

Commons Council December 4, 2018

Facilitators: Linda St Clair, Judith Roux. Notes: Louise Amuir for Process Team

Present: Patsy Ludwick, Heather Menzies, Deb Ferens, Bob Andrew, Allie Charron, Jinny Hayes, Marshall Mangan, K Louise Vincent, Maya Ruggles, Kim Kassasin, Dave Lightly, Diane Stretter, Claudia Brann,

Next Council meeting will be January 8, although it might not be in the living room.

Team Reports:

Finance Team – Deb Ferens. Next meeting 12:30 pm on December 17. Come and count money with the team! The Finance Team is a task force of the Trustee Team.

They are preparing a Financial Resilience and Health (may have that wrong?) Document to help guide us over the coming years.

Susie, a new team member, has created a new expense/cheque requisition form. It will be available on the website and in the back room. Due diligence is the aim.

“What are our eyes open to now that the mortgage is paid off? How will we raise other big funds to continue with projects?”

Kitchen Team – Maya Ruggles. Next meeting 5pm December 19. Potential water potability issue has stalled rentals in the kitchen. Awaiting UV bulb.

Learning Opportunities Team – Maya Ruggles. Next meeting 11-12:30 on December 17. Please come!

One focus is on FN awareness. Mary Wilson has been attending meetings as a representative of the Commons Learning Opp. Team. The research paper Intergenerational Land-based Learning for Reconciliation is available on request to Maya. Maya provided more detail at the November Council about this project and attached the letter of support that Mary and Maya composed on behalf of LOT. The research applicant is Mark Fettes from SFU. The main research partner is the Gabriola Elementary School, and the community groups named in the grant application to SSHRC are The Commons, GaLTT, From Truth to Reconciliation Committee, Gabriola Arts Council and the Museum.

Trustees – Allie Charron. Next meeting 2:30pm on December 11. See website for new trustee positions.

Trustees are supportive of moving Fall Fair in to the fall.

Danielle Artuso is the Trustee liaison with TAGS for moving the trail. They will have some help from the skateboarders relocating the trail and the Rick Cranston sign that connects the Commons and the Skate Park.

Emily is the new cleaner for the Farmhouse.

Trustees are planning their retreat for February.

Communication Team – Jinny Hayes. Continuing work on the logo. The suggestion last month was to pull in children’s art. Jinny has been in touch with Rose Boulton at the school for help. In the meantime, it would be great to have a brainstorm session about values. The logo will take a while!

Sign Team – Jinny Hayes. The second sign is up! Thanks to all and to Bob for his expertise. Way-finding signs still to come along with a big map by the shop.

Property Management Team – Bob Andrew. Next meeting TBD next week sometime. Water issue in the kitchen likely to be resolved next week. We have a dedicated water person, Nick Reid, to look after UV filters, pumps etc.

Parking lot entrance/exit now fixed. Keith Kloosterboer from MainRoad says it should last at least one year and up to 5.

A rental manager is still being sought.

Judith asked about snow removal and suggested we coordinate with GERTIE and PHC to have it be a shared responsibility.

Process Team – Dave Lightly. Next meeting probably 10am on January 2. We have room for a few more people. Jinny requested that Dave write a couple of sentences about what the team does for inclusion in her call for other participation at the Commons. Deb offered to send the vestigial document about safety and security on the Commons and Code of Conduct to the Process Team to work on.

Sharing the Commons – Heather Menzies. Before and after the last November 21 meeting, STC took in extensive commentary on the Cultivate proposal to have the festival on the Labour Day weekend next year. COUNCIL AFFIRMS: Cultivate Festival will be on Labour Day, Farm to Table will be September 7 and the Fall Fair will be September 15.

Wedding Approval Policy still under discussion. People concerned about over-taxing the property.

Doug McKnight will be the new liaison between STC and the Woodworking Shop Stewards.

Please see attached minutes from the meeting.

Further discussion: Trustees have a template for MOUs for use in these circumstances. Please use and have the Trustees sign off.

STC will appoint a liaison for Cultivate.

Kitchen should be involved with Farm To Table agreement.

Weddings also need MOUs

K Louise asked for a review of the liaison/MOU process for the various festivals.

Is the intention for the Woodworkers Shop Stewards (WWSS) to become a Commons team? Yes, and discussion with them will ensue. Judith will get in touch with Patrick. Deb asked if there is much use of the space and if so, how are costs associated with that being remitted to the Commons. Do we have rental agreements/arrangements? Apparently there hasn't been much use by the WWSS, mostly the PMT.

Covenant Team – K Louise Vincent. We have presented the document to the Trustees and GaLTT to review the position of Covenant Holder. The response was positive! There will be a new meeting in February.

The new draft of the Covenant will be posted on the web-site very soon and will be presented to Council in 2019.

Base-Line Report part of the Covenant details ALR parts (agricultural use), wild parts (almost half the property including forests and pond) and community-use parts (buildings, roads, parking lots), making it a highly unusual Covenant!

Farm Team – Judith Roux. Gardens have been put to bed, hoses drained..... We had a request from the Agi Co-op to work with Commons in Farmer's Markets. The Commons Mid-Week Market has been going for more than a year. Our zoning permits market use. We have been careful not to compete with the Agi Hall. The first meeting has happened. STC land-use form has been sent to them.

Question: Would they maintain their co-op status? Or be a team? How does it all fit? Delight was expressed that there are many ways for all kinds of fits to happen at the Commons – PHC, GERTIE, Poetry Gabriola, Tool Library are all different and all add to the richness of the Gabriola Community.

People for a Healthy Community – Claudia Brann. As the PHC Commons liaison person, she is looking forward to meeting with the Trustees to build up links between us. PHC is growing projects and people are expanding. Lease renewal is coming up. The PHC AGM has happened. For a list of board members please see their website: <http://www.phcgabriola.org/>

Tool Library – Patsy Ludwick. Having their AGM at 7pm on December 6 upstairs at the Commons and will have a new board as well. Coming up to MOU renewal with the Commons and would like to meet with the Trustee Team in the new year. ALL teams are invited to that meeting.

In the past, their budget was based on guesstimates and now they have a fuller understanding of actual expenses. Feeling a little trepidatious about their financial situation.

Most new members are young people.

PMT is one of the new members, as well. The Tool Library is looking forward to continuing to find ways to collaborate.

Gabriola Players – Marshall Mangan. Still getting oriented. Very interested in developing the Goat Barn into a rehearsal and performance space. It is potentially a very large project and GP is willing to put energy into writing funding proposals and helping out. Gabriola Players is used to renting from community groups, each of whom have their unique structures and are interested in how the Commons works.

Some discussion about safety issues, current planning of Performing Arts Centre, grant writing overlaps and legalities which resulted in:

Long Range Planning/Infrastructure mixed report – Judith Roux. There is a grant application being submitted through the RDN for the cistern proposal as discussed last Council meeting.

There is a meeting in the 2nd week of January with 6 or 7 theatre technical people to discuss some of the long range planning necessary for the Goat Barn Performing Arts Centre so as to proceed through the phases of development in a logical, useful, organized and economical way. After the Tech meeting, they will be having a further meeting with all interested groups.

Discussion: It is never too early to consider Stewardship and to establish a stewardship group.

Who is looking at the Goat Barn in its neonate state to assess current use/safety? We think it falls to PMY and Infrastructure.

Everyone is excited about the Goat Barn. If we looked at it from a 6 Hats perspective, what's bad about the idea?

20 Minute Discussion:

How do we meet and greet and get things done?

What are we about now that we've paid off the mortgage?

Excitement about the Covenant and Stewarding and communicating this to the community. Sustained commitment to land, potential to bring in a bunch of new energy, love the anarchy. There are all kinds of ways of joining together – teams, stand alone groups, ad hoc groups, we can all work together through common values and diversity.

Community-building, enunciating the vision.

Interesting discussions at lunch after work bees. The lunch alone is worth it, and the discussions alone are worth it. Put them together? You should come!

Love seeing PHC, Gabriola Players, Tool Library at Council. Would also love to see GERTIE and Poetry Gabriola.

Stewarding is more inclusive than sharing (which implies ownership) and management (which implies hierarchy).

Stewardship, once the Covenant is signed, will require a 3 year commitment. (I'd love it if someone who knows about this can elaborate)

It would be great if there was some consolidation. We're in a LOT of relationships. Want to take the time to get stewardship/governance right. How do we do this without slowing other groups down?

Important to communicate! Children's book on the covenant, Common's history, what we're doing. Get the school involved.

How are decisions made? Is there a hierarchy? More like spokes going inward/outward. Teams decide their stuff and then check to see if there is impact on other teams at Council.

Commons can help demonstrate that the community can honour the inherent conflict of living together in a way that takes all into account. We self-determine, not the market or the state.

Ideal opportunity for Commons/PHC to communicate with each other and with the community.

Trust the intent of those who are here.

What am I giving, rather than what am I getting.

Workbee lunches provide deeper, fuller conversations that percolate informally.

STC Minutes

Share the Commons

Meeting Nov. 21, '18

Present: Judith Roux, Doug McKnight, Kit Szanto, Heather Menzies & Patrick Olmstead
With Mitch Miyagawa, program director of GAC attending for part of the meeting

1. Seeking consensus on GAC's request to hold the 2019 Cultivate Festival on the Commons on the Labour Day Weekend, not mid-August.
 - It cannot happen at the same time as the Fall Fair. Because this would strain key facilities such as the Community Kitchen; because the set-up and logistics workload involved would likely exceed the capacity of both organizations to come up with the willing helpers to make all this happen. And because the Fall Fair is a signature event of the Commons calendar, and merits its own time slot. Plus, the cultural tone of both events are quite different.
 - At first there was reluctance to move the Fall Fair to a later date, though there was considerable support for this from emailed comments sent in after Judith R. sent out a magnificent synthesis of the points and issues involved. However, several factors, such as an existing precedent of it being held closer to "fall" (around Sept. 14 in fact), combined with an historical reminder that it used to be associated with the glee of getting the island back after the craziness of summer holidayers, tipped the scales.
 - This consensus emerged during the discussion with Mitch present, and while our session with him began with our stated preference that the Cultivate Festival be held in mid-August, by the end he was also told that, in the consensus that had emerged at this STC meeting, our team is prepared to recommend to the next Commons C. Council meeting (Dec. 4) accepting GAC's request to use the Commons over the Labour Day Weekend, with the Fall Fair being shifted (for next year at least) to a later date in Sept., probably Sunday, Sept. 15.
 -
2. Weddings on the Commons: The increasing frequency of requests to host wedding receptions at the Commons begs the question whether a "first come, first served" bookings policy is adequate. The discussion began with the suggestion for an additional policy statement to the effect that the Commons prioritizes public events, inclusive of the Gabriola community at large, over private ones, which might mean that private functions cannot guarantee a commitment earlier than x months (6?) prior to their event. A secondary policy might be to set a seasonal limit to the number of weddings that may be permitted, to ensure against straining the carrying capacity of the land and/or facilities.
This discussion was cut off before it could be fully engaged and a consensus reached, and will be resumed at the next meeting.
3. Wood-working shop: Patrick Olmstead updated the team that the workshop is being used, and used responsibly. He also asked that another contact person as steward for the workshop replace him. Doug McKnight agreed to be the steward/contact person.