



Homegrown, Handmade on Gabriola & Mudge Islands

P.O. Box 152, Gabriola, B.C. V0R 1X0 | www.gabriolaagriculturalcoop.com

2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:MINUTES

March 12, 2025

Doors Open 5:30 for registration.

Potluck at 6:00 7:00 PM meeting start

Place: Agi Coop Hall

Quorum: 10% of members, including 10% of producer members

Start Time: 7:23pm: 30 members present (correction: total 32 members)

Territory Acknowledgement: by Elana Evans. Delivered by Graham Bradley.

Directors Present: Graham Bradley, Drew Staniland (Graham-facilitator) (Drew-minutes)

Regrets: Rachel Dubois

Rules of Order: Consensus Decision Making: support, stand aside or block. Each time a decision needs to be made, these three choices will be asked of the membership.

Approval of 2025 AGM Agenda: Approved

Approval 2024 AGM Minutes: Approved

Business arising from minutes: n/a

- **Director Reports:**

- **Market report:** written by Elana Evans, presented by Graham Bradley:huge thank you and round of applause to all our farmers and vendors for a terrific 2024 market season.
- BC Farmers Market Nutrition Coupon Program:111 people accessed coupons.Just shy of \$29,000 worth of food purchased from our producers and enjoyed by our lower-income islanders.
- **AGI Hall report:** Drew Staniland
 - new wifi provider and exterior range extender>saving about \$1300/yr compared to our former provider
- **Kitchen Upgrades**
 - "new-to-us" commercial fridge
 - New overhead lights
 - New Hood fan donated by Arbutus Home Hardware
 - Commercial status certification from VIHA
 - We've recently been working with a potential new kitchen operator so, all things going well, we'll have a soft-start with a new menu in the next few weeks!
 - Plumbing work done: new jet pump installed: good for another 10 years or so
 - Most recent acquisition was a \$750 Pressure tank donated to us by Dallas and Curtis Smith and Gord at ARBUTUS Home Hardware, so HUGE THANKS TO THEM FOR THEIR SUPPORT!

- **Governance:** Drew Staniland

Over the past year, the Board has been committed to strengthening our governance

framework. This has included refining policies, clarifying decision-making processes, and ensuring that our cooperative principles remain at the heart of everything we do.

- **Policies created:**
 - Code of Conduct Policy
 - Procurement Policy, plus Reimbursement, Conflict of Interest, Honoraria Policies
 - Logo Use Policy
 - General Terms of Reference for Pods(subcommittees)
 - Draft Terms of Reference for the Building Pod
 - New Director Orientation and Training Document
 - One of our key focuses has been making governance more accessible and practical for future boards. This means having clear documentation, improving communication, and fostering a culture where directors feel supported in their roles. By doing this, we make the work of governance smoother and more effective for those who will come after us.
- **EVENTS REPORT:** Drew Staniland
 - **2024 Fall Fair & Apple Fest Summary**
 - Sunday, October 6th at the Commons: 12:30 pm to 6:30 pm
 - Over 1,000 attendees, generating a net income of almost \$4000 (\$3,949.17). The event received highly positive feedback, with many attendees describing it as “the best Fall Fair” in recent memory due to the wide range of activities and strong collaboration between the Agi Co-op and the Commons. Bobbi Rose O’Brien coordinated the event under her CSJ contract, putting in approximately 140 hours of work.
 - **End of Season Celebration Potluck: Saturday November 30**
 - the Board sent out an “End-of Season” survey asking for one thing about the Farmers Market that they felt really enthusiastic about and one thing they would do differently in the future.
 - About 30 of us came out to gather, share a meal, have a chat and enjoy a wind-down together after the last market of the year. As with most potlucks, we were gifted with an overabundance of Food!!
 - **Christmas Market: Saturday, Dec 14 12-4pm**
 - A power outage overnight made it look like it may not happen but the AGI Hall never lost power and the Christmas Market was up and running by our scheduled noon start time! Due to the power outage on most of the island, attendance wasn’t what it had been the year before but we still had a good amount of people come out to finish their Christmas shopping, have lunch and enjoy the festive atmosphere in the Hall. Artist Christi York showed people how to make their own Christmas Wreath. Nathan Sobko and our local Gabriola Carollers provided wonderful music for the event. Nesters generously donated much of the food and drink. We served Somerset turkey sausage, a plant-based sausage from Nature Spirit, mulled wine, hot spiced cider, hot “C” and tea and coffee. Ground Up loaned us some baking pans, which were used to bake delicious caramelized apple squares we served as sweet treats.

- **BCCA Workshop/Celebration: Sunday Feb 2, 9:30-4:30**
 - Thank you to Mid Island Co-op generously donated \$500 to the event
 - Despite the threat of snow overnight, over 30 people attended the event, including our local MLA: Sheila Malcolmson
 - 2025 the U.N. International Year of Cooperatives
 - Madelyn Read from British Columbia Cooperative Association led us through three workshop modules offered by BCCA:
 - Co-ops 101
 - Cooperative Governance
 - Member Engagement

Though not all attendees stayed for the entire event, 20 participants remained for the full day, demonstrating a strong interest in cooperative education. The sessions were highly engaging, thanks to Madelyn Read from the BCCA, whose enthusiasm and knowledge about cooperatives left a lasting impression on attendees.

- **Workshop Key Takeaways & Impact**
 - Participants gained a deeper understanding of cooperative principles and governance.
 - Discussions on member engagement provided practical strategies to enhance participation in our own cooperative.
 - The overall feedback was positive, with many expressing a desire for more such workshops in the future.
- **Conclusion**
 - The BCCA Co-op Workshop/Celebration was a valuable and inspiring event for our cooperative community. The generosity of our sponsors, the dedication of our directors, and the enthusiasm of our attendees all contributed to its success. Plus, after expenses, we made about \$400 which will help fund future events like this that will continue to foster cooperative knowledge and engagement.

- **Food Security Community Meeting: Friday, Feb 21: several directors attended**

- Sibyl Frei announced the Gabriola Land Stewards Society AGM will be held on April 7 at the AGI Hall

- **POD REPORTS**

- **Seed Bank Pod: Michelle Smith**
 - Began as the Gabriola Community Seed Bank in 2024; 50 members signed up. 25 people grew seeds for it.
 - Using plots at Commons garden.
 - Expectation to return seeds. \$10 membership. Free with \$20 AGI Co-op member-in-good standing annual fee.
 - Encouraging local seed banks to create resilience/food security
- **Fibre Pod: Yarrow Koontz**
 - Established in 2024 with a group of friends; all members of the Vancouver Island Fibreshed(an affiliate of the “mothership” in California, started by Rebecca Burgess)
 - Based on similar values/ethos as watershed and foodshed:bioregional

- Decolonized context, based upon Regenerative Agriculture, carbon sequestration, working with indigenous knowledge-keepers: Salish Sea bioregion
- Acquiring and promoting knowledge of what indigenous plants can be used for not only food, but for fibre, natural dyes, inks and clothes.
- Wool is likely the best fibre for this bioregion.
- Work with Dave Bodaly, Snunemuyx knowledge-keeper
- Connection to the land: key species > salmon/herring
- Movement to feel connected more connected to where we live
- Learn how to spin, weave, make clothing; connection to indigenous fibres: stinging nettle, fireweed
- Events:
 - 2050 Visioning with Islands Trust,
 - Refugia: local rope making
- Workshops:
 - Skirting local wool
 - How to make a drop spindle/how to drop spin
 - How to use compost to make natural dyes
 - Sharon Callas from Earthhand Gleaners: 5 hour workshop on nettle and hemp processing
 - Mushroom dyeing workshop in the Fall
 - Basket-making and weaving workshops
 - Adirondack basket workshop coming up in June 2025
- Growing:
 - grew flax for 2 years at Wishful Thinking Farm > too much work!
 - Advocacy towards Hemp production
 - Campaign/advocacy for wool: it is not recognized as a farm product and should be.
- **Building Pod:** Graham Bradley
 - Paused for the better part of 2024; new leadership for 2025
 - Rezoning application still valid but requires funding for hydrogeological and geotechnical surveys
- **Statutory Pods:** Graham Bradley:
 - We must have these as dictated by the AGI Co-op Rules
 - **Farmer Pod:** Terms of Reference: draft completed \$2500 potato order
 - **Market Pod:** not yet populated, but necessary: call for interest from membership
 - Call-out for creation of other possible Pods
- **FINANCIAL REPORT:(attached)**
 - https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qr9vwyqjQloBv5n0oh1alKk36JOmeQKP/view?usp=drive_link
 - Question from Maya Ruggles: Do you know what Receivables and Payables are?: referred to bookkeeper Victoria
 - Approval by Membership of 2024 Financial Statement: Accepted
- Implementation of the \$20 Annual “member-in-good-standing” Fee, introduced at 2024 AGM

- Looking to create an “arms-length” charity for the AGI Co-op
- **Waiver of auditor**
 - **Special Resolution:** Propose that the Agricultural Co-op waive the appointment of an auditor for the fiscal year 2024: ACCEPTED, 1 STAND ASIDE
- **Election of Directors**
 - Stepping Down: Elana Evans(after 2 year term), Simon Natrass, Jan Pullinger
 - New Director Nominations: Maya Ruggles, Kayla Lofstrom
- **Question Period**
 - query about joining Pods>start with email to Co-op
 - question to ask new directors to introduce themselves
 - Maya: grew up in/influenced by Co-ops, board experience, background in bookkeeping, inspired by BCCA Workshop day and food security
 - Kayla: background in farming, studied sustainable agriculture, new to boards but excited to learn and serve the community.
 - question/concern about proposed market vendor fee increases: conversation still open, board will reach out regarding these changes
 - comment re:communication/marketing regarding market
- **New Business:** n/a
- **Good of the Order:** recognized the passing of two members: Paul Grignon and Cheryl Ricard

Adjourned: 8:12pm