

## Annual General Meeting – May 4, 2013

Members present: Angela Chen, Anne Macey, Elizabeth Chrumka, Elizabeth Nason, Janine Gibson, Jordan Marr, Nicole Chartrand, Rob Campbell, Rochelle Eisen, Sarah Dobec, Susan Preston, Tegan Renner, Tony Marshall, Laura Harris, Colin Lundy, Dan Brisebois, Beth McMahon, Kristine Sloboda, Ann Slater, Vlad Skotar

Staff: Reza, Ashley and Candace

Call to order 2:09pm

2012 AGM Minutes – Motion to Approve (Beth/Rochelle); motion carried

President's Report (Daniel Brisebois)

- thank you to Beth McMahon, out-going Executive Director
- welcome to new board members: Tegan, Jordan, Elizabeth, Sarah, and Beth
- new organizational structure & welcome to Ashley and Candace; new decentralized structure (no Executive Director);
- strengthened board leadership and committees critical to new structure
- board committees include Finance (Vlad), Fundraising (Beth/Sarah), Strategic Planning (Dan), Succession (Gen), By-laws/Policies (Vlad), Chapters (Tegan), TCOG (Beth)

Financial Report (Reza Iranian)

- chapters not included in audited statement
- inventory changes noted in audited statement (disposed of extra Gaining Ground books, out-of-date)
- chapters will be remitting quarterly statements to consolidated

Motion to approve WGP as COG auditor for 2013 (Ashley/Colin); motion carried

Question: how much of surplus is chapter's share?

Answer: none.

Question: how do we treat COG ING's abattoir?

Answer: when building starts being used, we'll depreciate a part share of the building. It is currently an asset under construction.

The Year in Review – Presented by Beth

Slide: Cut Expenses and Maximized Donations

- Launched spring in to action campaign last year when COG was financially fragile
- Could not afford an audit early last year, but have since improved our financial situation

Slide: Magazine Revamp

- let go of editor, reduced issues to 3/year, Beth staying on as volunteer editor, digitized Magazine
- Digitized the Magazine – reduced costs, increased availability
- E-magazine now available to anyone who donates to COG
- Clarified that Hardcopy Magazine is an extra benefit, must be purchased separately, not included as part of giving donation to COG

Slide: Tending the Garden

- COG has continued to maintain its programs
- COG acquired Landshare Canada – no major cost to COG, no core funding, but positively received by our audience
- Library Update – COG received a grant to upgrade (along with develop a magazine website)
- Monsanto Lawsuit and GMO Activism – Monsanto lawsuit still in appeal process
- Maritime Hops project – primary focus due to financial constraints to Ontario Hops growers
- ACORN expansion and maintenance of Organic Price Tracker

Slide: Breaking New Ground

- IOIA basic inspections course
  - o COG plays unique role in Organic Community
  - o COG only charity in Canada
  - o Lots of Organizations want to work with COG, allowed for COG to host an IOIA course, hosted at OMAFRA in Guelph, ON
  - o Organic Master Gardener course – sill underway and will receive feedback from participants, determine if COG wants to run again

Slide: Honourable Mentions

- Organic week Growth – on-going, COTA-COG Partnership
- Rachel Carson's Slilent Spring - big event for COG
- Parliament Day – gave presentation to MPs at Parliament – COG will continue with this event for 2013, great networking opportunity

Finally -- Thanks to DAN as out-going President. The renewal of COG wouldn't be possible without his leadership. He will continue on the board as Past President.

View From Here (presented by Ashley)

COG will be moving June 1, 2013 to new office space. Will be shared space with COTA and Fair Trade Canada. This is a better location and less money.

New fundraising software required. This will also allow for e-receipting.

Updating website, very intensive process, as we have so many databases.

Library system being updated. Run by two volunteers, who come in weekly to manage books.

COG has just launched books as e-books. Helps to modernize resources, reduce costs, and staff time.

Fundraising Plan (presented by Candace)

Focus will be on member engagement. Moving from “membership” terminology to “supporters”. Achieved through direct mail, monthly giving, major gifts etc. COG is a charity!

Celebrate volunteers and programs

More public communications; talk to lapsed members; find new donors.

Discussion

Question: Are chapters listed on new website?

Answer: yes

Question: Why did we make the decision to move emphasis to “supporters”, rather than “members”?

Question: We decided this last year. Ultimately, when someone signs up as a “member”, they want to know what they “get” (ie. membership benefit). Like other charities, “supporters” know their donation is going towards the organization. This is where COG wants to be – Canada’s organic charity. Anyone who makes a donation is a member, as per the by-laws.

Question: Where did database come from, who updates and how often?

Answer: Businesses can submit with no cost, but these are screened by Ashely before publishing (to prevent spam). In the new website, there’s a prompt to make a donation to COG. Candace could go through list to update and solicit for donations.

Motion to adjourn Dan/Beth; motion passed (3:19pm)