

Commons Council Notes for Meeting of August 07, 2012

Present: Linda St. Clair (convener), Sam Adair, Mary Aitken, Bob Andrew, Rebecca Furnell, Jinny Hayes (notes), Stef Marrie, Sharon Pattison, Maya Ruggles, Aidan Simmons, George Szanto, Kit Szanto, Raymond Tremblay, Muriel Weins, Susan Yeend.

Team and Group Reports

1. *Event Planning and Volunteer Teams (Stef Marrie)*

The Community-wide Garage Sale August 4 was successful, a lot of fun, and brought in about \$400 from the Commons' own table sales plus table costs for participants. Stef thanked the many contributors and she was acknowledged for a job well done.

2. *Farm Management (Susan Yeend) – see attached*

Work bees are continuing and always needs people to help, as does watering. Harvesting has started and sales will happen at Garage Sale and Farmgate stand on Saturdays. Donated seed potatoes are pretty well all planted, or soon to be. Namaste Garden Allotments are progressing, with some planning for shared crops. A few spots are still available.

- Items for next agenda: People keeping some produce from Kitchen Garden and crop sharing
- Next meeting August 20, 4.00 pm.

3. *Property Management (Raymond Tremblay)*

Have developed a policy and process for borrowing things from the Commons, and also one for dealing with urgent or emergency PHC needs

- Next Meeting: August 20 1.00 pm

4. *Communications Team (Jinny Hayes) – see attached*

Jinny left her speaking notes at home, but summarized several articles that have been going to the local newspapers recently, and the plan for on-going publications.

- Next Meeting: TBA

5. *Covenant (a Team of the Board of Trustees) (Jinny Hayes)*

COV is not meeting over the summer. We are waiting for feedback on the last full Draft Covenant from GaLTT and The Land Conservancy of BC.

- Next Meeting: Sept. 7 at 2.00 pm.

6. *Fundraising Team (George Szanto)*

Bob Bossin will be doing a reprise of his show *Davy the Punk* as a Commons fundraiser on August 25 at The Centre on Peterson Road.

7. *Labyrinth (Mary Aitken)*

A work party of 6 did some maintenance - thank you! The tentative date for the bench dedication is Sept. 9 at 3.00 pm

8. *Grant Writing (George Szanto) – see these Notes, below*

9. *Trails and Green Spaces Team (Kit Szanto)*

Before the meeting formally began, Kit had given a brief up-date from Mary Wilson of the pleasure of working with the kids from Camp Miriam, who again this year, are thanking the Commons for letting them come to work. Volunteers to work with the kids—and projects for them—are still needed.

A maple tree has been donated and there is discussion about where it should be planted.

10. *Share the Commons (Kit Szanto)- see attached*

A team to manage the Community Kitchen will be needed to both assist with finishing the building and long-term management

A collaboration of 3 churches will present a Nativity Play on December 22.

- Next Meeting: August 8, at 10 am.

11. *Infrastructure (Aidan Simmons) – see attached*

INF suggests looking at an alternate means of managing Council, eg, a “Council Team” Discussed the team’s role in the Community Kitchen, eg, helping with construction and coordination among parties, eg, drawings, codes, etc. The timber cladding has to be removed from the existing building, but the plan is to save as much of it as possible for reuse. The Haven may be donating an extractor hood.

Team is looking at alternative technologies, as they are reasonably affordable.

- Next meeting – August 23 at either 10.30 am or 1.00 pm

12. *People for a Healthy Community (Bob Andrew)*

A PHC and Commons Bard meeting was held to clarify some areas of angst and work out some means of better communication. His was a cordial and productive meeting with outcomes such as a better Commons contact list for PHC, and plan to look at the liaison person role.

- Next Board meeting: August 16, time TBA

13. *Board of Trustees (Rebecca Furnell) – see attached*

A finance and spending policy is in draft by the Finance Team to clarify processes; will come to the next Council meeting.

Process for prioritizing the use of the \$50 K from the anonymous donation (as outlined in last CCC notes): Council for input -> Finance Team for more info gathering ->

Trustees, as an accountability process.

Importance of communication: Board upholds the Charter, and communication may be part of this,

AGM is Sept 22, and announcement of this plus call for nominations and notice of bylaw changes will be in August 20 newspapers and on our webpages. Board will be recruiting some nominations for trustees and there will also be nominations from the floor. Please be sure to have the nominee’s agreement to stand before nominating.

Note: All “finance people” are going off the Board as of the AGM; please think of suitable nominees. A bookkeeper will be needed, and if one is not elected to the Board in September, we may have to hire a suitable professional.

- Next meeting: August 17 at 3.00 pm

Additional Agenda Items

A. Grant writing Team and the Spending the \$50 K (George Szanto + All)

Judith Roux and George riffed on what would be needed to bring the kitchen to “skeleton” and full functioning, estimating that overall total will be \$70K, though the original estimate was \$50K. \$35,000 of this has already been raised, and can be considered matched funds to approach a new granting agency for another \$35K. Since just such an application process arose, Judith and George wrote the application requesting the \$35K balance required. At Council last month, \$30K was suggested as an amount to take from the \$50K for the kitchen; George is now asking for that amount to be increased to \$35K to assure that the kitchen be fully finished and functional for the community.

General discussion raised many points, such as a review of last month’s listed priorities as a guideline, the fact that the kitchen will bring in revenue, that additional future funds may come in from individual donors, the fact that the new \$35K grant has already been applied for, and so on.

Summary:

- Notes from this (CCC) meeting to go out to teams right away; team contact to please circulate to all members.
- All teams to discuss right away if this additional \$5K can be added to kitchen budget; recommendation to be summarized by team reps
- Team reps to get team opinion (consensus) to Linda ASAP
- Deadline 2 weeks, ie, August 21.
- Sam Adair requested that his objection to the \$5K increase be noted

Aidan reminded us that on the original estimate list from the last CCC meeting, the 10% contingency had been omitted.

B. Draft Decision Making Document – see attached

Rebecca prepared this start on a document on decision-making at the Commons, and has invited individual and team input. She reviewed the main points, including where an idea might come from (team, individual) -> Council -> team reps as key to communication with teams and getting team input back to Council -> Council or alternate body, as appropriate.

- Action: please get individual or team input to Rebecca. There’s no deadline, but sooner is better.

Next meeting of Commons Council will be September 4th at the Commons.

Attachments

Farm Management Team Report
COM Team Notes of July 12
Board of Trustees Report
Sharing the Commons Team
Infrastructure Team
and

Decision Making at the Gabriola Commons (for feedback ASAP please)

FMT Report for Aug 2012 Council

- veggies sold at C. garage sale
- donated seed potatoes, 1'2 planted
- blueberries netted, ripening, almost at their end
- Namaste South Gardens group growing, possibly farming some crops together

Needs:

- irrigation installation - little field, orchard irrigation plugged, so more help needed to bucket water
- water barrels for roof catchment

Next meeting Aug 20, 4pm

Communications Team Notes for July 12, 2012

Present: Yetta, Jinny, Doug

1. Taking notes at Council

Maybe there should be a separate group doing all Council meetings, facilitators, note takers and whatever else is necessary – should be decided at Council. It is a lot for the COM Team to take on now with its small membership.

Communications team should be a service that coordinates with the other groups involved

2. Articles

What to do with all of them? Made a list and designated to 2 newspapers. Several articles have gone out recently.

General/foundation and deck are the articles that we have now on hand

Six articles required for Sounder regular column: We are not getting these in, so decided to ditch this idea for now

Fund raising articles will be separate and coordinated through the fundraising group, but submitted through Doug (*Shingle*) and Jinny (*Sounder*)

There is a difference between news releases and articles that are “feel good” content

Jinny knows how to do news release, as does Yetta who might do this segment

Our task is to get Commons info out within the Commons and with the community at large

Follow-up with “Smiles” in *Sounder*

Have two from Ann Buttrick - send one to each paper (Jinny)

- Write a series of articles maybe Heather Menzies could be approached
- 50 K article series – trails, kitchen, sustainability centre, roof
- Giving series: Christine's article on securities, fundraising series, legacy donations and Christmas giving

Timings:

Ann 1 this week in Sounder 16th; Ann 2 Shingle on 23. Foundation in Sounder Deck article with photo and trail one for each paper 30th

- Need photos for articles
- Yetta will send out a news release on Vancouver Foundation donation
- News releases generally go to both papers at same time, after which they choose what to do about the “news”
- Whether to put contributors’ names on articles need to reassessed at a future Council mtg

3. Fundraising as it relates to COM

Loans to pay off mortgage (George); this project is ready to launch. Legal side ready to go.

Fundraising “big picture” is a Trustee thing to organize and it will be on an upcoming agenda

Launch financial information maybe at AGM - Doug will talk to Rebecca about this

When planning events, check with Derek at *Sounder*, who has volunteered that he has a “year on Gabriola read” on what is upcoming

Lots is happening on the Commons; articles are being written – right now it just needs coordination.

Next Mtg: At call of convener

Sharing the Commons Team Report

Submitted by Kit Szanto

August 7, 2012

Activities:

We met July 4 and discussed a great many ongoing issues:

1. Good discussion with LRP re various concerns for the long, middle and short range hopes we have for the Commons;
2. The Commons Community Kitchen, both its construction and management, the need for developing teams for both these tasks;
3. The need to clear space in the old goat barn, specifically to ensure the green bikes don't take up all the floor space they now have, and to see if a new storage space might be found for the equipment for a future biodiesel project.

We also met to discuss, and finally approve, an application for a new project, a Nativity play to take place on December 22, this year. We hope the Commons will make sure we are open to all groups of whatever political, cultural, spiritual persuasions, and after such events, no religious or cultural etc. images will remain on the property.

Next STC meeting: August 8, at 10 am.

INF Report: Meeting – 19 July 2012.

Discussion was primarily based on the current ongoing projects at the Commons:

Kitchen – proposed works.

- Finance from donation/grants available to move renovation works.
- Set up project.
- End user group to be reactivated.
- INF team to assist in construction.
- Applications to RDN and as necessary (VHA, Island trust, etc.).
- Ensure works comply with code.
- Preparation of drawings (Judith/Aidan).
- External timber cladding existing – remove and reuse. (sample section re feasibility).
- Use Al-Paca insulation?
- Wall lining and waterproof finish.
- Access door 1½ leaf.
- Extract hood – possible donation from Haven of equipment.

Green solutions and alternative energy to be explored were feasible and possible.

Site Plan:

Draw up site plan, discuss and evolve.

Council:

Discuss the proposal for a 'Council Team' to assist, coordinate, take Council matters forward, including notes at meetings and follow up items.

Note:

Current action items from June meeting notes - held over till next meeting.

Next Meeting: 23 August 2012 @ 10.30

Contact Details:

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Board of Trustees Report to Council
August 7th 2012

1. Lots of discussion around finance and spending:
 - Need to avoid a repeat of what happened with deck where check was cashed but money was not available because treasurer was not aware that a check was going to be cashed. The finance committee is drafting a policy which will set up a process where budgets are sent in prior to withdrawal being approved so that the money will be made available. This draft policy will be brought to council for review when it is ready. The remainder of the process where receipts are accounted for is already in place and looked after by the book keeper.

 - Process for decisions on spending money. Trustees understanding and recommendation is that council is used as a venue for input and prioritizing. The info from council would then go to the finance committee to gather budget info and other details and then finally to the board for final go-ahead and signatures (since the board is legal responsible for financial issues and the book keeper and finance committee report to the board).

2. Decision making:
 - We have discussed decision making somewhat and would like to discuss more. We noted that although teams and council are places where decisions are made (depending on the mandate(s) within which the decision falls) it is the trustees mandate and duty to uphold the charter. It seems that it would be appropriate for decisions and policies, etc. to have a final step in the hands of the trustees that would be a double check for this. The idea is not for trustees to be a gate keeper (in fact STC probably would take care of any issues), but just to provide a final check point and also a place where these are gathered in one central place.

3. The trustees who have been responsible for financial duties are all retiring at the end of this term and we have some positions to fill. There is a need for someone to take care of bills, and other day to day running around. This could be the board treasurer, but since it is rather time consuming it may be more practical for this person to just report to the treasurer.
Additionally there is a need for a bookkeeper. This is a skilled position and if a volunteer does not surface, we will need to hire someone. The person does not need to be a board member, but will just need to report to the treasurer who sits on the board. We are seeking volunteers or the OKAY from council to hire someone. (Works out to about 10 hrs a month and requires knowledge of Simply Accounting and book keeping procedures).

4. AGM – planning is going well and you will soon see a call out for board nominations. Start thinking about those you might consider for this ☺

Next meeting Aug. 17th 3pm