

Minutes of the Farmers Institute Directors Meeting held on Monday, September 18, 2023 at 7 p.m. in the Youth Hall located at 3565 Watson Avenue in Cobble Hill.

Those present: Roger Painter – President, Roy Davies – Vice President, Robin Brett – Treasurer, Jayne Shaw, George Baird, Bill Wikkerink, Russell Dann and Gerry Giles – Secretary.

President Painter called the meeting to order at 7:01 and the agenda was accepted by consensus with the addition of one item under new business – Dumont catering supplies.

Moved/second

the June 19, 2023 minutes be accepted as circulated.

MOTION CARRIED

Moved/second

the minutes of the Fair Meeting of September 12, 2023 be accepted for information only.

MOTION CARRIED

Correspondence received:

- Card from Linda Bilkoski thanking the Farmers Institute for the flowers received with the passing of her husband and board member Dave Bilkoski
- Letter from Ron & Margaret Kuharski with \$200 donation in memory of Dave Bilkoski.

The following items of correspondence were received with action taken:

- August 17, 23 - Letter from Karon Chong – re Speed Limit on Cameron Taggart Road – individual action to be taken by the members of the Society on items like this and a letter stating such will be drafted and sent by the secretary.
- September 7, 23 email and attachments from Shelley Balme re obtaining FI support for their gravel extraction proposal on their property – individual action to be taken by the members of the Society on items like this and a letter stating such will be drafted and sent by the secretary.
- 4-H Letter re dogs at the Fair – the letter from 4-H pointed out the danger created when a dog entered the livestock area and charged at a farm animal in the showring. The woman who lost control of the dog said, “my dog has never seen a cow before.” The cow bolted and dragged the youth across the show ring before adults could intervene. A lengthy discussion ensued at the Board table about the responsibility of the Farmers Institute to keep 4-H members and all Fair goers safe during the Fair. The conclusion was, it really is unfair for us to expect people to be able to bring their animals into a crowd of thousands of people and expect the animal to be perfectly controllable. Some are but some are not. Moreover, we are accepting the risk by permitting dogs to be at the Fair. Not only were there incidents in the livestock and poultry areas, but a woman wanted to bring her very large dog in the hall. First and foremost, dogs, unless certified as a service or guide dog, are not permitted in the hall because it is a food service area; but secondly it was very crowded at the time and the woman had very little control over the dog. I (Gerry) told her the dog was not permitted in the hall and she just smiled... I then said her name and more firmly said her dog is not permitted in the hall. She left quite angry and I can almost guarantee she won't be back to the Fair. However, it does point to the need to have a policy about dogs at the Fair. Are they permitted? What do other Fairs do?

Moved/second

With the exception of certified service or guide dogs, dogs not be permitted at the Fair; and further, the board consult with Cowichan Exhibition to see what policies they have in place regarding 4-H and vendors.

MOTION CARRIED

President's Report – Roger said his focus has mainly been on the Fair and ensuring the grounds have been clean and in top shape for our visitors. He feels we have finally solved our electrical issues as they pertain to the Fair and vendors so he is very pleased with respect to that issue.

Treasurer's Report – Robin said she is pleased to report that despite lower crowds, the Fair did very well. There are still bills and some Sponsorship money to come in, so the figures may change somewhat. So far in this fiscal year the Meat Pie Program has also done very well, and there is still September and October to go. Now that the Grant has arrived from the CVRD, the Institute part of the statement looks better too. Hall and Grounds is in a deficit position, as usual, because rentals never equal the ongoing repairs and upgrades that we need or want to do to keep the hall up to date and in good condition. We have had some donations towards the new hall floor. We will need to have half the money set aside in order to apply for grants. Seedy Saturday made a bit of money and so did the Show and Shine. The United Way technical upgrade still has 17,978.47 left on that grant. The Catering Program is doing well, and we already have events booked over the next months. The Main Hall addition's deficit needs to be viewed knowing that the Grant money came in during the last fiscal year and is part of that year's accounting. This fiscal year we received the last of the grant and the difference of \$23,384.43 was our share of the costs for this project. This new addition was very helpful on Fair Day and will be of so much help to us in the Meat Pie Program and Catering. The extra freezer space allows us to buy when things are on sale and saves us so much time when we don't have to take everything into the basement to freeze.

On the Balance Sheet you will note that funds are set aside for the upcoming insurance bill and for the Fair floats, although this figure has been reduced substantially because of taking debit and credit cards at the fair gates. Right now, all the grant money for the technical upgrade is still in its own savings account because there was no real need to transfer it into the cheque account to pay bills, and it earns a bit of interest in the Savings account.

Moved/second

the treasurer's report be accepted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

Secretary's Report – Gerry reviewed the upcoming catering events and the menu for the Volunteer dinner on the 30<sup>th</sup> of September. She also went over the October Veteran's Dinner. Then gave the Rentals Report by providing the September and October rental calendars which were attached to the agenda.

New Business – Dumont – catering supplies – Saturday pickup – 10 am at his Hutchinson Road property.

Next Directors meeting – October 16, 2023

No further business the meeting adjourned at 7:52 pm

Submitted by,



Gerry Giles  
Secretary