

Commons Coordinating Council

Notes for November 3, 2015

Present: Facilitator – Muriel Wiens & John Pierce (Co-facilitators), Patrick Roux, Kit Szanto, George Szanto, Judith Roux, Alison Fitzgerald, Bob Andrew, Sharon Arnell, Debra Ferens, Jinny Hayes, Jim Ramsay, Steph Marrie (Note taker)

GERTIE PRESENTATION by Jim Ramsay

The GERTIE team continues to prepare for the referendum in March 2016, when Gabriolans will be asked to increase property taxes in order to support the continued operation of the GERTIE Community Bus on Gabriola. While the GERTIE Team presented an operating budget of \$140,000, the RDN will present a maximum budget in the referendum, which amounts to double this. This strategy purports to cover unforeseen costs, and will be reviewed annually.

A permanent location still needs to be found for GERTIE parking and office space, and Jim has requested continued use of the Commons. He mentioned that the ideal location would be the old Fire hall; however, it is being used for training purposes by the Volunteer Fire Dept., and there is an issue with the safety of the building in the event of an earthquake. The GERTIE Team will continue to pursue other locations, as even the Commons is not ideal. Concerns raised by Council attendees are as follows:

- Island Trust regulations may prevent an extended lease agreement, but this need to be investigated further
- Poor aesthetics in having 4 buses so visible on the property
- An office space for drivers is needed; can we commit to the current location (goat barn) indefinitely?
- Although unfounded, our insurance company has raised concerns in the past about the storage of the cooking oil required for GERTIE on the property. Once stored at GIRO, and moved to the Commons temporarily, this will again need to be checked out with CCCU Insurance.
- The Commons as sustained some damage, so GERTIE will need to include repair costs into the operating budget.
- The suggestion that GERTIE present a proposal of a 3year term for the use of the Commons was made. The proposal should indicate the understanding that GERTIE would continue to search for an alternate location, and that the intention was to move by the end of the 3year term. This proposal will be presented to the teams for consideration and comment. Jim will forward the proposal to Judith. *Please see proposal in Attachments Section.*

SPECIAL TOPIC (Deb for Maya, the new Treasurer): Allocation of Special Project Funds

Currently, \$11,896 remains available in the Special Projects Fund. Teams had been asked to consider projects that may want to initiate, along a requested budget.

CPR – none

Events Team – none

Communications Team – a request for a fireproof filing cabinet was requested for the safekeeping of archives, Trustee Reports, legal documents and donor information. \$850 was the requested amount.

Covenant Team – a request of \$600 to cover costs associated with Bio-mapping.

Infrastructure – the current projects facing this team will cost well beyond the scope of this budget, (eg, goat barn renovation, etc,) so Infrastructure will be looking to raise funds through grants.

Trails and Green Spaces – none

Share the Commons – none

Property Management – There are always improvements to the property that require significant funds. A new water system would be at the top of the list, costing approximately \$5,000.

Signage Project – the current, tentative quote for the signage package designed by the team is estimated at \$15,000. This is well beyond the scope of the Special Project Budget currently available. It was noted that \$2000 had originally been allocated for a Site Map, which has \$1914 remaining. Since the Site Map is part of the signage project, the name will be changed for that line in the accounts to Signage Project. This gives the Signage Team an immediate amount of \$1914 to work with, and fundraising will need to address the balance.

Equipment Shed – the Solar Panel Project covered the construction of this shed; however, funding was insufficient to include the sliding doors. \$1,000 was requested to complete this project.

Kitchen Project – an immediate need of \$4,000 is needed to replace a large piece of equipment, plus \$400 for the purchase of utensils. This amount may be covered by remaining funds from unspent matching funds awarded by the Nanaimo Foundation. An answer to whether we are free to use this unspent portion of their matched funds is expected soon. If yes, then all is covered; however, if not, the Kitchen Project would like to be considered a recipient for these funds. It was noted that the Kitchen Project had originally been granted \$25,000 from the Special Project Funds.

The projects that were then approved by consensus for funding are:

Filing cabinet.....	\$850
Covenant Team.....	\$600
New water system.....	\$5,000

Equipment shed doors.....	\$1,000
Total	\$7,450
Remaining Funds	\$4,436

The allocation of the remaining \$4,436 will be discussed at the Council meeting in December. Please alert all Teams and discuss further if necessary.

TEAM REPORTS

Farm Management Team (Sharon): Meeting held Oct.26, 2015

- Apple juicing has raised \$172.50 thus far; however, Christine is having problems collecting money from some folks who have used the service. A minimum payment up front will be initiated. The juicer is in need of repairs, so it has been disabled until this has been completed.
- The Farm team is diligently preparing to present agricultural data at the Covenant Team meeting on Nov.9, 15.
- The Midweek Market was a great success, and is now closed for the season. Planning for 2016 will begin in January.
- The team will be reinforcing the orchard fencing over the winter, to increase support for the netting. Cost will be about \$200.
- The Little Field has very poor soil, so if anyone knows of a source for free seaweed, manure, leaves, spoiled hay, etc., please forward contact info to the Farm Team.
- Kitchen garden – the garlic is in! Trying up to 6” deep this year.
- The Cook Book is ready and will be available at the Christmas Craft Fair, where the FMT will be fundraising in the Commons kitchen. Soups, chilli, sweets and quince jelly will also be available from the kitchen. Many of the recipes used will be from the cookbook. Get there early though, as only 100 copies will be available in time for Christmas.
- Next meeting – Nov.30th at 9 am.

Trustees (Alison):

The AGM was held on Sat., Oct.24th. Four new Trustees were elected: Maggie Moonie, K.Louise Vincent, Linda St.Claire, and George Szanto. We thanked the outgoing Trustees for their hard work and dedication. Good-bye to Debra Ferens, Judith Roux-McKay and Robbie Huston. Thanks are also extended to Nancy Heatherington-Pierce, who has submitted an article to the Sounder about the AGM at Derek’s request as he couldn’t make the meeting.

The Draft of the Trustee Mandate was reviewed, and article 3 has been removed. This article outlined a very ambitious goal for the Commons to liaise with other

community groups to create programs beneficial to Gabriolans. The draft will be posted on the Commons website.

Next meeting – Nov.12th at 2 pm.

Infrastructure (Judith): No Report

Trails & Green Spaces (Kit):

Meets every Saturday from 9am to noon. Activities range from shucking beans, pulling daphne to any ground keeping work set out by the Work bee plan.

Share the Commons: Meeting held Oct. 21. 2015

On Oct.17th Susan Yates gave members and visitors to the GROWLS event at Rollo Centre, a tour and basic introduction to the Commons. A short introductory talk about the bioregional zones of the Commons and Gabriola was followed by a walk through the designated trails. Using the extensive data collected by the bio-mapping folks, we explored the fauna and flora of the Commons. The trail walkers, including toddler Rosalie in a wagon, contributed many excellent questions and comments! Many thanks to Judith Roux for providing the bio-mapping summary on which the event was based.

STC is pleased to welcome Tsiporah Grignon to the team.

Next meeting: Wed., Nov.18, 15 at 10 am.

Property Management (Patrick):

The current contact person for Property Management is Mary Wilson. Patrick feels that Charles Silva would be willing to accept this role if asked. He has been a key player in most of the projects over the past year, is a very capable organizer for work bees and would be a knowledgeable and proficient contact person for emergencies. Jinny (as keeper of the Team Rep List) will ask Mary if she would like to relinquish the role of PM contact, and Patrick will check out the change with Charles.

The PMT seems to have adopted the cleaning duties into their already busy schedule. This includes bathrooms, floors, general cleaning, washing towels, and sometimes even dishes. The Commons has enlisted a paid cleaning person in the past, for \$50 per month. These contracts have not lasted, as the cleaners found the work too much for the compensation. It was suggested that this duty could be passed on monthly to each team. Deb Ferens will put together a list of duties, which will be passed on to teams to discuss the idea of sharing cleaning duties at the Commons. It was also mentioned that some renters are leaving rooms less than

optimum. Perhaps the rental agreement form could be reinstated, as it included details about cleaning requirements after an event. Jinny will check with Gloria about what prospective renters are currently receiving electronically when they book.

Conflict Prevention and Resolution (Muriel): This team has recently added three new members, all contributing formal counselling experience. CPR does not approach its role through counselling, however, as that would be considered disrespectful. There is one issue pending.

Covenant Team (George): Next meeting will be with the Farm Team, to discuss mapping criteria for agriculture on the Commons. A joint session with Gabriola StreamKeepers will be held Nov 10.

Next meeting Monday, Nov.23 at 2 pm.

Grant Writing Team (George): Will be meeting with a rep from the Nanaimo Foundation on Thursday Nov. 5. They would like to see the Kitchen and the attribution to their grant. The use of unspent, matched funds will be addressed then too, though a written request has been sent.

Long Range Planning (Deb): At its last meeting, the “Draft Planning Chart” was reviewed and updated in preparation for the Team’s Quarterly Report to Council and the AGM. That process introduced topics such as the Priority Review Workshop and the Goat Barn “incubation”, etc. The revised Draft Planning Chart has now posted on the wall in the Dining Room for everyone to review, and is available at:

gabriolacommons.ca/pdf/lrp-planchart15oct22-2.pdf

It was decided not to include the Woodworking Shop on the LRP Chart as it did not come up through any process involving a wide group of participants in the Commons, as has other projects. This assisted the Team to realize that it is time to have another Vision and Voices-type meeting. We had committed to hold such a workshop every five years and the last one was held in 2011. Discussed planning another such program next Spring. This five year planning cycle should be built on what we have rather than starting from base “0”. It was suggested that we might use the open space methodology again.

In preparation for this, a meeting to start the process will be held November 18 at 2.00 pm to discuss the future of the Goat Barn. At least one rep from each team is encouraged to attend; Deb will be letting teams know.

Next meeting November 27 at 2 pm.

Events Team: The next event will be the Christmas Craft Fair on Sat., Nov.21st from 10 am to 3 pm. Fundraising will take place through vendor fees, raffle baskets, by a Commons donation gift table and T- and sweat-shirt sales. A request has gone out to the teams and Commons community for donations to the gift table, help with running the Commons tables and event breakdown.

Attachment



Date: November 6, 2015
To: Commons Council
From: GERTIE Management Committee
Subject: GERTIE at the Commons

From the beginning of our pilot project in June 2013, the home base of GERTIE operations has been at the Commons. We are extremely grateful to the Commons for generously providing the necessary space and resources to enable GERTIE to mount and sustain a bus service for the Island during this trial period, which will end in May/June 2016.

As we prepare for the Referendum next February/March to obtain taxpayers' approval for a regular transit service for Gabriola, we are planning for the new operation and want to outline the approach we plan to take. Essentially, we see continuing with a very similar operation, and are pleased that it will be managed and operated entirely here on Gabriola.

We currently have a fleet of 4 buses, and do not see that number increasing in the foreseeable future. In addition to parking space for the buses, we need office space for use by the Coordinator and drivers. Storage for the waste vegetable oil is also needed.

For the longer term, an optimum facility would be a dedicated space with adjacent service bays to enable servicing and maintenance of the buses on-site. No such facility is currently available, and until and unless that situation changes we would like to continue operating on the Commons, either in the current manner, using the Goat Barn and adjacent areas for parking the buses, or at an alternative location on the Commons which would meet with approval at Council.

In the budget for the new operation, we have made provision for a token payment of \$1,000 to the Commons in lieu of rent for the year 2016/17.

We request that the Commons Council approve GERTIE continuing to occupy space at the Commons on a temporary basis for a period of up to three years from May/June 2016.

Jim Ramsay
(for) GERTIE Management Committee