

GABRIOLA LAND AND TRAILS TRUST
Annual General Meeting
Tuesday February 2, 2021; by Zoom webinar.

GaLTT's President Rob Brockley called the meeting to order at 7pm,
recognizing that we met on the unceded Coast Salish lands of the Snunémuxw First Nation.

GaLTT AGM business meeting

Two weeks before the AGM meeting public notification was placed in the local newspaper, and Secretary Gehlbach circulated to GaLTT members by email all documents needed for the meeting: AGM Agenda; a copy of the existing wording and proposed changed wording of Bylaw # Part 13 (3a); Financial reports for 2020; draft 2020 AGM minutes presented for approval; slate of candidates for Board membership; biographies of Board members and candidates; and our 2021 newsletter.

1. Before beginning the formalities of the meeting, Brockley paid special tribute to Rose Jones, a dear friend as well as a long-time member and enthusiastic broom-bashing volunteer of GaLTT, who died last summer. She will be missed.

A quorum of GaLTT members being present, Brockley welcomed a record-breaking 60 members (some two to a screen) to our Covid-bound electronic AGM. He presented the proposed agenda.

MOTION: proposed by Nola Johnston, seconded by Kerry Marcus to approve the agenda as presented. CARRIED

2. **MINUTES:** Secretary Jenni Gehlbach presented the minutes from the previous AGM held March 3, 2020.

MOTION: proposed by Jenni Gehlbach, seconded by Anne Landry, to approve the minutes for the 2020 AGM as presented. CARRIED.

3. PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT:

Brockley noted that our Society's focus is threefold:

- Conservation and protection of natural habitats
- Development and maintenance of public trails
- Public education and awareness

He then presented the President's Report for 2020 first outlining the work of the Executive Committee and then inviting the various Committee heads to report on their work during the past year.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT—Chair Rob Brockley

Members: Brockley, Landry, Johnston, Shoemaker, and Gehlbach

- **Strategic planning:** revised and approved the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan, which was prepared by Wave Consulting.
- **Committee restructuring:**
 - Formed a new, stand-alone Conservation Committee following identification during Strategic Planning of conservation as a key purpose.
 - Separated the Membership committee from Finance committee.
 - Reassigned some responsibilities between existing committees.
- **Policy and procedures review:**
 - Reviewed Canadian Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices—the “best practices” for land trusts.
 - Created a Statement of Ethics for Board approval.

- Revised existing policies and developed new policies as needed to match
- **Advocacy with various agencies:**
 - To redesign and build Spring Beach access stairs.
 - To purchase new parkland
 - To protect Coats Marsh.
 - To prevent unauthorized trail-building on Federal/Provincial lands.
- **Liaison with Government agencies (RDN, BC Parks, Islands Trust, MOTI):**
 - With RDN to install Phase 2 of the new wayfinding system in 707 Community Park
 - Contribute \$57,000 toward the RDN’s purchase of an extension of 707 parkland adjacent to Coats Marsh.
 - Discuss a formal volunteer agreement with RDN.
 - Discuss accessibility improvement projects with RDN and BC Parks
 - Apply to BC Parks for accessibility improvements and shoreline erosion protection at Twin Beaches (Gabriola Sands Provincial Park)
 - Management contracts with IT at Elder Cedar Nature Reserve
 - IT Coastal Douglas Fir information sheet for Gabriola Island.
 - Discuss with IT signage improvements at Elder Cedar.
 - Resolve permitting issues re trails and boardwalks on undeveloped rights of way.
 - Discuss removal of danger trees from undeveloped rights of way
- **Improving accessibility.**
 - Formed new standing Accessibility Subcommittee (chaired by member Laurie Webster, with Danenhowe, Gehlbach, Landry, and members Tom Cameron and Sally Bullas.)
 - Developed list of potential accessibility projects.
 - Successfully applied to BC Parks for a PEF grant to improve accessibility at Pilot Bay in Gabriola Sands Provincial Park (Twin Beaches).
- **Nature Stewards.**
 - Designed a framework for a Nature Stewards program.
 - Produced seven “nature tips” videos.
 - Reviewed and revised grant applications to potential funding partners.
 - Contracted to develop a Nature Tips factsheet.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT—Chair Anne Landry. Members: Rob Brockley, Tom Cameron, Nola Johnston, Frank Shoemaker; and Peter Danenhowe (who left the committee in December ’20).

- **Acquisitions:**
 - The BIG news for 2020: GaLTT contributed \$57,000 from our Acquisitions Fund toward the purchase of the 3.5 hectare “remainder parcel” omitted during the previous parkland acquisition. It includes a major moisture catchment area for Coats Marsh, has important ecological considerations, and good trail connections, being contiguous with 707 CP.
- **Conservation Planning:**
 - Held a Conservation Planning Workshop in February with a group of relevantly knowledgeable Gabriolans.
 - Created a list of properties with ecological significance and further analysis and action are underway.
 - Reviewed and revised policy.
- **Covenants:**
 - Annual monitoring of Elder Cedar, Robinson Woods, and the Bachmann property.
 - Invasive plant removal, including reed canary grass at Elder Cedar, and boardwalk construction to protect wetlands were the significant follow-up actions.

ACTION: Landry requested members to let the committee know if they know of properties appropriate for a conservation covenant.

- **Liaison with other organizations and agencies:**
 - Trees for Tomorrow initiative from Hornby Island, plans to plant 10,000 trees on Gulf Islands each year. They hope to launch on Gabriola this Spring.
 - Attended Ecosystem-Based Adaptation Workshop by Islands Trust.
 - Discussed with Gabriola Museum the conservation covenant on the McRae property

TRAIL OPERATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT—Chair Barry Moerkerken (who took over from Peter Danenhower in December). Other committee members: Rob Brockley, Lars Hulstein, Peter Danenhower, David Skinner, and Hugh Skinner. Barry noted that many anonymous people help keep the trails clear outside of our work parties and we thank them all.

- **Volunteers worked 281 labour-hours** during 2020—just 67% of 2019 hours, but amazing considering the required Covid distancing and group activity restrictions. He thanked the volunteers.
- **Over 48 km (30 miles) of trails were trimmed mostly by Don Machell** single-handedly, with occasional help from two others. They used the electric trimmers purchased by GaLTT early in the year.
- **Trail improvement:**
 - Ditches were dug along the Nelder’s Pond licensed trail and along the Keith Drive ROW to help direct and drain water from the trails. More work is required.
 - In Joyce Lockwood Community Park, committee made its first venture into split-rail fencing, installing about 40 feet. More will be installed elsewhere.
- **Boardwalks:**
 - Installed under Islands Trust contract two boardwalks totaling 165 feet in the entry to Elder Cedar from Windecker Drive.
 - Upgraded the first of four boardwalks in Robinson Woods were upgraded.
 - Repaired 200 feet of the existing boardwalk at Gabriola Commons and added 300 feet of anti-slip mesh to the system for safety.
 - Volunteer Jamie Doig built a beautiful resting bench from wood donated by former board member Tom Cameron. It will be installed later on the McConvery Trail in Cox Park.

SHORELINE ACCESS AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORT—Chair: GaLTT member Hugh Skinner with committee members Rob Brockley, Kyle Clifford, Peter Danenhower, Nola Johnston, Laura-Jean Kelly, and Sarah Kopjar. This committee was created in 2019 to catalogue and assess the status of all the public shore accesses on Gabriola. It dissolved in October 2020 after completing its work.

- **Committee identified 112 accesses** mostly on MOTI Rights of Way or in public parks.
- **Committee surveyed them all** and categorized 63 as “developed” and 49 as “undeveloped”.
- **They developed assessment forms, a data base, and a summary spreadsheet** to evaluate the status potential and community importance of each access.
- **Their Assessment Summary** had general notes and recommendations for potential follow-up by GaLTT’s Board and committees.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE REPORT—Chair Lou Skinner with committee members: Peter Danenhower, Suzanne Christopher, Libby Gunn, Sally Bullas, and Paula Gray There are also many volunteers. Because of Covid limitations t group activities, the committee’s activities were based on the strategic goal; **“Continue to play an important role in community health and well-being by creating and maintaining trails and encouraging their use.”**

- **ABC Walks:** On the first Saturdays o f January, February and March there were good turnouts of walkers for our A, B, C WALKS led by Board members Rebecca, Nola, and Libby, and based on the GaLTT map’s identified walk areas.

- **Where on Earth?** This “Treasure Hunt” asked participating walkers to identify 8 photographed locations on our public trails. People who completed the hunt received wildflower seed packets created for Gabriola’s environment. One was difficult because a deer ate the leaves of the seedling!
- **Great Winter Walkabout**, to help Gabriolans get through the Covid winter the committee launched their most successful event ever. For 12 weeks from November 2020 to February 2021 we distributed a small map and description of trail loops in different neighbourhoods scattered all around the island to encourage Covid-bound walkers to get out and explore a new neighbourhood. Those who filled their trail journals were eligible to win a prize of a Patagonia day pack or a head lamp donated by North Road Sports. We are grateful to them and to Gabriola Recreation Society for their generous contributions to this initiative.
- **Market, map sales, and community contact:** we attended only three Saturday Farmers’ Markets before they became too difficult to manage safely during Covid.
 - Trail maps continued to be available at our generous vendors: Page’s Resort, Gabriola Museum, North Road Sports, Mid-Island Co-op, and the Visitor Information Centre. We sold 720 in 2020.
 - We participated in the Welcome Home program to provide information to newcomers about our trails and activities.
- **Land-based learning and reconciliation.** The strategic goal of this initiative is to connect with Snunéymuxw First Nation and/or the Hul’qumi’num Treaty Group stakeholders to identify areas of potential common interest.
 - GaLTT participates in community Zoom meetings set up by Land-Based Learning for Reconciliation project team (a collaboration between SFU and Snuneymuxw and Gabriola elementary School.)
 - Planned projects (postponed because of Covid) include students learning about the Garry oak ecosystem and restoration and a wildcrafting presentation with Nancy Turner and SFN elders.

INVASIVES COMMITTEE REPORT—Chair Libby Gunn, with Committee members. Linda Hellenius, Lou Skinner, Jewel Walker, and Susan Yates. A large group of volunteers work regularly. Its Mission Statement is *“To take a role in a collaborative effort to preserve native ecosystems on Gabriola Island and to eradicate, limit, or prevent the establishment of invasive species with methods that have the least detrimental impact to other organisms.”*

- **Volunteers everywhere!** This committee’s volunteers put in 627 volunteer hours in organized activities this year and even more on their own. THANK YOU ALL.
 - More than 400 volunteer-hours of species removal in provincial parks despite limits on group sizes through the spring
 - 368 hours in Drumbeg and 32 hours at Twin Beaches.
 - The work in Drumbeg included prepping and seeding small test plots at Drumbeg.
- **Invasive species removal:**
 - Primary focus was work parties to remove Scotch broom and Daphne laurel, but also some work on holly, Tansy ragwort and ivy.
 - Don Hare came to show us how to remove Giant hogweed and to assess Japanese knotweed.
 - We increased our focus on encouraging landowners and residents to remove invasive species on their properties.
- **Disposal** remains a difficult problem and huge efforts to find solutions are underway. We continue conversations with RDN, Islands Trust and others to find a disposal solution. Current

options are to compost on site or elsewhere, or to take the culled invasives to the RDN landfill in Cedar, which is expensive. We are looking for a local solution.

- **Working with BC Parks:**
 - Organized BC Parks student work crews to help with removal of cut invasives at Drumbeg and to map *Daphne laurel* in the park.
 - Met with BC Parks on various issues including neighbour relations, new boundary signage, illegal cutting, and archeological work.
 - Park Enhancement Fund: we successfully applied for a \$5000 grant for invasive plant management and restoration work at Drumbeg Park. This allowed us to contract an expert to assess requirements and provide two seed mixes, which were seeded in late Fall in areas previously cleared of broom.
- **Broom-cutting research:** Volunteers Linda Hellenius and Kim Kasasian established test plots to assess best removal strategies for broom. First year results suggest broom can still be cut when immature seedpods have formed. This would extend our broom-cutting window of opportunity.
- **Elder Cedar:** The committee supported Islands Trust conservancy work in the Nature Reserve, to remove Reed Canary Grass and to revegetate around the Elder Cedar.
- **Neighbours at work!** Committee coordinated with neighbours of Robinson Woods to remove *Daphne laurel* in January. The neighbours continued to remove and monitor invasive species. GaLTT continues to encourage others remove invasive species in their neighbourhoods.
- **Outreach about invasives removal:**
 - Committee visited properties to assess and identify invasive species and advise on removal.
 - They also provided information by phone and email, and by lending equipment.
 - They published photos and articles on Facebook and updated information on the website.
 - A group of 40 interested individuals have received 10 updates.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT—Co-chairs Jenni Gehlbach and Nola Johnston with membership coordinator Rebecca Furnell. In addition to recording of meeting minutes and digital and paper file storage of records, the committee does:

- **Digital and print communications:**
 - Regular email communication with members and volunteers with news of our activities and invitations to participate
 - Regular updates to GaLTT's website with current activities and up-to-date information.
 - With Community Engagement Committee, we keep our Facebook friends in the loop about activities and achievements and join relevant discussions on the Community Bulletin Boards.
 - Post some neat pictures of trails and activities to our *gabriolatrails* Instagram account.
 - Write articles for The Sounder newspaper and our own annual Newsletter.
- **Special projects:** our Digital Trail Atlas is on hold because of other projects but will continue in 2021. The great Winter Walkabout routes will be included.
- **Design and layout**
 - Promotional material including posters and newspaper advertisements,
 - Our AGM slideshow presentation.
 - Annual newsletter layout
 - Planning maps and other map-making
 - New trails signage

- Treasure Hunt ads, brochure, seed packaging, and colouring page
- Great Winter Walkabout ads, information sheets, and trail journal.

4. SPECIAL RESOLUTION TO REVISE BYLAW PART 13 (3a):

Brockley had previously circulated to members copies of the proposed bylaw wording and an explanation of the need for change. Some concern was expressed by a member that removing the restriction on “motorized users” might increase traffic and noise in the parks from vehicles like motorbikes or ATVs. Brockley explained that neither RDN nor BC Parks allowed those types of vehicles in their parks, but *did* allow e-bikes, so our previous bylaw wording was inappropriate.

MOTION proposed by Frank Shoemaker, seconded by Jenni Gehlbach that the Bylaw Part 13 (3a) be revised as follows:

Plan, develop, maintain, conserve, and promote a sustainable network of trails that provide routes to connect and explore island neighbourhoods, parks, shore accesses and services, and engage and educate to encourage the responsible use of them.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. TREASURER’S REPORT:

Frank Shoemaker presented the 2020 Financial Statement, which had been previously distributed to members. Highlights were:

RECEIPTS & DISBURSEMENTS

Receipts: TOTAL = \$32,641

| | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Memberships & donations: | = \$22,788 |
| Special projects | = \$5,323 |
| Map/market sales: | = \$3,906 |
| Investment income: | = \$624 |

Disbursements: TOTAL = \$22,507

| | |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| Community engagement: | = \$4,500 |
| Trail maintenance: | = \$4,242 |
| Elder Cedar contract: | = \$4,069 |
| BC Parks: | = \$2,164 |
| Invasive species control | = \$1,345 |
| Communications | = \$336 |
| Nature Stewards | = \$700 |
| Workshops | = \$454 |
| Operations | = \$4,697 |

Excess of receipts over disbursements: = TOTAL = \$10,134

Receipts and disbursements for Land Acquisition: Net (disbursement) = (\$45,553)

Receipts (donation to acquisition fund) = \$11,447

Disbursements (to RDN to assist purchase of 707 land) = \$57,000

FUND BALANCES:

| | Land Acquisition | Accessibility improvement | Stewardship | Unallocated | TOTAL |
|------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| Balance beginning year | \$55,056 | \$6,500 | \$15,953 | \$74,190 | \$151,357 |
| Allocations from general revenue | \$5,000 | | | (\$5,000) | — |
| Donations | \$11,447 | | | | \$11,447 |
| Operating result | | | | \$10,134 | \$10,134 |
| Excess receipts over disbursements | (\$57,000) | | | (\$1,288) | (\$57,000) |
| TOTAL | \$14,503 | \$6,500 | \$15,953 | \$79,324 | \$116,280 |

FINANCIAL POSITION December 31, 2020

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Credit Union accounts and term deposit | \$111,960 |
| Receivables, prepaids, and inventory: | \$4,320 |
| <u>TOTAL</u> | <u>\$116,280</u> |

BUDGET FORECAST for 2021 compared to 2020:

| | 2021 Budget | 2020 Actual |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Receipts | \$33,900 | \$32,640 |
| Disbursements (details below) | \$33,800 | \$22,510 |
| Excess receipts over disbursements | \$100 | \$10,130 |

2021 BUDGET BY ACTIVITY

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| Trail maintenance: | \$9,000 |
| Operations (insurance, accounting, memberships) | \$6,500 |
| Nature Stewards | \$6,300 |
| Pilot Bay Accessibility | \$5,000 |
| Invasives | \$3,500 |
| Community Engagement | \$1,500 |
| Communications | \$1,000 |
| Conservation | \$1,000 |
| <u>TOTAL =</u> | <u>\$33,800</u> |

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT—Chair Rebecca Furnell, with Shoemaker and Gehlbach. Since Furnell was unable to attend, Shoemaker reported for membership committee.

As of December 31, 2020, there were 235 memberships:

- 6 honorary lifetime members
- 35 monthly donors (CAFT, Canada Helps, CCCU direct)
- 41 5-year individual members
- 67 5-year family members
- 42 1-year individual members
- 44 1-year family members.

Board expressed thanks to our members for their financial support. Membership dues in most years are our main source of revenue, enabling our work for conservation, parks, and trails.

6. VOLUNTEER ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Our successes are the result of hundreds of hours of valuable volunteer time and labour on the trails and in our parks, much of it done by individuals (some anonymous) as well as in our organized work parties, which were much diminished this year due to Covid.

On behalf of the Trails Committee, Barry Moerkerken paid special tribute to

- Don Machell, who single handedly trimmed nearly all Gabriola's trails this year.
- Hugh Skinner, who worked tirelessly in nearly all work parties throughout the year.

On behalf of the Invasives Committee, Libby Gunn paid special tribute for their constant hard work eliminating invasive plants to

- Linda Hellenius
- Suzanne Christopher

7. BOARD ELECTION: Landry noted that current two board members are stepping down from the board at this meeting: Peter Danenhower and Lou Skinner.

GaLTT'S by-laws allow there to be between 5 and 15 board members. Landry presented the 2021 slate of Board candidates and called three times for nominations from the floor.

SLATE of candidates for 2021:

- Current Directors continuing for one more year of their term (5):
 - Anne Landry
 - Kerry Marcus
 - Barry Moerkerken
 - Allan Posthuma
 - Frank Shoemaker
- Current Directors standing for re-election to a 2-year term (5)
 - Rob Brockley

- Rebecca Furnell
- Jenni Gehlbach
- Libby Gunn
- Nola Johnston
- New Nominations for a 2-year term (5)
 - Lars Hulstein
 - Pat Jacobsen
 - Sara Kopjar
 - Hugh Skinner
 - Tom Wojcik

ELECTION: There being no further nominations from the floor, and no objections from the floor to the slate presented, the 15 directors and candidates listed were unanimously acclaimed as GaLTT’s Board Directors until the next AGM.

8. **Thanks to departing members and welcome to new Board members:** Brockley thanked the retiring Directors Lou Skinner and Peter Danenhower for their excellent, hard-working, high-energy service, and displayed some grand photographs of them both at work. Brockley also welcomed the five new Board members, noting that all of GaLTT’s successes are the result of the high value of volunteer time and labour both of our member volunteers “in the field” and the Board members “in house”.
9. **Questions from the floor:** Brockley clarified to one member that the “remainder parcel” acquisition for 707 Community Park that GaLTT contributed to would be wholly owned by RDN. There being no further questions or comments from the floor, Brockley thanked the members for participating in our first Zoom AGM commenting that it attracted more participants than usual, even without a guest speaker.
10. **Adjournment.** There being no further business to attend to, Jenni Gehlbach moved to adjourn the meeting at 9pm. Carried.

Minutes recorded by Jenni Gehlbach.