

Sechelt Seniors Activity Centre Society



Kit Artus, 2020 Lifetime Member

2020 Annual Report

SECHELT SENIORS ACTIVITY CENTRE

2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President –Chris Kane
Vice President –Ken White
Secretary – Mary Bittroff
Treasurer – Sylvia Graber
Maintenance Director – Fred Schembri

Directors at Large:

Kit Artus
Margaret Boyd
Bev Coxford
Marni Mulloy
Christine O'Brennan
Tony Stroud

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2020, A VERY HISTORIC AND CHALLENGING YEAR

2020 was a year of many challenges for our Centre. Here is a synopsis, to help us remember working to survive the realities of a global pandemic. We truly value the volunteer service and support of our many members through this time.

January:

- The year began with a review of the status of our three primary contractors. Our chef, custodian and rental/activity coordinator were all offered the opportunity to become employees. This was done to bring them and the Society, into compliance with national and provincial employment standards.
- We also sadly accepted the resignation of Norma Pruden from our board. She was highly valued for her work on the Kitchen committee and her diligent service to the Centre.
- With the management of board member Christine O'Brennan, keys to the Centre were changed and distribution recorded to improve security.
- A new ticket package was introduced for Pickle Ball to make payments easier but the program created an unforeseen challenge in financial accounting.
- Maintenance issues were identified showing necessary upgrades to our HVAC (Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning) and HRV (Heat Recovery and Ventilation) systems.
- Our auditorium floor was stripped and re-sealed by Jim Coffin.
- The walk-in freezer was serviced.
- An AED (Automated External Defibrillator) unit was installed in our lobby for emergency medical use.
- The ECHO newsletter was added to our web site.
- Our Facebook page was 'reclaimed' by Chris Kane and returned to internal control.
- Volunteer Sally Watson assumed responsibility for kitchen volunteer coordination.
- Margaret Boyd took on the task of making grant applications.

February:

- Our AGM was held in the auditorium on February 19, 2020 and a new board was elected.
- Video surveillance cameras were installed to give 360° coverage of the building with an interior monitor.
- Joanne Rykers and Wilma Lorimer met with Gayle Neilson of the Sunshine Coast Community Solar Association to complete a plan for the \$10,000 Jim Pawley legacy gift to install solar panels on our roof. Subsequent donations increased the total to \$20,000 and thus increased the number of panels to be installed. Installation of the system was included in the donation and completed by Olson Electric. A computer monitor in the lobby allows members and visitors to see the very substantial ongoing benefits of the system.
- Sylvia Graber, our board Treasurer, engaged Thinkeezy solutions to re-vamp the computerized accounting program.
- A Park review committee was struck at the AGM to evaluate current use of the empty lot and to make recommendations for its future use.

March, April, May:

- BC Public Health Authority required us to close all activities within the facility due to Covid-19 on March 15th. This continued through the rest of 2020, except for our takeout meal service, as the board struggled to balance Provincial orders while keeping our Centre funded.
- Under direction of the board, the annual summer maintenance program was accelerated. Jim Coffin was able to re-furbish, upgrade, paint and re-finish the Craft and Farish rooms. The automatic lift and extra cabinetry were cleared from the auditorium by reorganizing the storage room. The auditorium was then repainted, and new chair rails were installed. Several pieces of furniture, stage props and costumes were removed or repositioned within the Centre for better functionality.
- The board changed policy allowing the Centre to remain open year-round post-pandemic.
- The board and local Public Health Authority approved a takeout meal service. With our Chef Emily's expertise and our top-line commercial kitchen, we were able to provide frozen entrée meal service for members through the remainder of the year while also maintaining Emily's employment through Covid.

June:

- Joanne Rykers resigned as past-president, due to her move to Vancouver Island.
- The Centre-owned bus was not able to be used due to Covid-19 and was stored with a local business.
- Due to Covid-19 closures, the board deferred the planned pay down of the mortgage.
- The board also deferred costly scheduled HVAC improvements.
- The board formed Covid-19 focus groups to plan possible re-opening protocols. As a result, new Health and Safety procedures were developed and posted on both our website and in our Centre.
- Kit Artus developed and distributed RISK assessment forms for all Activity Coordinators.

July:

- Board member Bev Coxford reviewed our communication methods and made recommendations for changes. The board agreed to engage the services of Spider Plus Design (Edmund Arceo) to implement the recommended changes.
- The board further confirmed extension of our take-out food service through July and August; a change from our previous custom of closing food service during the summer months.

August:

- The workload of our volunteer Treasurer, Sylvia Graber, was recognized as very onerous.
- Our bus (while in storage) was vandalized and had its catalytic converter stolen.

September:

- The contract position of rentals/activity coordinator was terminated due to the cessation of activities and rentals during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Our food services were increased to include 'Fish and Chips' on Fridays.
- Our yearly Fall Membership meeting had to be postponed due to Covid-19.

October:

- Sadly, Sylvia Graber resigned as Treasurer and the board decided to contract Thinkeezy Solutions to provide financial services. We also engaged a CPA firm to ensure that all accounting practices meet industry standards and to assume responsibility for provincial and federal reporting.

- Following an extensive study of future needs conducted by an independent volunteer, the board decided to convert to a governance model from the current operations model. As a result, the board voted to pursue a plan to hire a Centre Manager, and began a candidate search. This was in recognition that the efficient functioning of our Centre was becoming too overwhelming for a volunteer board and that such an action would benefit the financial and organizational structure moving forward.
- Gratefully, we were able to rent our facility to Elections B.C. for use as their riding headquarters and voting place. The resulting income provided us with much needed funds.
- In recognition of a need to minimize personal contact, we upgraded the 'square' and encouraged members to use debit and credit cards for all services.
- Tony Stroud initiated new membership cards that can be used for more than one year.
- An outline of duties to be included in a new management position were reviewed by the board.

November:

- After 22 years of use, the kitchen air exchange unit (HRV) failed permanently. A new kitchen air exchange unit was ordered at a projected installed cost of over \$18,000. (Installation was scheduled for February, 2021.)
- Volunteer Pam Fouts was thanked for her diligent and consistent management of our cash, deposits and documentation of our income sources.

December:

- It was recognized that we did not have the necessary financial liability coverage for volunteer board members. Chris Kane found appropriate coverage for us and it was approved by the board.
- We identified future board member needs.
- We confirmed the need to clarify members' abilities when they volunteer, so we can better match abilities with opportunities.
- The board began planning a Legacy Fund to provide an opportunity for people to support our Centre into the future.
- Thanks was given that our Centre had financially survived 2020 and a hope was voiced for better circumstances for 2021.
- Kit Artus was awarded a Lifetime membership for her long-term dedicated service.
- Margaret Boyd, a previous Lifetime member award recipient, retired from the board. She was thanked for her many years of service and especially for her service on the Board.

On a personal note, looking back, this was a year to remember — from hopeful beginnings in January, the drama and sorrow brought on by Covid-19 and the good fortune that helped us financially survive the year. Thanks to our creative chef, Emily McPherson, we were able to continue SSAC's frozen entrée meal service, helping our members through very difficult times. The board worked diligently for all members and appreciated members' continued support throughout 2020.

- compiled by 2020 Secretary, Mary Bittroff

HISTORY UPDATE

The Sechelt Seniors Activity Society, originally incorporated in 1976 as Branch 69 of the Seniors Citizens Association of B.C., began in a small building on Mermaid Street. The membership then decided to erect its own facility. Built and financed by the founding members with assistance from a caring community and grants from the federal government, the new facility was officially opened in 1993 after a 7 year build on property at 5604 Trail Avenue. The Sherlock family donated the empty lot behind the centre to SCABC-Branch 69.

In 1999, the Sechelt Seniors Activity Centre Society was incorporated as an independent Society under the B.C. Societies Act. Without government funding and/or management, our Centre joins a small group of independently operated seniors activity centres in Canada. We run almost entirely by dedicated volunteers including a volunteer Board of Directors. We documented over 10,000 hours worked by our volunteers in 2018.

In 2018 a \$900,000 update and expansion of our facility was approved and completed. This has resulted in one of the best commercial kitchens on the coast, a large dedicated dining room and added offices to meet the administration needs of the Centre. We received substantial community and member support to help fund the expansion.

In 2019, over 1400 members enjoyed our expanded centre with many volunteer leaders for the majority of our activities. Financially, we continued with a mortgage of less than \$300,000 and a beautiful complex to serve our members and community.

2020 — a year like no other! A worldwide pandemic changed how we live our lives. We experienced the elimination of social activities, a change in financial circumstance and a new reality. For the Centre, it meant a temporary cessation of all activities. This had serious financial impacts for SSACS, as with other service providers within the community. As 2020 came to an end, the board was thankful for unexpected rentals and for donations from many members. The board dealt with risk assessment, financial and health issues associated with Covid-19 as it struggled to keep the Centre financially sustainable and to maintain our take-out food service. All of this was achieved largely due to the dedication and service of our president, Chris Kane, often called to attend to the Centre multiple times in a day, and often at night to stick-handle the Centre through this pandemic.

REPORTS

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Just like most individuals and businesses, the Centre is in a state of flux. Covid-19 has provided an intermission so we could drill down and assess where we are and where we need to be. We see that customs and practices need to be updated. Some functions, such as accounting, have been successfully updated. A contractor has been able to revamp the financial reporting system and we now receive clearer reports. This allows the Board to implement viable and sustainable changes to the operation of the Centre. It is a time to hope as we slowly find the new “normal” and define a new future for the Centre. The changes being made by the board are intended to improve life for everyone we serve.

Some previously common practices put the Centre at a loss and at risk. For example, a large number of individuals had keys to the Centre. Key holders could access the Centre at any time. This practice led to the Centre being opened outside of normal office hours and the building was frequently left unsecured. We all know the neighbourhood has changed over the past few years and the need for vigilance has increased. As a result of Covid-19, we now know that strict protocols regarding cleaning, sanitizing and personal hygiene are needed as we try to contain infection. Addressing both these situations, new physical locks have been installed on most doors and access is now restricted. The Centre's bus is now under surveillance by our own 24-hour surveillance cameras — after it was vandalized. These factors have increased costs for monitoring and security and combine to suggest the need for a supervisory component as activities and events start up.

While we transition to a Board of Governance with a structured operational management, articles such as the Centre's constitution, bylaws and policies have become outdated, ineffective, and are not Covid-19 functional. Although reduced by almost 50% by attrition, the Board is reviewing these documents so that they do not paralyze the organization.

The Board is acutely aware of the Centre's financial position. As Covid-19 continued through 2020, the Centre was forced to shut down all activities resulting in a \$120,000 decrease: down 36% from the previous year. Moving forward, a fundamental shift in how the Centre conducts operations will be needed if our financial health is to be secured. Future rentals — and activities — must be financially viable given the new costs of cleaning, security and administration. Our goal is to minimize the impact on members of these changes.

A new funding formula will be needed prior to reopening activities. The previous practice of blocking time and space with no assurance of revenue to the Centre will no longer be possible. By way of recent example, the Centre was offered a non-committed rental opportunity (one the client had previously enjoyed). They wanted the first option to rent, but did not want to pay for this privilege. This type of request can now only be supported if financial consideration is a part of the formula. Every rental needs to be in the best interest of the Centre and our members.

Many who come to our Centre relish informal social interactions and casual encounters. Your Board continues to search for ways to have members enjoy this aspect in future, but with current cleaning protocols, it is simply not feasible. We recognize and appreciate the loss of social opportunity for those who are lonely and in need of friendship and welcome.

Next year promises to be an exciting time for the Centre and our future. With respect to the pandemic, we can see light at the end of the tunnel with vaccines on the horizon which should lead to re-opening with activities and events. Together, we can build a better Centre. Expectations of members will always be respected, as members also continue to appreciate that as a “Member Driven Not For Profit” we all have a duty of care toward each other and the Centre. Please join us as we meet the future with hope and anticipation for better times!

-Take care, your president, Chris Kane

SECRETARY'S REPORT

It was a privilege to be a part of the board in 2020 and to witness the work of my fellow board members and many volunteers that make us a uniquely independent successful seniors centre with the best auditorium and commercial kitchen in Sechelt. I appreciate the support of my fellow board members and especially the dedicated service of our president, Chris Kane. Unlike other years, this annual report does not include activity reports due to our close-down. I hope the monthly summary will serve as a reminder of all that has happened in 2020. *Respectfully submitted, your secretary, Mary Bittroff*

RISK ASSESSMENTS

This year has been a challenge, and we will have to deal with Covid-19 for some time. The effect on the members of SSAC has been noticeable and frustrating. As a Board we have had to reassess the risks and plan to comply with requirements each time there was a new Public Health bulletin. This resulted in a jerky ride of starting and stopping activities because there were changing rules, reassessing risks and ever-changing parameters. The one bright spot has been the lunch program. It has been limited, yes, but consistent with Covid-19 requirements. Emily, preparing the meals with a constant smile and the unwavering support of volunteer LeRoy Pattison, has kept many members fed and able use this essential service.

As required, the SSAC Health and Safety Policy and risk assessments are available in the office for you to read. Recommendations for ongoing development are welcome.

Thank you to members, activity coordinators and volunteers for your support and co-operation. *Kit Artus, Director*

TECH REPORT

Our Membership Database is up and running. The new procedure for renewals is being used to ensure members get a full year of membership benefit, regardless of their sign-up date. The date of expiry is calculated from the date of Membership renewal. This will also help as the end of year crush to renew will be eliminated over time as new members sign up throughout the year.

Certain Members who renewed early in 2020 will have an expiry date of 2021-12-31 applied as the 2020 membership was valid until 2020-12-31.

Tony Stroud, Director

VOLUNTEERS

Since last March, our volunteer force has been "out of action" due to the pandemic. The office has been open from 11:00 to 2:00 each week on Mondays and Fridays for telephone enquiries and sale of memberships.

Emily McPherson has kept our members happy with Tuesday and Thursday frozen entrée sales, and Friday fish and chips.

Many thanks to stalwart volunteers who have helped out including Kati Rawson, Joan Stanton, Joanne Sheanh, Judie Hamilton, Christa Haas, LeRoy Pattison, Irene Jankovits, Kit Artus, Marnie Mulloy, Tony Stroud and Margaret Boyd.

This year a new membership system has been put in place. The membership cards now have an expiry date on the back. This allows members to maintain the same number and just renew annually. This

makes it easier for everyone to keep track and causes less stress for those managing renewals. The membership form has been altered to reflect these changes. The data base has also been updated.

SPECIAL NOTE: Thanks to the amazing efforts of our custodian, Jim Coffin, painting of the washrooms, Farish room and Auditorium were completed during months when the Centre was closed to activities. Jim was even able to paint the dusty looking and faded fabric blinds. As a result, the Centre now looks fresh and clean.

– *Margaret Boyd, director*

CONCLUSION

So, here we are, ready to reopen as soon as we are permitted to do so safely. Our heartfelt love for each other continues to sustain our loyalty to fellow members through this trying time.

On a personal note, I wish to thank the many wonderful people that I have met in the last few years. I feel very privileged to have been a part of such a caring and supportive organization. I have witnessed the extraordinary service of Chris Kane, Ken White, Kit Artus, Marni Mulloy, Tony Stroud and Margaret Boyd through these challenging times. 2020 was a year of many challenges that no-one could have foreseen! It took huge devotion and time from all of the board to successfully manage our Centre through Covid-19. Let us all hope for better times in 2021. - *Mary Bittroff*

Attachments: 2020 financial statements and 2021 budget.