Commons Coordinating Council (CCC)

Notes of Meeting of 07-Jan-2025

Send written reports to council@gabriolacommons.ca

Facilitator: Jinny Hayes

Recorder: Gloria Filax

Timer: Bob Andrew

Present: Kristen Allan, Kisa Carron, Kim Kasasian, David Lightly, Brenda Joy, Heather Menzies, Brent O'Malley, Maureen Wild

1. Welcome & introductions

2. Land acknowledgement

Bob talked about his experience in the Arctic working amongst Indigenous people. Bob was young and shocked at 'excessive' alcohol consumption and drunken, disorderly fighting. At the time he did not know about the effects of colonization and the intergenerational trauma of Indigenous people in Canada.

3. Agenda review

No additions. Brent volunteered to be notetaker and Gloria to facilitate Feb meeting.

4. Woods Mandate (previously circulated)

- Task group different from a team, shorter, tighter timeframe.
- To take burden off PST of cleaning up and fixing things.
- Focus on first three of the mandate strategies.
- Building relationships with input 'woods' people.
- Concern from Bob – need for long term 'caretaking policy/function' with safety focus (theft, damage, fire).
- Jinny asked for different phrase for 'woods' people, use different language.
- Kim understands mandate differently as in to explore what is **needed** to open the woods, not to facilitate opening of the woods.
- Kristin asked how we will know when the job is done, what are the markers, objectives.
- Jinny reinforces idea of developing objectives.
- Gloria agrees to assist with developing objectives, targets.

5. Reports

We went around the circle hearing the following Team reports.

Community Kitchen Stewards – Dave (verbal)

- Successful Spirit Feast on December 25th (cooked 9 turkeys).
- Kenny did the cooking.
- Hired a cleaner for the kitchen cleanup.
- Funding for Spirit Feast a PHC grant.
- Full funding for electrical upgrade in place. Big Thank You to Kim for bringing the funding to attention of Finance committee. Electrical upgrade necessary for community kitchen appliances.

- PST, Kitchen Stewards, Finance to meet via Zoom to organize the timing of the electrical upgrade.

South Commons Gardens – Brenda (verbal)

- 2025 registration for allotment plots complete.
- 2 vacant plots, 1 for community use to include a cold frame.
- Coordinating Committee to meet Wednesday and will appoint a new rep to Council, as Brenda is stepping down.

Finance Team – Gloria (verbal)

- Gabriola Auxiliary grant for $6583.00 received.
- Treasurer role shared by Gloria and Shirley. Gloria to mentor Shirley.

North Allotment Gardens – Maureen (written)

- Fencing project will have the 4th (likely final) volunteer day on Jan 18th to complete the Little Field and replacement gates for both the N. Garden and the Little Field. Maureen noted all the contributors: financial (Earth Day donations, PHC, Farm Team, one gardener's donation), Arbutus discount on materials, Tanner's leadership/oversight, and other Commons Teams' contributions.
- 2025 plot renewals not yet done; to start soon.
- A garden agreement will be reinstated after several years without one; adapted from the S. Garden agreement.
- At least 3.5 plots are available for new gardeners, possibly more.
- The garden shed's north side particle-board wall is wet for months and full of mold on the inside. It urgently needs replacing, likely with plywood (not particle board again). Maureen will inquire re: cost, etc.

Farm Team – Heather as presented by Maureen (written)

- Farm Team report for the Agricultural Land Commission on the Commons agricultural and related activities submitted by Trustees.
- Helped finalize requirements for final phase of large project re-fencing most of the food-growing areas on the Commons – namely, the Little Field; also helped secure funding, from Farm team revenues. (The work will be undertaken at a Sat. work bee, Jan. 18th.)

Yurt Keepers Team – Kristen (written)

- Updated draft of YKT mandate, see attached draft, which is a revised version to Council for approval. **ACTION:** Consensus approval.
- Met with the board of the Gabriola Poetry Society (GPS) in December.
- GPS passed on their yurt upgrades “wish list” to Kristen.
- Discussed wood stove- present state and future acquisition.
- Discussed possible heating and lighting alternatives.
- Discussed needs for secure firewood storage and washroom facility
- Invited members of the GPS to join the YKT.
- Timing for Sounder article re: needing a new wood stove – will happen after the official transfer of the yurt to the Commons.

- Fundraising for 2025 – Gabriola Recreation Society grants up to $1k, other ideas?

Q: Where is the yurt transfer paperwork at?

A: Response from Gloria - transfer in transition, will take a few months.

Property Steward Team – Kim (written)

- There is a more worrying level of activity in the woods.
- We currently have someone climbing up to the second-floor deck of the TimberFrame and sleeping there – there is no deck rail and not a lot of floor either. And he is a heavy drinker.
- We will buy and fit lots of security lights. This will be very time consuming and expensive.
- Another wheelbarrow has been stolen. That makes it 4 wheelbarrows stolen. $1,000 worth.
- We want to emphasize, again, the massive amount of work that PST is doing due to camping, partying, vandalism and theft.
- We also want to make it clear that only a tiny percentage of the work that results from partying, etc. actually happens in the woods. Most of it is on the rest of the Commons.
- When PST steps away from these jobs there will be a big hole to fill - both time and skills. The Commons needs to be thinking about how to do this.
- Prep for freezing weather is almost completed.
- We have a plan of action for the irrigation pump problems, thanks to Brenda Joy and her friend.
- Bob's neighbour is offering to pay for replacing the old irrigation pipes. When the trenches for new pipes are dug, we plan to upgrade the electrical wiring as well.

Trustees – Bob (verbal)

- New and outgoing Trustees met on January 6.
- New Trustee team: Bobbi Rose O'Brien, Kristen Allen, Shirley Whalen, Bob Andrew, Dave Lightly, Judith Plant, Heather Menzies (2 "hinge positions").
- Next meeting: January 29, 3- 5 pm, Farmhouse. Day and time set as last Wednesday of the month.

Council Steward Team – Jinny (verbal)

- Heide left team, Deb, Jinny and Bob current team members.
- Looking for volunteers to take notes and facilitate at Council meetings.

Peer Governance – Jinny (verbal)

- Work of team winding down.
- Thank you to all who participated.
- Jinny to do a final edit and send out for Council review.

Communications – Heather as presented by Maureen (written)

- Worked with web designer Colleen McCarthy to test where we can best locate the Commons land acknowledgement on the website. She's placed it both on the home page and in the footer for each page.
- Feedback from Commoners is welcome and will inform any changes that seem appropriate. Thanks all for your attention to this.

Trails and Green Spaces – Heather as presented by Maureen (written)

- Submitted report to Gabriola Recreation Society for $905 grant for creation of Commons trail map signs and their installation by Dec. 15 deadline; received money with expectation of project completion soon.
- Upgraded stones marking labyrinth path in anticipation of a Solstice Gathering at the Commons, hosted by Colleen Reid and Wild Wellness; this included a lantern-lit labyrinth walk (led by Heather).

Process Team – Brenda (verbal)

- The document *Dealing with Disagreement: The Gabriola Commons' Guide to Conflict Management and Respectful Relations* has been circulated several times, been to Council and feedback has been requested and received.
- Jinny suggests that the phrase 'toxic volunteer' be changed to another expression, noting that it's the behaviour, not the person, who may be "toxic".
- Kim suggests boxes with some comments would break up the heaviness of text-based document.
- Multiple comments on the excellence and thoroughness of the document.
- Brenda to tweak and then document sent to Heather to upload to website with hotlinks from The Process Team. This is a living document, not set in stone.
- Teams to let volunteers and team members to know document is on the website.
- High praise for Brenda's work on this document including that she has set a new benchmark for excellence in policy development.

6. Affiliate Reports – none.

7. Carried-over topic: To schedule a meeting for a fulsome discussion of teams

- This topic was brought to Council a few months ago by the Peer Governance working group which had prepared a report listing the existent, not-functioning and well-functioning teams. It was agreed then to schedule a special meeting to discuss this topic in detail.
- Meeting to discuss on Tuesday January 28, 3-5 pm at the Farmhouse. [Ed Note: due to lack of meeting space, **meeting moved to Monday, January 27, 3-5 pm.**]
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8. Closing –

- Brent asked about a possible 20th anniversary celebration.
- Enthusiastic response with many ideas, including needs of the Commons for better exposure on the Island and more active volunteers.
- Possible Spring Fair.
- **Action:** Brent (will talk with Bobbi), Jinny (will talk with Stef Marrie), Kristin volunteered to help make this happen.

ATTACHMENT

Yurt Keepers Team (Draft – Version 2 January 2025)

Contact: Kristin Allan

Mandate: We will maintain and promote the use of the Commons Yurt. The yurt is a hub of connection, education, culture making and collaboration with other community organizations.

Objectives:

- Maintain the integrity, security, cleanliness and functioning of the yurt structure
- Promote the availability of the yurt as an educational, wellness and entertainment venue
- Upgrade interior and exterior of the yurt to ensure safety and comfort of users
- Organize bookings and payments

Strategies:

- Replace existing woodstove, expand hearth pad, repair stove pipe
- Install baseboard heater too keep humidity down
- Build a secure storage shed near the yurt for firewood, etc.
- Construct a composting toilet system that is exclusively for the yurt
- Annual spring-cleaning work bee in and around the yurt
- Protect deteriorating bottom exterior plywood sheeting ring
- Install skirting beneath the yurt for increased security and aesthetics
- Inspect and improve insulation underneath floor, as needed
- Install sufficient lighting inside the yurt
- Grand re-opening of the yurt event
- Attend and report regularly at Commons Coordinating Council