

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Shawnigan Cobble Hill Farmers Institute and Agricultural Society held on November 27<sup>th</sup> 2023 at 7 pm in the Cobble Hill Hall located at 3550 Watson Avenue in Cobble Hill, BC.

Those present: Roger Painter – President; Roy Davies – Vice President; Robin Brett – Treasurer; Gord Dickenson, Bill Wikkerink, Russell Dann, Bill Davies, Lisa Davies, Marian Davies, Mike Wilson, Michael St. Clair, George Baird, Kathy Pringle, Karin Laurie, Betsy Burr, Linda Bilkoski, Scott Robertson and Gerry Giles – Secretary.

The President called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm after confirming the meeting had been properly advertised and duly called in accordance with the bylaws of the Society.

Moved/second

The minutes of the November 28, 2022 AGM be accepted as distributed.

MOTION CARRIED

There was no business arising out of those minutes.

**President's report:** Roger said his report will provide a general overview of the activities and challenges of this past year. He said will not be going into much detail on many of these issues as both our Treasurer and Secretary will be providing more depth in their individual reports. He said he is feeling positive about the overall results of this year's activities. He believes most of our endeavors we have been quite successful. We are back to holding all of the annual events we provided prior to Covid. Seedy Saturday was a great success, and we can see our way to increasing its value as a popular event for our society and community. The Cobble Hill Fair takes a lot of work, so we need to start as early as possible planning it. We also had some changes in terms of improving and providing a broader leadership group. Changes in these two areas worked well and I'm proud to say the Fair turned out to be a great success. He felt it was important to step in as Fair Chair this year in order to focus on our "being ready in advance" of our usual pace and filling key positions. Consequently, we had a very good Fair Committee this year.

We had a terrific crowd. Not as big as some years but none-the-less, people enjoyed themselves. It was tremendous to have a full and very active 4-H program for the first time in a while. It was a very successful and my hat is off to those organizers. As always, we provided an excellent venue for people to get out and visit their neighbors and enjoy the event. Our Fair needs to be dynamic and we will continue to add and improve on our activities. I'll leave the details to others to report on any specifics. I would like to mention in passing that we held a Volunteer Dinner for about 135 people that was very successful and appreciated by the volunteers. We need to recognize or volunteers more often.

Our success with the Pie Program continues to relieve any serious financial concerns we have had in the past for relying on the Fair, Rentals, and other fund-raising activities to

keep our finances in good shape. We are now moving into catering events for a variety of clients. This is proving to be successful and offers us another revenue source for the Institute. The bottom line is that with these types of financial successes we are more capable of tackling our larger and important long-term projects, currently and most notably being the Main Hall Floor.

We have had some other important events that also need reporting. The addition to the Hall was completed and is now fully operational, thanks to community donations and grant money. This will prove over time to be a great investment for our facilities as we move forward. No more storing of chairs and tables all over the Hall, a new office for managing events from and of course the walk-in freezer that so improves our ability to do catering and food preparation. We also received grant funding to improve some of our Fair capabilities, the improvement to our WiFi System, and improvements to our electrical capabilities. It offers us greater options to vendors and fairgoers alike, for money management and not having to rely on cash while allowing us greater control over our ticketing and other sales processes. We also received money, through a local grant, for the purchase of a new riding lawn mower. We have done very well tapping into Grant possibilities. Highlight in a glance:

1. Cobble Hill Fair
2. Seedy Saturday
3. Easter Egg Hunt
4. Volunteer Dinner
5. The Annual Car Show and Shine
6. Help with Music Concerts in the Commons
7. Help out with Remembrance Day
8. Completion of all construction related to the Addition
9. Installation and successful use of the new WiFi System
10. Increase in rentals from some more high-end clients (WIGA and Canadian Vintage Car Assn.) and requests for catered events
11. Support for the successful Seniors lunch program
12. Continued upkeep of Grounds and Facilities maintenance.
13. I'm sure I've missed a few things but for us to have accomplished all of this is quite remarkable and speaks to the one asset that we rely on heavily. Our volunteers.

Moving forward. There is always more work to do. More improvements. I look around and see an organization that is healthy and moving in the right direction. If I were to see any place that needs work, it is in the one area that is our greatest strength and can be our greatest weakness. That is with our volunteers. All of the events and activities we work on depend on a considerable group of people who come out and help for no reason other than to help their community. Making pies, time after time, attending, and working on various parts of the fair, keeping our land and building in good shape all require people

with a heart to come and give of their time. Sometimes that is the same people. And sometimes that is a bit too often. I think that this is the area that we need to look at more closely and find a way to improve. We are a very successful resource for our community. The one thing we rely on to make it work more than anything else is our Corps of Volunteers.

I said the following a year ago. 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 hold all our events. 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. I believe we are as strong now as we have ever been. But we need to recognize that nothing stands still.

Moving forward, I have been President for the past 4 years. We have seen a lot of changes and almost all of them have been very positive. I have been very fortunate and proud to be a part of those changes. I want to thank all of you for supporting and working with our executive, our board and myself in operating the Society over that time.

Moved/second

the president's report be accepted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

**Treasurer's report** – Robin reported the Farmers Institute financial position is in better shape now than it has been in quite a few years.

The chequing account is stable going into the new fiscal year and we have funds to finish off the Fair Technical Reserve Project by going underground for the gate electrical. Why is the gate electrical important? It will rid us of some big tripping hazards on Fair Day. We are also starting to build our fund for the new hall floor.

When we look at how our Current Earning for the year have accumulated our surplus, on the income statement we can see that Catering, Cobble Hill Fair, and Meat Pie program have all made a profit. Smaller programs like the Show and Shine and Seedy Saturday also showed profits. As mentioned, we still have money left in the Technical Upgrade program for the Fair. Hall and grounds is in an expected loss position because rentals never equal repairs on the property and buildings, however the loss on the Main Hall addition is simply the expected money we owed on the project, over and above the Federal grant we received.

And what an addition! It has saved volunteers so much time and energy in the Meat Pie Program, Catering, South Cowichan Seniors, and Fair Day; right through to dealing with rentals because we now have the convenient storage of tables and chairs. It has had a positive effect on pretty much every aspect of our hall and the programs we run.

Once more, thanks must go to the many wonderful volunteers that give so generously of their time and expertise in all of these programs. I am one volunteer. There is value in one. But I think we have demonstrated in what happens when you have the power of many, supporting each other in a common purpose. My thanks to all of you who have joined in that purpose.

Moved/second

the treasurer's report be accepted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

The treasurer then presented the 2024 Annual Budget for consideration by members of the Society present at the meeting. Robin noted the budget had been emailed to all members before the meeting.

Moved/second

The 2024 Annual Budget be adopted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

Moved/second

that Gay Wise be appointed as reviewer to conduct a review of the financial statement for SCHFIAS in 2024.

MOTION CARRIED

**Secretary's Report:** Gerry provided an overview of what she does as secretary of the Farmers Institute. She indicated in addition to keeping the minutes and records of the Society, now that we have entered the electronic age this also means entering these on our websites. The secretary's responsibilities have evolved to include the following:

1. Regularly updating both the Farmers Institute and the Cobble Hill Fair Websites, which she admitted to not doing often enough.
2. Rentals of all buildings, which includes taking deposits, rental agreements, insurance, setting door codes, checking building and controlling heat or air conditioning in the Cobble Hill Hall then checking the buildings after the rentals.
3. Searching for and writing grants and follow up reports for the grants is received and the work is completed.
4. Writing the annual report for the funds received from CVRD, which sets the stage for the next year's funding.
5. Working on all of the required government permits for all events including the Show & Shine and the Cobble Hill Fair.
6. Developing the Cobble Hill Fair Catalogue including working with others to sell ads to sponsors and creating some of the ads.
7. Take the lead on the Pot Pie program, which is a huge job and could not be accomplished without the help of all of the wonderful volunteers both Roger and Robin spoke of. During the month of October, our food safe volunteers made approximately 2,000 pot pies, which we sold in November.
8. Run the Seniors Lunch program, which again is run entirely by volunteers and gaining in popularity. We are now serving well over 115 at every meal and will serve about 150 at our Christmas lunch.
9. Take the lead on the newly developing catering program. I'm not sure how the catering program got started but it is gaining in popularity. Again, run by food safe

volunteers who serve high end; high class meals. We just finished catering to the Legions Veterans Dinner and they are still raving about the meal.  
10. Finally, I do all of the stuff no one else wants to do... with a smile!

Moved/second

that the secretary's report be accepted as presented.

MOTION CARRIED

There being no further reports the floor was turned over to Roy Davies – Vice President to conduct the election for the positions of president, secretary and 5 directors – 4 directors for 2-year terms and 1 director to fill a 1-year term being vacated by a director leaving the Board early.

Nominated for the position of President was Roger Painter

Nominated for the position of Secretary was Gerry Giles

Nominated for the positions of Directors for 2-year terms were: Gord Dickenson; Michael St. Clair; Scott Robertson and Bill Wikkerink.

Nominated for the position of Director for a 1-year term was: Betsy Burr.

There being no further nominations from the floor the above persons were declared elected by acclamation.

Correspondence – there was one item of correspondence – a thank you card from Ms. Baird who, as a member of 4-H, had won a Trophy at the Fair and was thanking the board for presenting it at trophy night.

There was no new business therefore the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Submitted by,



Gerry Giles,  
Secretary