

GABRIOLA COMMUNITY BUS FOUNDATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - October 28, 2021

Directors Report

▶ The Gabriola Community Bus Foundation (GCBF) has come through another challenging year. With relief funds and donations, the board set a list of priorities including (1) new bus expenses; (2) restoration of the PM two-bus service; (3) shifting drivers to employees. These priorities have all been completed.

▶ Discussions and negotiations have been ongoing for some time between the GCBF and the Gabriola Fire Department to determine the possibility of GERTIE moving its operations to the old fire hall.

GERTIE is an essential service, part of the emergency services network on Gabriola Island, and therefore an ideal tenant for the building. However, the building needs to be renovated to 21st century sustainable standards. GCBF applied for and was successful in receiving \$187,847 funding under the federal Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program (CERIP). The building is now being upgraded to sustainable standards including plumbing and electrical upgrades and installation of solar panels and heat pumps. We have reached a rental and emergency service agreement with the Gabriola Fire Department. Renovations are ongoing.

▶ In December of 2020 a large tree fell on the bus (Jay D) as it was traveling through the Tunnel. The driver was not hurt but there was significant damage to the bus and it was declared a write-off.

▶ In February 2021 GCBF purchased a new bus. The online naming contest (with 84 participants!) resulted in the name *Pegasus*.

▶ Members of the GCBF Board and the BC Community Bus Coalition (BCCBC) have met with the Minister of Transportation, Rob Fleming, to press for (1) provincial funding for community buses at the same 50% level as BC Transit; (2) to provide funding for Covid-related expenses; and (3) for free rides for kids 12 and under (GERTIE instituted this BC Transit directive on September 1st).

▶ The SUSO (Stepping Up Stepping Out) program for seniors was suspended for a year and a half due to COVID. It restarted on September 25th with bus service provided by GERTIE.

▶ As well, GERTIE assisted with delivery of prepared Christmas meals for the Spirit Feast. And also provided transportation to the Covid vaccination clinics and free transportation for voters on election day. GCBF wishes to express our gratitude to GERTIE'S many supporters either as direct donors or as supporters of Nesters Market community programs