

Salt Spring Island Farmland Trust

Annual General Meeting, February 15, 2018

President's Report

The year began with a farewell dinner to say thank you to Marguerite Lee on her retirement from the board. Marguerite was a founding member of the Farmland Trust, incorporated as a non-profit society in 2009. She served as president through those eight years with tireless energy and commitment to make this new organisation the best it can be.

Four themes emerged in the course of our work in 201.:

- 1) We refined management of our properties. The Farmland Trust land assets are valued at over one million dollars. In the report on the Burgoyne Valley Community Farm and Shaw Gardens you will see, for example, that we established a committee of gardeners to self-organise the day-to-day operation of the allotment garden. We consulted with other organisations to improve management of the farm, including assessment of water and soil drainage and development of a plan for enhancing natural pollinators and biodiversity. At the Beddis Road property we issued a standardised Request for Proposals for construction of the new building, and prepared the site for the next phase in the development of The Root.
- 2) We increased attention on the development of an Education Plan which began in 2016. The Education Report describes the many educational activities undertaken in 2017, all of which demonstrate an evolving and growing role that the Farmland Trust is playing in building local food and agriculture knowledge for the benefit of the community. Knowledge built through hands-on learning, demonstration of good practice, and social media are among the tools that the Farmland Trust is developing.
- 3) We advanced development of The Root at 189 Beddis Road as a focal point in the community for local food production. The Root report conveys the work undertaken by the Farmland Trust in collaboration with funding organisations and the community at large. The board kept its nose to the grindstone for much of the year, drilling the well, working with engineers to develop the stormwater, structural, and septic plans, to acquire the building permit, to build the community seed bank, to initiate the permaculture food garden design, and to prepare and issue the Request for Proposals for the construction of the facility, and the selection of a successful contractor. In October the board lifted its collective head and shared information about its hard work with the community. It was rewarded with community support that exceeded its wildest dreams.
- 4) The board continued to strengthen its commitment to sound governance and financial management. The board reviewed and updated the SSI Farmland Trust Society constitution and bylaws, in alignment with the amended Societies Act of British Columbia. The revisions are on the agenda of this AGM and will be formally adopted when approved and filed. As the 2017 Financial Statements show, the SSI Farmland Trust operates on a sound financial platform. The Treasurer's Report helps to interpret the formal statements prepared by McLean, Lizotte, Wheadon and Company, ensuring accountability and financial transparency.

As president, I thank all the members of the board for their volunteer dedication and many hours of expert work for the benefit of the community. I thank each and everyone of you for the skills you bring

to this board and the multitude of ways in which you supported me in carrying out my president responsibilities through 2017. The work of the Farmland Trust is a group effort that only happens because everyone on the board cares about this community and works together to accomplish our collective goals. This is a hands-on management and working board with work that includes everything from heavy lifting to heavy thinking and for all your work on all fronts I am truly grateful: Mike Lakin, Larry Starke, George Ehring, Michael Hogan, Lorenz Eppinger, Rob Klein thank you for all you do for this community.

I also thank the board members' families for supporting and sharing their work for the SSI Farmland Trust. And I thank the volunteers who put their hands up and jump in when we need help.

One of the board's priorities is to collaborate with other Salt Spring Island community organisations. I thank SSI Community Services, SSI Conservancy, SSI Seed Sanctuary, and SSI Agricultural Alliance (and all its member agencies) for their contributions to making 2017 a successful year for the Farmland Trust.

On behalf of the board, I thank our financial contributors, without whom we could not have done the work we did in 2017: SSI Foundation, Victoria Foundation, Vancity Credit Union, the Seed Sanctuary Society, the SSI Conservancy, and the people of Salt Spring Island.

Respectfully submitted
Patricia Reichert