

Guatemala Stove Project

Draft Minutes of Annual General Meeting held Sunday 2020-Aug-30 13h00

Location: Terrace on the Tay, Perth Ontario

Attendees:

Directors: Erika Johner, Janet Allan, Phill Brackenbury.

Coordinator: Tom Clarke.

Others: Al Teflissi, Bob Klatt, Catherine Smith, Elaine Scott, Hans Buser, Joni Seligman, Holly Blair, Ken Morin, Livio Persi, Liz Ballantyne-Jackson, Nancy Maynard, Paul Huaraney, Rita Redner, Rob Bowyer and Terri Henderson. (19 people)

Copies of the Agenda, Annual Report, Financial Statements and Minutes of last year's AGM were made available to attendees.

1. Phill called the meeting to order at 13h21. He noted that was music would be played on the other side of the Tay River and we might have to move, but it was not too loud so we stayed. Phill noted that our fiscal year ended 2020-Mar-31 which only extended two weeks into COVID-19 time so it was mostly a “normal year”.

2. Phill introduced the Founder and Coordinator Tom Clarke, and Board members Erika, Janet and Phill.

3. The Agenda was reviewed and one new item was added to New business: Rotary Club of Ottawa Bytown.

4. The minutes of last year's AGM held 2019-Jun-09 were handed out and reviewed. Paul moved and Elaine seconded they be approved; all were in favour.

5. The Financial Statement from 2019-Apr-01 to 2020-Mar-31 is in the Annual Report on pages 6 and 7, with comparative numbers for the previous year. All numbers are in Canadian Dollars. It was presented by our book-keeper Nancy Maynard. The Total Income was about \$136K and was broken down into General Donations (\$110K), Sam Clarke Memorial Fund (\$100), MicroLoans \$4K, Bursaries \$13K and Fundraising Income \$8K. The Total Expenses were about \$134K and were broken down into Cookstoves etc. \$91K, Education /Bursaries \$13K, Emergency Assistance \$12K, Microloans \$4K, Project Documentation & Promotion Incl Travel \$6K, Fundraising \$2K and Administration Overhead & Insurance \$5K. The Net Income was about \$2K.

Catherine inquired about our Microloans (see below), and Rita asked if Administration included Insurance (yes). Our Accounting is done by Cross Street.

6. Presentation by board members of the eight-page Annual Report, which was prepared by Janet Allan.

a. Phill summarized the Year in Review (pages 4, 5). He described the Main Fundraising Events, and month-by-month activities. GSP volunteers worked with two departments at Algonquin College who fundraised for us, and helped redesign our website.

b. Janet summarized the Highlights of our Programs (pages 2 to 4):

-- Masonry Cookstoves: She noted that we provided 300 families with improved cookstoves this year. We also provided nine larger school stoves (\$550 each) for cooking meals for the children. Liz and Janet documented 50 stoves in Comitancillo, and also

interviewed microloan recipients and bursary recipients. Tom documented 250 stoves near Xela. Tom and Liz provided Eric Sheuneman with stove photos and GSP volunteers enter the family data for each stove into the database maintained by Eric. (Volunteers are needed for data entry!) Janet commented that the book “Drawdown” cites Clean Cookstoves and says that “globally, household air pollution is the leading environmental cause of death and disability, ahead of unsafe water and lack of sanitation and is responsible for more premature deaths than HIV /AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis combined”. (p44) She noted that each GSP stove will save 2 to 3 tons of Carbon emissions per year.

-- Microloans: Janet described our Microloan program with our partner AMMID. The GSP has sent about \$24K including the \$4K we contributed this year. The total keeps growing because almost all the loans are paid back. If the recipients complete a green initiative of planting 50 saplings or shrubs & grasses between fields the one-time interest rate is reduced to 11% from 15%. Liz and Janet saw young trees that had been planted. GSP contributions are part of a larger AMMID microloan fund called Creditos Verdes. There are strict criteria to qualify, and there were 237 loans from the overall fund last year.

-- Educational Bursaries: Janet noted that we supported 14 girls last year and they all completed their year successfully. Maria Susana was our first graduate from Grade 12; she is working in Guatemala City and hopes to pursue her studies. We have two new students this year so 15 are now going to school. A notable new donor – Ron Wilkinson - started the Wilma Wilkinson Fund in memory of his wife Wilma to support six girls to attend six years of middle and high school.

-- Emergency Assistance. Janet commented on the three individuals who received funds for health problems. We sent money to CEDEC to purchase and distribute emergency food supplies to 100 families drastically affected by COVID-19 restrictions. Tom commented that harvest is usually in November, but there has been a corn fungus so there will be little or no harvest this year.

c. Erika read the material about the February Volunteer Stove-Building Trip (page 5).

-- Special Recognition. Erika also read the list of volunteers who deserve special recognition (page 8), and gave thanks to all our volunteers and donors.

7. Call for Nominations: Janet and Erika are continuing as Directors, but Phill – who has served for many years - is stepping down, so we are looking for one new director. Phill opened the floor for nominations. Tom nominated Rob Bowyer, and Rob accepted the nomination. No additional names were presented so nominations were closed. Rob Bowyer was elected by acclamation. Janet gave thanks to Phill for his many years of service on the board.

8. Coordinator's Report. Tom said the Guatemalan government was not reporting deaths of people over 30 years old. In Canada, our major fundraising events have all been cancelled this year. Emergency funding was sent to Guatemala for a limited time, but now we will return our focus to Stoves.

--Due to decreased revenue we have to change our approach to raising funds. We have depended primarily on individual donations, whereas many NGOs get their funds from corporations or foundations. See “Proposal Writing” below.

-- Tom reiterated that corn blight will be a big problem for subsistence farmers in Guatemala this year. Following Hurricane Mitch six months of emergency aid was enough. Janet commented that our next money transfer to Guatemala will be for Stoves. Ken asked if we could help the farmers combat corn blight.

9. New business.

9a. Proposal Writing. Janet said that a small group of volunteers plans to write proposals for grants, using the Grant Advance service to help. She commented that a lot of cement is used to make stoves, so Cement companies might give us grants.

9b. Currency Exchange. Janet noted that we send US dollars to Guatemala, and have to convert Canadian Dollars into US dollars first. Banks charge a hefty fee to do this so we are looking into a service called Knightsbridge Foreign Exchange which charges a lower fee. Money is available the next day.

9c. Silent Auction. Phill described this joint Perth & Ottawa online fundraiser planned for November. Holly and Liz are investigating the use of the "32 Auction" service. We are looking for items worth \$25 or more to auction off. Liz said that we need photos of the items, and lists of potential bidders. Bob has worked with Big Brothers, and Holly with GOGOs to support Grandmothers in Africa – both using online silent auctions.

9d. Ottawa Bytown Rotary Club – Ken Sparks is the President of Ottawa Bytown. He and his wife Anabelle Salas have raised \$2500 for the GSP. They are holding this as seed money and hope to leverage it through the Rotary organization to an amount sufficient to fund 300 stoves.

10. Date for our next AGM: Sunday 2021-Jun-06 at 1 pm was chosen, with location TBD.

11. Paul moved and Bob seconded that we adjourn. The meeting was adjourned around 2:27 pm.

These minutes were prepared by Ken Morin and Janet Allan.