

Fireweed Community Market Society
Minutes of the 2016 Annual General Meeting
Whitehorse Public Library
March 24, 2016

Attendance:

Susan Ross, Brian Lendrum, Valerie Whelan, Joella Hogan, Pam Charman, Lois Gillis, Leona Marinoske, Judy Matechuk, Karen Berrel, Kate Mechan, Luke Legault, Jeramy Mattie, Carolyn Campbell, Nancy Mercier, Jan Burks, C L Rideout, Lara Melnik, Sylvia Gibson
Board members: Ruth McCullough, Cora Lee Rideout, Carlie Ferland, Deborah Turner-Davis, Darren Holcombe, Tom Rudge

Call to Order

Deborah Turner Davis called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

Motion to accept the agenda

Moved by Deborah Turner Davis, seconded by Carlie Ferland that the agenda be accepted. All in Favor, **carried**.

Review of 2015 AGM minutes

The membership was asked to review the minutes from the 2015 AGM as provided in written form. No questions, errors or omissions were noted. Moved by Daren Holcombe, seconded by Coral Lee Rideout, that the minutes be accepted as presented. All in favor, **carried**.

Presentation of Reports

1. **Chair's report. (attached below)**

Deborah Turner Davis outlined the highlights of the society's past year including but not limited to: our new store, changes to the markets (Saturday market held on Main Street) and the fact that our largest market ever occurred in 2015.

A special meeting related to all our markets for input on how to improve the markets with an emphasis on bringing and/or keeping the markets "alive" will be held on March 30, 2016, 4:30 to 6:30 in the Whitehorse Public Library.

Deborah concluded with a heartfelt thank you to Claire Martel for her work over the past 18 months as the Executive Director, to Tom and Simone Rudge for their hard work over the past many years to keep the society afloat and to Joan Norberg for her work keeping our books in order.

Moved by Deborah Turner Davis, Ruth seconded acceptance of her Chair's report as presented. All in favor. **Carried**.

Deborah then introduced Sylvia Gibson, our new Executive Director, who provided a short outline of her background and experience.

2. **Treasurer's Report**

Carlie Ferland provided written financials and 2015 actuals with the 2016 budgeted items and a verbal explanation of items, including but not limited to: the end of Growing Forward 2 grant (finish in 2017 with final payment early 2018), Erin Woods will be

providing bookkeeping services, Farmer Robert provided free rent from April to the end of November while their store was under construction. A big thank you goes out to Robert and Simon for this contribution.

Moved by Carlie Ferland, seconded by Cora Lee Rideout, that the Treasurer's report be accepted as presented. All in favor. **Carried.**

Motion to waive the audit

Moved by Carlie Ferland, seconded by Cora Lee Rideout, that we waive the audit for the past year. All in favor. **Carried.**

3. Report on the 12 Days of Christmas Market

Carlie Ferland provided a verbal report on the 12 Days of Christmas market. Changes that occurred for the 2015 market included a move of venue which allowed an increase of vendors and a substantial increase of sales. The 12 Days of Christmas market will be part of the discussion at the March 30th meeting.

Moved by Carlie Ferland, seconded by Cora Lee Rideout that her report be accepted as presented. All in favor. **Carried**

Election of officers

Sylvia Gibson agreed to run the election.

Position of Co-Chair

Deborah Turner Davis and Carlie Ferland agreed to allow their names to stand for this position. There being no other nominations, they were acclaimed to the position

Position of Treasurer

Darren Holcombe agreed to allow his name to stand for Treasurer. There being no other nominations for this position, he was acclaimed to the position.

Position of Secretary

Ruth McCullough agreed to allow her name to stand for Secretary. There being no other nominations for this position, she was acclaimed to the position.

Position of Directors

Bart Bounds agreed to allow his name to stand for director.

Luke Legault agreed to allow his name to stand for director.

Jeramy Mattie agreed to allow his name to stand for director.

Lara Melnik nominated Kate Buerge for director. Kate was not in attendance but had indicated that if someone was needed for one of the positions, she would allow her name to stand.

There being no further nominations for these positions, the four individuals were acclaimed to the position.

Deborah Turner Davis moved adjournment at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

T. Ruth McCullough, Secretary

Fireweed Community Market Society.

Co-Chair's Report, Deborah Turner-Davis

What a year it has been for us all. When I reluctantly agreed to join the board last year it was with a complete lack of forethought or intention, truly a case of saying yes because no-one else raised their hand.

As a board, we had the advantage of the historical story of FCMS that Tom brought to the table as my co-chair and the perspective of a few voices brand new to the conversation. That created opportunities to take a look at some of what we do through new eyes and to examine why we do some of what we've always done.

There were certainly changes made over the course of the year. We appreciate the patience of our members as we made a rather quick departure from our previous Yukon Made Store location in favour of a more FCMS friendly agreement elsewhere. It might have felt like a long wait to get our new store opened but we're very optimistic that it will prove to have been a good move for the society and for individual vendors.

We made changes to our outdoor markets in 2015, moving Saturday markets from Shipyards to the Wharf at the foot of Main Street. We know our vendor numbers were down toward the end of our Thursday markets, but we also achieved our record largest market in 2015. Saturday markets on the wharf saw fewer vendors than we expected and we know we need to look at the length of the Saturday season. We'll be talking more at an upcoming meeting about the details and specifics of our 2015 market season, looking for thoughtful feedback from members to help us grow and improve our outdoor markets.

We've had some feedback from our outdoor market vendors already about last season. There were comments on vendor numbers, set up practices, external challenges such as parking & weather, questions about our rules & the personality of our market. We will look hard at all of those areas and more at the Special Meeting scheduled for March 30th, 4:30 – 6:30 at the Library. If you have been an outdoor market vendor in the past please consider joining, even if you don't plan to be at this season's outdoor markets.

One thing for us all to consider this season is how we can keep market alive in the minds of our customers, particularly our loyal local customers and how to keep encouraging new vendors to join us.

We know already that without new participants, we'll have fewer farmers at market this year. That is a liability for the FCMS, looking ahead. Aside from the obvious importance of offering lots of fresh local produce at market for customers, much of our funding is tied to our agricultural roots. If we lose that farmer base we will no longer be able to access some of our traditional funding sources. We also know that the more food trucks & food carts we have, the longer our customers stay and the more they are likely to spend.

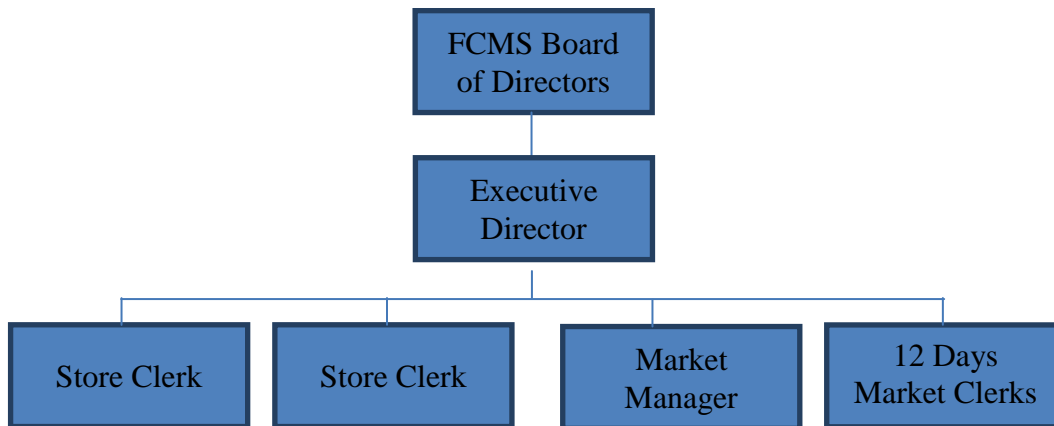
We have applied for Arts Fund money to help us expand our workshop program for 2016 in an effort to attract new audiences and provide an enhanced market experience for everyone. We will

let you know more about that once we know if we've been successful in our grant application. Even if we are not successful, an expanded workshop series will be explored for 2016.

Our Growing Forward funding will last only through 2017. That funding has provided critical core funding for its five year life cycle. Our board has spent a lot of time considering ways to become financially self-reliant, which we have not been to this point. Continued reliance on grants for our survival means we will always be at risk. There are financial decisions we need to make as a collective that will significantly impact our long term financial outlook. Specifically we'll need to finally tackle the hot potato issue of fees & sales percentages charged at all of our events in order to allow the FCMS as a whole to be sustainable. That will be addressed as part of our ongoing budget discussions.

We instituted some organizational changes this year, entrenching a few things that had always been informal. That was uncomfortable at times, and those changes were not without discussion & debate. What was once a small group of friendly colleagues meeting weekly at market has grown into an organization with several employees, significant revenue and an important role in our community. That is thanks to the very good work of those who built the FCMS from the dirt up.

Our board has worked to formalize the relationship between FCMS and our employees. Our current organizational chart is as follows, though there may yet be tweaks as we move forward:



As a board, we have begun tackling some overdue detail work like ensuring we have proper documents to support our hiring practices, good record keeping and a clear set of policies and operational procedures to help our staff. We want to thank Claire and previous FCMS employees who have worked without any guiding documents or procedures in place.

We have accomplished a lot this year. Our 12 Days of Christmas sale was a resounding success on all fronts, thanks in large part to the talents of the membership. Our sales were up, attendance was up and responses from vendors were largely positive. We know we have work to do to ensure continued success and we know we haven't slain the dragons we hoped to slay with the move to a larger venue. We still have to ensure we can meet the needs of the largest number of vendors as possible in a way that ensures we are inclusive, while maintaining FCMS values and the quality and essence of the event.

After a year of change and action, the outgoing board is optimistic. We've got a new Executive Director, a new store, and a plan to consult with the members to plan our market season. We've begun the task of planning for self-reliance and we're actively looking for input from all of you. We're hoping to access some board development training early in the next cycle. We want to build capacity within our new board to help empower all future boards.

The Fireweed Community Market Society is a vital part of all our lives. Whether you participate in all the FCMS events or just 12 Days or the Yukon Made Store you have a stake in our success. We all benefit from the community's love of the outdoor summer market and their consistent support of 12 Days.

Fireweed Market isn't operated by a governing body separate from yourself. The FCMS IS you, the vendor. What we become, what we gain and even what we stand to lose is as critical to us as a board as it is to you. None of the events the FCMS hosts are run without the energy and efforts of all the members involved. When you come to market this season, remember the excitement and energy that made you love it when you first hung your shingle. Get to know your market neighbours, lend a hand where you see it's needed and be part of the building process. Whitehorse loves market because it's a fun place to be, with great products, great produce and great people.

Thank you all for being here tonight. I hope you all have a successful 2016 season.

Respectfully,

Deborah Turner-Davis
Co-Chair, FCMS Board 2015