

GRANITE CREEK PRESERVATION SOCIETY

General Meeting
2017 November 16
Minutes

Meeting called to order: 12:58

Chair: George Elliott

Members present: (8) Dawn Gardner, Shirley Baker, Murv Baker, Bob Sterne, George Elliott, Ole Juul, Diane Sterne, Ernie Rice.

MSC

Minutes of last meeting

MSC

Treasurer's report

Bank balance \$998.73

Last bank balance \$862.01

Total balance \$8766.18

We are keeping a separate account for our Canada 150 grant

Volunteer time: 1212.05 hr = \$18775.53

Membership: 26

Progress Report (read by Diane Sterne)

- Diary from Lou hare received
- Yale University has right - we need to ask them.
- The diary includes pictures from the time, but not at Granite.

Committee of the Whole

MSC That we move into Committee of the Whole

MSC That we rise from Committee of the Whole, with nothing to report

New Business

MSC

- Bob moves that we authorize him to send letter to RDOS

MSC

- That we include the world unanimous in the letter.
- Letter to RDOS attached below these minutes.

- No meeting for December
- reminder of potluck party with Museum, Arts Council, and Museum boards.
- Next Meeting January 18, 2018

Meeting adjourned: 13:48

Ole Juul - Secretary

GCPS statement regarding the Signage Project at the Granite Creek Townsite, Nov. 16, 2017.

When we first discussed the concept of installing Interpretive Signs at the historic Granite Creek Townsite and Cemetery in 2013 upon the formation of the GCPS, we were informed by the RDOS that a License of Occupation would be required. The original suggestion was for the GCPS to obtain the License of Occupation directly from the Province. However, the RDOS, in discussion with Front Counter BC, decided that it would be far better for the RDOS (who will be around in perpetuity) to apply for it. It was explained to us in an email from the former Historic Coordinator, Lindsay Bourque, that the GCPS would then be appointed the Managers or Stewards of the site. She mentioned to us verbally during a site tour with her that liability and insurance could be borne by the RDOS. Had it ever been suggested that the GCPS would bear public liability and have to pay for insurance, we would never have agreed for the RDOS to apply for the License of Occupation, and the project would have died at that time. Subsequently, no Grant Application would ever have been made, and there would be no Signage Project.

The first mention of a “Sub-License of Occupation” was at our meeting with Candice on May 17. She told us this needed to be done before the signs could be installed, but assured us it was “just a formality, some paperwork, and would only take a week or so”. No mention was made that the GCPS would be required to carry liability insurance. In fact, the only financial implication that was discussed was that the GCPS would be responsible for replacing any signs that might be vandalized, and after determining the associated costs, the GCPS agreed to that. I can assure you that had any disclosure regarding requiring the GCPS to get insurance taken place, after the GCPS meeting the following day, we would have informed the RDOS it was unacceptable, the Signage Project would have been cancelled, and the GCPS would have made arrangements to return the grant cheque when it arrived later that month instead of cashing it. The first ever mention of the GCPS requiring liability insurance was in the email from Candice received Nov. 8, 2017.

The current trend is for Government to download their costs to their constituents to save money. For the RDOS to burden a volunteer organization (who they depend on to do the grassroots research and oversee and maintain an important historic site) with public liability and the associated costs of insurance which is far beyond their ability to meet, is false economy. The RDOS was using this as a “pilot project” for their new Heritage Initiative. They now have a Heritage Budget, presumably to encourage groups and projects such as ours. Downloading costs such as insurance to purely volunteer organizations is a sure way to kill not only such projects, but any enthusiasm the members have to try and preserve our disappearing heritage. Why would anyone spend hundreds or thousands of hours volunteering, to be told that their reward is to pay to enjoy the fruits of their labour?

At our meeting today, the GCPS unanimously voted not to agree to a “Sub-License of Occupation” from the RDOS, or any other arrangement that would transfer public liability or insurance costs to us. We are willing to be appointed as Managers or Stewards of the Granite Creek Townsite and Cemetery, as proposed in the beginning, and to continue with the Signage Project under the original ideals, goals and budget. We have completed all of our associated work months ago, and have arrangements in place for the installation of the signs, once they are ready. We await the RDOS to carry through with their commitments to us so that the project can be completed in a timely manner.

Bob Sterne,
GCPS Treasurer

Cover Email:

Candice, you have been wonderful with us, helpful in the extreme, and we feel that we have your complete support. However, we regret that the original vision of the Signage Project, and in fact the RDOS Heritage Initiative, seems to have been lost, buried under a mountain of paperwork. At the 99th hour, the RDOS is attempting to download costs onto the GCPS that we don't have the means, or potential means, to bear. To raise the concept of the GCPS assuming public liability or the associated insurance costs because of the Signage Project at this late date is incredulous. It would be irresponsible for the GCPS to agree to continuing insurance costs, ad infinitum, with no realistic way to pay for them. Any lapse in insurance coverage could, of course, put the Executive and the GCPS at financial risk, something nobody is prepared to face, nor should we have to.

This has brought us to the unfortunate state that it puts our ability to comply with the terms of the BC|Canada 150 Grant in jeopardy, through no fault of our own. I have attached a statement from the GCPS summarizing our feelings, which was approved at today's meeting of the Granite Creek Preservation Society. I am sending copies to Bill Newell and Anissa Paulsen so that our position is clear on this matter.

Bob Sterne
GCPS Treasurer
