

# GLA Communications Committee

## Meeting 8-27-2015

*This meeting summary/interpretation is being distributed to the GLA Board and Community as a volunteer service by GLFPC. Your comments are welcome should there be oversights or errors.*

A proposal that would have the full board voluntarily resign and run for re-election in a re-ratification vote in November was explored by GLA's Communications Committee on August 27, 2015. The man behind the proposal, newly appointed board member Pouwel Gelderloos, believes there is widespread dissatisfaction with the board and that a re-ratification vote could re-establish member confidence in the board. Gelderloos called the recent board meeting when members and directors continued to interrupt those who were speaking as terribly disturbing. He said that this kind of breakdown of order leads to wide-spread distrust of the board in general. It would be a great gesture of the board to say we are all open to re-ratification, said Gelderloos. And then when we do that the membership needs to speak up.

“But I don't think it (board dissatisfaction) is so wide-spread”, said GLA Board Dan Kehoe. It was wide-spread at the meeting, but I don't think it is among all the members. As the devils advocate for the other side, a re-ratification vote for those who voted us in will look kind of strange, Kehoe said.

But we do not have to be concerned about how it looks – we have to be concerned that the make-up of the full board is fully ratified by the members, countered Gelderloos. Given that every meeting looks like a bunch of unhappy people, I see the re-ratification vote as a way to start over, Gelderloos said

Committee member Ross Brunson said – then if we do this, we will still have to hold the November elections and that means we will hold two entirely different election cycles within about two months of each other and that is a tremendous amount of work. Personally what I think we ought to do, even though we can talk about this all we want, is that at the November election, we let people know this is a possibility. And if the members want this, though I am not sure how it is going to work and I am not even in question here, it does not matter to me, Brunson said.

“It does not have to be anything aggressive or be anything like everyone throwing up their hands,” said Gelderloos, “Rather this is about asking the board, now that working on the board has virtually become impossible, how are we going to get things done.”

Kehoe said, “Well that was true before we went to the phone meetings.”

“But are we really going to use phone meetings every time,” asked Gelderloos.

Board President Dan Kehoe acknowledged that while it has been hard to get board work done in the past (in live meetings), the change to phone meetings and the use of the mute button is about the only way to maintain order at the meetings. Kehoe added that since GLA can no longer use St. John’s as a meeting location, the only other alternative is Emigrant Hall at a cost of \$75 per use.

Gelderloos also explained that he was asking the Communications Committee to consider the matter at this time because if the idea gained the support of the full board, he knew that the usual member notice of the coming election would have to be modified and that the Communications Committee was already in the process of preparing that mailing for his committee (the Annual Meeting/Election committee) to collate and mail.

Noting that there had been a board discussion of the matter for the entire past week, Gelderloos said it should not take that long to see how the entire board feels about the new idea.

President Kehoe clarified that no more than about half of the board had expressed themselves on the proposal to date. To go this route is going to be time-consuming, and I do not know if we have everyone behind it, Kehoe said. He stated that he did not want to delay the regular election notice mailing.

“Then what is the process to move this forward?” asked Gelderloos.

I know what needs to happen, responded Brunson. There is a process and it needs to be one we agree on and then we go down that road. I know that the matter can affect the election mailing, but as a committee we are not a big enough forum to debate this. And to be clear, said Brunson, the election letter, if I have this right, is a notice of the nomination process, not the actual nominations.

“But have you read my emails?” asked Gelderloos.

“Yes,” answered Brunson, “I read every one of them.”

“Well, you do not have to get mad here,” answered Gelderloos. “I am just saying, given the interest I see in this from the board, this matter warrants discussion and because it would affect the make-up of the board, it is an important decision that needs to be made before the election mailing goes out.”

But the committee disagreed and by consensus agreed to proceed with the election letter mailing as planned. They also encouraged Gelderloos to seek board support for the proposed re-ratification with an email vote before the next board meeting, and reasoned that if the re-ratification matter gained traction with the board, then there could be a separate mailing to the members about it.

Committee member Ross Brunson called Gelderloos's proposal a grand gesture but not one that would work to change anything and, that though it did not matter to him how the process might affect him, he was willing to stand for re-election.

However, concern about how this re-ratification of the board proposal might be perceived by the member landowners appeared to motivate Brunson to ask a listening landowner, who had been muted during the phone-conference meeting, if she was the one who would write the GLFPC minutes of this meeting. She explained that minutes are formal legal documents that are to be kept by the board, not by GLFPC. Brunson then acknowledged that he had been on the GLFPC website where summaries of the GLA meetings are available.

Stressing the need to be as clear and transparent as possible when communicating with members, Brunson pointedly asked the landowner if she was willing to work with the committee on getting out the news about this re-ratification option. The landowner said GLFPC works hard to be accurate, and to hold GLA accountable, and that people need to understand how what one says or thinks they said will often read differently as the written word. When asked again if there was a way to work together, in particular if the committee could read and comment on the GLFPC summary before it gets posted on the GLFPC website, the landowner said she could be amenable. It was decided that Committee Chair Robert Branson would be the contact person.

***GLFPC Note: Driven by this inquiry of one of its members, the GLFPC followed up with an email letter to the GLA board on August 31 stating that the board would not be able to read and comment in advance of publication any of the GLFPC summaries, and outlined the proper methods of communicating with the GLFPC as well as making comments, corrections or suggestions. See***

***<https://glastonburylandownersforpositivechange.wordpress.com/letters-comments-ii/glfpc-response-to-gla-board-query-8-31-2015/>***

In other business, the committee agreed to include the committee's recently completed email opt-in form with the election letter. The email opt-in notice package, designed to save GLA time and money, will include the form itself, instructions, and a unique authentication code which members will need use to prove their identity when they ask for email notifications from GLA. As the chair of the Annual Meeting/Election committee, Gelderloos agreed to arrange a mailing "party" for the election letter and the new email opt-in form on Thursday September 3, 2015.

Committee member and web master Ross Brunson announced that new software, loosely known as "ticketing", was ready to go "live". This will be used to give GLA's Administrative Assistant Karleen McSherry, otherwise designated by the committee as the "hub" of GLA, an electronic way to keep track of every phone call, letter and email received by GLA and to assign someone on the board to respond.

The new software will also give GLA members and others who may want to communicate with GLA a way to create their own password and keep track of who on the

board is handling their particular issue. Cost for the service is free for the first three agents (McSherry, Brunson and Parker) and is a \$1/day for those who need temporary access to the software or \$11/month for each additional agent. In further discussion, it was clarified that every board member would continue to be noticed of all incoming “mail” lest some on the board feel there is an inner loop which they might not be part of.

*GLFPC Questions: Why do some on the board feel there is an inner loop that may be excluding them? Is there in fact an inner loop of directors running the board? Why is it that the GLA board can no longer use St. John’s Church as a meeting place? Why is it that the GLA board announced a vacated board seat for a North Glastonbury director in their September 3 elections mailing but failed to inform landowners of which director quit the board and why? So much for transparency!*

### **3 thoughts on “GLA Communications Committee Meeting 8-27-2015”**

See Chad Stone’s letter to the board regarding this summary under above menu heading “Letters & Comments – II” or use this link:

<https://glastonburylandownersforpositivechange.wordpress.com/letters-comments-ii/stone-letter-to-gla-board-9-7-2015/>

*Webmaster* [September 8, 2015 at 2:33 PM](#)

I am requesting that my name be taken out of this report, and and replaced with “GLA Vice President” or “Webmaster.” By posting these reports publicly without any sign-in or authentication, you are making them possibly indexable by Google, which will then be searchable by those outside of the GLA/GLFPC and their members.

By mentioning Board Members by name, you possibly affect their standing in the greater community outside of the GLA, opening up the GLFPC for possible suit for libel or slander.

“Collectively known as defamation, libel and slander are civil wrongs that harm a reputation; decrease respect, regard, or confidence; or induce disparaging, hostile, or disagreeable opinions or feelings against an individual or entity. The injury to one’s good name or reputation is affected through written or spoken words or visual images. The laws governing these torts are identical.” From <http://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com>

Thank You.

September 11, 2015

Dear Ross Brunson,

This letter is in response to your 9/8/2015 comment on the GLFPC web site regarding the GLFPC summary of the GLA Communications Committee meeting of 8/27/2015. You requested removal of your name from this report in order for us to avoid a libel suit.

Our research group has determined that for something written and published, such as on the GLFPC web site, to be considered “libel”, it must be both false and injurious. See this link: <http://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/defamation-law-made-simple-29718.html>

We do not believe that your accusations hold up as our report meets none of the criteria for libel, as explained in the link provided.

The GLFPC is providing a valuable and necessary service to the Glastonbury community by making public the goings on of the GLA board and its committees. Without this service the landowners would be continuing to only receive the information that the board wants disseminated, and not the entire accurate picture.

The GLFPC summaries are intended to be 100 per cent accurate. We legally record meetings, and unlike the GLA board which allegedly destroys their recordings after official minutes are approved, we retain all recordings to confirm our summary’s accuracy. Furthermore, we invite any landowner, including you, to correct any inaccuracies, as stated at the beginning of all our summaries, and in our recent letter to the GLA board.

It is our clear and stated intent to report the facts, defaming no one. We remind you that as an elected official you are acting for people you are supposed to represent. Your constituents need to be able to hold you and other GLA directors and officers accountable. Therefore, we will continue to name names. All directors and officers must be responsible for their words and actions while acting in an official capacity, and all landowners have the right to know about them, as well as evaluate them.

You have volunteered for service to GLA, an association which is publicly licensed to operate as a non-profit corporation in Montana. If you believe that our reporting of your words and actions at GLA’s open meetings may somehow injure your reputation, then it is your responsibility (not ours) to change the situation. True leaders stand tall and true to their words and actions – they do not seek to hide under a group name, title or job description. Real leaders do not place personal needs ahead of the common good. More understanding is gained when members know who said what at an open GLA meeting than if someone’s words are hidden behind a title.

We are not persuaded by your personal fears to change the use of our open website. If you are truly uncomfortable in the public domain, we suggest that either you rethink your choice of words and course of action or return to private life.

Sincerely,

Chris Williams, Debbie Blais, Leo Keeler, Donna Lash-Andersen, Sally Muto  
(for the GLFPC)