

Meet Your Board Candidates

The following individuals have put their names forward for nomination to serve on the Board of Directors for the 2026-2028 term. Director positions and elections are in accordance with our society's bylaws. **Positions up for election include:**

- 1 x Large Accommodation - North
- 1 x Large Accommodation - South
- 2 x Member at Large - North
- 2 x Member at Large - South

Your 2026-2028 Nominees

Large Accommodation, North

- Alisha Adam, Evergreen Hospitality Group; Waterways, A Boutique Hotel (incumbent)
- Ella Vallance, Desolation Eco Cabanas/Powell River Sea Kayak

Large Accommodation, South (1 seat)

- Qaid Jivan, The Stonewater (incumbent)

Member at Large, North (2 seats)

- Keith Allen - Powell River Community Futures
- Gary Shilling, qathet Film Society (incumbent)

Member at Large, South (2 seats)

- Heather Newman, Pointhouse Suites (incumbent)
- Jessica Price, Good Fridays Gibsons (General Store & Cheese Shop)
- Gina Ray, Gibsons Public Market

Full Bios & Nomination Submissions Below (alphabetically)

Alisha Adam - Evergreen Hospitality Group

(inc. Waterways, a Boutique Hotel (formerly the Marine Inn); Sunshine Lodge; Oceanside, a Coast Hotel; The Spot at Porpoise Bay; Rockwater Secret Cove Resort)

Nominee: Large Accommodation - North



Alisha grew up discussing hospitality around the dinner table, having both a father and grandfather in the industry. Along with her dad, Shakil, she currently leads the Evergreen Hospitality Group, one of the largest family-owned hospitality & tourism groups in British Columbia. The company operates 27 properties (and counting!) across Vancouver Island, the Sunshine Coast, and the Lower Mainland. Alisha's past roles include Director of the Portfolio Solutions Group at Atlas Partners, a Toronto-based private equity firm; Senior Strategy and Operations Manager at Uber, responsible for leading Uber's launch in Vancouver; and Business Analyst at McKinsey & Company, a leading management consulting firm. Alisha graduated from Stanford University with a Bachelor's in International Relations and Master's in

Computer Science. In her spare time, you can find her walking / running / biking along the seawall in Vancouver (on sunny days), or curled up with a good book and a cup of tea (on cozy days).

Sunshine Coast Tourism's Board of Directors is responsible for governance and strategic oversight of the organization. What does this mean to you, and how do you believe you will add value?

From Evergreen Hospitality's presence on the Sunshine Coast with 5 hotel properties, I confidently feel that we can add value to the Board of Directors and work in collaboration to make positive strategic decisions that will benefit the Sunshine Coast overall. I look forward to the opportunity and am excited to see how we can all work together.

Keith Allen - Community Futures Powell River

Nominee: Member at Large - North Representative



Keith Allen has been with Community Futures Powell River for six years and currently serves as Executive Director. He brings over eight years of prior experience in the banking sector, along with firsthand insight as a local business owner. This combination of experience has given him a strong understanding of both the financial and operational challenges faced by entrepreneurs and small businesses. Through his leadership, Keith works closely with individuals, organizations, and stakeholders to support business development, improve access to capital, and strengthen the local economy.

Deeply connected to Powell River and the surrounding region, Keith is passionate about fostering sustainable economic growth and building resilient communities. He is committed to creating opportunities that support local innovation, encourage

entrepreneurship, and generate high-quality, meaningful employment. Keith also recognizes the vital role tourism plays in the region's economic future, supporting initiatives that enhance Powell River's appeal as a destination while ensuring growth aligns with community values.

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I am actively involved in all facets of business in Powell River and the surrounding community. I believe I can provide insight on our local business community in a way that Tourism can benefit from. I am hopeful that I can utilize my connections to provide Sunshine Coast Tourism with additional resources and support to accomplish its goals.

Qaid Jivan - The Stonewater

Nominee: Large Accommodation - South



Qaid began his career in technology project management at BC's health authorities. In 2016, he founded a recruitment technology company with just \$3000, which he grew to 10 staff and a large venture capital round in 2021. Simultaneously, as a hobby he was also creating installations in the music festival industry. It was at these music festivals where he realized his true passion laid in building communities and creating spaces where people could come together and have a good time. By 2021, Qaid had sold most of his shares and left his startup to pursue hospitality development. He purchased and redeveloped a century home in Vancouver that featured an Airbnb. That Airbnb went on to become one of the top rated places to stay in Vancouver, and was featured in magazines like Business Insider.

By 2022, Qaid began mentoring under his friend John deC. Evans, the founder of OPUS Hotels and lead developer of Whistler Blackcomb. Qaid's goal was to learn as much as he could from Evans in order to develop his own hospitality projects on the Sunshine Coast.

In February of 2024, Qaid took over The Stonewater Motel and rebranded it to become The Stonewater – a boutique hotel that boasts glamping sites and a private circuit spa. After spending years taking frequent getaways to the Coast and now as a hotel-owner out here, Qaid is passionate about building tourism to the region. His goal is to promote projects that align with the history, communities, and natural beauty of the area. Qaid has a degree in Business Administration from SFU, has experience working on the Board of the Project Management Institute (Canada West), and has spoken at a variety of engagements and workshops for students at SFU, BCIT, UBC, and Emily Carr.

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As the Coast continues to grow as a tourist destination, it is essential that it maintain its authenticity. Local business owners, as a driving force of the economy, will assist in helping vision set in an organic, true-to-the-Coast way. To me, this role means two things: collecting input from other tourism-focused business owners to ensure our voices are heard as the SCT makes decisions that will directly impact us; and ensuring transparent and effective communication between the SCT and small business owners. If those two facets of the job are in good standing, everyone wins. Good governance is, in short, all just transparent and regular communication. Going into a second term, I'd add value in three different ways:

1. Sharing my insights and perspectives from the Pender Harbour/Egmont region: We're one of the smallest (by people) and fastest growing parts of the Sunshine Coast. As such, we need to make sure the needs of this part of the region are being met.
2. Sharing my insights and perspectives as an entrepreneur. We want to ensure longevity and foster a community for more businesses/business owners to not just survive, but thrive on the Sunshine Coast. As someone who is actively engaged with other business owners at similar stages in their work, I'm well positioned to offer just that.
3. Sharing my insights and perspectives as a board member for other organizations. I'm no stranger to the work being a board member entails, and my work at the health authorities was building governance systems for a series of oversight boards. I also have an extensive network and am a natural connector, which offers direct results to the boards I am a part of.

Heather Newman - Pointhouse Suites on Sargeant Bay

Nominee: Member at Large - South



Heather is a seasoned entrepreneur with deep ties to the Sunshine Coast, particularly through her ownership of Pointhouse Suites on Sargeant Bay, a Gold Certified Green Tourism property. With a background in Rehabilitation Medicine, Heather made the leap into tourism in 2003 when she opened her first B&B. Since then, she has become known for her ability to create sustainable and unique guest experiences that connect visitors with nature.

Her extensive board experience includes serving as Treasurer on the Sunshine Coast Tourism board, where she currently holds the position, and leadership roles in other policy-driven organizations such as Canadian Parents for French BC/Yukon and the BC Association of Child

Development Centres. She is passionate about sustainable tourism development and fostering regional collaboration to drive economic growth on the Sunshine Coast. Heather's commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainable hospitality, coupled with her financial oversight as treasurer, makes her a strong candidate for another term on the SCT board.

Sunshine Coast Tourism's Board of Directors is responsible for governance and strategic oversight of the organization. What does this mean to you, and how do you believe you will add value?

Governance and strategic oversight mean ensuring that Sunshine Coast Tourism remains aligned with its mission and values while adapting to industry changes. It involves setting clear policies, managing resources responsibly, and shaping long-term goals that meet both community and visitor needs.

I can add value through my operational experience in sustainable tourism, and my roles on various boards, including my position as Treasurer on the SCT board. My background allows me to contribute a strong focus on fiscal responsibility, sustainability, and innovative tourism strategies that will drive economic growth and enhance the region's appeal.

Jessica Price - Good Fridays General Store, Good Fridays Cheese Co.

Nominee: Member at Large - South Representative



Jessica has worked in hospitality for over 20 years, with experience owning a number of businesses that have relied both on the local and tourist economy. Moving to the Sunshine Coast in 2021, she immediately fell in love with the people, the community and the abundance of opportunity that laid ahead. It didn't take long before she had started a catering company, followed by opening up a permanent brick and mortar in Gibsons Landing in an iconic heritage building "Good Fridays General Store", followed by a second location, "Good Fridays Cheese Co" in Upper Gibsons. Each business is unique, but is highly impacted by the abundant tourist flood year round. Jessica is passionate about the Sunshine Coast and ensures that new and returning travellers, as well as the permanent community, are loving the area as much as she does. She is excited to

approach coastal wide tourism with fresh ideas and perspectives to enhance hospitality.

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To me, governance and strategic oversight of Sunshine Coast Tourism means ensuring we are making practical, thoughtful and worthwhile decisions that will help guide the future of tourism and hospitality on the Coast. Governing the overall strategy of what tourism will look like over the near and far future and ensuring we are setting achievable goals that will benefit the community is the main priority.

I believe I would add a lot of value given my experience as a small business owner, who owns 2 similar but different businesses. I am incredibly connected with the business community, and believe I am acutely aware of what we need to help the Coast thrive from a hospitality perspective. I also think I can bring a youthful approach, which might help us tap into strategies that may not have been yet explored, and help lean into strategies focussed on connecting with younger generations. Above all, I am a do-er, and someone who likes to focus on tangible, practical and results driven goals.

Gina Ray - Gibsons Public Market

Nominee: Member at Large - South



Gina is a seasoned hospitality and tourism professional with over 20 years of industry experience, spanning operations, brand development, and large-scale venue management. She has held senior leadership roles within corporate restaurant groups, including overseeing one of the largest restaurants in Western Canada and supporting the opening of multiple locations, as well as contributing to brand development initiatives with Browns Restaurant Group and the Tap & Barrel Group.

In her current role as Social Enterprise & Operations Manager at Gibsons Public Market, Gina oversees a dynamic, multi-tenant facility that brings together a diverse mix of food, retail, and tourism-based businesses, including one of the Sunshine Coast's largest visitor attractions. Her work requires strategic collaboration across stakeholders, operational oversight, and a strong focus on enhancing the overall visitor experience.

Born and raised on the Sunshine Coast, Gina brings a deep understanding of the region's evolution as a tourism destination. Having previously served on the Sunshine Coast Tourism Board, she offers valuable governance experience and is committed to supporting sustainable growth, strengthening shoulder-season visitation, and advancing a resilient tourism economy for the Coast..

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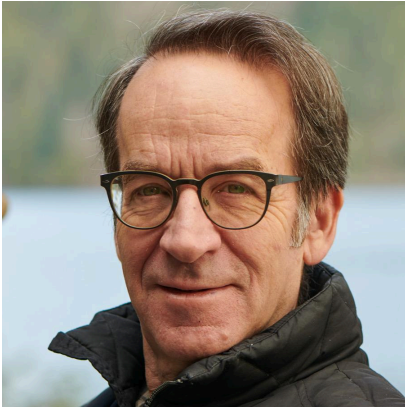
To me, governance isn't just about oversight, it's about providing clear direction and making sure we stay true to our mandate while staying responsive to what the region actually needs. It's about asking the tough questions, supporting smart decisions, and finding that balance between growing our industry and keeping our communities sustainable. A strong board empowers management to lead, but also keeps a close eye on the measurable outcomes that actually help our tourism ecosystem.

I'm coming to this with a mix of operational "in the trenches" experience and previous time on this Board. My background in hospitality has taught me the reality of the visitor journey. I know how every single touchpoint, from the first click to the final goodbye, shapes the Coast's reputation.

In my current role at the Gibsons Public Market, I'm working daily with a huge variety of tourism businesses. That's given me a front row seat to the real world challenges operators are facing right now, from shifting visitor habits to the current economic climate. I believe I bring a practical, solutions focused lens to the table. I'm fully committed to finding ways to boost our off season, strengthening our local partnerships, and making sure the Sunshine Coast remains a competitive and welcoming place for both visitors and the people who live here.

Gary Shilling - qathet Film Society

Nominee: Member at Large - North



Gary is actively engaged in the cultural community of qathet Regional District. A marketing and communications professional – he applies his practical knowledge to all aspects of the artistic visioning, financial stability, and organizational readiness of the qathet film society, their annual Film Festival, and the Patricia Theatre. As Executive Director for the Society, Gary is focussed on strengthening the role that film plays in the cultural and economic fabric of the region.

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Strategic oversight is a core responsibility of a board. And how the board executes that role can contribute to the success of the overall strategic plan. Key to that success is helping management address obstacles, find opportunities, out-think competitors, bypass disruptors and fine tune its direction. Having a diverse board improves strategy and risk oversight. As executive director of the qathet film society and owners of the historic Patricia Theatre, I oversee the implementation of strategies to attract locals and visitors to qathet's most important built attraction. With 7 year's experience in this leadership role, I believe my knowledge and experience will be an asset to the SCT board.

Ella Vallance - Powell River Sea Kayak Ltd. and Cabana Desolation Eco Resort

Nominee: Large Accommodation - North



Growing up, Ella was fully immersed in her parents' eco tourism and adventure business and developed strong interest in various aspects of the company from a young age. What began as a role washing kayaks has since evolved into something greater: a career in eco tourism and a burning passion for sharing unique experiences, destinations and a life well lived.

With a background in storytelling and digital marketing, Ella specializes in positioning experience-driven tourism for modern travellers. Ella brings hands-on understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing operators on the Sunshine Coast and is passionate about supporting healthy tourism growth in the region.

Over the past seven years, she has balanced her time between adventure travel and operating Cabana Desolation Eco Resort. Living in the incredible playground that is the Sunshine Coast, she can often be found running long distances in the mountains, road tripping in her truck, or sharing her story as a social media creative.

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To me, governance and strategic oversight of the organization means setting clear direction, ensuring transparency, and making sure the organization is acting in the best interest of this region while prioritizing long-term sustainability. Strong governance means balancing diverse perspectives and supporting operators of all sizes, as well as ensuring tourism development enhances rather than detracts from the community and the environment.

As an emerging voice in the industry, I offer a fresh, on-the-ground perspective with first hand insight operating a large accommodation in a remote, experience-driven setting. I understand the opportunities and challenges facing operators—from staffing and logistics to marketing, guest expectations and more—and can help ensure the strategic decisions made address real industry needs.

In addition, my background in storytelling and digital marketing allows me to contribute to high-level conversations regarding brand positioning, audience targeting and how we present the Sunshine Coast. I am motivated to listen, learn, contribute and support an already thriving tourism industry.