



Circle Craft Cooperative  
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting  
Thursday April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Board: Kaarina Talvila, Jenny Hildebrand, Greg Kawczynski, Wendy Van Riesen, Elaine Brewer-White, Jo Ludwig

Staff Present: Joanne Ma, Afuwa Granger, Bill Sulis

Members Present: Linda Doherty, Nancy Walker, Lorna Moffat, Diane Zwickel, Mary Downe, Gillian McMillan, Peggy Bracket, Pen-Hsuan Hsing, Terry Bigham, Claudia Hayward, Anita Jackel, Louise Valentine, Chi Cheng Lee, Ulrieke Benner, Susie Benes, Elen Danielle, Liz de Beer, Trish Moon

Minutes recorded by: Joanne Ma

The Chair called the annual general meeting to order at 4:03 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda

**MOVED and SECONDED** to adopt the April 15, 2021 AGM agenda as circulated **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

2. Adoption of minutes from the Circle Craft June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 AGM **MOVED and SECONDED** to adopt the June 3, 2020 AGM minutes as circulated **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

3. Presentation of Financial Statements, Kulraj Hundal of Kinder Sidhu & Associates

Kulraj Hundal of Kinder Sidhu & Associates (KSA) presented the consolidated financial statements. He wanted to emphasise and note that there were significant financial losses in the prior year (2020) due to COVID-19. Then Kulraj started outlining the independent auditor's report and reviewed the significant items on each page.

**MOVED and seconded** to approve the audited financial statements as presented. **CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

4. Appointment of Auditors

**MOVED and seconded** to re-appoint KSA as Circle Craft's auditors for the next financial year.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

5. Report from Kaarina Talvila, outgoing Board Chair

The Chair went over points addressed in the reports that were distributed with the AGM package this year:

- Circle Craft is still in a reasonably stable financial situation. Sales in the gallery for the first few months have averaged about 85% of normal which is okay for a pandemic year.
- One significant and recent development is that Circle Craft has received a sizable business recovery grant of \$35,000 from the provincial government.
  - Applied for and received a \$20,000 base grant as well as a \$15,000 top up for tourism related businesses.
  - The application stated that the funds would be allocated to hiring a retail consultant who would conduct an overview of our entire retail operation with the aim of increasing profitability from the gallery. This process has already been done. Additionally, some of the funds would be allocated for additional advertising
- A top priority for the coming year is to return the board to a governing board rather than operating board. At this time the Chair acknowledged and extended a heartfelt thanks to those serving on the Board as well as the staff.

The Chair then encouraged members to step forward into a larger role within Circle Craft:

- The Board has worked incredibly hard in the last year to ensure the survival of the co-op so that members can continue to have a gallery. Members have an obligation to support the co-op in any way possible whether the part is a small or large role.

6. Q&A

The Chair and Board opened the floor to any questions members had.

Wendy, the incoming Board Chair and Elaine, the Retail Committee Chair answered the following questions about website:

- Will there be a focus on the Circle Craft website in order to help promote all the artists and what is going on in the store? There are also currently some issues with the artist bio page.
  - Circle Craft has hired a website designer who is developing

our new website on a Shopify platform. Elaine and Wendy have gone over the first rough draft and it's looking fabulous so far. More information will be coming out very soon.

- Will the new Circle Craft website include the option to sell online? ○ That's on hold at this time. However, part of the reason the Board chose to use Shopify as the new website platform is so that e-commerce will always be an option
- Are there any financial considerations being given to what happens if the Christmas Market does not happen this year? Or happens in a modified form?

Kaarina the Board Chair shared that:

- If there is no market this year, Circle Craft will receive no royalties from Signatures. However, we are in a good enough position right now that even if there's no money from Signatures and there are no further disasters, we should be able to make it through another year without those royalties. ○ This is also non-inclusive of the steps we will be taking from a retail perspective to increase the sales in the gallery.

A few members then went on to give their thanks to the Board Members, Staff, and Store Staff. It's been a difficult year and everyone has worked so hard and everyone has been amazing.

## 7. Election of Directors

Jenny Hildebrand and Jo Ludwig have 1 more year to go in their 2 year term.

Wendy Van Risen, Elaine Brewer-White, and Greg Kawczynski are up for re-election since their term is over. However, because there are more vacancies than we have directors and we had no new nominees, the three directors get in by acclamation so there is no voting to occur.

## 8. Address from Wendy Van Riesen, incoming Board Chair Wendy started first by expressing her honour to be the Chair and is grateful to all the help she has received from Kaarina. After which, she proceeded to provide her thoughts and vision for the future of Circle Craft.

- Wendy would like to see Circle Craft move towards a direction in which members and artists can work together to build something new. To be able to collaborate with visionaries beyond just the crafts world.
- With the absence of the market, Circle Craft can now go back to its

roots and focus on the beginning when it was artists finding a community to sell their work.

- Although a difficult decision to make, the licensing agreement helped to save this organization. Circle Craft had focused a lot of its energy towards the market. Now, the organization will be rediscovering and reinventing ourselves.
- Circle Craft will need to connect more with the members and evaluate how the Co-Op serves the members and how the members serve the Co-Op. The Board is comprised of 5 out of 134 members, which means we have over 100 stories more to tell.
  - What role has the Co-Op played in your life and what role can it play for your future professional lives?
- Wendy is willing to come on as Board Chair because the current Board team members are all great. However, they are hoping to add new members as they would like to hear more voices and have more support.
- Wendy hopes that Circle Craft's vision will be collaborative with its members, composed of a collective of ideas that's honed in to do the best for what the collective wants. This is what Circle Craft should work towards and this is what Wendy will champion.

#### 9. New Business

Kaarina has passed on the torch to Lorna Moffat who is on the committee for celebrating the 50th Anniversary which Circle Craft turns next year. ● Lorna and Elaine Brewer-White are co-chairs and have gathered up a few members to be a part of the committee and they have some ideas up their sleeves. Specifically, they would like to hear YOUR stories.

- Stories of the makers, old photos from past exhibits/markets. Lorna has spoken about creating a digital storybook that can be shared on social media.
- The committee will arrange an allocated exhibition slot within the gallery for a big Co-Op birthday bash show. However, there are opportunities for planning other events throughout the year.
- The 50th Anniversary Committee is open to suggestions and ideas from everyone.

#### 10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:12pm