

## **VICTORIA NIKKEI CULTURAL SOCIETY**

### **2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Held: Sunday, February 12, 2023

Location: 527 Fraser St. Victoria, BC Esquimalt Recreation Centre, "Pioneer Room"

Meeting room was opened at 9:15am to allow for registered Members to join.

Tsugio Kurushima, President, Chair of Meeting

Victoria Nikkei Cultural Society Annual General Meeting 2023 was **called to order** by Tsugio Kurushima at **9:45am**.

Meeting began with Land Acknowledgement.

On screen reports were presented and discussed, each presenter took questions from participants at the end of each report.

#### **Agenda for 2023 AGM/Tsugio Kurushima**

Tsugio called for an amendment to item "b" Treasurer's Report. Treasurer Ken Watai is sick and cannot attend. The financial report will be posted online as soon as they are ready.

**Motion:** To adopt the VNCS AGM AGENDA as amended.

**Moved/Seconded:** Bill Code/Susan Kurushima; no further discussion.

**Call for the vote:** no nays, no abstentions, all in favour for the Agenda to be adopted – **carried**.

#### **Approval of Minutes of February 27, 2022 Victoria Nikkei Cultural Society Annual General Meeting (prepared by Debbie Ibaraki)**

Tsugio called for errors or omissions with none noted.

**Motion:** to adopt the February 27, 2022 Victoria Nikkei Cultural Society Annual General Meeting Minutes as presented.

**Moved/Seconded:** Craig Mercer/Maureen Bird

**Call for the vote:** no nays, no abstentions, all in favour – **carried**

#### **ANNUAL REPORTS/Tsugio Kurushima (Chair)**

a) **President's Report**/Tsugio Kurushima

- 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Internment Luncheon held July 10<sup>th</sup> was a success

- Japan Fest July 23 was success
- Japanese Cultural Fair was a success. The first year hosting the event at the Gorge Park Pavilion August 27
- Held Obon grave cleaning work party and service August 14
- Participated in the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Memorial August 9
- NAJC GEI: Art Symposium Sept 17
- Japanese Film Night November 9
- Awarded one \$500 grant
- Heritage Committee was very active (photography workshop, artist talk, walking tours)
- Formation of Human Rights Committee
- Completion of our oral history project – Reflections of Internment: Legacy of Survivors
- Sent delegates to NAJC Human Rights Symposium
- Held in-person Japanese Language classes
- Gorge Park Pavilion completed (culmination of our 5 year campaign, the building honors the Japanese-Canadian History of the Gorge Park, installation of interpretive display to educate visitors).
- Tsugio thanked fellow 2022 Board of Directors for their contribution: Debbie Ibaraki, Ken Watai, Craig Mercer, Yukari Peerless, Amy Kawano, Natsuki Abe, Maureen Bird, Reyna Goshinmon, Karen Geiger, Cristina Shore and Yuuri Daiku.
- Mike Abe inquired about the UVIC Endowment Fund and the \$1000 Scholarship – was it awarded to anyone. Debbie Ibaraki informed us that it was awarded to Peter Kruschke. Debbie has invited him to share a little bit about himself - we are waiting to hear back from Peter.

**Motion:** To accept the President’s Annual Report for 2022 as presented.

**Moved/Seconded:** Tsugio Kurushima/Mike Abe; no further discussion.

**Call for the vote:** no nays, no abstentions, all in favour – carried.

b) **Treasurer’s Report/Ken Watai**

- Ken was sick and could not attend. The Agenda was amended to omit his report. The report will be posted online when it is available online.

Tsugio noted that at the end of 2021 the VNCS had net assets of around \$51,000. That in 2022 will probably were break even or possibly a small operating profit.

c) **Newsletter and Communications Report/Yukari Peerless**

- a bi-monthly newsletter was published in 2022
- there were 17 e-blasts throughout the year in addition to the newsletter
- currently there are 356 subscribers (44 more than last year)
- readership is growing through Facebook and the Website
- the “open” rate of the newsletters is 51% which is high compared to the industry average of 22% (which means that people are reading the newsletter)
- maintaining the newsletter being offered in English and Japanese
- More translators are welcome if someone is available (every two months is helpful)
- Yukari thanked the volunteer translators: Mieko Fedrau, Kana Mercer, Rieko Hatakeyama, Satoko Clayton and Masako Hegge.
- Yukari thanked Editorial Partner Maureen Bird for her continued support and insight.
- This year a 4 part series was introduced written by Hiroko Currie on her memories of repatriation from Manchuria.
- Yukari welcomes contributions from the group, if there is a story or anything that they want to share in the newsletter. The deadline for all submissions is the 5<sup>th</sup> of every month.
- The question was asked: Can anyone subscribe to the newsletter. The Answer is: yes. You do not need to be a member to receive the e-newsletter.

**Motion:** to accept the Newsletter/Communications Annual Report for 2022 as presented.

**Moved/Seconded:** Yukari Peerless/Amy Kawano

**Call for the vote:** no nays, no abstentions, all in favour – **carried.**

d) **VNCS Website Report/Craig Mercer**

- Banner year with lots of interaction via Facebook and Instagram and Web presence
- Facebook saw a 32% increase in followers
- Instagram saw a 70% increase in followers
- Website saw a 50% increase in traffic
- Craig suggested that the 4000 people increase to the website is in part due to the Cultural Fair. Guests can view the Fair’s schedule, performers, sponsors, floor plan, etc.
- Sessions are up, the website is gaining new traffic and revisits.
- Most popular device to consume information is via cell phone.

- Majority of the interaction comes from Canada.
- Craig thanked everyone for their contribution: Patty Ayukawa (Facebook Admin), Reyna Goshinmon (Instagram Admin), Yukari Peerless (Director of Communications).
- Roy's question: How often is the website updated? Craig answered on average it can be 4-7 times per month, as the website will add cross promotions on upcoming events, etc.
- Roy inquired: how do people know that the Cultural Fair is happening. Craig answered: promoted at Japan Fest, Black Press, social media.

**Motion:** to accept the VNCS Website Annual Report for 2022 as presented.

**Moved/Seconded:** Craig Mercer/Ann-Lee Switzer

**Call for the vote:** no nays, no abstentions, all in favour – **carried.**

e) **Heritage Committee Report/Natsuke Abe**

- Completed the Reflections of Internment project (which was supported through a grant from the JC Health & Wellness Fund). 16 families participated.
- Natsuki Abe and Kyla Fitzgerald interviewed 15 individuals and families (Bradley Kurushima interviewed his family). Jordan Ettinger was the videographer.
- Jordan Ettinger created a short compilation video for the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Internment Luncheon
- Ken Mizokoshi (photographer) assisted in an outdoor photography class at the Gorge Park Pavilion and Gardens.
- Henry Shimizu Artist Talk in association with the Isshoni exhibition at the Legacy Art Gallery was fully subscribed.
- Historical Walking Tours were held at the Ross Bay Cemetery for Obon, and at the Takata Tea Garden for the Cultural Fair,
- They hosted a book tour/table and earned \$500 for the VNCS
- They are in the midst of planning more walking tours for 2023 ie; Mayne Island and Downtown Victoria.

**Motion:** to accept the Heritage Committee Annual Report for 2022 as presented.

**Moved/Seconded:** Natsuke Abe/Noreen Scarth

**Call for the vote:** no nays, no abstentions, all in favour – **carried.**

f) **Uminari Taiko Report/Susan Kurushima**

Financial Report to be included as Attachment 1.

- Gordon Head Recreation Centre did not charge rent for the full year (due to Covid-19 closures)
- Increase in gig review of \$9800 the highest record yet
- Gigs out of town charge more for travel fees.
- Gigs include: Gyro Park, Sydney, Metchosin, Dragonboat, Greek Fest & 5 at the Gorge Park Pavilion
- Workshop & classes revenue is high at a total of \$6519
- Fall 2022 classes resumed with a waitlist for workshops and classes
- 3 new apprentices
- Considering hosting a Members only workshop
- Uminari has not received a grant since 2017
- September 2022 rent at Gordon Head increased to \$630 and will increase again in September 2023
- Still need insurance for equipment (insurance is estimated at \$1000 per month) last assessment of equipment was approx. \$30, 000, however, they have acquired new and more equipment since the last assessment and replacement cost has increased. The guess estimate is approx. \$60,000 in equipment.
- Total income \$19,400
- Total costs \$10,714

**Motion:** to accept the Uminari Taiko Annual Report for 2022 as presented.

**Moved/Seconded:** Susan Kurushima/Natsuke Abe

**Call for the vote:** no nays, no abstentions, all in favour – **carried.**

**10:30am break**

**10:35am meeting resumed**

g) **Furusato Dancers Annual Report/Tsugio Kurushima**

Financial Report included as Attachment 2.

- Group was concerned about the survival of the Furusato Dancers due to a decline in participation (Covid-19)

- They have recruited new dancers and maintained a portion of the experienced dancers
- They began performing again, the following is a list of performances: Ethnic Dance Festival, Uptown Multi-Cultural Festival, VNCS Japan Fest, North Park Multi-Cultural Festival, Hiroshima-Nagasaki Commemoration, VNCS Japanese Cultural Fair, Greek Fest.
- They need a minimum of 6 dancers to perform (ideally with 4 experienced dancers)
- The annual fee for membership is \$25 for youth and \$50 for adult.
- They waived all fees for this year in the hopes to recruit more new dancers
- Paid Rina El-Nahas honorarium of \$75 for performing with us at Dragon Boat.
- They were in an operating deficit of \$310.34 based on revenue of \$750 & expenses of \$1,060.34.

**Motion:** to accept the Furusato Dancers Annual Report for 2022 as presented.

**Moved/Seconded:** Tsugio Kurushima/Sherry Goshinmon

**Call for the vote:** no nays, no abstentions, all in favour – **carried.**

h) **Sakura Fujinkai Annual Report/Susan Kurushima**

- a group of women that meet socially and help in fundraising for the VNCS
- restaurants were easier to book due to restrictions lifting
- participation in the fundraising at the Cultural Fair was successful, they were able to clear out all of the items that had been in storage
- the Ikebana group enjoyed getting together in person at the Cook St Village Activity Centre with teacher Michiko Seguev
- 2 new beginners have joined, one was able to continue with classes
- There was a waitlist for 2022. Susan reached out to Amanda Gaunt (a qualified teacher) and they started a second class for beginners. Reyna advertised on Instagram and we were able to fill a second class.

**Motion:** to accept the Fujinkai Annual Report for 2022 as presented.

**Moved/Seconded:** Susan Kurushima/Bill Code

**Call for the vote:** no nays, no abstentions, all in favour – **carried.**

i) **Cultural Fair Report/Craig Mercer**

- First year at the new location – Gorge Park Pavilion. The fair was able to be held indoors and utilize the outdoor space.

- New sponsorship from: Sakura, Robin Hood Inn & Suites, Fairway Market (full list of sponsors can be viewed in Nov/Dec Newsletter)
- Expenses this year included several capital expenditures eg: walkie talkies, Square sales terminals
- Tea Ceremony was held outdoors which could accommodate more viewers and they held 4 sessions (in the past they have held 2 sessions)
- Things Japanese was held outside and had record sales
- Mike Abe provided guided tours of restored Japanese Gardens
- Number of volunteers was scaled down compared to previous years
- Volunteers were needed to: food prep, silent auctions, things Japanese, food and drink sales, presentation room coordination, indoor/outdoor coordination, parking management, VNCS table/donations
- Number of volunteers 98 / total person work hours including fair day and prep 400 hours.
- From now on the Cultural Fair will be held the last Saturday, before Labor Day weekend
- Uminari Taiko will likely perform outdoors next year
- There is hope to have a Japanese car show on the grounds next year
- Craig expressed his thanks to the planning team:  
 Audio equipment & support: Lorin Goshinmon  
 Decorations: Amanda Gaunt  
 Donation Solicitation: Jo Brookes, JO Caragata, Lily Yee, Patti Kagawa, Rebecca Barnard, Tsugio Kurushima  
 Insurance contracts and permit: Debbie Ibaraki  
 Japanese Food and Drinks: Amy Kawano & Kana Mercer  
 Performers and presenters: Tsugio Kurushima  
 Silent Auction: Patti Kagawa & Cristina Shore  
 Things Japanese: Susan Ikeda & Susan Kurushima  
 Volunteers: Maureen Bird

**Motion:** to accept the Cultural Fair Annual Report for 2022 as presented.

**Moved/Seconded:** Craig Mercer/Susan Kurushima

**Call for the vote:** no nays, no abstentions, all in favour – **carried.**

**J) NAJC Annual Report/ Yukari Peerless**

- September 2022 Yukari joined NAJC National Executive Board.
- NAJC slowly returned to face-to-face activities
- NAJC did not hold a national conference this year
- NAJC waived the \$300 annual membership fee
- Biggest news from NAJC was the BC Redress. On May 21, 2022 BC Premier John Horgan announced that the BC Government has committed \$100 million to the Japanese Canadian community to fund multiple initiatives.

- The initiatives are represented by 6 pillars: Survivor’s Health and Wellness, Education, Monument, Community and Culture, Heritage Preservation, and Anti-Racism & Acknowledgment.
- VNCS received two grants from the JC Survivor’s Health & Wellness Fund. \$9800 for the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Internment Luncheon. \$7000 for the Oral History Project.
- The Japanese Canadian Legacies Society was established to manage the \$100 million
- \$2.25 million was allocated to NAJC as a Capacity Building grant. The first instalment has been received.
- GEI Art Symposium held at Gorge Park Pavilion September 16 – 18 2022 also a in partnership with NAJC. It was funded by UVIC CAPI (Centre for Asia-Pacific Initiatives), NAJC and Canada Council of the Arts.
- GEI was a meaningful experience for attendees and an opportunity to showcase JC artists.
- October 29-30 NAJC Toronto Chapter hosted a National Human Rights Symposium in Toronto – Tsugio Kurushima and Karen Geiger attended.
- 2023 is focused on capacity building and they will be hosting a meeting to discuss capacity building with Presidents from each member organization.
- If you are interested in getting involved with the NAJC and their capacity building teams reach out to Yukari Peerless.

**Motion:** to accept the NAJC Annual Report for 2022 as presented.

**Moved/Seconded:** Yukari Peerless/Gordon Switzer

**Call for the vote:** no nays, no abstentions, all in favour – **carried.**

**k) Membership Report/Tony Ibaraki**

- Year 2022 ended with a total of 109 paid memberships comprised of 44 individual and 65 family memberships. Of these paid memberships, 32 were new members.
- There was also 8 donations made to VNCS at the time of obtaining annual membership to the Society.
- Annual dues were paid as follows:
  - 42 Members paid PayPal
  - 12 Members paid by E-Transfer
  - 55 Members paid by Cash or Cheque
- Presently, as of February 7, 2023 the Society has 36 paid memberships.



- The Victoria Nikkei Cultural Society Board of Directors has changed an annual
- membership duration from a January 1-December 31 model to that of a 12-month
- duration beginning from a membership start date.
- It is interesting to note that there were 30 memberships that lapsed from 2021, but with the new reminder system being implemented that could help in membership renewal.
- Joyce Tobo will be taking over Membership.

**Motion:** to accept the Membership Annual Report for 2022 as presented.

**Moved/Seconded:** Tony Ibaraki/Natsuki Abe

**Call for the vote:** no nays, no abstentions, all in favour – **carried**.

#### **I) Human Rights Committee Annual Report/Tsugio Kurushima**

- The Human Rights Committee was formed due to the increase in anti-Asian racism
- HR Committee was formed in April 2022 to organize and focus HR actions
- Founding members: Karen Geiger, Mark Collins, Reyna Goshinmon & Tsugio Kurushima
- Terms of Reference:
  - To advocate for the Japanese Canadian community on Human Rights issues
  - Educate our members and the public on HR issues that effect the Japanese Canadian community
  - Liase with other HR committees to coordinate activities and resources
  - The HR Committee structure: chairperson will be elected by the HR committee members
  - The HR committee will report regularly to the VNCS board
- We set up the HR page on the VNCS website and populated with reference material and links to resources. Reyna Goshinmon was primary organizer.
- Arranged for Bystander Intervention Training Workshop Feb 5, 2023. 23 attendees in total. Mark Collins was primary organizer.
- Regular newsletter articles and social media posts

- Membership has grown: Pieta Van Dyck and Miwa Sugino have joined. Cristina Shore was a member but had to step down due to illness in her family.
- Karen Geiger and Tsugio Kurushima attended the National Human Rights Symposium in Toronto October 29 – 30. It was an educational, informative and inspiring.
- **Motion:** to accept the Human Rights Committee Annual Report for 2022 as presented.
- **Moved/Seconded:** Tsugio Kurushima/Sherry Goshimon
- **Call for the vote:** no nays, no abstentions, all in favour – **carried.**

#### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

#### **ELECTION of Board of Directors for 2023/Debbie Ibaraki**

- Debbie thanked all the board for their assistance and guidance and the greater community as well. Debbie had all the Board of Directors and nominees identify themselves in the room.
- Debbie introduced Joyce, Reyna introduced Kimiko and shared their story.
- Tsugio is willing to serve this year as President, however, he is open to having someone step into this role. Tsugio announced that we are seeking a Treasurer. Ken Watai has served as Treasurer for 13 years. It is preferred that the Treasurer lives in Victoria. Lauren Ibaraki has volunteered to help remotely. Ken will put together a list and pass on to Lauren.
- Cristina Shore and Craig Mercer stepped down as Directors and all remaining directors let their names stand as incumbent candidates for Directors for the Victoria Nikkei Cultural Society Board of Directors.
- With the call for the Annual General Meeting 2023, 2 members; Joyce Tobo and Kimiko West were nominated as candidates for the election and let their names stand.
- 3 separate times Debbie called for nominations from the floor with no new names being forwarded therefore, the slate for the Board of Directors for 2023 was elected by acclamation. The 2023 elected Board of Directors are:

President – Tsugio Kurushima

Vice President – Debbie Ibaraki

Treasurer – Ken Watai

Director – Maureen Bird

Director – Karen Geiger

Director – Amy Kawano

Director – Natsuke Abe

Director – Yuuri Daiku

Director – Reyna Goshinmon

Director – Joyce Tobo

Director – Kimiko West

At 11:30am the business portion of the 2023 Annual General Meeting was completed. There was a 5 minute break and Tsugio welcomed and introduced guest speaker, Bradley Kurushima, who created the musical score for the video - “Galiano Island Charcoal Kiln Pits.”

The Kiln Project is a dance film created collaboratively between BC artists Shion Skye Carter, filmmaker Brenda Kent Colina and musician Prince Shima (Bradley Kurushima), filmed at a late 19<sup>th</sup> century Japanese charcoal pit kiln on Galiano Island, BC.

Bradley screened the 18 minute film and then shared his experience and answered questions from the group.

Tsugio called the 2023 Annual General Meeting adjourned at 12:45pm

Minutes taken and prepared by Reyna Goshinmon

Attachments:

## 1. Attachment 1 - Uminari Taiko Financial Statement

### Uminari Taiko 2022

	Actual Jan. to Dec. 2022	Actual Jan. to Dec. 2021	Actual Jan. to Dec. 2020	Actual Jan. to Dec. 2019	Actual Jan. to Dec. 2018	Actual Jan. to Dec. 2017
<b>Income:</b>						
Gigs	\$9,800	\$1,350	\$575	\$8,956	\$3,500	\$6,710
Workshops	\$3,500	\$289	\$309	\$1,246	\$1,924	\$1,300
Classes	\$3,019	\$564	\$425	\$2,259	\$2,108	
Membership	\$2,700		\$2,500	\$2,066	\$1,949	\$1,800
Member workshop						
Grant						\$4,919
Sales	\$130	\$60	\$230	\$200	\$160	\$200
Concert						\$1,253
Interest	\$172		\$483	\$432	\$352	\$323
Petty Cash	\$79					
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$19,400</b>	<b>\$2,263</b>	<b>\$4,522</b>	<b>\$15,159</b>	<b>\$9,993</b>	<b>\$16,505</b>
Rent	\$5,594	\$1,726	\$3,000	\$6,600	\$6,600	\$6,600
Gig Expenses	\$2,050	\$171		\$3,557	\$284	\$1,652
Member Training						\$1,038
Equipment	\$190	\$227	\$8	\$337	\$1,022	\$5,313
Advertising						
Web-site	\$134	\$80	\$169	\$361	\$21	\$58
Merchandise			\$473			
VNCS Membership	\$90	\$90	\$80	\$80	\$80	\$100
Concert						\$1,254
Other	\$628		\$94	\$171	\$268	\$850
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,686</b>	<b>\$2,293</b>	<b>\$3,824</b>	<b>\$11,106</b>	<b>\$8,275</b>	<b>\$16,865</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>\$10,714</b>	<b>-\$30</b>	<b>\$698</b>	<b>\$4,053</b>	<b>\$1,718</b>	<b>-\$360</b>
Chequing Account	\$21,352	\$10,781	\$32,062	\$16,648	\$12,937	\$11,535
GIC	\$22,172	\$22,000		\$14,719	\$14,290	\$13,941
Petty Cash	\$28	\$70	\$70	\$67		
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$43,552</b>	<b>\$32,851</b>	<b>\$32,132</b>	<b>\$31,434</b>	<b>\$27,227</b>	<b>\$25,476</b>
Outstanding cheques		\$749		\$154	\$33	
Outstanding deposit						
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>\$43,552</b>	<b>\$32,102</b>	<b>\$32,132</b>	<b>\$31,280</b>	<b>\$27,194</b>	<b>\$25,476</b>

**Notes:** term deposit \$22,172 interest \$172  
**Expenses :** Other includes refunds + Uchiage

2. Attachment 2 – Furusato Dancers Financial Statement

**Furusato Dancers - 2022 Financial Statement**

**Balance in bank as of Dec 31/2021** **\$4,835.35**

<b>Revenue</b>			
Membership fees			\$0.00
Interest on Cheque Account			\$0.00
Honorariums			
Filipino Festival	\$150.00		
Hiroshima Nagasaki Memorial	\$150.00		
North Park Multicultural Festival	\$125.00		
VNCS Cultural Fair	\$100.00		
Greek Fest (2 performances)	\$225.00		
	Honorarium Total	\$750.00	\$750.00
<b>Total Revenue</b>			<b>\$750.00</b>

<b>Expenses</b>			
Practice space rent			
Cook Street Activity Centre Jan-Jun	\$389.84		
Cook Street Activity Centre Jul-Dec	\$425.25		
	Total Rent	\$815.09	\$815.09
Ethnic Dance Festival Registration			\$125.00
Parking expenses			\$45.25
Rina El-Nahas honorarium – Greek Fest			\$75.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>			<b>\$1,060.34</b>

**Net Annual Operating Costs** **-\$310.34**

**Balance in bank as of Dec31/2022** **\$4,525.01**