

Mayne Island Recycling Society 2022 AGM

President's Report for 2021, May 25 2022

Introduction

This is my first report to you as President of the Society. I appreciate the opportunity to share with you the accomplishments of your Society during the past year, review our current condition, and look forward to the next year.

2021 was another successful year for the Mayne Island Recycling Society. We continued to fulfill our mandate to safely provide a comprehensive recycling service to the island. Our staff and volunteers worked hard to provide a friendly and well-organized experience for those visiting the Depot. As you will see from the Treasurer's report, the Society is in a healthy financial position, and our assets have grown over the past year. In addition, we have made good progress on a number of strategic initiatives.

Acknowledgements

To start with, I would like to thank all those whose dedication and hard work make Recycling tick. First, our paid staff, ably led as always by Manager Grant Buday, working with Eric Abilgard and Rick Anderson, assisted sometimes by Sam Buday. They have continued to provide a friendly face to the public despite all the changes that have been forced on us by Covid and other disasters. Next I would like to acknowledge the contributions of all our volunteers. They are a vital part of the organization and keep us connected to the community. All Board members are of course volunteers, and continue to provide the wise guidance the Society needs to continue to provide the services as well as plan for the future. Thank you. Finally I would like to acknowledge and thank our landlords, Peter Robinson and Kristine Webber. They have continued to be really supportive in a number of ways.

Board Transition

During the course of the past few months, the Board has been preparing for a major transition, as a number of very longstanding and key Board members are planning to move on:

First, our Vice President, Vicki Turay. Vicki has served the Society on the Board for ten years. Since being on the Board she has focused her energy primarily on community related events by managing the annual beach clean-up, spearheading the green cone initiative, and more recently organizing the bicycle recycling. We will miss her wise and thoughtful counsel.

Deb Foote has been Treasurer since 2010, and until last year has also acted as Bookkeeper. This is a significant work burden and we deeply appreciate her all detailed and careful work in this critical area over many years. We are delighted to know that she will still be around to help with the transition.

Lynda Smyth has served on the Board since 2015 and prior to that she volunteered at the Depot. She has served as the Volunteer Coordinator and brought a thoughtful and well-organized approach to this important role. It was a great pleasure for me personally to work closely with Lynda on the development of the MIRS website, as well as developing our Communications activities in the past six months. Lynda has also served in the new role of Board Communications Liaison this year, as well as the 2019 BYOC Campaign. She spearheaded the 2020 Pollution Solutions Programs with the Mayne Island School.

John Shayler has been a Board member for two years and is a regular volunteer at the Depot. Although John has decided to leave the Board, we are delighted that he wants to continue to volunteer in various capacities.

We have identified some excellent candidates to join the Board, and these will be introduced to you during the Board election part of this meeting.

Depot operations

I am very glad to report that the Depot continued to operate safely in 2021, with no incidents reported. Under the leadership of Bill Warning as Chair of the Depot Operations Committee depot, health and safety inspections (with a Board member and staff member) have indicated the depot is in very good shape. We will continue these regular inspections.

Since Covid, the role of our depot volunteers has changed somewhat, and has been somewhat restricted to the (still very important) role of managing vehicle traffic. Our intent is to get volunteers back engaged with recycling work at the “bottom of the hill”, and we have already made some progress with this. In 2021 our Volunteer Coordinator Lynda Smyth undertook a volunteer survey. This provided some excellent feedback, and was mostly very positive. The Depot Operations committee and Depot Manager have been working on implementing some of the recommendations from this survey.

In February 2022, milk and milk substitutes entered into the provincial governments Extended Producer Responsibility (deposit) program. Although we had some trepidations about how this would work, generally it has gone smoothly. It does entail some additional sorting and stomping work by staff, but provides modest incremental revenue to the Society.

This year the Board decided formally to accept non-packaging plastic at the Depot, subject to space limitations. We are not paid for handling or shipping this material, so we request a financial donation where possible for these materials to offset the costs.

Much of our equipment is fairly old (and is almost fully depreciated), and in 2021 it looked for a while like we might need to replace the forklift. For 2022 we have increased the capital reserve for replacement of equipment when the need arises, and went through an exercise of estimating replacement costs for this purpose.

New bookkeeper and auditor

In 2021 we took the overdue step of relieving the Treasurer of bookkeeping responsibilities. We hired Kirsty Legge as our bookkeeper, and the new arrangement is working very smoothly. Kirsty has set up our finances on Quickbooks, which is a step forward from using Excel spreadsheets.

In addition in 2021 we moved from using an on-island bookkeeper to review our year end financials to using a professional accounting firm. This was necessary and perhaps overdue as our financial assets have grown to the point of needing a higher level of review and advice. For 2021 we engaged Tomkins Wozny for this purpose. They already provide this service to a long list of other non-profits, and have impressed with their expertise already.

New lease with landlords

In 2021 we signed a new lease with our landlords for the land on which the depot is located. In addition we agreed to have meet at the depot once per year to address any concerns by either party. As a result of the first of these meetings in September 2021, we cleaned up some materials at the bottom of the slope, and removed some small firs on one side of the building.

Strategic Planning

In November 2021, the Board met for a whole day for a Strategic Planning exercise. I would like to thank the Board members for making this significant time commitment. Some of the outcomes from this were:

1. Set up a committee structure for address three main areas of ongoing focus:
 - a. Financial sub-committee: deals with budget, cost control, asset investment etc.
 - b. Depot Operations: Focus on Safety, and longer term planning
 - c. Education, Outreach and Communications (EOC)

This will allow regular Board meetings to focus on “big-picture” issues rather than getting bogged down in details.

2. Enhance Communications capability, in particular web site and social media.

Communications Initiatives

In 2021 the Society finally got a functioning web site, www.maynerecycles.ca. Check it out. I would like to thank Lynda Smyth and Lauren Underhill for all their hard work in setting this up and keeping it current. The web site also includes a fun promotional video made for us by Pam Withers. Thanks Pam!

The EOC committee recommended engaging a Communications Coordinator to improve our online and print outreach. Earlier this year we engaged Elise Bouer to fill this position. We have already seen a significant increase in traffic through our web site and Facebook page as a result. Having an effective online presence is particularly important for effectively

communicating with the island community when there are changes in depot conditions – for example for a period in 2022 after the floods, we were unable to accept glass or Styrofoam, and needed to let people know quickly.

External connections

We continue to engage with the external world to share experiences and gain knowledge. Most of important of these is the Southern Gulf Islands Recycling Coalition (SGIRC). We meet several times a year with other depots, and the group is chaired by Kim Harris. Building and maintaining these relationships and the shared knowledge is invaluable in dealing with issues as they arise.

As members of the Coast Waste Management Association (CWMA) we also benefit through activities such as networking at the annual conference, and more recently with the recently formed “Islands and Remote Communities” network.

Goals for 2022/23

Some areas of focus for the upcoming year include:

- Integrating and training new Board members and ensuring as smooth a transition as possible.
- Engage in any planning needed to ensure the renewal of our CRD contract in 2023.
- Continuing our strong depot safety record.
- Increase volunteer engagement at the depot.
- Start a project for tracking key recycling metrics
- Develop a system for safe and accessible document management.

Don Eadie

President, Mayne Island Recycling Society