Commons Coordinating Council (CCC)

Notes of Meeting of 01 October 2024

Facilitator: Deb Ferens; Recorder: Jinny Hayes

Present: Betty Kehler, Bobbi Rose O'Brien, Gloria Filax, Kim Kasasian, Carol Keane, Heather Menzies

Next CCC meeting: November 05, 2024 at 7pm Farmhouse
Facilitator: Deb Ferens, Note Taker: TBA
Written Reports to: council@gabriolacommons.ca
Meeting Format: Three value areas: ecological, agricultural & community.

1) **Welcome and Introductions** (Deb)
   • Council Stewards have created a good start on planning for improved CCC Meetings.
   • Recapped how we are now doing team reports: 5 minutes for a report, **followed by** 5 minutes of discussion if that much time is needed. If more time is needed, the topic is added to the end of the meeting. Urgency will be set by agreement. Facilitator should try to restate any decision or consensus reached.
   • 3 submitted written reports were missed in the September Notes, so **ACTION**: these will be revised and sent again to Teams reps with the October Notes.
   • Reminder: Council Stewards are at 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 this meeting and last.

2) **Land Acknowledgement** (Deb)

3) **Affiliate Reports**

1. Tool Library – Carol
   • Library has lots of stuff! It's hard to move around in the shed, so representatives have consulted with Bob Andrew about adding an extension on the side of the existing shed. Have been looking at ways to do this (Murray) and they do have the funds to do it.
   Q: Do need a proposal to be presented to the Commons Trustees, who need to know not only the costs but also the implications for insurance.
   A: Will do.
   • The Library was complimented on its success.

4) Team Reports

1. Farm Team – Heather Menzies
• Potluck was held with all the allotment gardeners; 25 attended from North, South, and Namaste and Dragon Gardens and Farm Team. The commoning of knowledge was wonderful, eg, mulching.
• South Gardeners will be helping the North Gardeners with their fencing project.

2. Communications – Heather Menzies
• Supporting Bobbi with Fall Fair/Apple Fest: Sunder ads, etc.

3. Trails and Green Spaces – Heather
• Still working on maps and signs x 4.
• Considering changing the statement re: respectfulness on Commons signs to something more aspirational.
Q: Should this say something like "this includes you"?
A: Group working on conflict resolution documents has been consulted, as has David Lightly. Rephrasing will bring in inclusivity.

4. Finance – Gloria (written report)
• Finance Team working on a Grant writing and Project Proposal Policy for teams. We currently have 2 successful team grants, 1 potential grant submitted, and 1 grant in the writing stage.
• Finance is looking for someone to reconcile bookings. Please contact finance@gabriolacommons.ca if interested.
• We are working on processing the Year End adjusting entries.
• We continue to lose monthly donors, note that we collected $1,475.00 from monthly donors in July and this down substantially from previous years.
• The Fall Fair/Apple Festival is a joint event/adventure with the Agi Co-op. We are sharing revenue and expense 50/50. Finances to be processed through the Gabriola Commons and we will produce a final report.
• July financial statement reflects a large entry to Repairs and Maintenance under Trustee expenses. This item is the insurance deductible of $2,500.00 for the kitchen repair.
• Teams may ask for updates on the balance in their team restricted funds but keep in mind financial information is delayed at least a month or more. This is because we receive our bank statement for the current month mid-month of the following month. We reconcile all the revenue and expense items to the bank statement.
Q: What grant applications have been made?
A: - RDN for electrical upgrade to Community Kitchen, Goat Barn and Workshop.
- TAGS Signage
- Lions Club: $10K for electrical
- Federal Agriculture: assist with Community Kitchen and boost school lunch program

Q: Jinny and Heather attended a Commons webinar today about increasing community engagement; emphasized the importance of "meaningful measurement" eg, recording participation data such as volunteer hours (we have lots; can be recorded quite simply).
ACTION: Jinny to send link to Gloria. Link is:
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL10UNxAJiFzePnFrXSL5h1R26QJu4Stwx

5. Trustees – Gloria (written report)
Trustees have been working on the following items:

• Requirement from BC government regarding the *Land Owner Transparency Act* to file a report by the end of September. Said report is accessible to lawyers only. Lawyer Madeleine Ani was hired to prepare and file the report on behalf of the GCF for the cost of $362.82.
• George is interviewing a lawyer and several others for an advisory Legal Team under the direction of the GCF.
• The Commons public liability and property insurance policy end is October 31, 2024. Renewal for the November 1, 2024 – October 31, 2025 is underway.
• Date for **AGM is December 1, 2024.** Mark your calendar and please attend. Details to follow.

• Next GCF meeting date: October 17, 2024, 10:00 – noon, Farmhouse.

6. Trail Walking – Deb (written report)
• There are between 6 to 10 people who walk the trails weekly. More needed.
• Litter and garbage are picked up during each walk – varies from week to week
• The RCMP have opened a file on the graffiti (eg, trees tagged purple and new cistern by the goat barn)
• As well, the Commons wooden picnic tables have been marked with permanent black marker.
• Yellow fire department tape remains in place and trails closed.
• Community issue of homelessness came up at a recent Gabriola Health & Well Being Collaborative meeting. Action pending?
• CALL OUT FOR MORE TRAIL WALKERS – A roster could be used.
Q: Bob reported on the encampment issues at Sustainable Gabriola.
A: Action TBA. Will need a discussion of a future plan once the RCMP/Fire Department take down the yellow tape.
• Group commended on improvements.

7. Property Stewardship – Kim (written report)
• Simon and Tanner have joined PST - they are both very busy people. Also very capable in many areas. And we have a few new workbee people too, which feels wonderful.
• Various jobs need to get done before we have our first freeze of the year.
• One of the many problems with irrigation this year is that the original irrigation pipes were not great when new and have become more brittle. Thankfully one of Bob's neighbours has offered to pay to have them replaced. Other issues are still in need of a fix before the next growing season.
• The inadequate deer fencing around the little field and part of the North Garden will be replaced this month - led by Simon and Tanner with help from gardeners.
• The hedge will get trimmed soon. This year we will pay Simon to do the trimming and have as much volunteer help there as possible to help him.
Q: Does anyone know who the graffiti artist JANP is?
A: No-one knows.

8. Juicing – Betty
• Apple pressing: Juggling the people who don't know each other and all want access.
• Held work party at Namaste. Gardeners wanted to acknowledge John Peirce so a drone photo was taken of the allotments and given to him.

9. Fall Fair – Bobbi
• The Fall Fair/AppleFest is this coming Sunday, and planning has progressed well for the most part.
• There's a Memorandum of Understanding with the Agi Coop in support of the collaboration.
• The Children's games volunteer unfortunately resigned; Bobbi has someone else in mind to ask.
• Preparations will be advanced at the Saturday workbee; some areas need mowing.
• Need lots of volunteers, including for the Commons Table; ACTION: Deb will organize that. Need a big donation jar.
• Thanks to Heather for her article in the *Sounder.*
• Wifi range expander is working. Yay!
Q: Ask the volunteers to log their hours, including meeting attendances
A. Betty will attend a Finance Team meeting to explore this.

10. Council Stewards – Deb
• Members at present are: Bob, Heide, Deb, Jinny.
• Many thanks to the folks who signed up on the roster to help Council Stewards with facilitating, Note-taking and Acknowledgements.
• The *Introduction to the Commons* (a version of the Trustees' *Field Guide*) will be brought forward to a future Council, maybe November's or December's.
• Next meeting: Monday, Oct 7 at 2:30 pm

5) Further discussions (2)

A. Acknowledgement for Commons Website
• Heather reported that there had been some feedback on this topic since the last meeting and she and David Lightly had discussed this as well. They prepared a new version and she read this out. [ED NOTE: This was subsequently was sent out by e.mail to team reps for teams' discussion and possible "recommendation".] It is:

The Gabriola Commons respectfully acknowledges that we are on the land of the Snuneymuxw. We are committed to building a relationship with and honouring our responsibilities to them.

She noted that it covers a sense of responsibility, doesn't mention "stewardship" per se; the people are OF the land.

B. Commons Team Work and Structure Review

Intro: The Peer Governance Working Group submitted the results of its review, including some recommendations (previously circulated). Heather subsequently submitted to everyone a one-pager in which she reflected on the notion of affiliations among teams (previously circulated); this included a rough diagram presented at the September Council meeting. It was noted that the PG Group focussed on structure and Heather introduced teams' processes, ie, how things might better **work**.

Question: How could things **function** better? Can we think "out of the box"? For example, what if we didn't **have** teams?

Could we attach ourselves to projects? Eg, the hedge, fencing.

Responsibility is the key. So are talent, ability.

Sometimes it seems like everything "belongs" to PST.

Teams are related to one another but do sometimes get stuck, getting deeply involved in something and not being inclusive, ie, silo thinking.

Involvements could include the community at large for projects, increasing collaboration and connectivity.

Heather's diagram depicted the "three-legged stool" idea and clusters of teams. It was suggested that for now, we all think about teamwork creatively, setting aside prior conceptions. Consensus agreement.

Teams have an option to not be a flat organizational structure.

Few are present at tonight's meeting, and this discussion is far from finished. How can we move forward? Could carry over to the next Council meeting, but there are other pression topics being held over (Peer Governance, etc.). We need to get other people involved with the Commons and with this topic. It was noted that people **are** showing up to workbees, and that is often when invitations are issued by individual teams.

We must work on being more inclusive. And separating the Commons from being People for a Healthy Community (PHC). They do their promo well.

To be continued. Could be at our next Council or at a purpose-committed special meeting.

6) CLOSURE: 8.54 pm