Sechelt Garden Club – Annual General Meeting Minutes

Date: Monday, November 24, 2025

Year End Executive and Director Reports

President: Lee Tidmarsh: This is the 58th anniversary of the Sechelt Garden Club, being founded in 1967. We will have to start thinking about celebrating 60 years soon. Our club has had another successful year, thanks to the work of the executive and directors and hard-working members. We have maintained a membership of around a 100 people, heard interesting speakers on various facets of gardening, and raised funds to keep the club going. We now have enough money to create a bursary for someone who wishes to take the Master Gardener training. Our annual social event, the Strawberry Social was once again a success with a good turnout and delicious food provided by members with strawberries and cream to top it off. We moved our Members' garden tours to the late spring for better plant viewing and enjoyed seeing 3 gardens in Roberts Creek; Ali Forbes, Nancy Webber, and Paddy Wales, followed by a guided tour of the Salish Soils Regenerative Farm the next week. We increased our community involvement by participating in the Seedy Saturday at the library. Jon Bell and Phill Murray gave talks about seed starts and other garden topics to a keen audience. At the same time Vanessa Choo and Pat Kolterman introduced a new Practical Vegetable Gardening Course in collaboration with the Sunshine Coast Botanical Gardens. Finally, at the request of the Sechelt Seniors Activity Centre some members have given advice about clearing out overgrown gardens and have made suggestions for replanting. We finally got around to revising by-laws for the club and this will be formally passed in January 2026. For our upcoming year we will continue our speaker program and repeat the successful social and fundraising events of this year. The executive is always open to members' suggestions for speakers and activities. We hope that another member will apply for the Master Gardener program and SGC bursary for next year. Our website has been a game changer for the club, thanks to Ellen Heale our secretary. It has many functions and provides a wealth of knowledge. In addition, members can use it to feedback to the executive about the club. Executive positions are terminating at the end of 2026 and we will need to appoint new directors. Please let us know if you are interested. I would like to thank Gerri Randall, Past President who has completed her term on the executive in that role. Her positive spirit and good humour keeps us going. However, Gerri can't be inactive and we hope will continue to work with the directors. I would also like to thank all the directors on the executive who have made the job easy and enjoyable. Everyone contributes their enthusiasm and hard work to make this a vibrant club.

Treasurer: Dora McNeal: As of today we have $ 11640.16 in the bank, $ 6101.79 in chequing, $ 34.55 in shares and $ 5503.82 in term deposits. My 2024 year-end income statement has been posted on the website. For those who looked at it closely, you would have seen the separate entry at the bottom of the page for the Cascade Garden which seems to throw the final numbers out of balance. Until 2025, we kept that account separate. We started in 2024 with $452.91 in that account and had expenses of $121.96. The balance of $330.75 was amalgamated with Community Projects in 2025 so you won't see that extra entry anymore. We had a total of $8143.16 income throughout the year and $4711.46 in expenses for a surplus of $3431.71 in our operating account. We are a non-profit organization so this year the executive decided, with ratification from the members to give out a total of 2 bursaries for the Master Gardener course to deserving applicants. To this point, we have given one bursary in 2025.

Communications, Website and Newsletter: Ellen Heale: General and Executive meeting minutes were produced and posted on the website. Monthly newsletters (with the exception of July and August) were published and distributed in 2025. Topics ranged from timely gardening activities to seasonal plants. Club events and activities were promoted. Discounts for members now includes Rona in Madeira Park and B&K Landscaping in Gibsons. Facebook was maintained and a new Instagram account was developed. Facebook has over 450 participants and Instagram has 19 followers. The website was updated regularly with Club information. A new 'Members Only' section was added for General Meeting Minutes and Newsletters. A new interactive speaker rating form was developed. The Club g-mail account was monitored and correspondence relayed in a timely fashion. This included bulletins and newsletters from the BC Council of Garden Clubs. A program development survey was conducted.

Membership: Brenda Hawkings: 27 signed in tonight, 1 on Zoom. As of November 24, 2025, our membership breakdown is as follows: 96 current members and 7 Lifetime members for a total of 103 29 new members joined this year 15 members did not renew their membership Members Single Family Lifetime Total Existing 45 11 (x2) 67 New 15 7 (x2) 29 Lifetime Total 7 60 18 (x2) 7 7 Membership fees remained at $25. for single, $40. for family and $10. for visitors. Membership fees can be made via e-transfer, credit card at anytime and by cheque or cash at General Meetings. The winner 103 of the 'win your membership' contest for 2025 was Jean Conley. There were no members currently eligible for Lifetime or Honorary membership.

Community Projects: Pat Kolterman and Marylin Roberts: Another busy year and a year with changes and new connections. The garden club volunteers met four times to change up and plant the planters on Cowrie and Wharf Streets. We received a lot of positive comments about our planters this summer. We made the decision to eliminate the Butterflyway Garden at Totem Lodge because when construction starts there, machinery would have destroyed it. We dug up the shrubs and many of the native plants 2 and sold them to Garden Club members.

Vanessa Choo, the veggie garden coordinator at the Botanical Garden and a Garden Club member, came up with the idea to offer a gardening course for beginners. Working with Vanessa, a curriculum and 5 teachers from the garden club were cobbled together. The classes were held on 12 Sunday mornings at the Botanical Garden. After the class, the beginning gardeners volunteered in the vegetable garden. The beginner gardening classes were well received and we will offer it again after taking a year off [2026].

Gerri Randall: Cascade Green Park Butterfly Garden: The Butterfly Garden in Cascade Green Park saw a general clean-up at the end of April this year, managed by Beth Emms and Gerri Randall, with the assistance of Executive Members. Some plants were lifted and potted up for the Plant Sale in early May. Attention occurred 2-3 times throughout the summer, and a major clean-up occurred this fall, organized by Beth, Gerri and Pat Kolterman. A big thank you to the many volunteers who were involved with this task on October 3, resulting in a culling of certain plants and overgrown ground covers, and the addition of a few new plantings. Much appreciation to Lee Tidmarsh for transporting our green waste following this effort. Some attention has to be directed to plant borders during the next year, as a few of the border logs are deteriorating due to rot.

Sechelt Seniors Activity Centre: The club was approached by the Sechelt Senior's Activity Centre this year following their visit by FireSmart. Their side garden saw the removal of several large trees and shrubs, which left that area needing some remedial work. Pat Kolterman and

Gerri Randall liaised with Operations Manager, Gillian Smith with regard to this. Once ideas and concerns were shared, it was decided that before any final decision could be made for the area, it had to be completely cleared of the remaining plantings and ground cover that had been neglected over the years. A friend of SSAC donated his time and equipment, and the side area was cleared at the end of October. A few affected shrubs were recycled to SSAC members. More clean-up of this side area is needed prior to final outcome, and SSAC will attempt to identify volunteers to assist with this.

Strawberry Tea: 2025 Strawberry Social – Sunday, June 22 Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden Pavilion Committee: Gerri Randall, Ann Booth, Carol Corbet, Beth Emms, Marylin Roberts Esther Schmit (with Jean Conley, Lorraine McMillan, Gail Cron and Rani Kazmarek) The 2025 Annual Strawberry Social saw an attendance of 49 members and guests who enjoyed a fun afternoon in the S.C. Botanical Garden Pavilion, an ideal venue for this event. Seating capacity is 60, at tables of six persons each. Each member attendee is asked to provide a favourite appetizer for the buffet table, and the Club provides a selection of strawberry desserts, coffee and teas. This format has become popular with attendees, as everyone enjoys a wide variety of homemade goodies in addition to the desserts. The afternoon includes a Trivia Contest, and prizes for creative and/or crazy hats. In 2024, the Committee initiated a Silent Auction in conjunction with the Social in order to raise funds in support of our “$1000 Challenge” (SC Community Services). This year, we again included an Auction using donations provided by supporters of the Cascade Green Park Butterfly Garden. Led by Marylin Roberts, with Pat Kolterman, Marg Acton and Gerri Randall assisting, several themed baskets were planned. These were beautifully arranged by Marylin, and displayed for auction at the June 22nd event, realizing $650 in revenue. The planning committee is responsible for the event logistics, including marketing, purchasing of supplies, creating floral arrangements, table décor, baking of desserts, volunteer assignments, set-up and clean-up. The Club now has a decent inventory of plates, teacups and saucers for use at this event, thrifted over the last couple of years in order to avoid the high cost of rentals. These are presently stored at the home of Ann Booth. Thanks to the Committee members listed, and to the Executive (and spouses!) who so willingly volunteer 3 on the day of the Social; and to Ellen Heale for creating the tickets and web portal for purchases. Income: $1208.48 (Tickets $576.84; Auction $631.64) Expenses: $ 499.19 Net: $ 709.29

Speaker Program: Sheila O’Donoghue: Invited gardening experts presented, in-person and on Zoom, at the regular spring and fall meetings. Topics included "Becoming a Master Gardener, Firesmart information, Myths of Planting Forb, Rose Varieties and Cultivation, Garden Design, and Pruning”. A member survey was conducted to determine topics of interest for presentations in the coming year. Phill Murray stepped down as the speaker coordinator and Sheila O'Donoghue volunteered to take on this task.