



DRAFT MINUTES

Pearkes Recreation Centre, **7:00 P.M.**, Thursday, Mar. 3, 2016

In Attendance: Rob Wickson, Richard Bouchard, Ray Farmer, Pam Loadman, Katherine Brandt, Trevor Hancock and Vera Wynn-Williams (Marcus Fedoruk and Christine Fedoruk via Skype)

Regrets: Gabe Epstein, Wendy Farwell and Chris Bullock

Guests: Kay Stewart, John Rogers, George Spence, Marla Weston, Rebecca Mersereau and Rick Rainsford.

1. Adoption of February Minutes

Moved SK/Seconded PL– Approved

2. Adoption of Agenda with addition of trees and 570 Walter

Moved CB /Seconded RB – Approved

3. Special Presentation

Victoria Waterways Loop – A Circle Paddle Route – John Rogers

The proposed Victoria Waterways Loop is a 22 km route, which would allow a paddler to complete a one way trip starting at any number of access points along the Gorge Waterway, Portage Inlet or Victoria Harbour. The goal is to complete the project by 2018, the 50th anniversary of the Gorge Beautification Project.

The most ambitious goal of the project is to create a walkway underneath the Gorge Bridge with docks at both ends. (There is already a dock on the east side.) A walkway would allow paddlers of all experience levels to easily and safely bypass the reversing rapids without having to wait on favorable tides. The idea of a walkway at this location is not. There was one built in the early 1900's and remained there in various forms until its removal in 1967 when the existing bridge was built.

John noted that rebuilding the former walkway would be ideal but the group is also exploring the option of creating the portage walkway on the Esquimalt side, as Esquimalt seems more supportive than Saanich.

There is also a plan for a boat ramp across the road from Shoreline school, which will allow low tide access to the portage route as well as shortening the distance for those who don't want to paddle up around the Shoreline peninsula. The added benefit of this ramp is speedier access for the View Royal Fire Department Rescue crews.

The board was generally supportive of the concept and encouraged First Nations involvement. It was suggested that the group also contact John Roe from the Veins of Life Society.

For more information see:

<http://visitorinvictoria.ca/historic-marine-paddle-route-re-discovered-in-victoria-bc/>

4. Reports

a. Finance – Chris Kask

Chris had sent around financial statements. He noted that revenue from government grants and membership fees were down while, newsletter advertising revenue was up. Chris also noted that the gardens allotments did not cover the costs but that the garden was generating funds through a variety of fundraising initiatives.

Moved RB/Seconded TH. Carried.

Trevor Hancock suggested that the board revisit the idea of earmarking some of the surplus funds for projects such as Canada 150.

b. Membership - Christine

Board members need to pay membership before the AGM. Payments can be made online.

c. SCAN/Council – Rob

SCAN

- VOLCA (Veins of Life Conservation Authority) made a pitch to SCAN. The group includes John Roe, Shelli Gudgeon and Julian Anderson intends to become a registered non-profit.

Council

- Council approved the removal of the house at 574 Walter Ave and returning the land back to natural park space.

d. Transportation Committee – McKenzie/Hwy 1 Intersection Task Group

Obed Avenue – Pam

- Obed is getting paved but Saanich has not budgeted for any beautification. However, there will extensive tree planting along Obed.

McKenzie/Hwy 1 Intersection - Rob

- Rob noted that he was going around starting discussions and sharing his plan for the intersection.
- The board agreed that the issue should be discussed at the AGM.
- Chris Kask suggested that now is the time for the GTCA to push for greater investment in the park such as improvements to the fish fence and request that the Province transfer ownership of the park to Saanich. The board agreed that transferring ownership to Saanich would be a priority for the GTCA.
- Rob noted that the deadline for input is March 18th and suggested that a letter outlining the GTCA requests be sent to the Ministry before the deadline. Rob asked that board members send their thoughts to him by email.
- It was also suggested that the GTCA organize a community meeting to help inform the community.

e. Land Use Committee/Developments

- 574 Walter Street – It was suggested that something really interesting could be done on the site. Architectural details from the house may be saved and incorporated into the natural environment. Trevor noted that the Victoria Secular Humanist Association has been exploring the idea of an Art History Trail.

4. Parks

a. Community Garden – Kay Stewart

- On-site delivery of soil and servicing of the toilet have been hampered by the crosswalk construction at Gorge and Millgrove. According to Saanich, trucks should not drive over the crosswalk until March 16.
- To enable new allotment holders to plant before then, a load of soil will be delivered to the parking lot on Saturday, March 5, and a work party organized to move the soil onto the site.
- Preparations for the March 19 Benefit Dance and Chocolate Potluck Feast are well underway. Individuals and businesses have donated an interesting and varied array of items for the silent and live auctions. It would be helpful to have the use of a Square reader so that items can be paid for by credit card. The Square reader would require access to the banking information and is therefore restricted to the GTCA executive. Vera volunteered to get the square reader and take payments at the dance.
- A memorial tree planting is scheduled for the Easter weekend, details TBA.

b. Tree down in Gorge Park

- There is a tree down in Gorge Park (by Orillia) and is blocking the lower path. Saanich cannot remove the tree and therefore wants to close the path. The board agreed that it made sense to close the path, as it was poorly used and unsafe.

5. Communications

a. Newsletter – Vera

- The newsletter would be ready by March 11.

b. Websites/Social Media – Marcus

- Work on the website continues.

6. Homelessness - Rob

Rob distributed the report prepared by Joshua Ekko Goldberg and requested that he issue of homelessness be put on the agenda at the AGM. The board agreed that this should be discussed at the AGM.

7. Music in the Park – Ray

- Music choices must be made by the end of the month.
- Three food vendors should be chosen.

9. Canada 150 Funding Request – Richard

- Due to time constraints and the logistics of working with the First Nations the War Canoe idea has been put aside for now.
- Instead the proposal will centre on an event celebrating the Gorge Bridge, which was initially built in 1867 and rebuilt in 1967.

10. Societies Act – Rob

- Because of changes to the Societies Act, the GTCA will have to redo its constitution. This issue was deferred to the next meeting.

11. AGM

- The Annual General Meeting is set for Thursday, March 31st at the Craigflower School House.
- Mudlarker Bruce Campbell is confirmed as a presenter.
- No Sasquatch Award will be presented this year.

Next Meeting

Time: 7:00 – 9:00pm

Date: Thursday, April 7, 2016

Place: Pearkes Community Centre