

Commons Council Meeting Notes

Tuesday September 6, 2022

Facilitator: Bob Andrew (for the Design Group)

Notes: Mary Wilson (for Finance Team)

Those attending: Jinny Hayes, Deb Ferens, Patrick Roux, Mary Wilson, Robbie Huston, Joyce Lee, Judith Roux, Bob Martin, Brenda Fowler

1. **Welcome.** Bob Andrew identified the need for brevity at tonight's meeting.
2. **Acknowledgement:** Deb F read four points from the "health" section of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, reminding us:
 - a. The current state of aboriginal people is a result of actions of various levels of government
 - b. Measurable goals are needed to close gaps between indigenous people and the broader population
 - c. The federal government just respect the rights and needs of off-reserve people, and
 - d. Sustainable funding is needed for new and existing aboriginal healing centres.
3. 20 minute Discussion: Moved to follow Team Reports
4. **Team Reports**
 - a. **Trustees (Deb)**
 - CAFT/regular donors are our important core group
 - Focusing on insurance; investigating options for 2022/23, and in the longer term considering the issue of risk. Longest term, possibility of a local insurance coop with the investment coop.Noteworthy: insurance is around half our operating budget.
Q: yes, same liability coverage is in place
 - b. **Kitchen (Patrick)**
 - Propane refilled (\$1060.)
 - First workshop by Gabriola Good Vibrations was held in August.
 - PHC School Lunch program restarting this week; Agi Coop use of kitchen for market prep continues.
 - c. **Finance (Mary)**
 - Year-end work complete. Process issues: Documenting the year-end/transfer to accountant process to make it more stream-lined for next and subsequent years; and working towards a more robust budgeting process, involving setting of Commons-wide priorities.
 - Completing the team budgeting process spearheaded by Maya, and a Commons-wide review process, ideally beginning well prior to year-end, ie, more preparation up-front in future.
 - d. **Farm Team (Judith)**

Harvest season. Apples are being saved to sell at the Fall Fair by request of the fair organizing committee.

- e. **PHC (Brenda F)**
- Working on strategic planning.
 - Planning to move two of the three weekly seniors' lunches: one to Christ Church, one to the Fellowship Church, one outside at the Commons; School lunch program starts in 2 weeks.
 - Generator replacement details are being discussed with the Commons (landlord)
 - Grocery pickups and food recovery programs still happening
- f. **South Gardens (Brenda Joy sent regrets & a written report; presented by Jinny)**
SCG Annual General Meeting Saturday, 27 August 2022
- Two new members were elected to the SCG Coordinating Committee (Sue Chopin and Patti Mertz) making a total of 9 committee members.
 - The membership voted to maintain the current process of locking the SCG garden as no thefts or vandalism took place in 2022. This will be re-visited at the 2023 AGM.
 - The SCG would like a table at the 2022 Fall Fair on 18 Sept to sell poppy seed packages (donated by SCG Ellen Stewart) as a Commons fund raiser and to hold 2022/2023 SCG plot registration. Doug Scott is the point of contact. Several SCG members have volunteered to help.
 - Topics discussed included 2023 Sweet Pea Program beneficiaries, SCG website, weed control in the garden, managing vacant plots, SCG volunteerism, 3/5/10 year dreams.
1. SCG Website – Brenda Joy is now the point of contact for this project. Doug Scott has volunteered to assist. She will work with the Commons Communications Team to determine the best approach to integrate this content with the Commons website. Once the site or content is in place, the next step is to establish how best to keep the content current and interesting to members and the community. Brenda is away until 1 October and plans to connect with Jinny Hayes on her return to Gabriola.
 2. SCG parking lot project - Project dates have been moved to end Sept. Dr Bob Rooks will let Doug Scott know when he is able to start the work.
- Q: No thefts in the gardens this year; they intend to keep locking the gardens.

Trails and Green Spaces (written report from Heather Menzies; Bob A reporting)

- This is only a report on some activity that's been going on around the Labyrinth, where I've been putting some time and energy in recent months, upgrading stones and mowing the grass among them and along the paths. (A lot of other activity has been going on to help maintain the paths through the woods.)
- Two new developments to report: First, Amy Block who leads a Monday morning meditation walk through the labyrinth for guests who come to the PHC, has committed to help maintain the labyrinth. We met to discuss how this could be done on the Monday, and she's talking with Brenda Fowler at PHC about getting access to a small lawnmower to keep down the grass along the main pathways of the labyrinth. (This leaves me with less work using the Commons' weed-wacker mower, for trimming in and around the stones.)
- The second development is that Bob Martin, who has been helping to turn the Kitchen Garden into a thing of beauty and plenty this year) is planning an End of Summer event for the Equinox Sept. 21 at the labyrinth. We're planning to focus work bee efforts on the preceding Saturday toward prepping the space. Amy Block will invite her meditation group to join us that day too.
- Joyce noted that she feels restricted and uncomfortable due to the presence of male campers in the forested area. Judith and Bob reported that in the past we have posted a note on tents; noting that camping is not allowed on the property. In the past there was a time when the

RCMP were called in response to a camper who refused to leave.

g. **Covenant team (Deb)**

- Requested application (for covenant holder) submitted The Land Conservancy (TLC) in Victoria, though talks and field trips have been ongoing over years.
- Team is working on “what if they say no” and do have a short list of alternate covenant holders; Gabriola Commons Society (currently dormant) could potentially be re-purposed to hold covenants including this one; another covenant holder on Gabriola; there are other organizations interested in land trust acquisitions.
- The covenant will ultimately be registered on the Title and provides another layer of protection for the property (in addition to the ALR). Getting Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) approval to put a covenant on the Commons was huge.

h. **Communications (Jinny)**

- Weekly comment planned for Sounder; teams are requested to email info on events and activities to communications@gabriolacommons.ca.
 - Working on a First Nations acknowledgement to go on the website.
 - Concerns with Council Notes; note taking is falling to a few people, since many people have more than one role; should we think out of the box a bit about Council Notes, eg, do we need Notes of this detail? Could we record instead? Suggestion: Add the idea of how we should record notes from the meetings as a possible twenty minute discussion.
- Q: Will we revisit the logo; A: yes; teams have already been asked for comment, but nothing has been received yet.
- Q: Commons FaceBook page has 700-800 followers

i. **Property Stewardship (Bob)**

- Met to discuss the propane tank(s) for the propane tanks required for the new PHC generator referred to Trustees.
- Discussed timberframe budget.
- Also discussed prioritization plan for deciding about projects: Is it dangerous? Is it needed to function? Is it deteriorating rapidly and thus would need to go higher or lower on the list? A current priority is possible leaks in the house roof; it is felt that the leaks have been fixed, but we will have to wait and see.
- Timberframe: new door has been added, with a lock. Need to cover electrical both inside and outside, block of opening to nonexistent deck and various other securing things.
- The south wall of the workshop also needs urgent attention; it has creatures living in it. Team wants to make a list of ongoing maintenance issues to aid with setting priorities.

5. **UN International UN Day of Peace/End of Summer Event (Bob Martin)**

- September 21
- The event is planned to mark both the Day of Peace and the Equinox and to draw more, maybe different people to the Commons. Bob is paying for advertising, lighting and other costs; “It’s a giving”.
- RCMP have been informed
- Noise will be contained to avoid disturbing the neighbours.

6. **Items from Previous Council**

- a. **South Gardens Parking Project**
- Reviewed donation-of-labour-and-materials approach (exchange of cheques); likely will come from South Gardens project (for the service); if donator supplies materials, we will write it up as an “in kind” donation for that portion.
 - Budget will need to be documented prior to the project being done. Finance will request a copy of the Letter of Agreement from South Gardens.
 - Covenant team remains uncomfortable with the process, which seemed backwards; Covenant Team would have preferred a proposal and review first prior to the team discussion.
 - Noted that processes for how affiliate partners contribute to the Commons is not transparent. Noted that there seems to be a lot of tension around these issues; and that we need to find a way to discuss these possibilities as a Commons; could be a 20-Minute Discussion
- b. **Allocations Approvals (previously circulated)**
- \$2000 from Capital Funds to the Timber rame project; 1\$700 from the Trustees to Communications for weekly Sounder communications.
- No objections raised so we shall proceed.
 - Noted that we don’t always follow the Field Guide guidelines on the paying/ not paying for tasks done on the Commons; it is noted that sometimes things paid for are tasks that we (legally/ insurance-wise) cannot do. See 2021 Field Guide Policy: Policy: Volunteer Versus Paid Work, p.38 at <https://www.gabriolacommons.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/2021-04-Field-Guide.pdf>
7. **20-Minute Discussion: Report on Cultivate Festival**
- Commons Liaisons and evaluation group: Carol Fergusson, Larry Wolsky, Patrick, Deb, Heather, Mary

Met on July 7, 2022 4:30pm Timberframe – upstairs

MOU REVIEW GENERAL COMMENTS

Bob - appreciated GACs notable respect for the Commons and the grounds.

Carol – noted how smooth everything went generally

Heather – Kitchen was a moving target;

Mary – importance of regulated, VIHA approved kitchen and its workings

Patrick – Suggestion that GAC and the Commons explore joint Kitchen/Food operation for next year.

Larry – missed some opportunities to share information about the Commons with vendors & visitors

Everyone noted how great the layout was; created a “cultural commons” (Heather)

Amazing weekend of music, theatre, art, food, kids, fun

Signage was remarkable.

Workbees don’t all have to be in June.

Need for increased regular and consistent updates to Council from Liaison Group and reporting on the progress of MOU from Trustees.

Deb – suggested that Liaison group refer to Schedule A Communications as a process to record/track the actions/issues specific with Commons Teams on the ground for the Liaison meeting minutes/notes. Some will be of very little activity; others will be more detailed.

- Recommended that the Trustee contact for the MOU share the first draft template in a MS Word document and that the Track Change feature be used by each party to create the subsequent drafts, etc.

Dates for 2023 Cultivate: Fri June 30 to Sun July 2 (pencil in dates with bookings)

General Comments:

- Overall, a fabulous event
- Community Kitchen arrangements worked out in the end
- Need more ongoing updates from Liaisons to Council and teams
- Workbees could be better coordinated and need not be concentrated right before the event
- Vendors: need clarification on gray water disposal
- Wifi was spotty; when should it go on at the Commons, and when off?
- Liaison team might include a Trustee in future and someone from STC; need more involvement of Arts Council Team Leaders next year.
- Timelines were not always adhered to.
- Liaison group needs Terms of Reference.
- Will be a new Liaison group next year: It's a big job. Thanks to all four!

SEE ATTACHED: REVIEW PAGE 4 from the MOU for further specific details to be included in the next MOU. This is just the first of the reviews, more details will be added upon further review.

8. **Next Council** facilitation: Finance Team
ACTION: Mary will ask the team members
9. **Appreciations**
 - Thanks to the trustees for all the work they do.
 - Thanks to Bob A for facilitating three times
10. **Next 20 minute discussion:** PHC presentation on the PHC five year plan
11. **Closing**

ATTACHMENT to Cultivate Festival Report Item

MOU: Page 4

Review:

A review of this agreement will occur between the GCF and the GAC within 30 days of the end of the 2022 Festival to capture ideas for improvement while memories are fresh. The contact people for GCF **will be determined**. The contact people for GAC will be the current Executive Director and the Team Leaders. *See Revisions from Annual Reviews attached*

MOU REVIEW

Communications and Contact

- ADD: Role/terms of reference for Commons-GAC Liaison Team
- ADD: Terms of Reference for Workbees: purpose & clarity, sufficient & adequate timelines/deadlines, advance notice of dates, list of things to do, equipment supplied/required/number of people, etc.

Infrastructure and Use

- ADD: Community Kitchen with its specific requirements clearly referenced such as VIHA, permits, health & safety, water access and safety features, access restrictions & permissions, orientation, training, paper work;
- Vendors grey water waste disposal –clarify if this can be permitted.
- wording suggested: “If Community Kitchen is used the following requirements must be met” including timelines and follow up.
- ADD: Workbees are required; Liaison Group to work out details of workbees.
- Recognition that power & water, other infrastructure on the Commons are limited – but working in best practice with what we’ve got
- More detail about sufficient power. Commons generator may not provide enough if there were power loss during the Festival
- Clarify Cultivate WIFI needs during time of the Festival. WIFI didn’t boost well enough and was spotty throughout the Festival. GAC (Carol) will explore some other options eg Mobile units

Safety

Financial Costs and Insurance

Schedules

A. Communications Schedule

B. Schedule B : Cultivate Setup and Site Plan

- Identify set up needs and timelines with how/when completed.

C. Cultivate Safety Plan

D. Schedule of Materials

- Storage and log of GAC materials & equipment before, during and after Festival.
- clarify non monetary benefits
- encourage learning opportunities about the Commons with vendors and visitors

ADD separate Kitchen Schedule