



Village of
Sayward

Memo for Information / Fact Sheet

For: Village of Sayward Residents and General Public
From: Andrew Young, CAO
Subject: Petition to Reduce Council Quorum – What does it mean?
Date: October 17, 2025

On Tuesday, October 14th the Village of Sayward (“Village”) filed a petition in the Supreme Court of British Columbia and in the Victoria Registry to reduce Village Council quorum from three Councillors to two Councillors. Over the last couple of days people in Sayward have asked two key questions. Those questions and answers to them follow.

What is a quorum?

A quorum is the minimum number of people who must be present at a meeting for it to be officially held and for decisions to be made.

Cambridge Dictionary

Sections 129(1) and 118 of the *Community Charter*, SBC 2003, c.26 explain that quorum is a majority of the five members of Village Council, which is three Village Council members.

What Happens if the Court Approves the request to reduce the Village Council Quorum?

If the court issues an order that the quorum for Village Council is reduced from three Council members to two Councillors – with those Councillors being Debbie Coates and Jason Johnson:

- Councillors Coates and Johnson could then consider and vote on:
 - whether to proceed with considering a motion of censure and related sanctions against Councillors Susan Poulsen and Scott Burchett (the “Two Councillors”) for possible contraventions of the *Community Charter* section 117, and the Village’s *Code of Conduct Bylaw No. 442, 2018*, and *Council Procedure Bylaw No. 416, 2015*, and possibly Sayward’s new *Code of Conduct Bylaw* (Bylaw 512 adopted January 21, 2025) in relation to Councillors Poulsen’s and Burchett’s:
 - possible unauthorized disclosure to third parties of information and documents received in confidence and information and documents discussed during closed Village Council meetings; and

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The Village of Sayward respectfully acknowledges that the land we gather on is on the unceded territory of the K’ómoks First Nation, the traditional keepers of this land.

- their likely disrespectful behaviour towards Keir Gervais (now former) Chief Administrative Officer of the Village; and
- possibly commencing court proceedings against at least one of the “Two Councillors” and possibly Village staff for possible wilful misconduct and possibly against John France for possibly assisting in possible wilful misconduct.

Please also note that:

- if the court grants the sought order for reduction of quorum; and
- if Councillors Coates and Johnson decide to possibly proceed with consideration of a motion of censure and related sanctions,

each of Councillors Poulsen and Burchett will be informed and provided with an opportunity to be heard and respond and before any decision is made whether to pass a motion of censure and related sanctions.

Mayor Mark Baker may be called as a witness.

For all other matters considered by Village Council, the Council quorum remains three members of Council.

As this matter is now before the courts, the Village has no further comment at this time.

The Village is committed to providing accountable local government that ensures fairness, transparency, equality, equal representation, inclusiveness, and collaboration among partners.

Andrew Young, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer
Village of Sayward