attention when he ran for Mayor of Victoria in 2005. His campaign slogan was "No. 2 for No. 1. Mr. Floatie means business."

Mr. Floatie dropped out of the race the day before nominations closed, after he had caught the attention of media across Canada and in the U.S. as far away as New York.

"What a relief," said Skwarok. "Thirteen years is a long time to dress up as a seven-foot tall turd. I had no idea it would take this long but I'm very grateful to have been part of a movement of caring determined people, from both sides of the border, who helped bring sewage treatment to Victoria.

"Mr. Floatie was flushed with joy after the Capital Regional District finally voted in favour of a revised plan — a better plan in fact — to build a tertiary sewage treatment plant at McLoughlin Point. Retirement never felt so good."

For more information on the Wastewater Treatment Project please visit wastewaterproject.ca.

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