

Meeting Notes

June 6, 2023 at the commons farmhouse

C O M M O N S C O U N C I L

Participation

Deb Ferens, Heather Menzies, Judith Roux, Shelagh Huston, Patrick Roux, Kim Kassasian, David Skinner, Don Smardon, Patrick Colvin / facilitation & notes Cameron Murray

Acknowledgement

Thithma'

Heather, Deb and Cameron enjoyed an Oceans Day celebration, on June 4, as presented by members of *Snueymuxw* First Nation, at *Thithma'* on Degnen Bay.

Discussion

Governance

Deb presented a summary of ideas as prepared by the governance group for commons team review. Peer governance is the approach advocated. And a new council team is recommended to enable council continuity, communication, facilitation and notes.

The governance review document is enclosed.

Reports

Stewardship

Don presented a summary of projects that the property stewardship team is engaged with. Vancouver Island Health Authority has requested an *emergency response and contingency plan* for the use of use of potable water. Stewardship is preparing preliminary ideas for review.

The commons stewardship report is enclosed.

Commons Kitchen

Patrick recommended the stewardship *water contingency plan* also include records of water testing and guidelines for protocols for the commons kitchen. A new generator can also be included in the *water plan*, to ensure potable water during power failures.

The commons kitchen report is enclosed.

Trustees

Deb introduced the trustee report. Commons financial year end books are in preparation by Mary and Suzi. Commons memoranda of understanding have been renewed with Gabriola Arts Council, Gabriola Tool Library and Gabriola Lions. Trustees are also reviewing changes to the Societies Act, coordinating with neighbours on clean up of the abandoned encampment. Commons north garden coordinations are in preparation and the trustee annual retreat is scheduled for June 14.

The commons trustee report is enclosed.

Process

Dave Lightly prepared a process team report for council, presented by Heather. The intention of the notes is to serve as a starter for team discussion. And the approach is toward finding *agreement*, rather than setting a *code of conduct*.

The commons process team report is enclosed.

June 6, 2023 (Second presentation to Council)

From: Governance Review Group (Commons Review Sessions Jan 2023)

To: Commons Team. For Review and Comments (for the July 4 Council Meeting)

The Governance Review Group is proposing the following governance structure actions for team consideration and comments:

- Create a Commons Peer Governance Document (see * below)
- Create a Council Team to attend to Council needs such as facilitation, note taking, distributing notes, sending Council notices, and caretaking pertinent reference documents
- Change the Council agenda format to create a more dynamic sharing of information centered around themes such as a) ecological values/needs of the land; b) agricultural/ farming/ gardening activities and values ; c) public/ community spaces - multipurpose uses of the land.
- Gather, review and update if necessary, Relevant Documents (eg, Field Guide, Zoning Bylaws, GCF Constitution & Bylaws, etc.)

Timeline: Upon agreement, implement changes gently and mindfully over a four to six month period. Longer if necessary.

Costs: Minimal (paper, copying, communication)

***Gabriola Commons: Peer Governance Document**

This Peer Governance document upholds guidelines and agreements that promote caring for the land and the people: ecology, agriculture, the people who steward it directly and the Gabriola community which benefits from the green spaces and places to gather.

1. Background

The Gabriola Commons:

- Is part of a global commons and is, “a broad set of resources, natural and cultural, that are shared by many people” (International Association for the Study of the Commons).
- Was established in 2005 and is a 26 acre property located in the village center containing a mature forest, a wetland, agricultural values, facilities and green spaces for community benefit.
- “Is a unique and distinct property on Gabriola Island. Managed as a community commons by a community-based, volunteer association, it is a place where sustainability, community, and agriculture meet. The Commons is intended to exist in perpetuity for the benefit of the community, a community legacy serving community needs” (GI LTC Bylaw No. 258 – Gabriola Official Community Plan).
- Is on the traditional, unceded territory of the Snuneymeux First Nations.
- Is part of a woven, interconnected Earth-system, vital for life for all living beings and community, dependent on a stable and resilient planet.

2. Peer Governance

- works *within* the Commons, is “order without law” (Bollier & Helfrich, p.119). It is a dialectic between culture and structure.

- has clear organizational forms and regularities.
- articulates the relationships and interconnectedness among ecological sustainability, agriculture practices and the people who work and play on the Commons.
- includes clear statements about ethics, values and agreements (such as a Code of conduct).
- outlines how to care for the land, the people, the environment
- establishes boundaries [work, behaviour, being in relation]
- articulates structures and processes of shared decision-making.
- defines shared intentions (such as organic food production, control of invasive species).
- has a process for naming and resolving differences and accountability for conflict resolution and redress of grievances
- has a process of monitoring and evaluation of the stewardship of the land

3. Principles and Agreements

- Contributing Freely: individual contributions depend first and foremost on what people can truly give.
- Valuing Diversity: drawing upon everyone's experiences and motivations and respecting the individuality of diverse members while forging an ethic of solidarity.
- Cultivating shared purpose and values: through collective reflection, traditions, celebrations and participation in all kinds of activities.
- Authentic participation: Individuals contribute by doing something they truly enjoy; the most helpful questions are "what do we have" and "what is possible with what is available here and now" (Bollier & Helfrich, p. xx).
- Practicing gentle reciprocity; what matters is a feeling of fairness.
- Participative Decision Making: decision making processes encourage open discussion and actively elicit people's deeper, often unstated, concerns (Bollier & Helfrich, pp. 139-140).
- Preserving relationships in addressing conflicts; there is an honest transparent reckoning of conflict or violation, in a spirit of respect and concern for all the people involved.
- Meaningful togetherness: meeting regularly, sharing deeply, celebrating successes, candidly assessing failures.
- Trusting the deep wisdom of situated knowledge: observing and interacting with the land to creatively respond to change and experiences on the land.
- Deepening communication with nature: Interacting with nature as consciously helpful protectors and stewards.

Beloved Community:

From KL: The CPTR Director of Diversity, Equity and Belonging, Shirley Strong, (California Institute of Integral Studies & Center for Psychedelic Therapies and Research), defines Beloved Community as *an inclusive, interrelated consciousness based on love, justice, responsibility, shared power, and a deep respect for all people, places and things that radically transforms individuals and restructures institutions.*

**Property Stewardship Team
Report to Council
2023 06 06**

Hedge:- Needs 40 more wheelbarrow loads of mulch. Volunteers please!

Picnic Tables:- Financed by a grant from Nesters. We assembled three last Saturday. They are now ready for use. Thanks to Leanne, Rainbow, Kim and Don.

We'd like to mark them as Commons property. Does anyone have, or know someone who has, a wood burning craft tool, and would lend it to us, or even better, do the marking themselves?

Cob wall:- Kim has started to fill a missing chunk of the wall.

Campers' Garbage Dump:- Not much change. Garbage (i.e. stolen stuff) is still there. Trustees are discussing next steps.

Boardwalk:- GaLTT has agreed to cut back the bush.

Watering the ornamental plants - Deb has taken this on

Potable Water on the Commons:- We have just completed our Emergency Response Plan for this year (2023). This is required to be done every year. Our last filing was 2016.

However, the BC Government now requires a new and different plan called The Emergency Response and Contingency Plan. They want to know what we will do if our source of drinking water fails. How will we supply water to our users? The failure could be contamination, electrical/plumbing failure, or lack of water due to drought.

We are working on a strategy to meet these new requirements. It will likely lead to some changes in infrastructure which will be costly. Please keep in mind that we are at the very beginning of this process and will, eventually, require input from all teams.

Kitchen Report

Hi all

The kitchen is in good functioning order.

I just received from Mary the ongoing discussion that booking has with the Agi for the wednesday market.

I will meet with Robby soon.

We had a meeting with Health Gill Lucko and gave a list of produce authorised without permits.

She confirms the need for a permit for vendors ect.

She mentioned that the well was not secure (I did it but we need a better lock to make it inaccessible)

She asked about the filters(when are they changed) and for a report from Nicolas about which Kitchen is tested.

Can somebody pass the information to the Kitchen steward Please.

The toilet for the kitchen could be closed for the public especially for events under 50 people Since we now have a toilet outside.

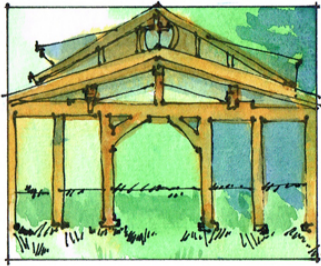
No need for portable toilets for events under 50 people; we actually save \$1500 for six months.

Fire suppressant for kitchen and fire extinguishers inspected but the report still marks the deficiencies of a GFI to be installed

It was installed a year ago after the last inspection.

And last the kitchen is going to change the battery of the generator you will understand that the water even in a power outage is essential for the Commons and the Commons Kitchen also power is for the food in the fridge and the frizers (It would be good to have a build in generator lets include that in a bigger plan).

Patrick



June 6, 2023

T R U S T E E R E P O R T

As submitted by Deb Ferens

1. Finance: The year end books are being prepared by Mary and Suzi..
The plan is to deliver them to the Accountant possibly before the end of June.
2. Several MOUs have been reviewed, updated and signed for 2023-2024:
GAC Tent, Gabriola Tool Library, Gabriola Lions portable,
Reminder that there should be information on the Commons website about the MOUs and with whom the Commons has an MOU.
The actual MOUs are not linked as they do include personal signatures.
The MOUs are available to review upon request.
3. The Commons Foundation has been notified that there are new changes to the Society Act and we will be following through with compliance to the legislation.
4. Garbage dump/abandoned encampment: The Trustees have been in contact with the RCMP and the Fire Department as well as the Folklife Village site manager.
The Trustees will contact a Gabriola disposal company for clean up of the site.
5. North Garden: As there is no current coordinator for the garden to collect fees, etc (this was most recently done by Patrick Roux and Neil Ballash before him - many thanks to both of them), the Trustees will work to find a new North Garden coordinator.
6. The Trustees are planning their annual retreat for June 14.

Commons Process Team

Discussion Starter notes

Toward a Commons "agreement" on respectful behaviour & accountability for this.

Part I: Toward articulating an 'agreement' (our version of a code of conduct)

The Commons functions on the basis of respectful, caring relations with each other and including with the land. Anyone participating in the Commons or coming onto the land agrees to do so on these terms. If any behaviour breaks or violates this agreement, the person is understood to be breaking off relations with the Commons unless restorative action is taken.

Premises and principles associated with this:

- 1) Decision making on the commons is by Consensus (see the Field guide on the process for this)
- 2) Alternative points of view are valued, criticismfeedback encouraged, along with disagreements and differing opinions -- in a context of safety, dignity and protectivenessrespect.
- 3) All participants in the Commons share responsibility for maintaining an environment that is kind, courteous and respectful. (see Palette People's statement, on maintaining a civil environment.)

Thus:

Commitment to mutual respect; The Commons is a place where everyone can expect to be treated with dignity and respect.

Commitment to solving emerging problems and learning good communication skills

No behaviour that causes harm to others

No intimidation or abusive behaviour

Part II: Toward addressing the need for behavioural accountability and conflict-resolution in a Commons Agreement:

A: Abusive behaviour protocols:

- 1) Apology
- 2) Warning
- 3) Consequences as per draft statement above.

B: Conflict resolution protocols:

- 1) Attempt to resolve conflict between/amongst themselves
- 2) Mediation (Process team)
- 3) Outside mediation

Questions: Who will "hold" the Agreements (Trustees?)

Who will implement the protocols? (Process Team under the Trustees?)

What are the consequences of each level of the protocols?