

Dear APRM Members,

We want to make sure you're aware of an important and troubling policy change made by Metchosin Council last week.

For the **first time since incorporation**, Council has chosen **not** to provide **Permissive Tax Exemptions (PTEs)** for Metchosin's non-profit organizations for the 2026 tax year.

Historically, Metchosin has granted these exemptions every year to community-based organizations that serve residents, protect our environment, support youth and seniors, and sustain the social fabric that makes Metchosin unique. These include groups such as:

- **Wild ARC (BC SPCA)**
- **Camp Thunderbird (YMCA)**
- **Metchosin Hall Society**
- **Victoria Motorcycle Club**
- **Victoria Humane Society**
- **BC Parks Foundation**
- **Anglican Diocese property in Metchosin**

Together, these organizations represent a cornerstone of community life — and losing their exemptions could mean thousands of dollars in new annual costs for each group, potentially threatening programs, events, and volunteer-run services that residents depend on.

What changed

Instead of renewing the standard PTE bylaw, Council decided to *replace it with a promise* to “consider grants” later in the 2026 budget process.

However, **without a PTE bylaw passed before October 31, no organization can legally receive a property-tax exemption for 2026**. Provincial law requires that permissive-exemption bylaws be adopted by this deadline. *A grant is not equivalent to an exemption and **provides no guarantee or stability**.*

Adding to the concern, the **discussion was bundled** in a way that forced two councillors, who had potential conflicts on the specific properties, to **recuse themselves entirely**, including from the **policy debate** itself. This left **half a council** to

make a significant policy shift with **no full discussion** and **no reconsideration** when requested.

Why this matters

This is more than a financial change, it's a **philosophical departure** from Metchosin's long-standing commitment to supporting the volunteer-driven organizations that define our rural character.

If left uncorrected, this decision could reduce services, increase costs for residents who use these programs, and permanently weaken the community infrastructure built over decades of volunteer effort and collaboration.

What you can do — today

Please take a few minutes to email the Mayor and Council and **respectfully request reconsideration** of this decision.

Ask that they:

1. **Direct staff to draft and bring forward the 2026 PTE bylaw immediately**, for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd readings; and
2. **Call a Special Council Meeting before October 31** to adopt it, ensuring these community organizations remain supported next year.

Email addresses:

- Mayor Marie-Térèse Little – mtliddle@metchosin.ca
 - Mayor and Council – mayorandcouncil@metchosin.ca
 - General District contact – info@metchosin.ca
-

Feel free to use this or similar sample message

Subject: Please restore Metchosin's 2026 Permissive Tax Exemption Bylaw

Dear Mayor and Council,

I'm writing as a Metchosin resident to **request that Council reconsider** its recent decision regarding the 2026 Permissive Tax Exemptions.

Without a PTE bylaw adopted before October 31, local non-profits cannot receive property-tax relief for 2026. Past Councils were deliberate and transparent in providing this support, recognizing that these exemptions sustain the volunteer-run services that make our community strong.

Please direct staff to prepare and adopt the 2026 PTE bylaw immediately so these organizations, and the residents who depend on them, are not left in limbo.

Thank you for your leadership and for acting quickly.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Street or Neighbourhood]

This issue is **time-sensitive!** The bylaw must be adopted **before October 31** to take effect for 2026. Please share this message with neighbours and local groups so they can add their voices.

Together, we can ensure Metchosin continues to stand by its community values and the organizations that make this place home.

Warm regards,

Darren Brown

Vice President **Association for the Protection of Rural Metchosin (APRM)**

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