



Colwood Garden Society AGM

September 19, 2026 @ Colwood Garden

- 1 President Marnie L. welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 9:37. A President's report was given by Marnie. (attached below)
- 2 Bonnie K. Adopted the minutes for the September 28, 2025 AGM meeting and Susan H. second the motion as well as accepting the agenda.
- 3 Naomi E. gave the treasure report with the current bank balance being \$9,460.09. The High Interest Savings Account is \$28,573.31. The GIC account is \$40,000. The 1 Year Redeemable GIC is \$33,100.00. There is was also a cheque for \$2600.00 for a grant from Colwood City Hall that remains to be deposited. The report was accepted by Stacey H. and second by Astrid W.
- 4 The membership report was given by Jackie L. (attached below)
- 5 The current Board Members were introduced.
- 6 There was a discussion of annual bed rental fee increases and it was decided that the amount and timing would be addressed at next years AGM. Robert F. led a discussion of the future use of galvanized beds after the presentation of information gathered by Naomi and Jackie on a recent visit to a business in Saanich. Robert F. also offered to help with the collection and return of bottles.
- 7 The current Board Members all agreed to remain in their current positions. There was a vote and all current Board Members were declared by acclamation.
 - President : Marnie Latour
 - Vice President : Susan Howard
 - Treasurer : Naomi Ellis
 - Secretary : Val Kowalko
 - Membership Coordinator: Jackie Laurie
 - Volunteer Coordinator: Bonnie Keleher
 - Colwood City Hall Liaison: Derek deCandole and Jackie Laurie
 - Members at Large : Robert Fraser, Nicole Schultz, Astrid Wilson, Stacey Howard, Sue Peters and Krys Rennick.

- 8 Marnie L. moved to close the meeting at 10:08 second by Val K.
- 9 There was a brief question and answer period. There was some general discussion regarding the proposed future garden location. Derek answered those question. Krys volunteered to help Robert F. with bottle sorting and returns the following Saturday.
- 10 Everyone enjoyed refreshments on this lovely Saturday morning.
- 11 In attendance: Robert F., Jackie L., Krys R., Bonnie K., Astrid W., Val K., Marnie L. Masako W., Naomi E., Derek D., Rose F., Stacey H., Susan H., and Sue P.

Colwood Garden Society Annual General Meeting

September 19,2026

President's Report

The Society had another successful year of growing our gardens and our community. Our plots are all being utilized, and we still have a long list of gardeners wishing to join us. The newsletters and bulletin board have enhanced our communications with members. The long anticipated gazebo project was finally completed, providing shade and a gathering place. Garden beds are being repaired on an ongoing basis, and the grounds are being kept neat and tidy. We were out and about in the community at events like Seedy Saturday, the Colwood Volunteer Fair, and most recently the Lagoon Arts Festival. And we provided beautiful organic produce to the Living Edge Market over the summer. All of this is thanks to the dedication of our volunteers, to whom we are all grateful.

We are all aware, I think, of the large grant we received from the federal government towards a new garden space. Despite numerous setbacks, Derek DeCandole has been tireless in his efforts to bring this project to fruition. We hope that following the municipal elections there will be a renewed focus on this project, with a new site by Lagoon West Park having been identified. Further details will be provided as they become available.

Looking ahead, we hope to revitalize our website as another means of communicating and engaging with the community. We are evaluating different options for more durable beds that might require less maintenance. And we intend to bolster the ranks of our volunteers and give more people the opportunity to contribute to and build upon the good work currently taking place.

On that note I would like to take this opportunity to recognize two of our members for their outstanding commitment and contributions to the Society. Barb and Bob Sibbald have done so much for us over the years. Barb has taken on various board positions, most recently as City Hall Liason. Her sunny disposition and knack for engaging with people have benefitted us greatly and in no small part have brought us to the point where the dream of a second garden might become reality. Bob has quietly worked behind the scenes doing maintenance and building projects, as well as singlehandedly managing our major fundraiser, the ongoing bottle drive. They have had to significantly scale back their involvement recently, although they still have a plot and will be around the garden. We wish them well in the next chapter of their lives and offer our deep gratitude for years of support.

Here's to a successful year that was, and an exciting new year ahead of us!

Respectfully submitted,

Marnie Latour

2026 Membership Report

When we speak in shorthand, as we sometime do to the City of Colwood, to other community gardens or funding agencies, we often refer to this garden as having 70 beds. Which is technically true.

However, 2 of those beds are dedicated to Living Edge charity crops. 2 beds measure only 4 x 4 feet and are rented out together as a slightly smaller garden bed. And one other bed obliging fell apart around the same time we wanted space to put up a gazebo. Which brings the true tally to 66 beds.

We had 9 gardeners give up their beds at the beginning of 2026, which means we welcomed 9 new gardeners in the months following. We're full. And we're maintaining a waiting list of 27. To be clear, that's 27 gardeners who are okay with waiting up to 2 years to rent a bed. By my own estimate, about twice as many more tell me not to bother keeping their names on file. It has been a busy year with a few changes around the gardens:

- we've at last put up our gazebo
- re-purposed our in-garden message board
- created a small lending library
- refreshed our CGS website
- launched a monthly newsletter
- and welcomed a new Director / Volunteer Coordinator, Bonnie Keleher

The Board is already wondering what we'd do without her. We're also enormously grateful to all the members who have given of your time and talents to keep the gardens running this year. Please give yourselves a well-deserved round of applause.

At the same time, we are sadly missing some founder members, who are stepping back because of health and family concerns. I'd like to pause for a moment here and recognize especially the 7 relentless years of energy and service from Barb and Bob Sibbald. We greatly appreciate the knowledge and experience they are generously passing along, but WOW are they leaving behind big shoes to fill!

That brings me to another very important membership focus going into 2027 – better organization and support for our volunteers. Before you leave today, please ask yourself what you would most like to do help keep the Colwood Garden Society vibrant and healthy going forward. We're still working towards staffing four standing volunteer committees introduced in our July newsletter:

- Living Edge
- Communications
- Work Party
- and Garden Maintenance

There are vacancies on all these committees. Come see me, or any of the Directors after today's meeting to chat about them.

The other key membership focus for 2027 is working to open another allotment garden here in Colwood. Sadly, we didn't succeed with the original plan for Colwood Creek Park, but there's new hope. Last Saturday, we set up a booth at the Lagoon Arts and Culture Festival to introduce ourselves to the neighbours around the Goldfinch Arts Centre. With a bit of luck, and continued Council support after next month's municipal election, we may be able to put another community garden in behind the orchard there. I believe we'll have more to share on that very soon. This concludes my report.

Jackie Laurie