

VICTORIA NIKKEI CULTURAL SOCIETY 2024 AGM

Held on Sunday, February 4, 2024

Location: 527 Fraser St. Victoria, BC - Esquimalt Rec Centre, Craigflower Room

Tsugio Kurushima, President, Chair of Meeting

Victoria Nikkei Cultural Society Annual General Meeting 2023 was called to order by Tsugio Kurushima at 10:00 am. The meeting began with Land Acknowledgement.

Approval of Agenda

Motion: To approve the VNCS AGM agenda.

Move/Second: Make Abe / Craig Mercer ; no further discussion.

Call for vote: none opposed, no abstentions, all in favour – **Passed.**

Approval of Minutes from VNCS 2023 AGM, held on February 12th, 2023

- [2023 minutes](#)
- Tsugio called for errors or omissions, Mike Abe states Natsuki Abe name misspelled Natsuke on page 4.

Motion: To approve the VNCS 2023 AGM Minutes as amended.

Move/Second: Gordon Switzer / Maureen Bird ; no further discussion.

Call for vote: none opposed, all in favour – **Passed.**

Annual Reports

- a) [President's Report](#) /Tsugio Kurushima
 - **Highlights** a successful year with a return to pre-pandemic event schedules, special events, and record revenue from fundraisers such as the Cultural Fair and Japan fest. New projects
 - **Key achievements** include finding a new Treasurer, starting the Strategic Planning Initiative, capacity building with the NAJC, and reaching an all-time high membership.
 - Comments: none

Motion: That the presidents report be adopted.

Move / Second : Tsugio Kurushima / Alder Currie ; no further discussion.

Call for vote: none opposed, all in favour – Passed.

b) [Treasure's Report](#) / David Lawson

- This year we had a strong balance sheet with no liabilities and no loans. We had a net gain for the year, which updated our current assets and equity
- Notable changes include a change in investments – with a substantial investment into GICs.
- Money generators – Japan fest and cultural fair
- Donations – we had a significant donation from the Mito family of 5000 dollars.
- Did make over 17,000 dollars, that is what we will report to the CRA

Motion: To have this report adopted.

Move/Second: David Lawson / Amy Kawano ; no further discussion

Call for vote: none opposed, all in favour – passed.

c) [Newsletter/Communications](#) / Yukari Peerless

Questions from attendees:

What is the opening rate for the newsletter?

- The opening rate for the bi-monthly newsletter has remained about the same, but there have been more subscribers to the newsletter this year.

How many hours do you spend on the newsletter?

- Aprox. 2+ hours per person, so encourage everyone to submit before the deadline if possible, and they are looking for more translators, as noted in the report.

Motion: To have this report adopted.

Move / Second: Yukari Peerless / Mike Abe; no further discussion

Call for vote: none opposed, all in favour – passed.

d) [Web Presence Report](#) / Craig Mercer

- Not much to report, besides typical annual increases in following online.
- There was one anomaly in the website data this year and we lost two months of data right around the cultural fair.

Motion: To have this report adopted.

Move / Second: Craig Mercer / Reyna Goshinmon

Call to Vote: None opposed, all in favour – Passed.

e) [Heritage Committee Report](#) / Mike Abe

- The highlight of the year was the Mayne Island tour
- We are going to have a Vancouver Island tour this year, hopefully subsidized by the JCLS intergenerational wellness grant.

Questions from attendees:

For the tour, do you have a bus or individual vehicles?

- There will be a bus seating up 52 passengers. It is a tour mainly for people whose families were on the island pre-internment and uprooting .

Was this grant submitted by the Steveston Buddhist temple?

- Yes, but we worked on it with them.

Motion: To have this report adopted.

Move / Second: Mike Abe / Reyna Goshinmon ; no further discussion.

Call to vote: None opposed, all in favour – passed.

f) [Uminari Taiko](#) / Susan Kurushima

- VNCS provided 500 dollars grant – which covered half the cost of having Kenny Endo and his wife Chizuko give a workshop for the group.
- Noted concern over the increase in rent for rental space.

Questions from attendees:

Is the insurance for the drums or the people?

- If the drums got ruined in some event at Gordon Head Rec Centre, they would not be responsible.

How much is it to replace drums?

- Would estimate >40,000 dollar range if we had to replace all equipment

Are you increasing your rates for your workshops and performances?

- This year yes, but not every year.

Motion: To have this report adopted.

Moves / Second: Susan Kurushima / Debbie Ibaraki ; no further discussion.

Call to vote: All in favour, none opposed, no abstentions – passed.

g) [Furusato Dancers Report](#) / Tsugio Kurushima

- Had 10 performances this year
- Membership went down by one but added one new younger member.

- Financially, had a small operating loss of \$140, leaving a bank account balance of \$4,384.00.

Motion: To have this report adopted.

Move/Second: Tsugio Kurushima / Susan Kurushima ; no further discussion.

Call to vote: All in favour, none opposed, no abstentions – passed.

h) [Sakura Fujinkai Report](#) / Susan Kurushima

- Membership in the ikebana classes has stayed consistent, with members coming back each year – so there is a waiting list of people wanting to join which has developed over the year, usually only admitting a new person or two every year. So, this year started a second class but it has been a struggle to fill the class.

Motion: To have this report adopted.

Move/Second: Susan Kurushima / Amy Kawano; no further discussion.

Call to vote: All in favour, none opposed, no abstentions – passed.

i) [Japanese Cultural Fair Report](#) / Craig Mercer

- The Cultural Fair is our biggest event of the year. Craig and Yukari took over running it from Tsugio in 2022.
- This was the second year at the new location, the Gorge Park Pavillion, rather than at the Esquimalt rec center.
- Compared from 2022, 2023 Cultural fair had a significant increase in revenue; \$29,000 in revenue – approx. \$15,000 in expenses and \$14,000 in profit.
- With expanding activities at the new location, to Gorge Pavillion, now purchasing a significant amount of infrastructure and equipment; square terminals, sandwich boards, new tents, etc.
- Many new activities and presentations of Japanese culture.
- In the future, will continue to expand the event, inviting other community groups in the city and also other communities up Island and on the Gulf Islands.
- As parking is limited at the Pavillion, introduced a bike valet for another option.
- Also invited food vendors, such as Koji Koji and Hide n' Seek.
- Kakigori were very popular again this year.
- And got to invite new performing groups, such as the Southern Wave Okinawan performing group.
- Thank you to Volunteer Coordinators; Maureen Bird and Yumiko Mizuno.

Motion: To have this report adopted.

Move/Second: Craig Mercer / Debbie Ibaraki ; no further discussion.

Call to vote: All in favour, none opposed, no abstentions – passed.

j) [NAJC](#) / Yukari Peerless

- NAJC working on capacity building initiative, they received 100 million dollars from the BC government. At the NAJC national conference in Winnipeg this year, the VNCS sent 5 delegates.

Motion: To have this report adopted.

Move/Second: Yukari Peerless / Craig Mercer ; no further discussion

Call to vote: All in favour, none opposed, no abstentions – passed.

k) [Membership Report](#) / Joyce Tobo

- Membership increased from 109 to 161 this year, without much promotion. Signifies an increase of engagement with the community.
- The way we process membership is not sustainable, so looking for a new system that is more efficient – will be a project for the upcoming year.

Motion: To have this report adopted.

Move/Second: Joyce Tobo / Emily Schweitzer ; no further discussion.

Call to vote: All in favour, none opposed, no abstentions – passed.

l) [Human Rights Committee Report](#) / Tsugio Kurushima

- First year of the Committee, and held three events – the bystander intervention training, a healing circle for change, and a nonviolent communication workshop.
- At the end of the year, started a strategic planning exercise to identify tasks for 2024.
- Spent \$2870.

Motion: To have this report adopted.

Move/Second: Tsugio Kurushima / Mark ; no further discussion.

Call to vote: All in favour, none opposed, no abstentions – passed.

New Business

a) **Japanese Canadian Legacies Fund Grants** / Karen Koyanagi Geiger & Tsugio Kurushima

- We were successful in receiving money for the Community fund of the amount of \$40,000, which will fund six projects:
 - o Community building
 - o Uminari Taiko - Drum Reskinning
 - o Furusato Dancers – purchasing of new sound system
 - o Ikebana – purchasing of flower stands

- Youth Engagement initiative.
- Year End Celebration Event.
- Capital Purchases grant, of the amount of approx. \$8000. Purchases will include:
 - Happi Coats – approx. \$6000
 - Cooking equipment (takoyaki grill).
 - Red and white banners.
- Intergenerational wellness grant of approx. \$9,000 – still pending approval
 - For elders but also intergenerational component, looking to running activities like cooking classes, social activities, and a follow up with non-violent communication workshop we had last year.
 - Will have cooking classes, gatherings and a follow up to the nonviolent communication workshop from last year.

Overall, 2024 will be a busy year, with lots of funding coming in and new projects underway.

b) VNCS Strategic Planning Update / Tsugio Kurushima

- This year the VNCS started a strategic planning initiative – lead by Kimiko West
- 3 planning sessions with the board – based off of surveys and communities used to gather information about the VNCS
- Conducted SWOT analysis – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.
 - Strengths – two revenue generating events; Cultural Fair and Japan fest. Financially in good standing.
 - Weaknesses – lack of onboarding for new leaders within the community, unintegrated operational infrastructure. Membership system. Small group of people doing a lot of work.
 - Opportunities – funding from JCLS and NAJC, connecting with other organizations who can offer support and guidance.
 - Threats – burnout.
- Identified Key performance indicators, such as cultural fair revenue, donations, membership, event attendance, the volunteer numbers, grants, website and social media. From this we will identify goals in these areas, still a work in progress.
- **Identified some short-term actions:**
 - the establishment of an annual budget for 2024.
 - Will introduce a new system for membership this year, as an effort to increase membership, working with the NAJC.
 - Adjusting board meeting structure to optimize meeting time.

- Next step we need to complete the strategic planning process – gain a census of findings and identify action plans and priorities.

c) **2024 Financial Forecast** / David Lawson

- Financial estimates going forward in the new year.
 - Forecasted revenue: \$29,700
 - Forecasted expenses: \$31,930
 - Forecasted loss: \$2,230
- At this point, it looks like we're going to have a slight loss, but not a particularly substantial one.

Election of Officers and Directors / Tsugio Kurushima & Debbie Ibaraki

- Would like to thank **Ken Watai** for his significant contribution and work for the VNCS over the years. 14 years he has been our treasurer. Board is planning to do something special for him.
- Stepping down from the board: Natsuki, Maureen and Yukari
- Candidates: Lily Yee, Craig Mercer, Yumiko Mizuno & Djuna Nagasaki.

Board for 2024:

President: Tsugio

Vice President: Debbie Ibaraki

Treasurer: David Lawson

Secretary: Djuna Nagasaki

Directors: Karen Koyanagi Geiger, Reyna Goshinmon, Amy Kawano, Craig Mercer, Yumiko Mizuno, Joyce Tobo, Kimiko West, Lily Yee.

11:33 am Adjourn AGM