

*October 12, 2017 Minutes*

## Gabriola Commons Foundation AGM

### **Present:**

Allie Charron, David Chorneyko, Deborah Ferens, Maggie Mooney, Linda St. Clair, George Szanto, K Louise Vincent, Patrick Roux, Judith Roux, Alison Fitzgerald, Bob Andrew, Sharron Pattison, Robbie Huston, Kit Szanto, John Peirce, Nancy Hetherington Peirce, Danielle Artuse

### **Agenda:**

Welcome and Introductions  
Minutes 2016 AGM  
Trustees Report  
BC Society Act  
Finances  
Election of Trustees  
Celebration  
Closing

### **Minutes:**

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

#### **Minutes 2016 AGM**

2016 AGM meeting minutes accepted by consensus.

#### **Trustee Report** by K. Louise Vincent, Trustee Co-chair

It's good to be here with everyone this evening. If there are newcomers a warm welcome to you. May this report serve as part of an introduction to the Commons.

Traditionally it is the trustee chair of the foundation that gives the annual report for a registered society and I'm happy to do this today. But any team at the Commons could share an overview of the year with you. In keeping with the governance model of team based process and a monthly council meeting this is a report determined to reflect the intersectionality so alive at the Gabriola Commons. Some talk about the governance model here as flat - i like to say it is lateral and inclusive but in truth it is circular and at any point one aspect of the Commons connects with another. This whole report could focus on examples of this dynamic exchange and knowledge sharing.

So I will begin by commenting on how this particular land is shared by so many in the community - for meetings, projects, service and sharing. There are the teams: Communications, Farm including the community gardens at north and south Commons and the Namaste gardens, Conflict Prevention & Resolution, Grant Writing, Infrastructure, Learning Opportunities, Long Range Planning, Property Management, Sharing the Commons, Trails and Green Spaces, Events, Kitchen Stewardship, Covenant

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and a Finance team. There are the community groups: People for a Healthy Community, Poetry Gabriola, the newly formed Tool Library, Gertie, the soon to be Lions storage, the Farm Market, Farm to Feast, Fall Fair, Fix it Fair, Christmas Fair, Food Workshops, dance, music, school groups and more. There is new signage, parking, the ongoing Saturday work bees, the exemplary model of stewardship by the kitchen and the property team. There are all kinds of meetings and manifesting I may have overlooked.

This year the long range planning team helped to clarify further future projects: the goat barn as a co-operative center, connected to the community dining hall and the completed, flourishing community kitchen. The timber frame building as well as water storage, solar energy and a viewing platform for the pond. So much gets done here. It's safe to say our cup runneth over.

This year the Trustees formed a new financial team that meets regularly to attend to all financial matters of the Commons Foundation, an electronic drop box has been set up for current legal and financial information, and archives, follow through with filing necessary papers for the New Societies Act as per legal requirements, integrating Ages last donation, reviewing all MOUS and the Rental Agreement, inviting younger adults to contribute their wisdom and energy while deepening a progressive stewardship model of governance and regular attendance and reporting at Council. We are very grateful (and sorry) to see George Szanto and Fay Weller fulfill their trustee terms - they have both contributed so very much. And continue to with other projects at the Commons.

Projects, governance process and over all increased community use has tipped the Commons into a transition time after a highly intense decade of development. With the progress of the mortgage, the time now to bring the Covenant forward, the continuing growth of interest groups at the Commons we are necessarily moving into new cycle. We are stepping from years of growth into a steadier stewardship model of governance in which we can strengthen as citizens as part of the resurgence of the global commons. So much has come to fruition. The need for review and realignment has come upon us. We are overdue in honouring so many individuals who have dedicated for many years unbelievable energy and wisdom to keeping the wheels of the Commons turning and the heart of its vision strong. It is a time as well to celebrate.

How we learn to excel in inclusivity and a community-based ethos of hospitality and reciprocity is up to all of us. As a place of experimentation and governance outside the traditional model of hierarchical management this is a long conversation and one we hope you will continue to participate in. How to continue these conversations, steward this land and the possibilities it invites in the next decade will highlight the priorities in 2018.

The Gabriola Commons is part of a larger global commons movement. This is what we hope to keep most in sight, to be a model for future commons and keep in perpetuity this land as an example of stewardship and sharing. The preamble in the Covenant reads as such:

The Gabriola Commons binds the land and the people in a vibrant, affirmative and synergetic relationship. The land provides gifts of nature and is the source of diversity,

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abundance and well-being. The integrity of the land is sustaining and restores in people purpose, belonging and commitment.

The land anchors the community in local geography, history and a set of traditions. The community cares for and stewards the land with deep knowledge, imagination and responsibility so its living systems can flourish.

The Gabriola Commons is an entrusted and emergent commonwealth passed on in perpetuity to future generations. It is centred in a global commons resurgence that offers an ethics of sufficiency, community self-determination, ecological resilience, social equity and cultural connection to a beloved landscape.

To explore what stewardship -from Dream to Design- really can mean here at the Commons on Gabriola Island is a wonderful endeavour. It is very significant to our times. I'm grateful to be part of it.

So please take some time to step back and consider the growing history of the Commons, read up on the council minutes, the last draft of the Covenant soon to be posted, keep observant of the efforts of the many dedicated stewards, the salient particulars of all the teams. But most important we invite you take a walk and rest inside a reality that is successfully growing another way of innovating and flourishing. There is magic afoot here if you look closely.

Thank you to all for your outstanding contributions to the Gabriola Commons. Exciting times ahead.

## **Finances**

- Deb went through the Income Statement and Balance Sheet. There was some discussion, which was clarification of specific items.
- Financial report accepted by consensus

## **BC Society Act**

- We have complied with the requirement from new BC Society Act, to refile our bylaws.
- We still need to move unalterable clauses from our Constitution to our Bylaws. This will be done in the near future.
- Membership in the Society
  - Prior to 2014, all Gabriolans were members.
  - Currently 2-5 in our Bylaws state who is a member.
  - There is a mistake in the Field Guide, as to who is a member.
  - Some discussion around membership.

## **Election of Trustees**

- Nomination Committee: George Szanto and Allie Charron
- Nomination are Bob Andrew and Danielle Artuse
  - Introductions of Bob Andrew and Danielle Artuse
- Bob Andrew and Danielle Artuse New Trustees by acclamation and consensus.

## **Celebration** by Linda St. Clair

In the beginning there was a dream... for many years folks on Gabriola looked longingly at the Goat Farm as a potential place to create a community place that integrated land and people and other living things together.

This dream started to become a reality in May 2005 when AGES with Jay Mussell's legacy and made a down payment and monthly mortgage payments to the newly formed Gabriola Commons. This initial gift was valued at around \$220,000... which included two years worth of monthly payments too.

By 2010 the Gabriola Commons (Foundation) legally formed had a mortgage of \$490,000 due in 25 years (interest around \$294,000)... 2035

But lo and behold by 2014 about \$256,000 was paid off with large donations (some anonymous, and a legacy and monthly donors adding another \$175,000 over 7 years.

Then this fall with \$28,000 to go... another generous anonymous donor contributed all we needed to become debt free with a savings of \$65,000 in interest.

Today and in the near future we will celebrate this accomplishment... the results of sharing in Common our time, our talents and our treasure.

Every hour spent working on getting the buildings repaired and renovated and even built; Every dollar given to pay off the mortgage and buy equipment and supplies. Every idea shared and tried to expand the uses and steward this place "where land and people meet" ALL Contributed to this moment in time... where we can say we are free from the mortgage... free at last.

Of course we need to gather to explore how this legacy lives on and forms it takes and how important it is for each of us to contribute the time, talent and treasure that has made today possible. But for now let us toast ourselves here today, those friends who are absent and those we don't even know we have as friends and fellow "commoners"

**Closing** at 20:30