Gabriola Commons Coordinating Council
Notes of Meeting April 7, 2026

Reports to: council@gabriolacommons.ca

Facilitator: Jinny Hayes
Timer: Don Smardon
Note-taker: Brent O'Malley

Also Present:
Bob Andrew, Diane Conrad, Mark Fenster, Kristin Allen, Betty Kehler, Kim Kasasian, Bruce Batchelor, Maureen Wild, Plus 1 person.

1. Welcome & First Nations Acknowledgement

Jinny noted that a First Nations chief in Alberta has filed an injunction regarding the provincial government's attempt to conduct a referendum on separation. The chief noted that First Nations were not consulted regarding this proposal.

2. Agenda: Approved as posted.

Farm Team to facilitate next meeting

3. Team Reports

Yurt Keepers: Kristin Allan (written report)

- Rentals: The yurt keepers will make a small flyer to hang around the island indicating that the yurt is available for rent.
- Yurt maintenance: The new wood stove door has been malfunctioning, and we requested a new door from Pioneer Fireplace in Nanaimo, as the stove is under warranty. It will be replaced in the next week.
- Fundraising: The Yurt Keepers Team has been awarded a $1,000 grant from the *Gabriola Recreation Society* to put toward the construction of a woodshed for the yurt. Work bees will take place in May and June.
- Yurt Events:
  - Mark Fenster is facilitating a fundraiser for the yurt and Gabriola Outreach. *Serenity Sessions*, a meditative musical journey, will be held on Sunday, April 19th from 2-4pm in

the yurt. By donation.
- Tom Kennedy of *One Earth Yoga* will be offering a free therapeutic yoga class to Commons Volunteers on Sunday, April 26th from 3-4:30pm in the yurt. Email tommyveg50@gmail.com to register.

- Saturday, May 2nd will be the annual Spring-Cleaning Work Bee at the Yurt.
- The team is working with finance to create an online ticketing platform for events on the Commons.

Board of Trustees: Bob Andrew (verbal report)

- Code consultant came yesterday to evaluate the farmhouse and will write a report
- The liaison group between the trustees and PHC meet once a month. At the last meeting, due to code compliance the stove from the farmhouse to the community kitchen.
- We now have a protocol with PHC regarding standardizing meetings.
- There is concern about access to the upstairs bathroom in the farmhouse and this is being worked on.
- PHC wishes to create a hub/gathering for island services and this will need further discussion with the Commons council. The issue is that PHC would like to have a new building to house this new organization.
- Regarding waste pickup, RDN will no longer be picking up individual bins for businesses. This is a big deal for PHC. For the moment PHC is using the big green bin in the north parking lot but that bin could disappear at any time.

Kitchen Report

- The new stove has been met with mixed reviews
    - Some like the fact that there is a broiler
    - Some have complained that the oven is smaller than the other stove and does not accommodate larger casserole pans
    - Also, it has been noted that the BTU output is not as powerful on the stovetop and therefore cannot really accommodate larger pots. It should be noted that a constant complaint of the other stove was that there was no simmer capability and therefore difficult or impossible to use to simmer sensitive sauces etc.
    - Question about paying for the stove – credit being applied through their rental fee

Farm Team: Betty Kehler and Leanne Duncan (verbal report)

- Still some plots left at the south garden.
- North garden is all spoken for
- Grass is mowed, fencing done
- There are 95 blueberry plants that need a lot of care such as weeding (needs to be done in the next two weeks), mulching and fertilizing and then erecting the netting. Trying

to get the community involved. Families? Last year was a big success and this year could be even better but need labour! Facebook posts. There will be five workbees.
- Homeschooling group could be a good group to approach
- Writing an article in the Sounder would be a good idea

Property Stewardship: Bob Andrew (written report)

- Irrigation system: The pond irrigation system is now set up again. Many thanks to Rob Holt and crew for helping with that. It is a half day of work for three of us. This system feeds the S. gardens, the North Gardens, the Little Field, the Kitchen Garden and the PHC garden.
- Tanner is building a better filter system to allow a micro watering system in the orchard area.
- We need more people to know how the whole system works for when something goes wrong (and something will). Bob is willing to set up training for this crucial job
- Power outage: When the power goes out, we set up two generators, one for the potable water system and another to run the fridges, freezers etc. in the Commercial kitchen. We need to find $4,000 to be able to have the kitchen generator run the walk-in cooler. This clearly became a vital necessity for PHC to be able to have water in the house and kitchen and to be able to have sufficient storage for food products. Gas cost to run the two generators for approximately 8 hrs.: over $60.
- A recent power outage necessitated PHC to give an incredible amount of food to Loaves and Fishes in Nanaimo. We are working on getting the walk-in cooler working during power outages to allow PHC the ability to store refrigerated items
- Workbees:
    - People doing lots of work in the gardens already: major fence repairs, garden preparations etc. Maureen, Tanner, the lawn had to be cleared after the power outage and had its first cutting.
    - The upper deck is well on its way to having the railings redone.
    - The hedge removal and tree planting is now complete finally. Lots of digging, manure hauling etc. Five new trees (Crimson King Maple; Kim's lead).
    - Inspection of roofs partially done, need full roof inspection and repairs.
- PST meeting this Wed. to discuss future projects and maintenance.

North Gardens Maureen Wild (verbal report)

- Lots of good energy this year
- People always choose a common area to take care of and people are stepping up and making the garden look great.
- There is need for a small project in the garden that hopefully can be done during a Saturday workbee.

Covenant Team – Jinny (verbal report)

- The team has rejuvenated with Brent O'Malley and Rob Stephenson along with Dave Lightly and Mercedes Scott
- The Islands Trust lawyers wanted a fair number of changes, primarily "legalize".
- Next meeting on April 14 will look at the Stewardship Plan and the Stewardship Agreement and will follow up with our own Islands Trust Trustees once we are approaching finalization.

4. Affiliate Reports: None

5. Other Business & Announcements

- Bruce Batchlor for the Gabriola Transportation Society reported that the group is working on adjusting speed limits, getting pedestrian walk ways established to improve safety on the island.
- Also working on improving cycling safety
- Working with provincial ministry to make changes but it's slow going

6. Closing at 7:53 pm

Next Meeting: NOTE NEW TIME: 6.30 PM May 5, 2026 Farmhouse