

Minutes of the Cowichan Station/Glenora/Sahtlam parks and Recreation Commission Annual General Meeting, held on January 29th, 2013 at the HUB, Cowichan Station

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 by Chairman Frank McCorkell.

Introductions

Director Loren Duncan introduced the Commission members as well as Mr. Roland Brown, a past member of the Commission for many years. At this point Director Duncan requested the members of the public to introduce themselves.

Purpose of the Meeting

It was mentioned that the meeting would provide everyone a general outline on the work undertaken by the Commission over the past twelve months (2012) as well as nominate a total of five new Commission members to serve during 2013. There will be an additional four individuals appointed by Director Duncan to the Commission, thus bringing the total to nine.

Minutes

The Minutes of the 2012 Annual General Meeting were distributed to all present and reviewed. There were no questions as to the contents and accepted as presented. Past 2012 budget numbers along with the proposed 2013 budget were distributed as well.

The Chair's Report

Chairman Frank McCorkell outlined the work already undertaken at the new park that is across from the Sahtlam fire hall, as well as the improvements to be undertaken during the 2013 fiscal year. This will include installing new picnic tables, playground equipment, some of which will be made of metal and portions of wood, additional fencing and a parking lot area.

Chairman McCorkell then discussed the improvements at the Glenora Trails Head Park which included the completion of the cookhouse, which he said was becoming well used by many individuals and groups. Director Duncan added that this park, developed over the past number of years, is of the highest standard with quality facilities and extremely well used, drawing people from not only the local area but from throughout the Cowichan Valley and far beyond. People, he mentioned, not only stop at the park when using the Trans Canada Trail (Cowichan Valley Trail), but use it as a gateway to the other trails and to our Cowichan River Community Park, just a fifteen minute walk away.

There was also a brief mention of other parklands purchased by the Regional District within Electoral Area 'E' that will add to the overall public lands inventory but were funded through the Regional Parks function.

Agenda Topics

1. 2011 Sahtlam Parks and Recreation Survey

Director Duncan provided the assembly with copies of both the questionnaire and 2011 survey results. He then spoke about why a survey was warranted in the Sahtlam area. He mentioned that the Commission did not want to 'impose' what they *thought* the community should have but rather ask the community *what they wanted* and through the survey the results provided the Commission with excellent ideas that were much appreciated and gave them direction to provide, among other things, new park land within the Sahtlam area. This survey will be referred to in the future and assist the Commission with the development of other new parks and trails.

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Electoral Area E Parks and Recreation Commission Annual General Meeting, January 29, 2013 continued:

Marie Hogg from Fairbridge suggested we should have a similar survey for the Cowichan Station area. Commission member Patty John mentioned that there have been regular community meetings hosted by the Cowichan Station Area Association to gain the pulse of the community since 2007. The next one will be held on February 2nd. Nevertheless, Chairman McCorkell believed a similar survey could be undertaken and would be distributed to all households within the Cowichan Station area, most likely in the fall. Community discussion of the Cowichan station survey results would then follow.

There was a brief discussion about the HUB development, (applause) as well as the possibility of the elimination of the *two-tier fees now charged to residents of Area E to use the Aquatic centre in North Cowichan. Director Duncan outlined what is proposed at the present time. *(Area E residents, among others, who do not contribute annual funding assistance through their property taxes, are charged an additional fee to use the facility)

Director Duncan also discussed the very strong desire to have a 50/50 split of monies allocated for parks and recreation facilities used by and paid for by residents of Electoral Area 'E'. He mentioned that he wants to see 50¢ of every \$1 stay within the electoral area to assist with the purchase, development and maintenance of present and future parks, trails, facilities and recreational programs, the remaining funds would be available for recreation facilities outside of Area "E". He mentioned that at the moment the Islands Savings Centre is costing Area "E" homeowners ~ \$67 per \$100,000 assessment on their property, with local parks costing the same homeowner ~ \$33. The two\$ to one\$ imbalance may need addressing, public awareness and discussion is needed. The vision and goal is to have local facilities that will be well used, of high quality and meet the needs of the local community whether it be Sahtlam, Cowichan Station or Glenora so residents don't have to travel to the valley's major urban area as much as at present.

Nominations for the Park Commission for 2013

The following residents were nominated, and acclaimed, at the meeting for a one year term;
Patty John, Paul Slade, Mike Lees, Irene Evans, and Larry Whetstone.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.