

South Surrey Garden Club
Minutes of General Meeting
23 May 2018 St. Mark's Anglican Church

Welcome and Announcements

President Lee Bolton Robinson welcomed new members.

Thanks were extended to all the volunteers for the Plant Sale, especially those who helped out with propagation.

The Constitutional Revision Committee has nearly completed its work which will soon be presented to members.

Melodie Brandon is the person to see if you would like to volunteer for an executive position next year. There are four positions opening up: vice-president, secretary, membership chairperson and plant sale chairperson.

The Program Committee would like to thank Heather Parker and Heidi Baloun for organizing a trip to Chris and Jane Byra's wonderful alpine garden in Chilliwack last Sunday. If you were there and if you took photographs could you forward these to Linda Stanley Wilson for the newsletter.

The Program Committee is organizing a trip to Sun Yat-Sen Garden. A show of hands was asked for as an expression of interest and it was clear that many members were interested.

There is still space in Melodie Brandon's succulent workshop.

Please contact Kathy Starke if your garden is in bloom and you would like to open it to the club.

Shirley Skagen is having a sale of plants at her house tomorrow and there is information on the bulletin board.

Flower and Garden Show

Cindy Tataryn explained that the F & G Show is a great opportunity to share what is in your garden with other club members. There is a full schedule of what can be entered in the show and the specifications, as well as a quick list, on the club website. If you have not participated before the committee will be there to help you.

There are a number of jobs that need volunteers and there are sign-up sheets at the back.

Media

Linda Stanley Wilson spoke about club media, apart from the website. She will be taking over the Yahoo Discussion Group which was started and run for a number of years by David Broomhead. Anyone who has an email address can sign up for this and should talk to Linda. She mentioned the Club's Facebook and Instagram and asked members to send photos to be posted. She and her son will be holding another photography workshop at Ocean Park Community Orchard this Saturday from noon to 2 pm. There will also be work happening on the cob house at the orchard.

Speaker

Lori Ross spoke about the garden tour that she and Glenda Ewanyshyn organized to the Comox Valley and how, through the Comox Valley Horticultural Society, she met Leslie and John from Courtenay. Our tour visited their garden with its 1200+ ornamental plants.

Leslie Cox, known as the Duchess of Dirt, spoke on the "Evolution of My Garden."

BREAK

Plant Sale

Anna Ludwinowski, Chairperson of the Plant Sale, gave a quick summary of the day. Weather-wise we got lucky after a hot year then a cold, wet year. Many people were lined up to get in to the sale and there was a good balance of plants which looked great. The gross income was over \$12,000 of which about \$6,000 went to plant sellers. The amount raised from donated plants (\$3,963) was significantly higher than previous years.

Anna thanked the volunteers who propagated and worked on Friday and Saturday and those members who donated plants to the sale. She also thanked her committee members: Gwen Odermatt, Christine Deagle, Claude Hewitt, Gillian Roberts and Brenda Woosnam.

She asked members to let the committee know any concerns or tidbits of information that would be useful. Anna then drew the names of 10 plant sale volunteers who won plants picked by Gwen Odermatt.

Motion Regarding Storage Locker

Vice-President Karen Ewing gave some background to this motion. In 2016-2017 when she was Logistics Chairperson it was challenging to find particular items when required. Club possessions were stored with 14 different members as well as in a shed at the back of the church. Some items had gone missing.

Last year, about May/June, the Executive decided to rent a storage locker to house club property. An amount of \$1,200 was budgeted but when a "big enough" locker was rented in September the cost exceeded the budgeted amount.

In response to questions Karen clarified that three people had offered space for storage but as a long-term solution the locker seemed preferable. The size of the locker is 8 feet x 5 feet x 10 feet high. Insurance is \$145 per year.

Motion as per the Minutes of the Executive Meeting of 16 April 2018:

That the costs (\$840) associated with the storage locker at Sunnyside Self-Storage that are in excess of the budgeted cost of \$1,200, for the months of September 2017 to August 2018, be approved. Moved by Karen Ewing, seconded by Lorna Fraser. Approved.

Budget Discussion

Lorna Fraser introduced herself as a past president. She expressed appreciation for having the budget introduced this far in advance so that members have time to discuss it prior to the AGM.

Treasurer Dorothy Brown took the audience through the proposed operating budget for 2018-2019 line by line.

INCOME

-Membership income has been based conservatively on the number of members in April (286). We have gained a few members since then but we will also lose some and overall numbers have been declining in recent years.

-The membership fee itself increased from \$20 to \$25 in 2016 and from \$25 to \$35 in 2017 so it is not desirable to increase fees at this time.

-The Club's other revenue source is the Plant Sale where net income has averaged \$3,000 apart from last year's soil sales and the proceeds of the raffle held in previous years.

EXPENDITURE

-Audio set-up has been a big expense for the past two years, at \$1,500 per annum. This year a family member of one of the Executive has offered to do this for \$50 per meeting resulting in a savings of \$1,000 per year.

-BC Council of Garden Clubs membership enables us to attend their educational meetings and we also obtain our liability insurance through this umbrella organization at a cost of \$1 per member.

-Other fixed expenses include gifts, library costs, monthly door prizes.

-Marketing is a new expense to cover the cost of printing a brochure to be given to potential new members on club nights and at community events.

-Set-up and take-down of the hall for meetings costs \$75 for each, totalling \$150 per meeting.

-The newsletter costs cover printing and mailing copies to members who do not have email.

-Rent is based on the current year's costs plus 5% for inflation to allow for any increases. The contract with the church is signed annually in September.

-Stationery covers the costs of name tags and membership cards. We are looking into whether we can reduce this cost by using a name tag with the name and membership number written in by hand thus eliminating one card. We have to find out if this would be acceptable to garden centres offering member discounts.

-The cost of the website, which is paid in US dollars, has been going up and a small committee has been investigating alternatives. Susan is currently setting up a trial website using Weebly to see if that will meet our needs. At present it appears that we can set up a website with the features we want for \$675, a saving of \$530.

-The Program Committee does an admirable job of organizing speakers, workshops, garden tours and visits to gardens and venues outside the club. It is the core of the club and its budget allocation remains at \$2,750.

-The Flower and Garden Show is also important to the club. Costs have varied from \$800 to \$1,300 depending in part on whether rosettes and ribbons have to be purchased or if there was enough purchased in a previous year. Members are welcome to return rosettes and ribbons for re-use.

-The storage locker is currently in the budget at \$2,079 while insurance for it is \$145.

-The \$1,000 scholarship given to Kwantlen University every year has been cut from the budget in order to balance the budget. We would have liked to continue to support a horticulture student but this but it is not a core club activity. If members feel strongly about maintaining the scholarship, perhaps at a reduced rate, they may have suggestions as to how to fundraise specifically for this purpose. One suggestion has been to have a donation jar at the goodie table at meetings.

On the second page is the Capital Budget. This includes an allocation of \$2,000 for a laptop for when it becomes necessary to replace the current laptop. Dorothy made a case for the importance of balancing the budget and not running at a deficit every year. She referred to the minimum cash balance which "should" be held. Members who responded to last year's survey felt \$10,000 was sufficient whereas a general rule is the average annual expenditure i.e. about \$13,000.

The meeting was opened for questions.

What are the expenses of the Flower and Garden Show? These were judges, rosettes and ribbons, rental of tables and gift certificates as prizes (8 x \$25 = \$200)

The comment was made that we don't need gift certificates for winners. A ribbon is sufficient.

Another query about the F & G Show was why it cost \$800 one year and \$1,200 the next. This is due to Cindy purchasing rosettes and ribbons in bulk to use over a two year period.

One member felt strongly that the amount of work taken to mount the F & G Show and the cost of it was not justifiable due to the low level of participation. Another view expressed was that, while only about 30 to 40 members place entries in the show, many more members attend and enjoy the display. Gillian Roberts pointed out that a survey regarding the F & G Show had been done several years ago.

Other comments were regarding storage and that a locker is too expensive when the items could be split up between several members.

There was a comment indicating disagreement with the idea that the club needs a \$13,000 cash surplus.

Shortly after 9 pm President Lee spoke about the need to close the meeting as the take-down crew were waiting to get into the building. She suggested that members needed to talk amongst themselves about this evening's discussion, think about it and let Club executive members know what they think.