

KDCFS Director's Report 2019

Welcome everyone and thank you for attending and showing interest in the Kaslo and District Community Forest Society.

Introduction of Board members: Steve Anderson (village of Kaslo rep and chair), Stephen Neville (vice chair), Tara Clapp (treasurer), Steve Fawcett (secretary), Robin Mercy, Marie-Ange Fournier-Beck, Neil Johnson (RDCK rep). Thank you to all the board members for their work this year with special mention of Tara and Steve F for their considerable contributions. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Chris Webster for his many years of work on behalf of the society as the RDCK appointee. He chose to leave the board last fall due to personal reasons and his insights and energy are certainly missed.

Introduction of Management Team: Sabrina Mutterer and Jeff Reyden; again, special mention in recognition of their dedication and hard work in leading us through this past year. I'll also introduce Heather Hamilton who was recently hired as our bookkeeper replacing Carol Brown. Thanks to Carol for her work over the previous year and her help is bringing Heather up to speed.

I will now take a few minutes to touch on some of the highlights of the past year after which I would be happy to answer any questions you may have. I will then ask the managers to provide a visual flashback of 2018 operational achievement markers and a preview of plans for 2019/20.

First of all, let me talk about the Board itself. For the past year the board, on which there are nine seats, has been operating with two of those seats being empty. Following last year's AGM there were eight members but Ross Lake resigned early in the year. Two members – Marie-Ange and Robin – had terms that expire at this AGM and that meant there would four seats up for election. Marie-Ange has agreed to run again and Graham McKellar has been nominated so they will both join the board by acclamation. Some other members did express interest but did not get their nomination papers in by the required deadline. In the case of vacant seats the board has the right to appoint members and I'm sure we will be looking at those who expressed interest and consider appointing two of them to make up a full compliment.

Next, let me say a little more about our managers who have now been with us for a year and a half. As you may know they have moved us into the modern era by setting up a “virtual office”. This was done to save money as the physical office we used for many years saw very little traffic. Business is now conducted on line apart from our monthly meetings and we maintain a store front presence at Mel B Digital where you can access our digital resources on her public computers, pick up forms and purchase memberships.

Another significant change has been a shift in responsibilities. The management team now conducts all the day to day business of the society reducing demands on the board which now sets policy and direction and oversees the managers activities. This division of roles was long overdue and is very welcome.

The society does have a policy manual which is available on line and you are invited to peruse. This manual is the mechanism by which the board guides the managers and, with their help and guidance, the board has spent time and energy updating that document over the past year. The policies we have worked on are the:

1. Financial Governance Policy
2. Financial Management Policy
3. Investment Policy
4. Contingency Fund Policy
5. Legacy Fund Policy
6. Contracting Policy
7. Operating Reserve Policy
8. Information Disposition Policy

As you can see, most of these are related to our finances and we hope we are building a solid financial foundation for the future. One example of these efforts is the Operating Reserve Policy which seeks to establish and maintain a financial cushion so that the organization could survive a period of operational hardship or market stagnation if necessary. While we hope that won't ever be necessary but if it is we want to be well positioned and confident in our solvency.

Another significant financial change was to increase our accrual rate for silviculture. This is money that is set aside as we log in order to pay for planting and tending the blocks until the new forest is established. A careful review of our expenses revealed that the previous accrual rate was inadequate to cover the costs of reforestation.

While the board has been working on policy the management team had a busy year planning and supervising successful logging operations. The financial report will highlight their achievements in this regard. I am pleased and proud to say that they also undertook a number of initiatives to improve relationships with the broader community. In the interest of time I will, again, simply list some of those initiatives and invite you to ask questions after if you'd like more information about any of them.

Some of those initiatives are:

1. Organizing a cleanup of garbage that had been illegally dumped on some of our access roads
2. Working with the Mirror Lake water users to straighten out the course of Bjerkness Creek where it had meandered back and forth across a logging road. In

regards to this project we would like to acknowledge and thank Irma Aldinger who very generously donated rock from her nearby quarry to be used as fill and rip rap for use in this work. The value of the rock is significant and should be recognized as a donation to the community as it represents money we didn't have to spend.

3. Coordinating with the trail users and cross country skiers to improve the wagon road while conducting some logging along that route.
4. Initiating conversations with Shutty Bench residents as planning starts for fire interface work on the slopes above Shutty Bench and Kaslo.
5. Organizing a field day for interested residents on Mt Buchanan to display and discuss some of our operations there.
6. Donations of three logging truck loads of firewood to local groups and the auctioning off of two other which money was used to fund a very successful Winter in the Forest Festival.

Some other points I would like to mention briefly are:

1. Tara Clapp attended the British Columbia Community Forest Association annual conference last year as our delegate and representative.
2. We have undertaken an initiative to write a Business Plan for the society and while that is moving slowly at this point it is underway.
3. As I mentioned briefly above, there is also work underway to begin fire interface work in order to reduce the threat of wildfire to the village and surrounding area. In view of recent summer's fire records this should be a high priority for all of us.

Finally, let me mention a idea that has come up in our conversations about the society and I would seek your comment and input on this topic. One of the constant struggles we face is maintaining a healthy membership base and keeping membership records accurate and up to date. It has been suggested that this chore might be simplified if we were to offer multi-year memberships. Before we undertake such a change we'd like to know how you, our members, would feel about it. With that thought on the floor I will conclude my report and invite your questions and comments about this topic and any other information I've offered or, for that matter, any other information I haven't offered that you may be interested in.

Steve Anderson - Chair