

Meeting Summary: Meeting Transcription

Date: 2025-11-28

Participants: Anni Danielson, Barry Fenton, Elmira, Fariba Leilaby, In-Ah, Lauren Gorgounis, Mahnaz Fardghassemi, Michael Bernard, Ted Bancroft, Lesley Brooks

1. AGM Minutes

- Clarification needed on a presentation mistakenly attributed to Mahnaz. It was confirmed Toby was the presenter.
- With correction, the minutes were approved for posting.

2. Blueridge Cares Update

- Currently supporting 5 adults and 7 children across several families with about 12 volunteers.
- Donations total approximately \$2,750, with expectations to reach about \$650 support per family.
- Volunteer request letters updated and being distributed to encourage participation.
- Emphasis on ongoing application period for support until early December.

3. Blueridge Sharing Garden

- All garlic planted in October; other root vegetables harvested and donated.
- Volunteer participation remains steady but limited to about 5-6 core individuals regularly.
- Discussion on efforts to recruit new volunteers and increase community engagement.
- Plans to publish articles in the community bulletin to promote volunteer opportunities and share gardening activities.

4. Outdoor Cinema Night Proposal

- Fariba presented research on a movie night event, which would cost approximately \$2,000 and include full setup by a third-party company.
- Discussion on benefits versus challenges: cost, timing (need for dark evenings), and competition with other entertainment options.
- Concerns raised about volunteer needs, potential sponsorship, and turnout.
- Some skepticism about the event's appeal given many movie options at home.

- It was agreed to revisit the idea after further consideration and when key organizers (e.g., Eric) are available.

5. Cozy Connections Neighborhood Night Initiative

- Michael and Eric to meet with representatives from neighboring communities (Pemberton Heights, Norgate) to learn from their neighborhood night experiences.
- Questions to explore include event format, themes, location, participation demographics, and lessons learned.
- Discussion on potential formats, venues (e.g., United Strangers), and timing (possibly winter months such as January or February).
- Emphasis on creating inclusive social events with manageable scale (30-60 attendees) to foster community connection.

6. Land Acknowledgment Discussion

- Ted raised concerns and shared views from indigenous perspectives about the effectiveness and controversy of land acknowledgments.
- Varied opinions among members, with some supporting a neutral stance to avoid political polarization within the community association.
- Consensus leaned toward maintaining neutrality by not formally including land acknowledgments at events or on the website, but allowing individuals to raise the issue if desired.

7. Town Hall Meeting Review and Follow-Up

- Barry reported that about six directors attended a recent Town Hall with reasonable public turnout (~150-175 attendees).
- The meeting featured significant finger-pointing with limited solutions; an opportunity for a 2026 follow-up was identified.
- Michael and others emphasized the Town Hall as one tool among many to address community concerns (notably wastewater issues) and suggested better pre-meeting information distribution for attendees.
- Consensus on the need for follow-up meetings, potentially inviting higher-level officials including cabinet ministers.
- YouTube video of the Town Hall had 356 views, indicating community interest.

8. Chemtrade Rezoning Update

- Barry raised questions about the current status of Chemtrade's rezoning and public hearing process.

- Mahnaz referenced an article in the November bulletin regarding the Chemtrade plant rezoning.
- Lauren clarified the update shared by Jeff Powell:
 - Chemtrade submitted a rezoning application in September to DMV.
 - Plans include new rail car loading building and infrastructure to reduce chlorine production and distribution risks.
 - Public meetings were held between October 27 and November 7, with an in-person meeting on October 29.
 - DMV seeks community feedback; resources available online.

9. Neighbors Helping Neighbors Initiative

- Mahnaz was involved temporarily after Eric's departure.
- One family requested gutter cleaning assistance due to medical limitations.
- Ginnette, the original idea person, and her husband will assist with gutter cleaning.
- Concerns about insurance liabilities were clarified by Ted; BCA insurance covers volunteers assisting neighbours.
- Discussion about the scope of "help": some members felt gutter cleaning might be too risky or better handled by paid professionals. Instead, smaller tasks like grocery shopping or snow shovelling were suggested.
- The importance of having clear criteria for the assistance and finding a dedicated lead for the program was emphasized.
- Challenges with tech access raised: not all community members use Facebook or are tech-savvy enough to fill out forms or post requests online.
- Possible solutions included a community board or a website form for posting help requests and volunteers' offers.
- Ginette may be asked to take the lead, potentially coordinating another interested community member.
- Clear consensus that a leader is necessary before more infrastructure (like website forms) is implemented.

10. Board Member Profiles

- Mahnaz requested board members to complete their profiles.

11. Acknowledging Corporate Donations in Minutes

- Barry proposed officially acknowledging large corporate donations in board meeting minutes for transparency and governance.
- The example discussed was ERCO donations of \$750 each to Blueridge Cares and Blueridge Sharing Garden.

- Motion to include acknowledgment of ERCO's donations in the minutes was put forward by Barry, seconded by Ted and Michael, and passed unanimously.

12. North Shore Art Crawl Participation

- In-Ah updated on contact with the program director; support exists to feature Blueridge artists at next year's Art Crawl.
- Two options: host venue (no registration fee, but venue selects exhibitors) or individual artists registering.
- Next step involves contacting potential venues like CanLan to explore participation possibilities.

13. Scholarship Criteria Update

- Lesley briefly discussed changes in scholarship criteria to allow more flexibility, including exceptions for those living outside Blueridge but having completed volunteer hours.
- Anni offered to circulate the revised wording for feedback before website update.

14. Snowflakes Donation for the Park Gate Community

- Discussion on continuing participation in the "snowflakes" fundraiser for the Park Gate Society.
- Agreement to donate five snowflakes (approximately \$100) as done last year.
- Anni volunteered to handle the purchase and donation logistics.
- Elmira and others emphasized community collaboration and reciprocity between Blueridge and Park Gate events.
- Logo needed for donation acknowledgement; In-Ah offered to provide the necessary Blueridge logo to Anni.

15. Future Meeting Hosting

- Elmira discussed scheduling and hosting of upcoming meetings.
- January 13th in-person meeting planned.
- Mahnaz agreed to host the January meeting; Barry requested to host in May.
- Flexibility to swap hosting duties if necessary; Fariba expressed willingness to step in if needed.

Actions and Recommendations:

- Post corrected AGM minutes and maintain Google Drive repository for documents.
 - Continue promoting Blueridge Cares and Sharing Garden volunteer involvement via bulletins and articles.
 - Reassess outdoor cinema night proposal after key organizers are available.
 - Michael to prepare questions for upcoming neighbourhood night consultations.
 - Organize follow-up Town Hall with better publicity and possible inclusion of higher-level officials.
 - Investigate and update on Chemtrade rezoning status.
 - Ensure all participants have proper meeting links and are added to communication channels.
 - Mahnaz to follow up with Ginette regarding leadership for Neighbours Helping Neighbours.
 - Jeff or IT to explore creating a simple webpage or form for matching help requests and volunteers if a leader is confirmed.
 - Board members to complete profiles as requested by Mahnaz.
 - Anni to circulate updated scholarship criteria wording for feedback.
 - Anni to purchase and donate snowflakes; In-Ah to send Blueridge logo to Anni.
 - In-Ah to pursue potential venue options for North Shore Art Crawl participation.
 - Elmira and members to finalize meeting hosting schedule for 2026.
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