

Sustainable Gabriola Meeting Notes

June 27, 2021

Attending: Bob McKechnie, Deb Ferens, Charlotte Cameron, Kate Reynolds, Tom Cameron, Jim White, Steve Earle, Suzi, Fay Weller, Dyan Dunsmoor-Farley/aka Jacqueline Carlin (recorder)

1. Land Acknowledgements – how to make land acknowledgements more than rote performances – Dyan DF

We come to this space we call Canada with a sense of entitlement reinforced by western religion and technological supremacy. This is strengthened by systems (legal and economic) which favour capital and business interests and that underpinned the necessity of ‘stealing’ land from Indigenous peoples.

The use of land acknowledgements is not even across Gabriola organizations, for example GES does not currently have one but is working on one.

People agreed that land acknowledgements had to come from the heart, but that can be challenging when you understand the issue intellectually as opposed to being able to absorb the impacts of past actions on the present day lives of Indigenous peoples.

The repetitive nature of repeating specific land acknowledgements rather than being understood as a rote exercise could also be thought of as an anthem – repetition ingrains the message and can act as a learning tool. It could be thought of as a mantra or an affirmation.

A land acknowledgement is a step in affirming a ‘truth’ which is necessary before we can begin the process of reconciliation. Part of that truth is that we have witnessed and participated in cultural genocide. With that comes a strong feeling of guilt. We are left to reflect on how we redress these wrongs. Guilt is experienced differently depending on the roles we have played over the years. For instance, as a teacher being ashamed for what one has taught in the past and recognizing that we each have a duty to learn and know.

There is a recognition of the deep connection of Indigenous people between land and culture. Understanding that relationship would be important to beginning the process of reconciliation. As well we can consider learning some aspects of the language as a signal of respect. Terms like *Huy-ch q’u seeum* (thank you very much) and *Uy’skweyal* (good day) can be used to demonstrate both interest and respect for culture (pronunciations can be found at: <http://abed.sd79.bc.ca/hulqumimum-resourses/hulquminum-greetings/>).

Actions:

- Build a land acknowledgement into each meeting by having whoever is chair prepare a statement that expresses their commitment and understanding. Dyan is facilitating the next meeting so she will try to craft something that expresses her understanding.

- Several resources were also recommended: Suzanna Moodie's book *Roughing it in the Bush* – as an early Canadian settler—and Leanne Simpson's book *Noopiming: The Cure for White Ladies* for an Indigenous perspective. Also, Bob Joseph's *21 Things You May Not Know about the Indian Act*. And for a satirical examination see Baroness von Sketch https://youtu.be/LQyFfC7_U-E

2. Gabriola GHG Goals – Steve Earle

The single most significant action Gabriolans can take to reduce GHGs is to have at least 50% of the population switch to electric cars.

A range of ways to encourage people to do this were discussed including:

- presentations by people who have e-cars and are able to answer questions about their experiences. It will be important to be able to answer questions related to the environmental impact of e-cars vs gas and the long-term sustainability of the model.
- financial assistance, for instance, through the Investment Co-op for people who want to purchase an e-car

Jim White provided a link to a YouTube video he created <https://youtu.be/HI-sfLQ8kc8> *Pass it On - Our Own Climate Action*

Actions: Steve will take the lead on this as a SG project. He will start a list of questions on e-cars and circulate for others to add to. (See Appendix 1)

It was noted that increased recycling was not going to have a significant effect, and that we needed to tackle the culture of consumerism. **This will be a topic for the next meeting** on July 25th.

3. Climate Change – Deb Ferens

Deb described a range of positive legal decisions and actions worth noting:

Bill C-12

On June 22 the House of Commons finally passed Bill C-12 to achieve net-zero ghg emissions by the year 2050.

The bill still needs to get through the Senate.

But C-12 still won't be enough to ensure Canada truly tackles the climate emergency. To do that, PM Trudeau needs to follow through on his 2019 promise to pass a Just Transition Act, ensuring that no one is left behind as we transition off fossil fuels.

With the possibility of a fall election on the horizon, it's time to continue pressuring the government to deliver on the Just Transition Act.

Dutch Court and Royal Dutch Shell

In a landmark case, a Dutch court orders Royal Dutch Shell to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions 45% by 2030 based on 2019 levels.

The ruling applies to Shell and its suppliers and covers not only the companies' emissions but also emissions from products burned by its customers.

The decision comes after scientists have said most of the known fossil fuel reserves will have to be left in the ground to avoid the worst effects of climate change.

The case could set a precedent for similar lawsuits against huge oil companies that operate across the globe.

Seven youth challenge provincial climate change policies

A group of seven young people, including three First Nations youth, have won a legal battle against efforts by Doug Ford's Progressive Conservative government to stop them challenging Ontario's climate change policies.

The recent ruling is "a landmark victory" and "a legal first" in Canada, according to Ecojustice. The group claims this is the first time a Canadian court has determined fundamental rights under the Charter can be threatened by climate change and citizens have the ability to challenge a Canadian government's action on the climate crisis, according to the group's website.

Our Children's Trust (the Public Trust Doctrine)

Our Children's Trust is a non-profit public interest law firm that provides strategic, campaign-based legal services to youth from diverse backgrounds to secure their legal rights to a safe climate. We work to protect the Earth's climate system for present and future generations by representing young people in global legal efforts to secure their binding and enforceable legal rights to a healthy atmosphere and stable climate, based on the best available science. Our legal work – guided by constitutional, public trust, human rights laws and the laws of nature – aims to ensure systemic and science-based climate recovery planning and remedies at federal, state, and global levels.

Actions: make Public Trust Doctrine a standing agenda item.

4. GIRO Fashion Show and Auction – Fay

Fay updated the group on the progress on the recycled clothing project aimed at diverting clothing and fabric from the landfill by using them to create usable products (e.g., acoustic sound panelling, dog beds, *unpaper* towels).

To celebrate the successful products there will be a Fashion Show and Auction on Sunday August 22nd from 1:00 to 3:00 at the Community Hall. Proceeds will go towards a new building for this new social enterprise.

Action: Dyan to check with Golf Club to be test site for the acoustic panels.

NEXT MEETING

July 25th, 3:00 to 4:30

Facilitator: Dyan

Recorder: Bob M.

Roster: Dyan, Bob, Mary, Judith, John, Fay, Deb, Nancy, Steve