

Commons Coordinating Council Notes

March 3rd 2015

Present: Rebecca Furnell, Virginia Hayes (co-facilitators), Alison Fitzgerald, Shelagh Huston, Heather Menzies, Kit Szanto, George Szanto, Charles Silva, Muriel Weins, Judith Roux, Sharon Arnell, Louise Amuir (notes for Trustee Team)

1. 20 minute discussion COUNCIL

What is the Purpose of Council?

Round: info sharing, direction to teams, cross team decisions, issues can be raised, open discussion, consensual behaviour, early warning system, modelling a commons ethos, 20 minute discussion very useful as well as team reports, enlarge the vision of the commons, promotes our evolution, where we are the whole which is greater than the parts, integration and synergising, practice being different, connect all the teams.

How are the goals achieved?

Round: show up, be respectful but be prepared to brave dissent, practise consensus, have conflict so that things don't go underground or people leave, probe for what we're saying, why we're saying and why others may have a different opinion, self-organized at the team level, invite new people and fold them in (time might be a problem, though), diversity of format (we're boring in the circle) so use social media or meeting in VFM parking lot, shake things up, freshen perspective, conscious awareness of maintaining tension. Clarity without rigidity, stability with the willingness to adapt and evolve. Keep juggling, love the heated discussions! Balance between fuzzy/clarity is important.

We need a blurb describing Council, so this might be a beginning for it? If someone wants to take this on for review at another council meeting, that would be great. Please add to or make suggestions. Teams? Anyone? Send suggestions to: gabriolacommonscouncil@gmail.com

Decision – Notes from Council go to website, via facilitator. If there is a team response required, facilitator will send to team. Becky will send out a notice to everyone who is getting minutes that we're doing this that way from now on.

2. REPORTS

Communication Team – Jinny reporting. Communication team asking people to update their mandates. Half the teams have done it. Hans returning next week, so please get them in so he can get them to the website with other updates & corrections. Changing the tag line from “A place for everyone” and getting a new logo? 10th anniversary might be a time to revisit and discuss. Teams please ask themselves how they feel about the tagline and if they have any strong feelings about a logo.

No set meetings – do most business by e.mail. when there is one, it will be announced.

See attachment I for full report

Teams invited to write lovely little articles for the Sounder, each taking a turn so we can have one per month.

Trustees – Alison reporting. Celebration party on March 21! Donation of juicer, donation from another anonymous donor toward expenses.

Next meeting – March 5 @ 2:30

CPR Team – Shelagh reporting. Next meeting March 12th 10-12 going along fine, dealing with stuff, having great conversations.

STC – Kit reporting Feb 28, Noted a scheduling conflict with rug hookers event and music festival event (Rebecca reported that the music festival venue has now been moved in light of this conflict). Veg oil will be inside GERTIE office. Need more discussion about whether we should be the home of GERTIE (referendum coming soon) BaseLine report now has lots of schoolchildren interested in contributing.

TAGS team Kit reporting – heavy traffic by arbutus tree not good, so GERTIE has changed routes due to new barriers. Contact Randy to include new trails on the GaLTT map. Easter egg hunt has left a lot of trash on the Commons in the past, so team is thinking of suggesting a reward system for bringing trash back at the end of the hunt. Kit will contact the appropriate person at the Rod and Gun Club. Next meeting is the Saturday workbee. Need signs. We will ask GaLTT if they will make the signs for new trails. Written up a brilliant mandate.

See attachment II for full report

Covenant Team – Deborah reporting

1. Focusing energetically on BaseLine Inventory. 25 people showed up to help plan the data collection over the next year. Take a form from the downstairs foyer table, go out on the land, observe, record and leave the completed form in the box in the foyer. Hoping to take a year to do this, roughly on solstice/equinox times. Planning group has been dubbed BIG = Baseline Inventory Group. Very important piece of work to have complete for the covenant.

Mar 15 next meeting: come all ye Citizen Scientists and look deeply into the land

2. Interface with Long Range Planning Team – stewardship to happen in perpetuity. Template needs to be ready for when we register the covenant

3. Draft 2(b) of the covenant is on the website; best to search to find it; it is in Archives at present. Names of potential Covenant Holders have been excised from the draft for now. Working on the new document.

Grantwriting Team – George reporting. Mandate done in 2 parts and is marvellously clear. Applied for matching grant from Nanaimo Foundation and received \$13,000. We have been sitting on \$20K unallocated donor money, so we can match the Nanaimo Foundation for septic field. Let's make it official! Matching Funds are coming out of those unallocated donor funds. Consensus.

Money also coming in from Bullfrog and the RDN for solar project (see Solar Project, below)

Muriel question. Is there a beehive here? Answer from Judith: Brenda Jaenkers used to keep bees here, but there weren't enough flowers for them. We could plant heather, lavender, etc. and get them to come back.

Project solar – Judith reporting. RDN matching the Bullfrog grant. Hydro has agreed that we can keep and use our analog metres for this. Cheque received for \$16,000 from Bullfrog. RDN matching funds coming. Next meeting 1pm Friday March 6

Farm team – Sharon reporting.

Sign ups for south and north garden allotments 1:30-3:30 March 7th

South Garden Spring Meeting 1-3pm April 12th.

Apple trees have been pruned, blueberries have been pruned. Replacing a couple of apple trees. Mar 7 proposing to take down fir trees by little field and west of the orchard. Those who care have been consulted. Branches will be chipped for mulch.

Mid Week Market meeting. 1:30-2:30 March 4

FMT Monday Mar 23 9:30am

Cook Book – Sharon reporting. Got some numbers \$600 or so to print 100 with colour, \$100 less for b&w. Put on the agenda for next time and Sharon is still collecting recipes.

3. Follow up from Feb Council

- a. Revisions to facilitator document – 2 sets of suggestions were received. The group worked through a draft of the document that included changes based on these suggestions. Attached (III) is a new version of the document with the changes made at this meeting. Please circulate to teams. This was approved as a working document.
- b. Reminder to send changes to team mandates for Jinny for website
- c. Waste veg oil storage - not discussed (lack of time)

4. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Thank you!!!! To Mary for having done the bookings! And to Gloria for taking it on!
- b. New facilitators needed –make yourself known!

5. Next meeting April 7th

Notes: Farm Team

20 minutes on Social Enterprise (Robbie)

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment I)

Communications Team Report to Council (Jinny Hayes)

1. Logo: The team discussed the first submissions of Norma Gauthier, who had met earlier with Richard and Jinny. Agreed that we are really not ready for graphic representations of the Commons yet. Also, a stumbling block is that Norma has requested payment for her work; the Commons policy had been explained to her, but we're not sure how that will work out in future. Designing a new logo is closely linked to a society's tagline or slogan.

2. Slogan/Tagline: The team brainstormed ideas for a replacement tagline. In businesses and societies, a logo may remain constant though the tagline changes from time to time. However, whether or not to establish a new tagline or slogan for the Commons has not been formally considered at Council. We are asking for this discussion at this meeting: "change or switch"?

3. Budget: A draft was OK'd by the team and sent to Deb Ferens for planning of the Commons 2015-2016 budget.

4. Website update: Hans is away and updates to the existing site did not get in to him before he left. The sub-group will continue to work and when the corrections are made, we will turn to changing the site to WordPress with its new look, etc.

5. Planning for Sounder articles: Suggested that teams be asked to generate one article each for a stockpile of articles of interest about the Commons. Then the "headline ideas" can be drawn out for the Communiqué and also posters for the Village Foods bulletin board. Suggested that we play up the 10th anniversary this year. Also, Derek at the *Sounder* has suggested we reawaken the "Commons Corner" in the paper.

II. Trails and Green Spaces Report (Kit Szanto)

March 3, 2015

The TAGS team have discussed at some length a suggestion by Tom Cameron, of GaLTT, supported by Rob Brockley, also a GaLTT member, that the Gertie buses avoid moving along the area close to the big Arbutus tree north-west of the Goat Barn, since the weight of a heavy vehicle could harm the young roots of the tree. The tree shows signs of stress already, not necessarily caused by Gertie, but this is a

particularly impressive tree on the Commons and we want to preserve it. I asked Bob Andrew to pass the request on to the Gertie drivers and by Saturday, Feb.21, the buses all were avoiding coming close to the tree. Our THANKS to the speed of Gertie drivers to comply with this request. We have piled logs up to indicate to all cars, do not come past this area, but have left an opening for bikes and pedestrians.

A second request has been suggested, about the Easter egg hunt. One of the results of TAGS working in the woods is that we keep finding plastic egg remains left over from past years' egg hunts each Saturday. One idea was to ask the gun club to hide empty plastic eggs and the kids could find them and bring them to a central location where the plastic eggs would be turned in for candy or whatever is usually inside the plastic eggs. This might solve the problem, we hope. Is this a possible idea? Who might contact the gun club, and if TAGS, whom should be contacted with this request?

TAGS will contact Randy Young of GaLTT and ask him to put several Commons trails on the GaLTT map: East/West connector (this is already on GaLTT's maps, as is the board walk down to the South Garden allotments); West side trail; "Cascara" trail (the one most used by the Camp Miriam work bees in the summer that connects with the west side trail near the Cascara tree); and our new "circle trail" - from the entry into the woods west of the labyrinth through a trail in the woods, coming out at the "rocky knoll" - i.e. where the Elder Eco Village was to be - then back along the west side trail, returning to the area west of the Timber Frame building and on to the Commons entry.

Next TAGS meeting - at the next Saturday work bee, March 7.

Attachment III: Responsibilities of Facilitators document with changes made at this Council meeting.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF FACILITATORS AT COMMONS COORDINATING COUNCIL

FACILITATION OF COUNCIL

- Council meetings are co-facilitated by two people. Each volunteers for six months, but terms cross each other's by three months, ie, one co-facilitator changes every three months.
- Each pair of co-facilitators works out how the roles will work for them
- Facilitators are responsive to Council.
- If one facilitator cannot attend a monthly meeting, an alternate is recruited.

RECRUITMENT OF FACILITATORS

- Is the responsibility of the Council
- Qualifications:
 - Familiarity with the Gabriola Commons and its functioning as well as the functioning of the Coordinating Council
 - Not required to be currently participating on a Commons team, project, or group
 - Willing to facilitate group decision-making using a consensus-based, egalitarian approach
 - Not necessary to have experience in facilitating; other facilitators with experience may offer guidance and support.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Plan the agenda for each monthly meeting

- Refer to Notes of past meeting for relevant items
- Continue the agenda format currently in use
- Meeting Notes are not formally approved at the next meeting but any corrections are made to the Notes before they are posted on the website, and/or corrections are noted in the next month's Notes.
- Ensure that recruitment of new facilitators is on the agenda when needed
- In advance of the monthly meeting:
 - Bring forward outstanding actions of teams or Council
 - Remind the Team responsible for taking the notes at the up-coming meeting; furnish template for Notes if needed
- Facilitate the meeting
 - Maintain a welcoming and positive atmosphere (e.g. introductions, chairs in a circle, etc)
 - Maintain respectful communication and behaviour and ensure that all have an opportunity to speak and be heard.
 - Keep track of time and agenda items; summarize decisions as necessary
- After the meeting:
 - Facilitate prompt writing of meeting notes and receipt by facilitators (eg. follow up with the note taker about a week after the meeting if notes have not been received).
 - Review Notes promptly and add any needed attachments
 - Distribute Notes and any additional materials as appropriate

Approved at March 2015 Coordinating Council as a working document.