



Galiano Conservancy Association  
**Annual General Meeting**  
July 6, 2024  
Draft Minutes

1:30 PM – AGM proceedings

1. Welcome & Acknowledgement of Shared Territory
2. Call to Order – 1:45pm

Attendance

Board members (9): Sheila Anderson, Risa Smith, Suzanne Fournier, Holly Schofield, Laurene Stefanyk, Nancy Wilkin, Emily Gonzales (online), Julie Gardner (online), Chris Tollefson (online); Regrets – Stephanie Cairns

Nominated Board candidates (1): Sid Fels; Regrets – George Maddison

Staff (6): Chessi Miltner, Katherine Hazen, Adam Huggins, Martine Paulin, Cedana Bourne, Tala Clark, Sofia Silverman (online),

Voting Members: (20 - quorum achieved)

Non-voting Attendees: (4)

Minute-taker: Chessi Miltner (from recording after event)

3. Approval of Agenda and previous AGM Minutes

**Motion:** To approve the 2024 AGM Agenda

- Motion carried unanimously

**Motion:** To approve the 2023 AGM Minutes

- Motion carried unanimously

4. Chair's Statement

- Board Chair Sheila Anderson highlighted that this is the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the organization, and took time to thank the board of the previous year, highlighting the contributions of Stephanie Cairns and Chris Tollefson, who did not stand for reelection, before highlighting the work of staff and GCA accomplishments that stood out, including the increase in land stewarded, the planned restart of the Nature Stewards program, the wetland restoration work at the MLC, the success of learning and food systems program, and the policy work of the Indigenous Relations committee and Investment Advisory committee; in closing, Sheila expressed gratitude to the membership for believing the GCA can make a difference.

5. Financial Report

- Treasurer Risa Smith introduced Executive Director Chess Miltner to provide the financial report. Chessi highlighted the 2023 acquisition of Quadra Hill (QH), as the largest single project influencing gross revenue, and provided a comparison of 2023 revenues and expenses



compared to 2022 and 2021. Notably, grants (including for QH) were much higher in 2023 than previous years, and expenses were very similar, with a slight increase in core operating costs.

**Motion:** To adopt the [2023 GCA Financial Statements](#)

- Motion carried unanimously

**Motion:** To waive the audit requirement when preparing the 2024 GCA Financial Statements

- Motion carried unanimously

## 6. Program Updates / Staff Reports

- Sofia Silverman, Conservation & Climate Action Coordinator, provided an update on Land Stewardship activities, the revamped / relaunched Nature Stewards Program, covenant monitoring, species monitoring, marine conservation projects, and water conservation initiatives
- Katherine Hazen, Administrator & Outreach Coordinator, provided an update on the Education Program on behalf of Education staff (Ria Okuda & Sarah Fleming), highlighting the record number of returning schools and groups, positive program feedback from teachers and youth, Ria becoming a bus driver, local programs for Galiano and Penelakut youth.
- Chessi pointed out that learning program participants surpassed 40,000 since 2000, and highlighted the need for financial support for the Education Bursary Program.
- Cedana Bourne, Sustainable Food Systems Coordinator, provided an update on the nursery and forest gardens, highlighting infrastructure improvements, seasonal harvests, biochar production, and the Nuts'a'maat Forage Forest, concluding with a thank you to community volunteers.
- Adam Huggins, Restoration Coordinator, provided an updates on the 'Cedars for the Next Century' wetland restoration project, highlighting Phase 3 restoration, volunteer support, and the recovery and monitoring of the overall watershed, and on planned restoration in the Waterfall Creek watershed (at MLC), and Quadra Hill.
- Chessi Miltner, Executive Director, provided an update on land protection, announcing the rapid acquisition of DL50, now the Talking Trees Nature Reserve, shortly before the AGM in April 2024

## 7. Elections

- Risa Smith, Treasurer, conducted elections, first pointing out board members in attendance and introducing members standing for election: Sid Fels and George Maddison. Lastly, before voting commenced, Risa called for further nominations for the board from the floor.
- Corinne Matheson nominated herself from the floor, and introduced herself, highlighting volunteering work and efforts to manage invasive species on DL86. Corinne stated she had renewed her membership three months prior, but staff were not able to find a record of this.

**Motion:** To re-elect [current board member Julie Gardner](#) to the GCA Board for a 2-year term

- Motion carried unanimously

**Motion:** To re-elect [current board member Holly Schofield](#) to the GCA Board for a 2-year term

- Motion carried, with one abstention

**Motion:** To elect member in good standing Sid Fels to the GCA Board for a 2-year term ([link to bio](#))

- Motion carried unanimously



**Motion:** To elect member in good standing George Maddison to the GCA Board for a 2-year term ([link to bio](#))

- Motion carried unanimously

**Motion from the floor:** To elect Corinne Matheson, contingent on her being a member in good standing, to the GCA Board for a 2-year term

- Motion carried\* unanimously
- \*Note: It was determined after the AGM that Corinne had renewed membership to another Galiano organization 3-months prior, not her GCA membership, so did not meet the minimum requirements to stand for election to the GCA board, voiding result of the vote.

#### 8. Special Business

- Chessi Miltner and Adam Huggins introduced the revised policy to facilitate Indigenous-led hunting at the Millard Learning Centre, and provided a detailed review of all revisions; namely, that the no-hunting buffer from Porlier Pass and property lines was revised to 100 m, and 50 m from MLC buildings, the closure to the public prior to scheduled hunts was reduced to 12 hours (with signage still posted 24hr ahead of time), and the policy was made permanent, with review as part of the 5-year strategic plan renewal process, and as needed.
- Attendees raised numerous questions regarding deer management, and equity of hunting access.

**Motion:** To approve the revised [GCA First Nation Deer Hunting Policy for the Millard Learning Centre](#)

- Motion carried with abstentions

#### 3:14 PM – Motion to Adjourn Business Meeting

- Motion carried unanimously

#### 3:15 PM – Intermission

#### 3:30 PM – Guest Speaker Ruth Waldick

#### Title: Understanding and Mitigating Forest Fire Risks in the Gulf Islands: We are not the Mainland

Ruth Waldick, PhD, is an ecologist and climate impact researcher currently focusing on extreme weather and the implications that fire and drought have on our Coastal communities, and identifying strategies to reduce risk from such events. Ruth is a director for both Transition Salt Spring (TSS) and the Institute for Multidisciplinary Research in the Salish Sea (IMERSS), leads the [Climate Adaptation Research Lab \(CARL\)](#) on Salt Spring, and was a recipient of an Islands Trust Community Stewardship Award in 2022.