Commons Coordinating Council (CCC)

Notes of Meeting of 3 September 2024

Facilitator: Deb Ferens; Recorder: Jinny Hayes

Present: Bob Andrew, Betty Kehler, Maureen Wild, Brenda Joy, Heather Menzies, David Lightly, Greg Blee, Bobbi Rose O'Brien, Brent O'Malley.

Next CCC meeting: October 1st, 2024 at 7pm Farmhouse
Facilitator: Deb Ferens, Note Taker: Jinny Hayes
Written Reports to: council@gabriolacommons.ca
Meeting Format: Three value areas: ecological, agricultural & community.

1) **Welcome and Introductions** (Deb)
   • Council Stewards are very near the end of their one-year trail in the facilitation and note-taking roles, so are calling for others to step forward. A signup sheet was circulated.
   • Betty brought freeze dried fruit treats (yummy!) and is selling Commons pressed apple juice 1.8 L for $5.

2) **Land Acknowledgement** (Deb)
   • Deb read the proposed entry for the Commons website (previously circulated to team reps).
   • Brenda attended an acknowledgement workshop at the Museum, where it was proposed that one should include a statement of support for reconciliation.
   • "Stewardship" has a more Euro mind-set, whereas FN learned from the land.
   • There's an implied "stepping up", moving towards helping to right wrongs.
   • Settlers: Not quickly done; be authentic; not all are ready; better not to do an acknowledgement than be inauthentic.

3) **Team Reports**

1. Community Kitchen – Brent O'Malley (written report submitted)
Report covers the month of August 2024.
• The kitchen has seen regular use this summer from GAC, the Grub Huggers, and individual users.
• The damage to the ceiling from the water leak last January has finally been repaired by the insurance company.
• We have received $5000 from the RDN that is earmarked for the kitchen electrical upgrade. We still need substantially ($15k+) more than this before we begin work.
• Heather Menzies is working on a grant that might bring in some money for the Community Kitchen
• The freezer has reached capacity and there is food that has been there for more than a year. A purge is coming if the food is not claimed!
Next meeting: We have been meeting sporadically during the summer months but do communicate via email for pressing matters. Brent continues to monitor the calendar and emails.

2. Fall Fair – Bobbi O'Brien (written report submitted)
   • Event planning coming along well, though a bit behind: Food (Grub Huggers), Music, events largely sorted; doing a dog show.
   • Promotions hitting a snag by not being able to get into Commons FaceBook - need password, seeking this out. Getting access to info@gabriolacommons.ca email also.
   • Financial responsibility split agreement/MOU with Agi Co-op planned to be finalized this

week.
• Volunteer team coming together, event planning meeting this Thursday.
• Next meeting: Sept 5th 6:30-8:30pm.
Q: How many Tables does the Commons own?
A: 8-10? Ask Kim.

3. Garage Sale – Jinny Hayes
• Was held with only a short period of rain on Sunday August 18, co-sponsored by Sustainable Gabriola 12-12-12.
• Raised just over $450 from table rentals and food sales; some food donated to Fall Fair.

4. Poetry Gabriola Yurt – Greg Blee
• Fire inspection going forward; all approved except WETT Certificate cannot be issued d/t old age of the wood stove. Will be $4000 for a new stove and surrounds, so therefore, it's now a 3-season Yurt.
Q: Maybe put an ad in the *Sounder* requesting a donated stove?
A: Yes, but it does need certification.

5. North Gardens – Maureen Wild
• Would like to set a date for the fencing project; a Wednesday is best for Tanner but Saturdays are also possible. Various dates suggested and will be decided by e.mail.
• Arbutus is ready; Donations came from Arbutus, Earth Day and PHC.

6. Property Stewardship Team – Bob Andrew
• Very busy
• 2 people have expanded the team (see last Council Notes); 2 important things are coming up for which people will be needed
• Insulating lines
• Enclosed a wall in the Workshop
• Hedge needs pruning and lots of help is needed for that.
• All stuff from around the Goat Barn has been removed at a cost of $800.
• Shed with solar panels has been all cleaned out and reorganized.
• Irrigation system is still not working; a new worker will locate and replace the line at his expense! Pump still needs resolution.
Q: Water: recently switched over to the other side of the cistern: how long will that last?
A: About a week.

7. Peer Governance – Jinny Hayes
• No meeting this month as we are finishing off out work by email.
• The 3 special requests for time at tonight's meeting are from our working group; we will do one tonight: discussion of Commons teams; Info Handbook and Decision making will be deferred to a future Council Meeting.
• No future meetings are planned.

8. Trail Walking – Deb Ferens (written report submitted)
• 1 year of trail walking
• Yellow fire tape remains in place and trails closed.
• Trail walking is going relatively well.
• There are between 6 to 10 people that walk the trails weekly.

• Litter and garbage are picked up during each walk – varies from week to week, but currently less than previously.
How it works:

- Weekly message sent out to the walkers with any updates, news, need to know type things.
- Usually one of the walkers will report back to the group via email, often with pictures.
- Walk in pairs (30 minutes to an hour) Mon, Tues, Thurs, Sat.
- Walk the main paths (different areas are becoming identified with common names)
- Litter buckets available
- Pick up litter and bring back to RDN bins
- 24 hour removable notice regarding personal possessions

• CALL OUT FOR MORE TRAIL WALKERS
• These walks are extremely important, as a continuous presence. Campers may try to return with winter coming.

9. South Gardens – Brenda Joy
Report covers the period of: 2 July to 6 August, 2024; Last meeting 10 July (monthly).
• AGM will be Sept 29th.
• Welcoming more Members in CoCo.

10. Conflict Management Task Group - Brenda Joy
• Final draft of the Participants'/Volunteers' Agreement guide has gone out to teams with no additional feedback being received. It is therefore accepted as of this meeting.
• Small posters will be posted about.
• Next meeting: this Friday. Will discuss protocols for managing conflict, and a glossary to go with their documents. Draft will come to October Council mtg.

11. Trails and Green Spaces (TAGS) – Heather Menzies

- Team (Deb & Heather) plus Bobbi joined 8 guys in a GaLTT work team to dig holes for and install posts for the GaLTT trail marker signage along the connector trails for which they have a license.
- Applied for & received grant (for $905) from Gabriola Recreation Society to create and install 10 trail map signs at access points to and junction points throughout the Commons trail system.
- Begun work to move this forward so that, if possible, the trail signs are in place when the Trustees consider it's safe to re-open the forest trails.
- This work includes verifying (using GPS) trail map lines plus including an abbreviated version of the Agreement on respectful relations on the signs at entry/access points, plus consulting with the Conflict Management task group on its wording.

Q: Recommend a clarification of this statement/agreement wording; idea is aspiration rather than feeling lectured at.

12. Process Team – Dave Lightly
• Team had an in-depth discussion of the agreement; don't feel that it should be on the trail signs.

13. Farm Team – Heather Menzies

- Preparing a report for the Agricultural Land Commission (last one dated 2008), having established an email correspondence with the Land Use Planner (Ciaran McKay) who has the

Commons file. Having this report on file will be useful, we think, for grant writing around food-processing related projects we're exploring with the Kitchen Stewards.
- Drawing together information from allotment gardens, Farm Team, Kitchen Stewards and Finance Team (for income from orchard and kitchen) to make this report as robust as possible, and grateful for their cooperation.
- Collaborating with the North and South Gardeners, plus PHC (re. the Dragon Gardeners) on re-fencing the perimeters of the North Garden, the Little Field and the Kitchen Garden. The North Gardeners have taken the lead on this, including in pulling in monies from the gardener groups, Farm Team and PHC to finance this.
- Collaborating with the North, South and Namaste gardeners to have a potluck supper at the Commons on Sept. 8th sharing food sourced from our gardens and also sharing what we've learned through this growing season and its particular challenges (such as water shortages). This sharing of observations as in keeping with the "commoning of knowledge" that's part of the Commons heritage.
- Talking with Kitchen Stewards about sharing the storage space in the back room of the kitchen, currently deemed for the exclusive use of the Farm Team.

14. Covenant – Deb Ferens

• Working the Local Trust Committee about becoming the Covenant Holder; requires request to ALC for a time extension for registering the Covenant on Title.

15. Communications – Heather Menzies

- Took photos and wrote short piece for the *Sounder* about the signage installation along the Commons connector trails.
- Supporting Bobbie in crafting promotional ideas and materials for he Apple Fest/Fall Fair Outlets include the *Sounder,* the Commons Facebook page and, through Colleen, the Commons website.
- Supporting Kitchen Stewards in framing a fund-raising appeal for the Commons around celebrating the re-opening of the kitchen and the (costly) upgrades to make it more useful to the farmers and the community at large.

Q: Can we look at ways to boost the wifi signal for such events?
A: Yurt uses a wifi hub but it does cost $70/month; try Telus SmartHub, a rural Hub.

4. Discussion of Teams on the Commons

• 2 documents previously circulated: recommendations from the Peer Governance Work Group and a one-page suggestion from Heather Menzies
• Deb facilitated two rounds; various ideas were aired, eg, Trustees as "where the buck stops" and teams are all interrelated.
ACTION: Continue this discussion at next Council Meeting.

5. CLOSURE: 9 pm