

GIRR Chair report for 2021 AGM

2020 was a difficult year for everyone and GIRR fared no better. The year started out on a fine note.

In January the Board decided to move our money to Vancity. We did some preliminary research into banking investments and Vancity had by far the greenest most ethical investment policies and practices. Paula took that job on as Treasurer. We also decided to have a facilitated visioning meeting with board and staff to discuss expansion of our facility and need to increase our capacity which has always been hampered by the lack of clean, dry and secure storage space. The Board also decided to explore the possibility of implementing a “Wellness Plan” for staff to be included in our Personnel Policy.

In March we held our facilitated GIRR Site Redesign meeting with some board and staff members. The outcome was clear. We needed enhanced covered storage, enhanced concrete surfaces, a metal and appliance plan, a maintenance of existing assets plan with top priority being staff and public safety. The Pandemic was just on our radar, we met in person! Our last in person meeting to date. Little did we know how important this idea would be to our future operation. We then had to shut down GIRR to rethink and comply with all the new health directives coming from the BC Chief Health Officer and Worksafe BC. It was hard times. We decided to continue to pay our Depot staff but had to layoff our Redirectory staff. It was sad to have to close.

In April the Board and OM made the decision to reopen on the 25th. There was a lot of thought and logistical strategy that went into this opening, as anyone who recycled at that time knows! The board would like to thank Mariann, Ken and all the depot staff for the time, thought and creative processing that went into keeping our staff and public safe while still providing service at the Depot. The Board stepped up, literally, and helped on site with traffic control. It was a huge adjustment for everyone and it kept morphing and changing as our staff continued to improve and expand the service. We focused on residential recycling as that is actually our mandate and closed our facility to businesses.

In June we held our AGM in the Lion’s Hall with social distancing in place. Members of the commercial community came to inform us of their need for recycling. It had been a hard decision for the Board and it was a hardship for our businesses. We made a commitment to work on a plan to reopen ICI recycling.

In August we opened for our ICI community members using a pay for service system. The Board passed a new Commercial Users Policy. The community was happy again! The Building Committee continued to meet and collect information about priorities and practicalities of expansion.

In September The Board passed a motion to hire a Project Manager so the Building Committee started a public hiring process.

In November the Board decided to develop a Harassment Policy for our staff. Paula took on this job. There were 4 applications for the Project Manager's job. We interviewed 2 of the 4 candidates and eventually hired Keith Erickson. The Board decided to talk to Vancity about partial financing for the project.

It was a busy year with many adjustments along the way. The Board would like to thank our wonderful staff for all the rearranging, reassessing, and rethinking that had to occur to keep everyone safe and recycling moving along at a timely pace. The staff met the challenges with intelligence and good will. We thank them for all their work.

On a personal level I would like to thank the Board for all the extra work they did this year to keep GIRR running smoothly. Thanks for all the feet on the ground, all the communications that needed to be done, for the extra financial work involved and for all the support during board meetings. We have a very thoughtful, energetic, involved, curious and determined board. We are sad to say goodbye to Paula and Nicole. Their individual voices were always important additions to our board discussions. They will be missed.

We would also like to thank Ken for his work as Operations Manager. Ken's attention to detail, his system building ability, and his fair and calm demeanor has developed GIRR into a stable work and management environment. We wish him all the best.

We welcome Renee into our GIRR family as we look forward to interesting and exciting years ahead.