

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Shawnigan Cobble Hill Farmers Institute and Agricultural Society (Farmers Institute) held at 7 p.m. Monday, December 14th 2020 via Zoom.

Those present: Roger Painter - President, Roy Davies - Vice President, Robin Brett - Treasurer, Brenda Burch, Lynne Pohynayko, Blair Herbert, Jayne Shaw, Kathy Pringle, Mike Wilson, Bonnie Wadds, Morris Wadds, Karin Laurie, George Baird, George Robbins, Joy Cameron, Dave Bilkoski, Bill Wikkerink and Gerry Giles - Secretary.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by President Roger Painter with the Secretary confirming appropriate notice regarding the AGM had been provided to the members of the Farmers Institute.

After a brief introduction Roger called for adoption of or correction to the AGM Minutes of November 25th 2019.

Moved	Lynne Pohynayko	
Second	George Robbins	
the 2019 AGM Minutes be adopted as circulated.		MOTION CARRIED

There was no business arising from the minutes.

President's Report - Roger Painter gave the following report:

This is a general overview of the activities and challenges of the past year. I won't be going into much detail on some issues as both Robin and Gerry will provide more depth in their individual reports on some of these items. I'm sure you are all aware that this year has been a challenge and you should not be surprised at many of the impacts we have had from the Corona Virus. However you should also know, we have continued to work on behalf of the membership and we have had some unexpected successes.

Prior to the onset of the Virus we continued to move along the usual track before it became necessary to reduce and shutdown much of our operations. We already had some inklings of the issues related to the Virus and we were able to stop some activities early. I'm referring mostly to our Maintenance and Capital program. This came about as a result of happenstance rather than good planning. In the early part of the year a number of our projects were already underway and likely should have been put on hold given the future we faced. However we had no true picture of the extent of what was coming at us. Work I'm referring to included completion of the upgraded Poultry Barn and construction of the maintenance building. Both were priority items in any event but proceeding with them at that time did put pressure on our budget. Both have since been completed and look great. Currently we also have some ongoing work in the Youth Hall that will need to be finished as money provides. One success and fun event that did proceed was New Years Eve Dance with Montgomery County. It wasn't a big fund raiser but it was well attended.

One of the things we learned out of the early expenditures was the need for a Finance Committee to help manage ongoing goals and activities. We created this committee with the purpose of providing greater control between Board meetings as well as to review and make recommendations for the Board's consideration. It is comprised of the President, Vice President and Treasurer. It also functions to manage emergencies.

So moving into this year, the Movie Program unfortunately did not continue as a result of the Virus. COVID basically brought this to a halt with the restrictions on gatherings. However, at the end of the day we did get a huge new screen with high tech projection equipment that now allows us to give presentations to a fully packed hall.

The Corona virus also led to the cancellation of Seedy Saturday, the Annual Easter Egg Hunt, Halloween Activities, our Christmas Concert, the New Years Dance, cancellation of Seniors lunches and obviously Fair Trophy night. In late March we had to shut down our hall rentals as well. You will notice that I did not include the Cobble Hill Fair.

Further to this, you should know we are strictly following the rules set down by the Provincial Health Officer. Part of that involved developing our own Covid Safety Plan and amending our Rental Use Agreement to reflect the new reality.

With all of these closures and cancellations it became obvious we needed to develop a budget that focused on our ability to manage costs and commitments based on a minimum bank balance and income with an almost non-existent revenue source. Earlier expenditures on upgrades and maintenance had been curtailed in January. When we started looking at the full impact of the Corona virus on our operation it looked pretty bleak at first. Fortunately, we have a very competent treasurer and some very valuable directors on our board, which allowed us to look at our costs and see where we could cut and where we really needed to spend money. We were faced with losing all of our rental revenues and the Fair was certainly in doubt. So when we looked at our the budget we made a number of adjustments. Paramount was keeping the basic assets of the Institute safe. We were not alone, and I'm sure we all know that many organizations like ourselves were faced with similar issues. So starting in March our Vice President and Treasurer sat down and developed what basically became a COVID budget which focused on how much money we had, what our financial commitments were and how long that would last us. This was intended to be an ongoing budget with a moving bottom line. The first view of this gave us a better reality, and allowed us to work at pushing back what I refer to as the DROP DEAD DATE or better referred to as the date when we could no longer operate. The Board looked at our commitments and the basic areas we needed to continue: insurance, security, electricity, and such. Any areas where we could get a reduction or deferral were considered and we made efforts to contact suppliers and see if they could help. As the months went by, we were able to slowly push back that drop-dead date and move forward again. Instead of just sitting there we worked at trying to do something about it.

We discussed the idea of a Virtual Cobble Hill Fair and started planning. At first the idea wasn't so much to make money but to keep the Fair alive and let the community know that we hadn't given up. And in the end, the virtual fair was a success. We had over 400 entries. This showed our community was still out there and very interested, and low and behold our fair actually made money. The majority of the financial support came from a number of our corporate sponsors who, without being asked to contribute, showed their love of the Fair. I'm sure some of them were hurting or unsure of their future too but we received sufficient donations to push back our closing date considerably. We're now looking at other ideas including selling sign space on the

fencing surrounding the hall. We have other ideas as well including perhaps an on-line Seedy Saturday.

We also have receive revenues from the annual CVRD grant and from Duncan Dabber Bingo Society. There have been a couple of private donations but I'll leave both Gerry and Robin to elaborate as they feel necessary. Also we applied for and received a Grant from the Red Cross to make meals for people in need in our community but I'm going to leave that one to Gerry to give you the full story. I want to make it very clear that both Gerry and Robin should receive so much credit for moving us along and keeping us going thru these times.

Finally, and most recently, we planted about 10 fruit trees, donated by the CVRD, after they had to be removed from Cobble Hill Common. This also included 32 Blueberry bushes which were planted around the horse field. In talking of the CVRD, I want to sincerely thank Director Michael Wilson and recognize him for his ongoing support throughout this difficult year. He has been generous in finding financial help and supporting us officially, where appropriate, and he deserves our thanks.

As President I view my job as having several focuses, but first and foremost is the protection and maintenance of the physical assets of the Institute, the Hall with all other buildings along with the grounds and services that allow us to function. And keeping them in the hands of our community. I'm not alone in that responsibility but I view it as a President's primary task.

Moved Kathy Pringle
Second Robin Brett
the President's report be accepted.

MOTION CARRIED

Treasurer's Report - Robin Brett gave the following report:

It has been a challenging year financially. We started out completing a few projects fully expecting the Cobble Hill Fair to balance our budget. So, an audiovisual cupboard was constructed in the Main Hall to safely house the new equipment, and a shed to house the lawnmower and gasoline was built to get those items out of the Poultry Barn for safety reasons. And then the Poultry Barn was renovated.

In the midst of all this construction, we had an insurance inspection. Both inspectors took time at the end to tell Gerry and I that they seldom saw buildings that had so much obvious care and attention to detail, and they said the fact that the organization was run solely by volunteers, made it even more amazing.

Because we have had little income since March and some basic expenses have continued, we ended up the year with a \$29,000 loss. Had the Pandemic not happened, the intention was that we would have made that loss up on the Cobble Hill Fair and balanced the year successfully. But as my Grandmother used to say, "Man plans, and God laughs," and that certainly was true this year.

We were halfway completed doing the set up for Seedy Saturday when the notification to shut down came from the Province. We hurriedly contacted all the vendors, Lynne and I put the hall back in place, and I refunded all the vendor's money.

All work on projects was stopped by this time, thinking it would just be a couple of months. But as the shutdown continued, it became increasingly clear that the budget we passed at the last AGM was not workable in any respect. So, former Director Jason Walker worked with me to make an emergency budget. Our first efforts were alarming because it showed we could only last until February 2021. It became obvious to us that more drastic steps were needed to reduce spending to the barest essentials, so that the institute could sustain itself for as long as possible. So, we doubled down and revised the Emergency Budget further and with determination from the board, each month we have managed to push that date forward, little by little.

We were helped tremendously in this regard by the nearly \$11,000 profit from the Virtual Fair in August. And with thanks to Gerry Giles for filling out the required forms, we have also received COVID Assistance from BC Hydro which greatly reduced our billings from March through September. We also received credits from our garbage hauler, Waste Management, which also reduced our billings from March through September. We cancelled every bill we could and pared the budget down to the barest essentials: insurance and security, both of which are more necessary now that the buildings are mostly closed; and hydro and water. And by doing this we have managed to extend our funds so, with the passing of this updated COVID Emergency Budget tonight, we can last out until October 2021.

We will have programs happening, but only where they will be self-sustaining, or have the necessary funds donated.

I continue to say that I don't have all the answers to surviving this pandemic. I don't know what the future holds. All I have is a plan and a determination to see it through. But it requires a commitment from all of us. If we can stick to it, we will survive this and be able to move forward.

Moved Dave Bilkoski
Second Lynne Pohynayko
the treasurer's report be accepted with appreciation. MOTION CARRIED

Robin then reviewed the proposed COVID 2021 budget after which, it was

Moved Bill Wikkerink
Second Brenda Burch
the 2021 COVID Budget be accepted as presented. MOTION CARRIED

The financial review prepared by Gay Wise of Wise Financial Services had been distributed earlier in the day. Robin briefly explained the difference between the financial review and the line items found in the COVID Budget.

Moved Robin Brett
Second Jayne Shaw
the Financial Review to October 31, 2020 be received. MOTION CARRIED

Moved Robin Brett
Second Bonnie Wadds
Wise Financial Services be appointment financial reviewer for the 2021 year.
MOTION CARRIED

Secretary's Report - Gerry Giles briefly reviewed the situation with facility rentals. She indicated the Farmers Institute does have a written COVID-19 Safety Plan developed using WCB guidelines and all renters, when permitted, must comply with the Farmers Institute plan as well as having their own written plan approved by the rental coordinator. She also indicated all users are required to have a building cleaned after their rental and the cost of the janitorial service is paid by the renters.

Gerry then provided information on the Virtual Fair, the Seniors Lunch Program and the Red Cross program. She indicated notice was received today that the Red Cross Program has been extended to February 19, 2021 with an additional \$25,179 in funding. The final report on this program is due on March 5, 2021. All of the reports distributed with the agenda are attached to these minutes.

Gerry briefly outlined the fence advertising program being implemented by the Farmers Institute in an effort to regain some of the funds lost due to COVID-19.

Moved Lynne Pohynayko
Second Karin Laurie
the Secretary's report be accepted as provided. MOTION CARRIED

Maintenance Report - provided by Robin Brett and Gerry Giles. It covered the work done on the poultry barn, the building of a storage shed to house the lawn mower, tools and paint supplies as well as work being done in the Youth Hall. With respect to the Youth Hall, it was explained water has been leaking in the kitchen for years which was causing damage to the wall as well as attracting carpenter ants. The kitchen has been dismantled and the water has been routed into the building underground. The holes in the wall and floor will be patched and the water supply pipes lowered and shut off taps installed. After this work is done the kitchen will be reassembled using hot water on demand and a much smaller fridge.

Moved Robin Brett
Second George Baird
the maintenance report be accepted as presented. MOTION CARRIED

Election of Directors - the election results for the Farmers Institute were provided. It was explained that with the AGM being held electronically, the elections were held separately and prior to the AGM to ensure a secret vote by ballot could take place prior to the AGM if required. A call for nominations had been emailed to the membership on October 31st with a follow up on November 10th. Nominations closed on November 15th with the following individuals being duly nominated and elected by acclamation.

Roy Davies - Vice President
Robin Brett - Treasurer

Directors elected for a One Year term:
Nellie Poelman and Gord Dickenson

Directors elected for a Two Year term:
Brenda Burch, Russell Dann, Jayne Shaw and Lynne Pohynayko

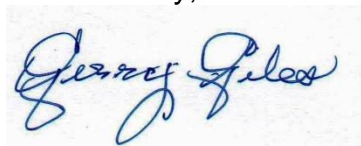
As a result of the elections the full board for 2021 is Roger Painter - President, Roy Davies - Vice President, Robin Brett - Treasurer, Gerry Giles - Secretary with Directors being: Brenda Burch, Russell Dann, Gord Dickenson, Blair Herbert, Jane Shaw, Nellie Poelman, Lynne Pohynayko and Bill Wikkerink.

New Business - President Roger thanked Brenda Burch for her effort on Social Media, as well as the other Directors who helped with Seedy Saturday and the Virtual Fair.

Before the meeting adjourned, George Robbins thanked Roger for his comprehensive President's report.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gerry Giles". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "G".

Gerry Giles, Secretary

Virtual Fair Report
for December 14, 2020 AGM

the following reports
were submitted by Gerry Giles

Words cannot begin to convey the gratitude the Board of the Shawnigan Cobble Hill Farmers Institute and Agricultural Society (Farmers Institute) and the Cobble Hill Virtual Fair committee has for those businesses and individuals who sponsored the 2020 Cobble Hill Virtual Fair. We could not have fully staged this wonderful family event without that support.

When we realized the COVID-19 pandemic meant we would have to cancel our traditional Fair and thoughts of a Virtual Fair started to crystallize, we didn't realize many of our sponsors would join us on this journey. However, with their help we were able to promote as well as advertise the Virtual Fair and we were very pleasantly surprised by the results.

Although we did not have any farm animal entries, we did have more than 460 photos entered in the various categories offered in the Virtual Fair Catalogue, which is a little more than half of our normal hall entries. Some of the pictures submitted were absolutely spectacular! Importantly, from a few of the "Anything we missed you would like to enter" category we gained new ideas for inclusion in our future traditional Fairs.

None of this could have happened without the support of our sponsors and we are very heartened by it.

A huge thank you goes to our Social Media guru and volunteer - Brenda Burch of Social Media is Not Simple as well as Virtual Fair organizers and judges Robin Brett, Jayne Shaw, Linda Bilkoski, Lynne Pohynayko and Cicely McLachlan. This small but mighty team worked with both vision and flexibility to ensure the event was a success. Our

website designer, Paul Mycroft of Creative Market 2 All, was also a huge help in setting up our new website in a format that could easily be changed and kept current.

South Cowichan Seniors Luncheon Report for December 14, 2020 AGM

Although not run by the Shawnigan Cobble Hill Farmers Institute and Agricultural Society, this popular program is supported by the organization as it provides free space in the Cobble Hill Hall along with covering the heat, gas, electricity and insurance for the Seniors Luncheon group. This program is now in its 7th year.

Until March 23 of 2020, approximately 150 seniors from the community gathered in the Cobble Hill Hall on the second and fourth Mondays of each month for nutritious homemade meals and an all important opportunity to socialize with their peer group. Menus included a wide variety of home cooked meals like lasagna, stuffed rolled pork loin, chicken cordon bleu, Salisbury steak and on special occasions the Chinese community would prepare Chinese food.

All meals are prepared and served by volunteers following strict "Food Safe" guidelines. The suggested price for the meals served inside the Cobble Hill Hall was \$6.00, which included beverage and a dessert.

When COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic in March of 2020 and with cases being recorded on Vancouver Island, these luncheons were cancelled and a two week break took place. During this time, the main organizing team developed plans to provide the same quality meals via a takeout service.

Menus are now sent to seniors on the email list on Wednesday and recipients are given until 6 p.m. on Saturday to place their order for either cooled or frozen meals. The price was reduced to \$5.00 per meal and each person on the email list can order up to four meals. These meals do not include a beverage but often include a dessert or other treat.

Our core group of five or six volunteers regularly prepares over 200 meals on Sunday for each session. These meals are made ready for delivery between 10 and 11 a.m. the next day. Approximately, half of the meals are provided frozen.

Over the course of this past year the Seniors Luncheon volunteers have provided a \$3,000 cash donation to the CMS Food Bank, a \$2,000 donation to the SPCA and a \$5,000 donation to the Farmers Institute to help cover the use of the hall. This group has also purchased additional equipment including freezers.

Red Cross Program Report for December 14, 2020 AGM

In August of 2020, an application was made by the Shawnigan Cobble Hill Farmers Institute (Farmers Institute) for federal funding through the Canadian Red Cross Society. The goal of the program is to "help address the impacts of COVID-19 by ensuring food security and fostering social inclusion." On September 20, 2020 the Farmers Institute was granted \$33,626.50 in funding to achieve the above goal.

The term of the program was back dated to September 1, 2020 and the end date of the project was November 30, 2020 or earlier if the project activities were completed.

The project's description is "to provide nourishing meals to 1280 seniors, people with disabilities, low income individuals and people experiencing homelessness in the South Cowichan area who are experiencing isolation and food insecurity due to the impacts of COVID-19."

Although the final report has yet to be filed, the interim report filed by the Farmers Institute midway through the program was favourably received. An extension to the program has been applied for but approval has not yet been granted.

Note: an extension to the Red Cross program was provided on the same day as the AGM

To date, the program has provided homemade meals to the CMS Food Bank, the Malahat Nation, the Cowichan Green Community and several isolated seniors.

Since the start of the program in mid September approximately 5,146 meals have been provided and over 660 volunteer hours have been donated toward this effort.

Funding for this program no longer exists; however, the volunteers have decided to provide Christmas meatloaf meals to the CMS Food Bank and the Cowichan Green Community along with a special meal prepared for the Malahat Nation in January.