

Meeting: Abkhazi Advisory Board

Date: Friday, March 17, 2023

Time: 11am

Location: Zoom Meeting

Minutes

Present: Cathy Armstrong, Roxy Dawe, Cherie Miltimore, Jacqui Paulson, Marg Palmer

Regrets: Samantha Beare, Barb Gunn, Pam Madoff

1. Adoption of Minutes

Approval of the Abkhazi Advisory Board minutes of January 27, 2023, was motioned by Jacqui, seconded by Cathy.

2. Agenda

Roxy's Report (TLC Property Covenant Manager)

Jacqui's Report (Head Gardener)

Cathy's Report (TLC Executive Director)

Cherie's Report (Site Manager)

Marg's Report (Friends of Abkhazi Garden Group)

3. Roxy's Report (TLC Property Covenant Manager)

Cathy introduction – Roxy is new to the TLC Team. She is a Property Covenant Manager with a background in law. She will take on the Abkhazi file in the future.

Bike Shed – Roxy met with Green Island Builders regarding the construction of a bike shed/garbage screen on Friday morning to accommodate the City of Victoria's request for more bike parking. AAB members recommend a pergola over the garbage containers and separate bike racks. There could be four zones for bikes: current bike rack by house, hanging bike rack on fence, bike rack for electric bikes by stone wall under the rose bushes, plus a bike rack in the service area. Cathy asked Roxy to investigate a custom-made metal frame that fits the space by the rock wall.

4. Jacqui's Report (Head Gardener)

Pathway Renewal – Jacqui, with volunteer help, edged pathways with small boulders as needed and added gravel screenings. Ron helped adjust the flagstone pieces by the Bella Bella Magnolia that were causing a tripping hazard. It took three days and wonderful volunteers to complete the job.

Student Pruning – 17 students from the Pacific Horticultural College came to prune on March 8th with one instructor and an assistant. Jacqui hopes to have some students come back in the summer to help prune the rhododendrons.

Chipper Report – Jacqui is considering various options to replace the chipper that is in constant need of repairs. She will prepare a report and share it with the AAB team in a couple of weeks.

Tree Assessment – Jacqui has asked the city for a permit to remove three of the Garry Oaks that are at risk to the garden. Two city arborists came to the garden this week to review the permit request and Jacqui is waiting for their response.

Garden Mapping – Jacqui now has an updated garden map on the inside of the door of the toolshed. The mapping project is ongoing and Jacqui is working with volunteers to determine which plants are growing in the different sections of the garden and which plants are no longer in the garden.

Propagating for Spring – has started propagating plants for the garden especially for the Georgian Garden and pollinators for the bees.

Spring Plant Sale – on Saturday April 22 and on Sunday April 23 from 11am-4pm. Jacqui is asking volunteers who are dividing plants this spring to consider donating extras to Abkhazi for our Spring Plant Sale and daily plants sales after that. Cherie will be organizing volunteers to help with the sale.

5. Cathy's Report (TLC Executive Director)

Documentary – Oak Bay Heritage Foundation invited Geoff Bird to show the documentary, Abkhazi Garden – Sanctuary from War for their public heritage lecture series held at Windsor Park Pavilion on March Thursday, March 9th. Cathy attended and volunteers, Marg and Jane who were in the documentary also attended. This event was well attended.

Rezoning – TLC is still in the process of rezoning the Abkhazi Garden property: selling densities to Aryze, moving the heritage designation to the house, changing zoning to commercial and garden. Cathy recently met with Aryze who hopes the city will approve the Aryze development by the summer. When that development is approved, the rezoning of the garden can move forward and creditors will be paid back some money.

6. Cherie's Report (Abkhazi Garden Site Manager)

New Roof on Summerhouse – Proline Roofing installed a new roof in February. This company also installed a roof on the Tool/Teahouse shed in 2017.

Key Vault Lock – Prices Lock and Safe will install a key vault lock outside of the front gate in the big rock. Cherie will follow up with the Victoria Fire Department to add keys (Front Gate, Back door of the house and key to the Teahouse freezer shed where there is a second electrical panel).

Welcome Back Volunteers – on Tuesday, March 28th, Cherie is meeting with the gate greeters at 1:00-2:30pm and the docents at 2:30pm to welcome the volunteers back for the season. Cathy would like to attend. Many thanks to Barb for use of the Teahouse and refreshments.

Social Media – our social media volunteer, Alison Butlin, is leaving this position after 2 and a half years. Cherie is looking for a replacement.

\$5000 Grant Disbursement – We are still waiting for \$5000 of the \$10,000 grant money for the documentary, Abkhazi Garden – Sanctuary from War. Cherie is following up on this.

55+ Lifestyle Show – this show is taking place on Tuesday, March 21. Abkhazi Garden will have a booth. Emily, TLC communications coordinator will attend with Cherie.

Yoga in the Garden – Yoga is back in the garden this summer. Yoga instructor, Kaitlynn Raymond will offer an all levels class on Tuesdays from 6:30PM TO 7:30PM. Kaitlynn will donate half of the fees to Abkhazi Garden.

Power Washing – we will power wash around the house before the Teahouse and Garden are open seven days a week. Jacqui is renting a power washer and our volunteer, Geoff will do the work.

Walkway Driveway – Ryzuk Geotechnical has recommended that we hire an engineer to help with the road design. Cherie is arranging for an engineer to come to the garden to look at our walkway/driveway. We are wanting to get the grade appropriate for wheelchairs.

7. Marg's Report (Friends of Abkhazi Garden Group)

Bookmarks – Marg suggests making some Abkhazi Garden bookmarks that can be handed out when volunteers are travelling. Cathy will ask Dianna to make some up. The bookmarks can be handed out at different tabling events as well.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 12:07 pm.

Next Meeting: will be Friday, May 19, 2023 at 11 am by zoom.