

Meeting: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
Date: Saturday, September 21, 2019  
Time: 1:00 pm  
Location: Mary Lake Nature Sanctuary, 1772 Millstream Road, Victoria, BC  
Voting members present: 22

## Motions:

i) **Motion:** That Grant Thornton be appointed as auditor for 2019/20. Moved by Peta Alexander. Seconded by Briony Penn. Carried.

## 1. CALL TO ORDER (Mel Lehan)

Meeting Called to order 1:10 p.m. 22 members and 8 guests present.

**Board Present:** Frances Pugh, Lori Roter, Mel Lehan, Briony Penn, and Marika Smith

**Executive Director:** Cathy Armstrong

**Staff:** Connie Pedersen, Lisa Cross, Sherry Beauvais, Torrey Archer, Dianna Stenberg, and Karen Iwachow.

## 2. APPROVE/AMEND AGENDA: (Mel Lehan)

**Motion** to accept the agenda.

Moved by Winona Pugh. Seconded by Peta Alexander. Carried.

## 3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS AGM (Mel Lehan)

**Motion** That the AGM minutes of September 22, 2018 be approved.

Moved by Bob McMinn. Seconded by Winona Pugh. Carried.

## 4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (Mel Lehan)

## 5. THANK YOU TO RETIRING BOARD MEMBERS (Mel Lehan)

It takes many – members, supporters, donors, staff, vols, partners, board members. Mel thanked each group. Without them there wouldn't be 300 properties saved and even more covenants. Partners included Greater Victoria Greenbelt Society who were present at Mary Lake Nature Sanctuary. Together we are stronger.

TLC has not only survived, but is making a contribution to conservation in B.C. Today, three members of the board who were on the Board during the time of crisis are retiring from the Board. Frances Pugh has been a board member since 2010. Frances is a fruit and vegetable grower on the Saanich peninsula. While TLC was going through rough times Frances took on a leadership role as chair of TLC. She gave it her all and she made a big difference. TLC is so much better for her in involvement.

Fred Newhouse is not present today. He has been a director since 2010. There's a saying: it takes one to know one. Fred is a woodlot forester and works two woodlots. He has dedicated his life to conservation efforts in forest

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management. Whenever silviculture is discussed on the Board, Fred is a great asset to TLC. He believes in a progressive, sustainable management. Thank you Fred. TLC's Board and members wish him well.

Describing the talents of Briony Penn would take a book the size of a phonebook. An author, tv producer, entrepreneur, community activist, Lady Godiva impersonator, fundraiser, volunteer, ... and the list goes on. One thing dominates and connects these threads: passion for conserving the environment. Her love knows no bounds. She was one of the founding members of TLC. She has been dedicated to the land trust ever since. She stepped in in the darkest moments and took a leadership role, and is a huge factor in why TLC survived. She is one heck of a lovely human being. Even though Briony is stepping down from the Board, she remains an active member and teacher with Deertrails Naturalist Program.

Briony Penn shared that she was so grateful to Mel, Frances and the team. She had never worked with such an amazing group as the board. People who had values and stuck through thick and thin. Thank you to the members that stayed. You made the difference and kept us going. That was the difference between being here today and not being here today.

Mel Lehan thanked Frances, Fred and Briong again, commenting that they are three individuals whose lives have modeled the values of The Land Conservancy. TLC has been so lucky to have them.

## **6. ANNOUNCING THE BRIONY PENN ENDOWMENT FUND (Mel Lehan)**

Mel Lehan announced the Briony Penn Endowment Fund to honour founding TLC member Briony Penn. Mel said Briony hasn't just theorized about her beliefs, she has acted on them. Mel read letters by John Shields and Robert Bateman recognizing. Mel said that Briony cares and will do whatever has to be done to protect our planet, and she will do it creatively. She was his hero before he met her, and after a decade Briony is even more impressive. Briony was a mentor to many on TLC's Board of Directors. She has been a constant in TLC's history. For this TLC's Board and members are eternally grateful. TLC has created a Briony Penn Endowment Fund to support naturalist education. It has been kick-started with a gift of \$20,000 by Board Chair Frances Sloan Sainas. No one could be more worthy.

Peta Alexander suggested that members in attendance contact their own contacts to contribute. She started with a gift of \$1,000 saying that she could not think of anything more meaningful.

Ted Newman said that he will make a contribution to the same purpose.

Mel Lehan thanked Peta and Ted. He hopes that others will join them in contributing or give online. Briony has recently written two books: Stories from the Magic Canoe and The Year on the Wild Side. Available in most bookstores.

Mel Lehan added that if any members would like to be on the Board, or if you think of someone, there is room.

Frances Pugh shared that one of the reasons she felt that she could depart at this time is that TLC has such a strong board. She thanked Jeff Ward, Marika Smith, Lori Roter, and staff.

## **7. ELECTION OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS RESULTS (Mel Lehan)**

**Motion** to ratify the election of Sara Wickham to TLC's Board of Directors. Moved by Briony Penn. Seconded by Robin Hood. Carried.

## **8. REPORT FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (Cathy Armstrong)**

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Cathy Armstrong shared that last fiscal year TLC registered a conservation covenant, named the Pugh Covenant, in Central Saanich. This covenant adds to TLC's portfolio, but also shows TLC's role is in the province. A niche TLC fills in B.C. This covenant reflects that. The covenant will protect that property forever. TLC also increased its property portfolio: the Kurta family wanted to protect their property in Clearwater River Valley and began working with TLC in 2010. TLC added an additional piece last year and is fundraising for one more.

Cathy reported that a number of projects were completed at TLC's Abkhazi Garden including an entrance kiosk. Members might not realize how many visit the garden: approximately 10,000 per year. Entrance is by donation. Last year gate revenue was \$57,000. There are 50 volunteers connected to the garden. Volunteer gardeners are on site year-round every Monday and Tuesday morning. TLC employs a head gardener and site manager. TLC is always looking for gardeners and gate greeters to join the volunteer team.

Cathy reported that last year TLC launched the Passport to Nature Program and is currently delivering the second year with 13 free events for members and the public.

Cathy shared that TLC's 2018/2019 fiscal year has been very strong. TLC has a significant surplus thanks in part to a legacy gift bequeathed to us from supporter Maila Lehto. TLC established two endowments this year. The Ruffed Grouse Endowment Fund will support naturalist education thanks to a gift from a major donor who wishes to remain anonymous. Funds earned from the endowment will support students who require bursaries to attend our Deertrails Naturalist Program. Next year the Deertrails Naturalist Program will expand to include two sessions: Clearwater and Cortes Island. The program features a transfer of knowledge in both directions, building a network and encouraging connection. Deertrails professors want to share knowledge with the next generation. Participants Kim Bedard and Naomi Salie were in attendance.

Ted Newman asked if there are connections to local indigenous groups. Cathy replied that yes, TLC staff and Board have met with the Simpcw and invited them to participate, but the process is slow and respectful.

Larissa Bron, a 2019 Deertrails Naturalist Program participant, sent a video message thanking TLC members for their support of the program.

Naomi Salie shared that most of the 2019 Deertrails Naturalist Program participants continue to stay in contact.

Cathy Armstrong reported that TLC is administering this program now through cooperation of professors like Briony Penn and Trevor Goward and that TLC is looking for funding to build connections. She hopes to offer the program in different ecosystems and climates. She sees a big future for the program.

Cathy thanked TLC staff present and asked that members stay after the meeting and enjoy refreshments.

## **9. TREASURER'S REPORT (Lori Roter)**

Lori Roter thanked members for coming. Her Treasurer's Report is found within the Annual Report. Lori shared that her focus is on operational accounts day to day. She provides monthly or bimonthly reports to the Board based on financials reports from staff. She provides information regarding how TLC is doing and forecasting. This provides information for decision making should adjustments need to be made for the future. TLC is a not-for-profit. Cash flows are positive. The 2018/2019 Financial Statements show where TLC is at the end of the year, but do not show month-to-month. TLC is looking to increase membership contributions to support operations. Since volunteering with TLC, Lori has come to understand the importance of TLC's monthly membership gifts. Knowing that TLC has this monthly flow of income really helps with planning. Lori shared that TLC will need to find a new permanent home which may include the need to fund renovations. Lori would like to increase monthly memberships to increase regular cash flow. Lori requested that members present help get the word out to others and thanked them for their support.

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Peta Alexander asked about the relationship at Abkhazi Garden with the teahouse. Cathy Armstrong replied that the teahouse is rented from TLC by a business.

Peta Alexander asked is there was an Abkhazi Garden endowment fund. Cathy Armstrong replied that there is. The Jack Eldridge Endowment Fund is held with Victoria Foundation.

A member asked if there were any remaining mortgages. Cathy Armstrong replied no, there are no mortgages anywhere.

Mel Lehan shared that TLC is in discussions with the Greater Victoria Greenbelt Society regarding Mary Lake Nature Sanctuary with regards to TLC becoming more involved and Mary Lake becoming TLC's new home.

#### **10. PRESENTATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Larry Beatty from Grant Thornton)**

Larry Beatty provided an overview of the audited financial statements for the year ended April 30, 2019.

**Motion** to accept the financial statements April 30, 2019. Moved by Freda Knott. Seconded by Winona Pugh. Carried.

#### **11. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITOR (Lori Roter)**

**Motion** that Grant Thornton be appointed as auditor for 2019/20. Moved by Peta Alexander. Briony Penn 2nd. Carried.

#### **12. NEW/OTHER BUSINESS**

**Briony Penn acknowledged Bob McMinn as her mentor back in 1980. Bob hired Briony and others to put forward an idea of a regional trail. Bob has done so much in almost a century working in conservation.**

**Koi Neah shared background regarding the Greater Victoria Greenbelt Society and the protection of Mary Lake Nature Sanctuary: Mary Lake Nature Sanctuary is on the territory of the Wsanec Coast Salish peoples. They would not lived here, as this area was so sacred to them, but they would perform sacred walks. This is a return of that language; they want to bring youth and elders to share stories of the songs in the land. Tsartlip elder Tom Sampson has been involved and has given the lake a First Nations name. This year the Greater Victoria Greenbelt Society received a \$1.4 million grant to pay off the mortgage on Mary Lake Nature Sanctuary. Mary Lake is now mortgage free. John Horgan, Ministry of Environment, B.C. Parks, and councilors from Tsartlip First Nation have been instrumental to receiving funds**

**Ted Newman shared that he was making two donations today:** one was intended for Bob McMinn for Mary Lake Nature Sanctuary and the other to go to TLC in memory of his late wife Jocelyn Newman. The couple were involved at Yew Tree farm (where the racetrack is now). Ted and his wife sold their home in Gordon Head and moved to a care home at Cedarhill. Ted shared that Jocelyn was a thoughtful and compassionate public health nurse.

Peta Alexander shared that Ted Newman was one of the first people she met when she moved to Victoria. He was a volunteering dad at the preschool both of their children attended; most of the volunteers at the time were moms.

Mel Lehan thanked Ted and Peta for sharing. Mel said it was always nice to hear these stories as TLC is all about protecting these connections.

Torrey Archer performed a musical interlude with vocals and guitar.

Freda Knott shared that this week there would be many climate strike activities in Victoria and encouraged attendees to participate. Ted Newman commented that it was wonderful to see coverage in the newspaper this morning. Mel Lehan shared that right now there's a picture of Greta circulating the web – of the first time she did her climate strike – she was one little girl sitting by herself. Mel said the least we can do is support her.

Drawing for the donated birdhouses. Freda Knott and Peta Alexander won. Thank you to volunteer Jim Roberts for donating his hand-crafted birdhouses.

**13. ADJOURNMENT:** Moved to adjourn by Richard Hardy. Meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.