



UNIVERSITY  
NEIGHBOURHOODS  
ASSOCIATION

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
OCTOBER 2, 2024  
MINUTES**

Minutes of the University Neighbourhoods Association (UNA) 2024 Annual General Meeting (AGM) held at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 2, 2024, at Wesbrook Community Centre, 3335 Webber Lane, Vancouver, BC.

**PRESENT:**

Richard Watson – Chair  
Paul Thorkelsson – Chief Administrative Officer  
Eagle Glassheim – Director  
Bill Holmes – Director  
Fei Liu – Director  
Murray McCutcheon – Director  
Carole Jolly – UBC Member  
Holly Shepherd – UBC Member  
Ayesha Irfan – AMS Designated Student  
(Arrived at 7:30 p.m.)

**STAFF:**

Rocio Escalona, Internal Communications and Office Coordinator  
Dave Gillis, Recreation Manager  
Chris Hakim, Corporate Services Specialist  
Athena Koon, Finance Manager  
Glenda Ollero, Communications Manager  
Wegland Sit, Operations Manager

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Ivy Yu, Portfolio Finance Manager, University of British Columbia  
Leroy Van Spronsen, Practice Leader, Johnsen Archer LLP

**RECORDING SECRETARY:**

Justine Wiklo, Raincoast Ventures Ltd.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Richard Watson, the Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m. and welcomed residents to the 2024 AGM.

**A. INTRODUCTION TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

## 1. Review of Meeting Procedure

Richard Watson reviewed the meeting procedure, noting that per Bylaw 4.4, a quorum is 10 members, and with 39 members present (26 members and 13 proxies), declared that a quorum was present.

The UNA Board of Directors, guests, and staff members present at the AGM were introduced, and the Chair acknowledged that the AGM was being held on the traditional unceded territory of the Musqueam First Nation.

Paul Thorkelsson, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), reviewed the voting protocol and provided guidelines for questions and answers. Information was provided on a special resolution that members and proxies would be voting on by ballot.

## 2. Motion to Adopt the Agenda

**IT WAS MOVED (Richard Watson) and SECONDED (Michael Kerns)**

THAT the UNA membership adopt the Annual General Meeting 2024 agenda as it appears in the Notice of AGM 2024.

**CARRIED**

## 3. Motion to Accept the 2023 Annual General Meeting Minutes

**IT WAS MOVED (Richard Watson) and SECONDED (Melvyn Rowles)**

THAT the UNA membership adopt the Annual General Meeting 2023 minutes as circulated.

**CARRIED**

## B. REPORTS

### 1. Chair's Report, Richard Watson

The Chair expressed appreciation and gratitude to the UNA Directors, to the CAO and UNA Staff on behalf of the Board, and to the UNA membership for participation and commitment to the good of the neighbourhood and neighbours.

The Chair's Report highlighted:

- The Strategic Plan has five priorities in progress.
- The Landscape Management Plan was significant for Hawthorn.
- We are looking at ways to improve consultation and feedback; it has been a good year in getting that representation going.
- The Neighbours Agreement Committee has been doing a lot of work, and there is hope that a new Neighbours Agreement will be brought forward soon.
- The UNA card is a successful initiative that allows residents to access facilities.

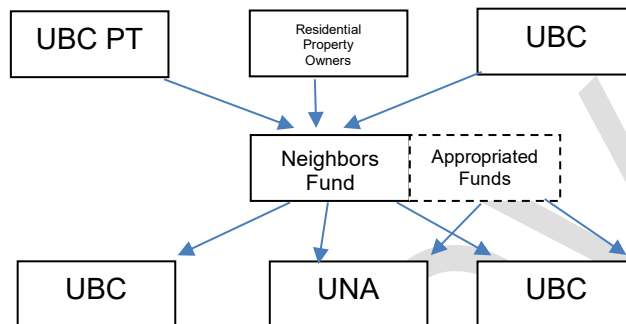
The Chair advised that this would be their final report as Chair of the UNA Board, and thanked residents for the opportunity to serve and expressed gratitude towards the other Board members for their participation.

During a question-and-answer period, there were no questions introduced.

## 2. Finance and Audit Committee Report

Bill Holmes, Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee, provided the Finance and Audit Committee Report. The report included an overview of the UNA revenue and expenses for the 2023/2024 fiscal year, its financial performance, and position at the end of the 2023/2024 fiscal year, and highlighted:

- Focus of Flow for Service Levy:



- Financial position for 2023-2024:
  - \$7.7 million in revenue, the largest portions being the UBC Neighbours' Levy (66%), Recreation and Culture (19%), other revenue (15%)
  - \$6.7 million in expenses, the largest portions being Recreation and Culture (42%), Engineering and Operations (22%), General Operations and Services (36%)
  - \$951,854 in excess revenue
- UNA does not budget for surplus as it is a non-profit entity; any budgeted surplus would be subject to tax
- Budget comparison to actual spending for 2023-2024:
  - Budgeted revenue was \$7,316,132, actual revenue was \$7,665,088 (+5%)
  - Budgeted expenses were \$7,316,132, actual expenses were \$6,713,235 (-8%)
  - Landscaping and water expenses were much lower than expected, and salaries and benefits have decreased by around \$200,000
- Assets and liabilities as of March 31, 2024:
  - Total assets of \$4.4 million
  - Total liabilities of \$1.6 million, mostly from deferred revenue
  - Net assets of \$2.8 million.

UNA's financial position can be viewed at [www.myuna.com](http://www.myuna.com) under the Governance and Finance section.

During a question-and-answer period, there were no questions introduced.

## 3. Presentation of UNA Financial Statements for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2024

Leroy Van Spronsen, Johnsen Archer LLP, reviewed the audited financial statements for

the fiscal year ending March 31, 2024. The purpose of the audit engagement and significant risks such as the going concern concept, self-review threat, and overstatement of expenses, all of which were found to be low risk for the UNA, were referenced.

The auditor reviewed the results of the audited financial statements, noting the following:

- No reliance was placed on internal controls; a substantive approach was taken
- There were no concerns raised with internal controls
- There was no fraud, errors, or illegal acts identified
- No material misstatements were made
- The financial position and net assets can be viewed in the AGM package, as well as revenue and expenditures.

Director Bill Holmes highlighted the hard work that UNA staff put into the financial statements.

During a question-and-answer period, the following questions (Q) and answers (A) were introduced:

Q: The cash position is high and uninvested compared to the liabilities; even looking at deferred revenue, if that is all discharged, there is cash available. In the future, it would be better if this is invested; can we make note of that? (*Suresh Prasad*)

A: Cash is an accounting term, we are conscious that we can get interest on that. Much money is invested, and we are looking for other options to get the maximum amount of interest. (*Bill Holmes*)

Q: Thank you for your hard work. On page four of the AGM package, there are revenues and expenditures for community services for the community centers and another for services, what is the difference between these two? Why are they separate from one another? (*Sandy Song*)

A: The first line for salary and benefits under the community center is specific to the center; it includes all staff and personnel who run the Westbook and Old Barn centers. The other is for supporting staff, those who work in the main office. They are separated to create more transparency, as there are different types of salaries. At the centers, there are many hourly staff. It makes sense to divide these by the community center and the back-end office. (*Athena Koon, Finance Manager*)

Q: There has been a 10% increase in the size of the community; for general services, were there more staff hired to support the community or just a 20% increase in salary? (*Jian Mi*)

A: We created five new positions. The previous year, hourly numbers were different due to COVID-19, and it would be better to compare 2024 to the following year as COVID-19 had impacts on how we were staffing people. (*Athena Koon, Finance Manager*)

**IT WAS MOVED (Richard Watson) and SECONDED (Suresh Prasad)**

That the UNA membership appoint Johnsen Archer LLP as auditor until the next Annual General Meeting.

**CARRIED**

**4. University of British Columbia Presentation on Neighbours' Fund**

Ivy Yu, UBC Portfolio Finance Manager, provided a presentation on the Neighbours' Fund Audited Financial Statements of 2023-2024 and noted the following highlights:

- Purpose of fund is to deposit service levy to provide services to residents
- Fund revenue is \$9.3million
- The Neighbours' Levy Fund allocation 2023-2024 of \$8.5 million, which includes:
  - UNA Operating Budget (62%)
  - Fire Protection Costs (21%)
  - Non-recoverable portion of GST (1%)
  - Athletics Access Fees (8%)
  - Utilities (6%)
  - UBC Administration (1%) – covers cost for administering the fund.
- The Neighbours' Fund holds reserves of \$12 million which includes:
  - \$6.1 million (51%) in the Infrastructure Replacement Reserve:
    - To cover the anticipated replacement of roads, lighting, utilities, and greenspace
  - \$2.4 million (20%) in the Capital Reserve:
    - To cover anticipated replacement of major facility items
  - \$1.03 million (9%) in the Contingency Reserve:
    - To guard against unforeseen annual needs
  - \$430,000 in the Rate Stabilization Reserve:
    - To guard against unforeseen changes in the City of Vancouver mill rates
  - \$661,000 in the Community Field Replacement Reserve:
    - To fund replacement of community field in the future
    - As the field was replaced, there will be a draw from this in 2025
  - After funds are appropriate based on the Reserve Policy, additional funds are added to the Unappropriated Reserves.

During a question-and-answer period, the following questions (Q) and answers (A) were introduced:

**Q:** In one account, the maximum amount was reached but continued to increase due to investments. What are those investments, and how do they contribute to the fund? Does this financial disclosure go through the same auditing process? (*Michael Kerns*)

**A:** There is interest collected on the cash balance at the fund. That interest is allocated between each reserve and added to the reserve balance each year. (*Ivy Yu, UBC Portfolio Finance Manager*)

The Neighbours Fund is an accounting entry; there is no cash earmarked for UBC in this fund. The interest is what UBC is getting on cash balances and what they

add to the fund. It is not money in a pot but an accounting concept. We pay the services levy, they collect and invest it, and they decide that interest is credited to the fund. *(Bill Holmes)*

The fund is audited separately by MNP. This audit is still in draft, but the results will be published on the website when they are available. *(Ivy Yu, UBC Portfolio Finance Manager)*

## **5. Chief Administrative Officer's Report, Paul Thorkelsson**

The CAO provided an overview of key accomplishments as they relate to the Strategic Plan:

- The 2023/2024 fiscal year was a success, and progress was made on goals and priorities for the 2023-2025 plan
- Focus was put into strengthening a sense of community, keeping members informed and engaged:
  - The Campus Resident was re-launched, bringing independent journalism to support understanding and knowledge
  - The UNA Guidebook was updated to support newcomers with resources for settlement
  - There has been engagement on topics from traffic safety to climate action and preparedness
- Success at internal organization initiatives has included:
  - Better access to and management of records with strengthened IT infrastructure and support in registration
  - A revised program guide to aid with programs
  - An expanded Green Depot
  - A preliminary investigation into the establishment of an off-leash dog park
  - Performance tracking and reporting of metrics
- UNA will hold a general election in the fall to elect a new Board of Directors, and there will be electronic voting for the first time
- Important dates for the election:
  - Nomination deadline – October 4, 2024
  - Voting period – November 4-26, 2024
  - All Candidates Forum – November 14, 2024
  - Deadline to register as a UNA Society Member – November 22, 2024

The CAO expressed gratitude to the elected Directors of UNA, to leadership and staff, and to residents for participating in the community.

During a question-and-answer period, the following questions/comments (Q) and answers (A) were offered:

- Q: I have been a resident for four years and use the facilities. The IT and technology strengthening, where does that align with the financial statements? There is a website, and the hardware and software are going down. It does not seem like there are funds going into this. The website has a lag response. I do not know if there are going to be improvements to the server if there is online voting, there may be issues.  
*(Norm Au)*

A: There will be reporting on this in the next fiscal year. The Board committed funds this year that were unbudgeted to go toward the servers. Registrations this year had no downtime to the servers, and the load time is disappearing. Funds will be spent on the next year's report. *(Paul Thorkelsson, CAO)*

The investment in technology occurred after March 31, 2024, after these statements. This spend will be reflected in next year's statements. *(Richard Watson)*

Q: How is *The Campus Resident* governed, and how has independence remained from UNA leadership? Additionally, are there any plans to expand the community centres, as there have been issues with capacity? *(Shin Oblander)*

A: The editorial board is independently chaired by members of the UNA Board and staff. It is independent journalism. We get reported on equally as anyone out in the community. *(Paul Thorkelsson, CAO)*

The Editorial Board is made up of UNA Board members and six resident representatives. It is a core commitment from all community members around the board and those who volunteer. *(Eagle Glassheim)*

The revival of the Campus Resident is something that UNA is proud of. When John Thompkins passed away, the loss of the Campus Resident was felt. This is bucking the trend in communities where local newspapers are being lost. *(Murray McCutcheon)*

Capacity issues are a challenging situation for many of our programs; we are victims of our own success. In the last fiscal year, there was significant investment to get the Old Barn fitness center renovated, and we are seeing increased usage. There are parts of this building that are used for administrative offices, and work is underway with UBC to identify space for administrative offices to release this space to recreation. *(Paul Thorkelsson, CAO)*

We are bursting, particularly in fitness. We are moving classes into spaces that are not necessarily ideal, but we are in this position. On a yearly basis, we look at room use and prioritize room use and size based on attendance. *(Dave Gillis, Recreation Manager)*

Q: I have lived here for 14 years, and the service fee has increased from \$700 to \$1,400. There used to be the Old Barn facility that offered free recreation. When the Wesbrook Community Centre was built, it was great at first, but there is a feeling that it is not service-oriented but more commercial as all programs are paid. Community centers should provide services for residents. Can we have more free services and outdoor amenities for seniors? *(Sandy Song)*

A: In terms of recreation services, we have both free and paid programs. It is important to recognize that there is a lot that we do that is free of cost. *(Paul Thorkelson, CAO)*

Programming costs cover the increasing costs of instructors. There are programs that are break-even programs, where the cost is kept as low as possible, and there is no profit made. There are programs that are free for seniors and youth that are led by volunteers. We do not offer drop-in space for pickleball or table tennis at this time as we are limited in the space we can operate. We are fortunate to have a seniors grant that helps to run more programs for free when the funds are obtained. *(Dave Gillis, Recreation Manager)*

Q: Why were some services free before and not now? *(Sandy Song)*

A: Initially, the programs and services were run bare-bones as far as instructors, but the demand of the population has increased. We have to be sure that we provide things like newly purchased equipment and be able to cover the salaries of the people who operate the facility and service the equipment. *(Dave Gillis, Recreation Manager)*

We cannot answer this in more detail, but we can do our best to reduce costs. That is a good point to allocate a higher priority to accessibility for seniors. *(Richard Watson)*

Q: I want to suggest that programs for seniors and children be free. As residents, we should be able to use the rooms in the facility as we would in our own homes. The service fee is growing every year. *(Sandy Song)*

Q: When talking about space, there is a new community center being built; does that fall under UNA or a different neighbourhood? *(Michael Kerns)*

A: This is a separate facility that is operated by the University Endowment Lands. We have reached out for opportunities to collaborate, and they have selected a contractor to run that facility. *(Paul ThorkeIsson, CAO)*

Q: What is the New Neighbours Agreement? Was there one implemented in the past that I am not aware of? *(Gary Gibson)*

A: The current agreement was signed in 2020, and we have been working on an update to that for the past three years. This is the main agreement between UNA and UBC that gives UNA responsibilities. The original was signed in 2008, and updates were made in 2015 and 2020. It is showing its age, and there needs to be an improved agreement that is clear on the responsibilities and rights of the UNA. The hope is that it will be finished by the time the Board has completed their term. Under the current agreement, UNA has no responsibility for anything in Wesbrook. The new agreement will also limit risk. *(Bill Holmes)*

Q: 10 residents and I signed two letters that were placed in the suggestions box at the front desk. The first was in March 2024, and the second was in August 2024. We have not had any response. *(Sandy Song)*

- A: The suggestion box is at the front desk. I will follow up to see when that is emptied, and I will respond as quickly as possible. *(Dave Gillis, Recreation Manager)*
- Q: Can you please set up free outside table tennis for seniors? (Sandy Song)
- A: This is a great idea that many parks are doing. It is on our radar, but cost and location are a challenge. *(Dave Gillis, Recreation Manager)*
- Q: I know that UNA has a rapidly growing population, and we are in the midst of a housing crisis. There are rising demands with regard to this growing population. At the Old Barn, the cost is \$80 per month, while Wesbrook is \$120. Is there any vision to expand the machines that are available to accommodate the needs of seniors and other populations? There are discrepancies in the equipment available at both locations – the Old Barn equipment is not the same as at Wesbrook. Will there be a solution to upgrade the equipment at Old Barn to be comparable to Wesbrook? *(Paul Li)*
- A: The discrepancy in cost at this time is associated with the amount of exercise and types of programming that can be performed. The equipment is all brand new, but there are limits due to the size of the room; larger machines do not fit there. There are more multifaceted machines instead. There is a plan to look at what needs to be upgraded, and the community will be consulted through this process. *(Dave Gillis, Recreation Manager)*
- Q: I do not have a question but a comment. I have been here since the early 1990s before there was a community center, but now that it is built, I think that it has been done really well. Community centers are not free anywhere. They are all facing challenges as density increases and the population grows. UBC must think of spaces for people and community centers. We need more space; we do not have enough for the number of people who are going to be living here. (Suzanne Prasad)

## **C. OTHER BUSINESS**

### **1. Proposed UNA Bylaw Amendments**

The Chair reviewed the proposed UNA Bylaw Amendments and reviewed the ballot voting procedures prior to commencing the voting. Ballots will be counted, and results will be presented prior to adjournment of the AGM.

#### **a. Motion to Accept and Vote for Special Resolution A: Byelections, Appointments and Minor Amendments**

The CAO read aloud the following proposed resolution:

*BE IT RESOLVED, as a special resolution by a majority of not less than two thirds of the members who vote at the Annual General Meeting of members of the Association, the Bylaws of the Association be altered to implement a new by-election and appointment process for Directors and to make minor changes as per the amendments included in the notice of the Annual General Meeting.*

**IT WAS MOVED (Richard Watson) and SECONDED (Kathy S.)**

BE IT RESOLVED, as a special resolution by a majority of not less than two thirds of the members who vote at the Annual General Meeting of members of the Association, the Bylaws of the Association be altered to implement a new by-election and appointment process for Directors and to make minor changes as per the amendments included in the notice of the Annual General Meeting.

**CARRIED**

During a question-and-answer period, the following questions/comments (Q) and answers (A) were offered:

Q: Under Bylaw 6.12, there is a reference to CPI for the year; is that calendar year or fiscal? If this is dealing with financial statements, should the reference be fiscal year?

A: This is a published rate. The bylaw starts off by stating that the stipend is for 2024, which is the calendar year. This is not a part of the bylaw that is changing.  
(Bill Holmes)

Following the motion, Members and proxies were informed to complete the Yellow Paper Ballot issued upon arrival and to drop completed ballots into the yellow box at the front of the room. Results of the ballot vote are noted under Item E of the minutes.

The CAO thanked the Board for their service and dedication. Gifts were distributed to each of the Board members at this time.

**D. QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD**

During a general question-and-answer period, the following questions/comments (Q) and answers (A) were offered:

Q: We were told that during non-peak season, landscaping staff would be transitioning to electric leaf blowers. What is the status of that switch? Additionally, the City of Vancouver is moving to ban all gas leaf blowers. At Hampton Place, we have three different private companies that do landscaping; can it be enforced that they use electric leaf blowers? In the summer they are operating them when there are hardly any leaves, and it is disruptive when people have windows open.

A: UNA's pilot project is moving forward, electric blowers are used from April to the end of September. Our Landscape Management Plan includes the tree management plan. Once fall leaf cleaning begins, it is no longer efficient to use the electrical blowers in this season. (Wegland Sit, Operations Manager)

We do not have regulatory authority to ban private contractors from using gas leaf blowers as we are a non-profit, which does not fall under the *Local Government Act*. Vancouver is particularly unique in that it operates under the Vancouver Charter, which offers it additional authority that other municipalities do not have. What we can do is show by example what is possible, and stratas will start to recognize this and transition as well. *(Paul Thorkelsson, CAO)*

Q: We all know UNA is expanding and UBC is expanding. I work for the hospital, and it is incredibly busy. There are patients waiting outside of emergency and urgent care at all times. Is there anything that UNA can do to address this?

A: UNA does not have the authority to address this directly. However, as a community representing members, we can voice our concerns. UNA advocates for residents, although we do not have the direct authority to enact change. In the case of hospitals, this is difficult but not impossible to advocate. *(Richard Watson)*

Q: Are all the Board members leaving?

A: Richard and Murray, by the bylaw, cannot run again. Fei has moved away from the community and is no longer eligible. Bill will not be running again. Eagle has indicated that he will run again. *(Richard Watson)*

Q: I know that full-service translation is expensive, but is it possible to get some form of interpretation at the next meeting, given that it would be helpful to some community members here? *(Sandy Song)*

A: That will be noted as a request in the meeting minutes to be deliberated on for future meetings. *(Richard Watson)*

## **E. Proposed UNA Bylaw Amendments – Results**

The Chair reviewed the voting results for the proposed UNA Bylaw Amendments.

### **a. Results for Special Resolution A: Byelections, Appointments and Minor Amendments**

- 36 Votes in Favor
- 1 Opposed
- Resolution Passed

## **F. MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**IT WAS MOVED (Richard Watson) and SECONDED (Suresh Prasad)**

That the UNA membership adjourn the Annual General Meeting 2024.

The 2024 AGM was adjourned by unanimous consent at 9:05 p.m.