



Gabriola

RECREATION SOCIETY

GABRIOLA RECREATION SOCIETY: Annual Report for 2020

Submitted to Hannah King, RDN Supervisor of Recreation Services

The Gabriola Recreation Society got off to a great start in 2020. We had robust program attendance from January – March, including a growing and committed participant base for our adult/youth drop-in sports. We had plans to take a targeted approach to assess community based recreation priorities for the near and far future, through our participation in various community groups and events, and consultation with local recreation providers.

Then the Covid-19 global pandemic hit, and everything changed - everywhere. Our promising year came to an abrupt halt in mid-March, as we all figured out how to navigate the unexpected and challenging circumstances that shaped the rest of 2020. GRS ended with a “good” year, but for very different reasons than anticipated. The lessons learned from 2020 will help carry us through 2021, as we face another year of uncertainty connected to Covid-19.

CHALLENGES

- Covid-19 had enormous and unforeseen repercussions, affecting all aspects of our lives. This included recreational activities, at GRS as with all service providers. School and facility closures; job losses; limits on physical interactions; enacting strong safety measures to engage in anything recreational - all drastically reduced our ability to host our usual selection and scope of activities.
- We dealt with ongoing uncertainty on our operations from March – December, starting with the cancellation of Spring programs. The rest of the year required staying current on changing Covid-19 safety protocols; ensuring compliance on guidelines for different activities; instituting new safety measures; collecting new registration/documentation materials; limiting programs, and access to in person services.
- Moving programs online. The internet connection to our office at the school is slow and sometimes unreliable. We also did not secure enough instructors who were keen to move online. Most were already trying to do that on their own.

SUCSESSES

- GRS was able to pivot more quickly than larger organizations, in creating new Covid-19 related registration materials, and instituting new safety guidelines for programs. Operating on a smaller scale allowed us to be prepared for kids summer camps earlier than most departments, and to focus our activities outdoors.

- We had a “successful” year financially, in having ended with a surplus. This was forecast to the RDN in August, 2020, but is now accurate with our year end financials. We ended the year with a \$7,000 operating surplus, as explained below.
- GRS renewed their lease on office/program space at Gabriola Elementary School for the next 3 years. Our recreation services agreement with the RDN was also renewed, through 2023.

BUDGET DIFFERENCES (2020 projected vs. actual)

The comparative financial report, including GRS’ proposed and actual 2020 budgets, accompany this report. The significant differences between our proposed and actual 2020 budgets were:

Revenue

- We received extra funding from HRDC, for our Canada Summer Jobs funded summer positions. Total funding budgeted for summer jobs: \$8,000/ Grant received from HRDC: \$11,592 \$3,592 savings; actual over proposed budget.

Concurrently, we increased the hours and employment period for our primary summer leader over previous years, and paid the extra cost – an additional \$3,000 over and above the HRDC funding. Increased costs for summer staff are reflected in our payroll expenses.

- Rollo McClay Custodial: \$2800 savings (64%); actual over proposed budget
This contract is tied to the softball season. The length of the season and participant numbers were dramatically cut due to covid-19 restrictions.
- Program Revenue/Expenses: \$3871 in total; actual over proposed budget
Proposed budget: \$40,000 program revenue; \$40,000 program expenses
Actual budget: \$45,234 program revenue; \$41,363 program expenses

Program revenue for 2020 came primarily from kids programs. In particular, the expansion of Nature Kids, our longest and most consistently full program. We also had fewer contract instructors in the summer, with more programs led by our summer leaders.

Adult Program Revenue: Down 74%; actual (\$1837) over proposed budget (\$7,000)
Adult revenue/expenses ended 2020 close to net 0. Adult program offerings were vastly reduced in 2020, being much more impacted by covid-19 restrictions than kids’ activities.

Expenses

- Rental of GRS office at Gabriola Elementary School: \$4000 savings; over proposed budget
SD68 waived 5 months rent (April – August) due to covid-19 closure to the public.
- Telus: Savings of \$900; actual over proposed budget
Our webmaster got the GRS rate reduced to a more appropriate level.
- Advertising: Savings of \$2500 (almost 50%); actual over proposed budget
Spring programs, and most Fall/Winter programs were cancelled. GRS had fewer ads, and did not produce 2 full season program brochures that were done in previous years.

- Insurance: Savings of \$1000+; actual over proposed budget.
We changed insurance companies, which significantly reduced our premium.
- Numerous other expenses were less than anticipated, given far fewer programs and reduced operations overall in 2020. More savings came in the areas of travel, training, honoraria, office equipment, and program supplies/equipment.
- Expenses that increased in 2020 included: assistance disbursements – from \$2000 to \$2500; and grants-in-aid – from \$5,000 to \$8,000.
More families than ever before applied for our low income subsidy program, GabRec Access. It was a very difficult year for local non-profit groups. GRS received a higher than usual number of worthy grant applications and had leeway to increase the budget for 2020.

Program statistics for 2020 are attached separately.