

BOWEN ISLAND CONSERVANCY

DRAFT Minutes, Annual General Meeting 28 November 2020

1:00 to 3:00 pm

Venue: via Zoom

Chair: Owen Plowman

Meeting was called to order at 1:06 p.m.

Announcements

- Salt Spring Island Conservancy is presenting an evening of stories: December 1st
- *Stories from the Bay – Jan.20 at 6:00 pm – Deadline is December 11, 2020 to get your story in from Mannion Bay*

Business Part of Meeting

- Agenda approved
- 2019 AGM minutes approved

Report from the Chair

Nature Reserves

Fairy Fen (FF) and Singing Woods (SW) are owned by Islands Trust Conservancy (ITC) and monitored by BI Conservancy.

Usually annual visit from a ITC monitor, not done this year, but all is well, some informal monitoring. Have received \$400 honorarium to remove some invasive species at SW. Thank you to Everhard who did the work. Had some dangerous trees removed from SW.

At FF, received info that the sign by the boundary had fallen over. Again thank you to Everhard for fixing this. Still waiting for the viewing platform to be approved – need permits from BIM

ITC has proposed that BIC do the monitoring this year along with the McIntyre Covenant and the David Otter Nature Reserve – waiting for paperwork from ITC.

Speaker Series

Pre-COVID events: Screened documentary *Unearthed* – about hydraulic fracking – in January. Vicky Husband gave a presentation in February.

We published and held a virtual launch celebration of the Marine Atlas in May. A few Mannion Bay events took place: exploring tidal flats in August and eel grass planting in September.

Herring Fishery – John Rich

Background- commercial herring fishery -very controversial -First Nations have used it as a principal source of food, important to their culture, some critical of DFO science, Coast is divided into 5 areas – 4 of which are closed due to low stocks.

The 5th area is Strait of Georgia, now estimated to be about 60% of what they were 3 years ago.

Several board members - Bob, Ellen and John - visited Hornby Island last spring – Conservancy there held a big meeting with a number of speakers on every aspect of the fishery. We struck a Conservancy Committee with Ellen Coburn, Peter Williamson, Bob Turner and John Rich - held one meeting so far. Intention is to try to pressure the government, to collaborate with Hornby and other groups, to build a coalition of Howe Sound environmental groups, to protect Howe Sound from this fishery. We may have more impact if we focus on Howe Sound.

Status as Land Trust

At beginning of year, issue came up to assess whether or not we as an organization were empowered to hold land. We have this power in our Constitution. We are moving to adopt the Canadian Land Trust Standards and Practices. Moving towards eligibility to receive eco gifts under federal government scheme.

The recent park acquisition at Cape Roger Curtis is moving us towards being a much different organization.

Mt. Gardner and motorized vehicles

Earlier this year, Owen met with Kevan Barnards from Trail Riders Association – the organization working with Crown to upgrade the trails for ATVs – BIC wrote a letter to Tom Blackbird from Ministry – sent off in June. Expressing our strong opposition. Work continuing on this.

Donations

Have received support from several organizations/businesses on Bowen including BI Sea Kayaking, Phoenix on Bowen. Both have the Marine Atlas in their shops.

Other donations: we have received about \$10,000 in last few weeks specifically for the Cape park.

ITC opportunity fund gave us \$5000 to pay for the land appraisal that we had done to assist with negotiations for the three lots.

Anonymous donors gave us \$9.4 million to purchase, pay GST and set aside some money to start first year's operations. Extremely grateful for that.

Back page of Undercurrent appeared this week – full ad to say thank you to the Conservancy and the anonymous donors, from a group of people on Bowen who paid for this ad.

Marine Atlas

Started off as a result of seeing the Hornby Island Marine Atlas. Project plan put together, published in May 2020 on time and on budget. Printed one run and have done a second print run. Launched via zoom in May. Phase 2 – website development – is under way – will be completed in next few months. Current focus is on Mannion Bay.

Bob Turner reported that a core group decided to focus on a part of Bowen as a continuation of Marine Atlas work; contacted David Suzuki Foundation who have done a conservation assessment of all of Howe Sound (on line); Bowen has a number of areas identified as high conservation values. Five or six different high bio-diversity areas. Spoke with Bonny Brokenshire at BIM who suggested Mannion Bay – great public access: 2 public beaches, the causeway access, history of First Nations and early settlement shows it has been a centre of Bowen activity. Recently a source of conflict in terms of use of the waters – anchorages, derelict vessels, etc. Project conducted by Sea Change Society (Fiona Beatty). Created an informal working group to discuss what each group is doing. Recently, gave a talk with a movie about the bay and looking at whole system as a critical estuary – and seeing how it all functions together. Will, Len Susan and Bob (the original foursome who created the Marine Atlas) are pulling together website content – want to pull together natural history stories for the bay, tell the stories, perhaps with an interactive map.

Next step: story telling event – hosted by a Howe Sound group that Fiona Beatty leads. Dec.11 is deadline for getting your stories in. Important for people who know the bay to participate.

Cape Roger Curtis Park

BI Conservancy takes possession on Dec.16th - 32 acres – a tremendous achievement.

Next Year Projects:

- Focus on things at the park
- Working on getting the viewing platform for FF
- More work on the herring fishery
- Dealing with Mt. Gardner
- Engaging with BIM as appropriate – recently commented to Province on Ecclestone Beach and to BIM on the DVP for Whitesails property.

Financial Statements (included in the AGM slides)

- Review of Financial Statement of Income and Expenses (up to June 30, 2020)– Paula, Treasurer

Board members

Directors whose term is up have agreed to carry on. No nominations from the floor. (Owen asked 3 times). Full Board is as follows:

- o Leo Chan
- o Ellen Coburn
- o Allie Drake
- o Owen Plowman (President)
- o Nerys Poole (Secretary)
- o Bob Turner
- o Paula Hay (Treasurer)
- o Peter Williamson
- o John Rich
- o Louise Loik

Other Business - none

The formal business portion of the meeting concluded at 1:55 pm

Break: 10 minutes

Presentation:

1. Owen presented a map and photos of the new park acquisition at Cape Roger Curtis.
2. Bob presented his video of the new park acquisition.
3. Sue Ellen Fast presented information about the mosses and lichens on the coastal bluffs.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Bowen Island Conservancy
Nerys Poole, Secretary