

**Minutes of the Gabriola Community Bus Foundation Annual General Meeting,
Thursday, October 28, 2021**

GCBF Board present: Carol Billyard, Helen Cook, Steven Earle, Katharine Patterson, Susan Yates

Others present: Darla Jamieson, Erin Udal, Trevor Gear, Co-ordinator, Chih-Chao Wu, driver, Tracy Begg, driver, Vanessa Craig, RDN Director, Kees Langereis, Island Trust, Dinah D., Barry Patterson.

The Zoom meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. Susan Yates welcomed those present and thanked our elected representatives, Vanessa and Kees, for attending.

Carol Billyard presented the Directors' Report. She began by inviting Trevor Gear to give a brief account of the year from his perspective as the coo-ordinator. Trevor said that it had been another challenging year because of the pandemic but he was optimistic that things will continue to improve. A full schedule is back in place again and the new Route B, now a loop thanks to the Spruce Ave connector, seems to be working well. Gertie's new home at the old fire hall will give good accessibility and protection to the buses since two can be parked inside. Two new drivers have been hired. Scott Smith, a longtime driver and former volunteer driver, has retired. Carol's report covered the move to the old fire hall and its renovation, the resumption of the Stepping Up, Stepping Out program for seniors and the loss of one of the buses when it was hit by a falling fir tree.

Steve presented a graph which shows the ridership week by week to the end of September over three years, 2019, 2020 and 2021. He pointed out 2020 started very well with ridership exceeding the ridership in 2019 for 11 weeks until the COVID lock down. The ridership then fell to its lowest point of 100 passengers in a week before very slowly increasing. Ridership in 2021 has continued on an upward trend although we are not yet at the levels of 2019. Two questions were raised: were all the drivers vaccinated and did we expect ridership to increase on route B with the connector?

Katharine gave an informal financial report in which she contrasted the low point of 2020, the loss of one of the buses, with the brighter outlook of the early months of 2021. Over \$23,000 in donations were received between October 2020 and January 2021. We applied for and received a grant from the RDN of \$27,235 to cover our lost fare and charter revenue in 2020 and our expenses for COVID related supplies like masks. These funds allowed us to set three priorities: replace the lost bus; reinstate the dual bus AM and PM schedules and shift the drivers from contractors to employees. All of these objectives have now been accomplished. Vanessa requested that a copy of the report be sent to her.

Steve presented the proposed budget for 2022. As usual, the figures are based on the actuals for 2020 to September, pro-rated to cover the full calendar year. The budget shows the expenses and in another column the expenses plus 2% COLA. A few expenses such as fuel are expected to

increase above the actuals for 2020 because the cost of fuel has risen quite dramatically from its low point early in 2020.

Since it is difficult to predict what effect the pandemic may have on our revenue in 2022, the assumptions are conservative. The budget is unbalanced because it shows a deficit but it may be less than shown if the revenue exceeds the cautious assumptions. A question was raised whether the COLA would be increased from 2% if the inflation rate continues to be double that amount. Vanessa explained that our new agreement with the RDN stipulates that COLA will be paid each year at 2%. Vanessa asked what the current price of diesel fuel is and whether we are still using biodiesel. Another question asked what the primary barrier is to getting provincial funding at the same rate (50%) as BC Transit.

The budget was approved.

Helen called for nominations for Directors. Hearing none, she presented Darla Jamieson as a candidate. Her appointment was approved. Carol Billyard's reappointment for 2 years was also approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45.