

Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF)

Annual General Meeting

Minutes

Olds College, Olds, Alberta

Friday, October 14, 2012

11:11 am – 12:25 pm

Attendees:

Robert Annis*, Bill Ashton*, David Douglas*, Ryan Gibson*, Rob Greenwood*, Jennifer Daniels*, Bojan Furst, Heather Hall*, Terri MacDonald*, Sean Markey*, Judy McMillan-Evans, Janet Sainsbury, Bill Reimer*, Kelly Vodden*

CRRF members eligible to vote are noted with an asterisk.

1. *Call to Order* at 11:11 am

The President noted that even though the AGM was being conducted in English, he welcomed any questions or discussion in French and would call upon some of his Board colleagues for assistance in this. The President also explained CRRF welcomed everyone's participation in the discussion of the AGM, however, only CRRF members would be eligible to vote. Bill Ashton had a list of CRRF members available at the meeting.

2. *Review/Approval of Agenda*

No items were added to the agenda. David Douglas put forward a motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Kelly Vodden; motion carried.

3. *Approval of Minutes from Last AGM*

Minutes from the last AGM held in St John's, October 14th 2011 were circulated for approval. Ryan Gibson put forward a motion to approve the Minutes of the 2011 AGM; seconded by Heather Hall; motion carried.

4. *Report of President*

Bob Annis (President) noted CRRF has been very active since the last AGM in St John's.

It is my pleasure to present this Annual Report to our membership as I complete my term as President of the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation/Foundation canadienne pour la revitalisation rurale.

The CRRF board and foundation members have realised another busy year building on and extending the energy built up over the past number of years under the leadership of our previous president David Douglas.

Our board's regular monthly meetings and our committee's activities have focused on creating a number of new board policies, consolidating our financial position and the management of our accounts, the publishing of our E-zine, streamlining our membership process, and further developing and re-launching our website. Great progress has been made on all of these fronts.

CRRF is now also in a sound financial position. Bill Ashton, our new treasurer, has completed the movement of our accounts to Brandon University and has automated our ability to receive and process new memberships. Through the dedicated commitment of our communications committee members and in particular with Ryan Gibson's e-talents, we now have a very much improved, versatile and powerful website. The ability to track the number of visitors to our portal is complete and impressive in terms of both the reporting process and the number of hits received. As an entirely volunteer-based organization, and given the uncertain times in which we find ourselves, these are welcomed accomplishments indeed.

Our new, streamlined computer-based membership application process and membership policy refinements are completed and we have, for the first time, a substantial number of 5-year memberships in place. Changes to our constitution, endorsed at last year's AGM in St John's, are serving us well and we have, with Matt Brett's great efforts, moved further to solidify our board governance processes with a number of new policies relating to membership, intellectual property and copy-right ownership as well as the recognition of honorary members.

Over the course of the past year, and in accord with our long established tradition, we have also continued to have an active engagement with our partners in the Rural and Co-operatives Secretariat (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada), the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), the Rural Ontario Institute (ROI), Statistics Canada, the Rural Development Institute (RDI), Concordia University, CCEDnet, the Canadian Rural Health Research Network, the Canadian Rural Research Network (CRRN), the Community Foundations of Canada as well as developing and extending the reach of several new partnerships - notably with the Alberta Rural Development Network (ARDN) and Olds College Alberta.

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of CRRF, to express our appreciation and indebtedness to all of these organisations and their dedicated members for sharing their commitment to the strengthening and continued development of rural Canada. These

numerous collaborations and partnerships have also enabled our board to achieve a remarkable array of external activities in 2011 – 2012. I wish, in particular, to draw attention to five of these.

In May of this year we co-hosted a second national Rural Research Workshop in Ottawa. This proved to be a very productive event supported by the Rural Development Network (RDN) of the Federal government. A reporting of this event can be found on our CRRF website. Because of the positive feedback we received concerning the value of this forum, it remains on our agenda to host another similar event in 2013.

At the invitation of the federal government, CRRF also made a presentation to Infrastructure Canada's Stronger Communities Consultation sessions held in April in Ottawa. The presentation made by Ryan Gibson and myself, as well as a more detailed reporting of this activity, can also be found at our CRRF website.

Our 2011 Annual Conference "Culture, Place and Identity at the Heart of Regional Development" was held in St. John's, NL (October 13-15). This event was undertaken with collaborations between the Leslie Harris Centre (MUN), the North Atlantic Forum (NAF), the Small Islands Culture Research Initiative and others. In addition to our AGM, this event also incorporated our annual New Researchers Forum.

In June of this year, two of our board members, Bruno Jean (l'Université du Québec à Rimouski) and Bill Reimer (Concordia University), partnered to co-host the 9th International Comparative Rural Policy Studies Summer Institute (ICRPS). The Summer Institute brought together an international, multi-disciplinary group of faculty, students, and professionals to study many facets of rural policy. The goal of the summer school was to provide graduate students, researchers, and rural development experts from around the world an opportunity to exchange insights and knowledge regarding rural and northern policy using a comparative perspective (www.ICRPS.org).

Last but not least, a group of CRRF members led by David Douglas met with community leaders in Didsbury Alberta for a town-hall type event. This proved to be a very fruitful meeting for all concerned. For me this event also further reinforced the idea that CRRF needs to maintain and grow our commitment to directly connect, on a regular basis, with rural residents, practitioners and community leaders in their own communities across the country.

Before concluding this annual review, I would also like to draw attention to our board's work in another core CRRF mission activity area. CRRF has for many years made a long-term strategic commitment to facilitate and contribute to the development of innovative rural research by both our members and by others. In this regard, we have had two major Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) research requests for partnering this year. The first project is led by Lars Holstrom at the

University of Alberta, under the heading “Rural Sustainability: Complexity, Informality and Partnerships in Planning, Policy and Governance”. The second, led by Terri MacDonald, Regional Innovation Chair in Rural Economic Development at the Columbia Basin Rural Development Institute of Selkirk College and by Nicole Vaugeois at Vancouver Island University is titled “Attraction and Retention of Young Adults to Rural Regions: a National Conference and Knowledge Mobilization Project”.

We are hopeful that both of these new research enterprises will be successfully funded and join the cadre of other ongoing SSHRC projects we are partners in or within which our board members are actively engaged. Notably, these include the very exciting project led by Kelly Vodden “Exploration of new regionalism in Canadian regional development (2010-2013)” which will be reported on over the course of the next few days at this year’s annual conference, as well as a SSHRC funded project lead by Victoria Esses entitled “Welcoming communities (2012-2017)” which explores the immigrant experience and immigration policies and processes as they play out in rural Canada.

As we imminently launch into our 2012 conference here in Olds Alberta “Creating Rural Connections: Regional Realities and Approaches”, we are also actively planning for our 2013 conference. We are currently in very productive discussions lead by Rhonda Koster at Lakehead University with a host of new partners and aboriginal organisations regarding the specific theme, programme and event management .We anticipate that our 25th Annual CRRF Conference will be held in Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank all of my colleagues on our Board for their dedication and commitment to our cause. For me, it has been a great pleasure to be your President and to work so closely with you over the past year. I now also look forward to continuing our work together as your Past-President.

Bob expressed his appreciation to both our members and our partners to their commitment to rural.

5. *Report of Treasurer*

Bill Ashton outlined the current state of CRRF finances. CRRF’s financial year is based on the calendar year. As of December 31, 2012, CRRF’s financial standing was \$9,904. A copy of the 2011 Annual Audited Statement is available on the CRRF website.

6. *Approval of Audited Financial Statements*

David Douglas moved the Treasurer’s report, seconded by Kelly Vodden. Motion carried.

7. Appointment of Auditors

Bill Ashton put forward a motion to appoint Harris Ryan Chartered Accountants of St John's, Newfoundland as the auditors for 2012; seconded by Bill Reimer; motion carried.

Bill Reimer commended Bill Ashton for his lead on the financial front. George Penfold was also commended for bringing our financial books up to par.

Bill Ashton put forth a motion, seconded by David Douglas to post the 2011 financial audited statements on the CRRF website. Motion carried.

9. Election of Board and Officers

Rob Greenwood served as the elections officer for the board election. Rob explained the process, whereby elections for the position of President, Secretary, and Treasurer would be held first. Following the election of the executive positions elections would be held for the remaining board member positions.

9a Nominations Committee Report

David Douglas explained a board committee consisting of Matt Brett, and George Penfold met to encourage nominations to the board. At the same time, the Nominations Committee spoke with current board members regarding their desire to remain on the board. The Nominations Committee received the following names for consideration to the board: Sean Markey and Terri MacDonald. Two current board members indicated they will be stepping down from the board: George Penfold and Bruno Jean.

9b Election of Board and Officers

President: Rob indicated Ryan Gibson was nominated for the position President. Rob called for nominations from the floor three times. No further names were put forth. Rob declared Ryan Gibson elected as President for a one-year term.

Secretary: Rob indicated Heather Hall expressed an interest in the position of Secretary. Rob called for additional nominations from the floor three times. No further names were put forth. Rob declared Heather Hall elected as Secretary for a one-year term.

Treasurer: Bill Ashton re-confirmed to the position of Treasurer.

Board Member Position: Rob indicated Sean Markey and Terri MacDonald expressed an interest in the position of board members. Rob called for additional nominations from the floor three times. No further names were put forth. Rob declared Sean Markey and Terri MacDonald elected as board members for a two-year term.

The elected board members for 2012-2013 will be: Ryan Gibson (President), Heather Hall (Secretary), Bill Ashton (Treasurer), Robert Annis (Past President, ex officio), Matthew Brett, David Douglas, Kate Hall, Terri MacDonald, Sean Markey, Bill Reimer, and Nicole Vaugeois.

Bob Annis thanked Rob Greenwood for his role as elections officer. Bob expressed great appreciation to Heather, George, and Bruno for their contributions to the board.

10. *Other Business*

Rob Greenwood suggested a potential think tank focused on the inter-linkages between the Straights region of Québec and Atlantic Canada. A tentative timeline for a session would be fall 2013 or spring 2014. The Harris Centre of Regional Policy and Development will be pursuing this initiative. Building on this suggestion, Bill Ashton noted a desire for a solution-based regional development workshop in Manitoba. Bill Reimer suggested CRRF could organize a series of workshops across Canada, each building on the successes of the previous. David Douglas suggested this type of series of workshops could re-energize the provincial arenas.

Rob Greenwood is exploring a national research dialogue on resource economies and sub-national entities with partners at the University of Saskatchewan. This event could take place in the spring 2013.

Kelly Vodden expressed congratulations to the board for all their efforts over the past year.

11. *Adjournment*

Rob Greenwood motioned to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 12:25 pm