

**Draft Minutes - Transition Sooke General Meeting – May 6, 2020, 7 pm
(Virtual meeting via Zoom)**

18 attending

- 1 a) Welcome
- b) Introductions
- c) President's remarks – Moki - Where do we want to go post lockdown? Can action groups work together?
- d) Agenda Review
- e) Active Members' List - Active members currently total 44. In future meetings, we will always need to pass the list around or refer to it so that participants can sign up to become. Active Members (if they have attended two meetings as per membership policy)
- f) Minutes of last meeting (April 1, 2020) Moved by Robin; Seconded by Moki. Approved

2 Treasurer's report – Not much activity. Donations can be made to TS by email. Moved by David; Seconded by Lynn. Approved

3 Reports from Climate Emergency Action Teams - Jo and Susan C

- a) Backyard Gardening Program (BGP) – Robin updated: oversubscribed at 30 families
 - Budget presented for / planned for 20 families
 - Used the FED application process to volunteer, contact Stephen directly
 - Donations can be emailed to admin@sookefoodchi.ca with backyard gardening program in the subject line

Motion 1: I move that we allow funds to be withdrawn from the Legacy Funds for the purpose of supporting the Backyard Food Growing Program which replaces other plans for the celebration of Earth Day 2020 which could not be carried out because of the pandemic. Moved by Moki; seconded by Bernie. Approved.

Motion 2: I move that we make available \$1,000 from TS to the Backyard Food Growing Program and withdraw the motion on \$500 from the April 1 meeting. Moved by Moki; seconded by Bernie. Approved.

b) Green Energy Action Team report presented. Next meeting 19 May

c) Rainwater Harvesting AT on hold

d) Transportation AT: trying to liaise with other groups in the community

4 a) Membership ad hoc committee: motions circulated in advance of meeting. Last minute amendment added. Much discussion ensued. Five motions all passed (see below)

b) Decision making – Considerable discussion. Directors do not have financial decisions; role of directors is to manage the organization. Resolution passed (see below)

c) Financial Processes - no report

5 District of Sooke Climate Action Committee – Susan C, Diane, Christina, Andrew Report. Report by Susan C. Preparing recommendation on how Sooke can reduce GHGs in four areas — transportation, food security, land use (buildings, trees) and an initiative on how best to engage the public.

6 SICAN – (South Island Climate Action Network) attended by Susan Belford. Reported by Susan C. Network of individuals put climate emergency on the agendas of municipalities. Primarily inter-group networking and plan/action sharing.

7 Zerowaste Sooke – no report

8 Wildwise – no report

9 Other business

BetterBuySooke.ca - Britt had to leave but reported on "buy local, support local during lockdown" initiative. visit website (betterbuysooke.ca) for more

Creatively United Earth Week webinars are available online

LifeLongLearners in suspension during lockdown

Next meeting June 3, 2020

Membership Motions

Motion 1: Moved that the membership policy proposal below be adopted:

Transition Sooke Membership Policy

Classes of members:

- Transition Sooke has two classes of members, to reflect the broad email list with over 400 subscribers and the much smaller group that comes to meetings to vote and discuss issues.
 - Email subscribers will be known as ‘associate members’ while people who regularly come to meetings or are involved with action groups will be known as ‘active members.’
 - Only active members will be voting members.

- It is from the Active Member list, not the email list, that membership numbers for official purposes are collected, and from which issues such as quorum can be calculated.

Voting Rights of Active Members

- Active members attain voting rights in Transition Sooke when they sign the active member sheet at their second meeting.

Renewal of membership

Membership in Transition Sooke is to be renewed annually at specific date, not on the anniversary of the date they joined.

- Annually an email will be sent to everyone on the active members list asking if they wish to remain on the active members' list, move to the associate members' list, or withdraw from membership. If they wish to remain on the list, they need to respond; if they don't respond they will be moved to the email list of associate members.
- To reject membership, an associate member has only to unsubscribe from the list, and an active member can ask to be removed or can simply not respond to the annual refreshing of the list.
- Membership in Transition Sooke is attained without member dues. Persons becoming active members affirm their support for the constitution.

Motion 2: Active Member Voting Privileges

Moved that:

Active member voting privileges are attained when an individual has attended two general meetings, either consecutively or within three months. Active participation in an action team or group could stand in lieu of meeting attendance. If the member is unable to attend the two meetings in the time allotted.

Motion 3: Statement of members' shared values and intentions

Moved that:

- The constitution of the Sooke Transition Town Society (Transition Sooke) will appear across the top of the Active Member's attendance sheet, which is circulated at every general meeting. Meeting participants will be reminded that signing the sheet affirms their support for the constitution.

Motion 4: Collection of needed information from members

Moved that:

- To ensure proper maintenance of membership records, Transition Sooke's Active Member attendance sheet will be modified to include contact information required by the Societies Act.

Motion 5: Date of Membership Renewal

Moved that:

- Annual Membership renewal would take place in January of each year.

Transition Sooke

Draft Policy on Decision Making

Preamble

During Transition Sooke meetings, it has often been stated that we make decisions by consensus. It is not a formalized process of consensus; there are no rules of order, but we are guided by Roberts Rules of Order. Most of the decisions are fairly easy. Sometimes when decisions are more difficult, such as financial decisions, or "policy direction" decisions, we vote and majority rules.

Consensus requires a strong "basis of unity" not only agreement with the purposes of the society but also some harmonization with fundamental values. That is challenging in an organization with a somewhat revolving membership. Consensus, when it involves difficult decisions, takes time and lots of people have little experiential or socio-cultural tolerance for the time it takes to make a good decision.

Majority voting can be accomplished quickly, but it is often argued that it fails to take the time needed to adequately consider all aspects of a decision and inclusively consult with all voting members. People sometimes come to meetings with an attitude that they just need to persuade 50%+1 of the people to support their motion and they can "win."

It is possible to hybridize the two ways of making decisions, either formally or informally. Hence, time is taken to process and talk about the decisions and consider different points of view, including such things as small groups, forming committees to report back, etc. Then when the topic has been thoroughly discussed, you call the vote. In a sense, it is not how you ultimately make the decision but how you got there.

At the moment, Transition Sooke's registration with the Societies Act states that we use simple majority voting.

While we may want to change decision-making rules in the future, the important thing right now is that we have a simple understanding of how we make decisions so we don't get mired in the nuts and bolts and so we don't alienate a large number of members by taking up valuable time discussing the fine points of decision making.

Most importantly, decision making has not been a big issue for Transition Sooke. The non-hierarchical, inclusive, and action-oriented nature of the group precludes the necessity of rigorous decision-making rules.

Policy

Who makes decisions?

Transition Sooke is a non-hierarchical organization, hence decisions are not made by the board; decisions are made by the Active Members (as defined in the draft membership policy).

How do decisions arise?

Decisions arise primarily in two different ways:

1. Someone comes to a meeting with a proposal and they are seeking a decision.
2. A discussion takes place in a meeting and it becomes apparent that in order for the discussion to move forward, a decision must be made.

How are decisions made?

Decisions usually begin with a motion, which is proposed by one member and seconded by another. The motion, which is best presented in writing to the members before or during the meeting, may be modified by the group provided the person who made the motion agrees to the changes.

Most decisions are straightforward and can be made by a “loose consensus” process. For example: approving minutes, accepting a report, etc. This is easier when we are face-to-face, but also possible when we are meeting virtually.

If there appears to be some disagreement in the room, after considerable, inclusive discussion, including a consideration of taking the motion to committee, deferring the decision, seeking more information, etc., then a vote would be called. The results of the vote are determined by a simple majority.

Where are decisions made?

Decisions are made at monthly general meetings and at the annual general meeting (AGM), whether they are in-person or virtual.

In some situations, in between monthly general meetings, a situation may arise where a decision needs to be made before the next monthly meeting. These decisions are made by email. All Active Members would be sent the decision to be made by email and asked to respond in two days. The email is sent out to the Active Members list with a subject line that clearly says “DECISION.”

How are decisions recorded?

The wording of the motion, the person who moved it, the person who seconded it, and whether it passed, failed, was deferred or removed are all recorded in the minutes of the meeting.