

Democratic Accountability in FMCBC

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Summary:

1. In early January 2019, the [Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia](#) (FMCBC) reduced its democratic accountability to member clubs:
 - no longer disclosing Board meeting minutes to FMCBC members;
 - no longer showing member clubs the insurance policies that we are buying through FMCBC;
 - removing me from the members' online forum for asking about the above two issues.
2. These changes would seriously weaken FMCBC's transparency to members, and undermine its constitutional mandate to "foster and promote cooperation and coordination of clubs".
3. The changes were implemented soon after members approved shrinking the Board size from 45 (all member reps) to a maximum of 11, in June 2018. While shrinking the Board is practical, it need not and should not reduce the Board's accountability to members.
4. I complained to the Board in writing about the above issues in January and February.
5. On March 4, the Federation resumed disclosing Board minutes to members.
6. Unless we maintain democratic accountability, FMCBC will face increased risks of waste and ineffectiveness.

Abbreviations:

FMCBC = [Federation of Mountain Clubs of British Columbia](#)
BCMC = [BC Mountaineering Club](#)
WWOCB = [We Want Our Co-ops Back](#)
MEC = Mountain Equipment Co-op
CIRA = Canadian Internet Registration Authority
ED = Executive Director

My background:

Since 1996, I have specialized in making elected leaders more accountable to voters, in corporations, democracies, co-ops and nonprofits. After the 2008 financial crisis, [U.S. SEC](#) Chairman Mary Schapiro appointed me to their newly created [Investor Advisory Committee](#) "to represent individual investors, particularly with respect to their role in corporate governance."

I welcome comments – feel free to email me: mark@votermedia.org

The Federation:

On January 17, 2019, the [North Shore Hikers](#) Executive Committee appointed me as the club representative (rep) to the [Federation of Mountain Clubs of B.C.](#) (FMCBC), also called the Federation or the Fed. North Shore Hikers has about 250 members, each paying \$25 per year, of which \$18 goes to the Fed. \$8 is for liability insurance and \$10 pays for the Fed's operations, which primarily focus on advocating to the B.C. government for back-country recreation and conservation. The Fed has about 45 member clubs, which have a total of about 5000 club members.

Note the distinction between "member clubs" and "club members". The Fed is incorporated as a nonprofit society whose members are the clubs. The 5000 members of those clubs are not members of the Fed. Each club is one member of the Fed. The Fed has a category of membership for individuals, but there are only a few Individual Members, and they have no vote in the Fed's general meetings. Each member club has one vote (regardless of club size, which ranges from 3 people to about 800 people).

I accepted the North Shore Hikers rep position because I had heard some members' concerns about whether the Fed was adequately fulfilling its mission and accountable to its members. Signs of trouble included an increasing annual deficit, further exacerbated by the June 2018 exit of its largest member club, BCMC (about 1000 members). BCMC complained of improper governance, ineffective advocacy to the BC government, and the disconnect between voting power and size of Fed membership payments. I hope to help solve these problems.

Principles: See [We Want Our Co-ops Back](#) (WWOCB)

In 2012, I wrote [this paper](#) focusing on two co-ops ([MEC](#) and [Vancity Credit Union](#)) and a nonprofit ([CIRA](#) – Canadian Internet Registration Authority). Drawing on their bylaws and my experiences as a member of those three, as well as previous study of other organizations, I tried to outline some principles for improving member democracy.

I think those principles can be applied to FMCBC. So this paper quotes some ideas from WWOCB, and relevant evidence about FMCBC. I'm new to the Fed, and this paper is based on what I've learned so far. As I revise it, I welcome further evidence and perspectives on any side of these issues.

Quotes from WWOCB below are in **green**; evidence is in **red** (most names are omitted here).

Nonprofits and Co-ops Have Similar Governance Issues:

This paper proposes rules to improve the democratic accountability of co-op leaders to members, organized in nine topic sections. To contrast these proposals with existing rules, I cite examples from three Canadian organizations where I am a member: Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC), Vancity Credit Union, and the Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA). For brevity, I will sometimes refer to all three as co-ops.

CIRA is technically not a co-op; it is a "member-driven" nonprofit organization. But its governance issues resemble those of co-ops, so I include it in this analysis.

Why Democratic Accountability Matters:

Diminishing accountability of leaders to members brings with it a substantial danger of abuse of power.

The global financial crisis of 2008 shows that Michels' iron law [democracy degenerates into oligarchy] is holding strong 100 years later. Investigative exposés such as Morgenson & Rosner (2011) have revealed how American politicians elected by citizens, and corporate directors elected by shareowners, took actions that benefitted themselves at the expense of voters. When voters lack the information needed to hold leaders accountable, the resulting agency costs can be severe.

But aren't co-ops and credit unions run by idealistic leaders who believe in member democracy, and would not try to "emancipate themselves from the mass and become independent of its control"? Unfortunately, even they seem subject to the same human tendencies toward increasing their power and using it for their own benefit. For example, from Leggett and Strand (2002, Abstract):

"This research finds empirical evidence that agency problems grow as credit unions add membership groups and members. If a credit union takes on more than one membership group, and as membership increases, management is apparently able to channel residual earnings away from members (in the form of higher net interest margins) toward itself (higher salaries and operating expenses)."

Even well-intentioned co-op directors may take self-serving actions, while sincerely believing them to be in the best interests of members. As Michels (1911, p. 139) confirms:

"The despotism of the leaders does not arise solely from a vulgar lust of power or from uncontrolled egoism, but is often the outcome of a profound and sincere conviction of their own value and of the services which they have rendered to the common cause."

Transparency:

Transparency helps to reduce corruption in organizations. Widespread recognition of the importance of transparency has spurred the growth of an international movement -- see for example Transparency International, "the global coalition against corruption". An oft-quoted watchword: *"Sunlight is the best disinfectant."*

To be transparent, a co-op should make it easy for members and journalists to monitor what the co-op and its leaders are doing. As far as is reasonably possible, such information should be publicly available on the co-op website. Most co-ops have open membership -- anyone can join -- so information available to members may as well be public anyway. Because of the free-rider problem described earlier in this paper, making information available only on request by an individual member, creates a hurdle that may discourage some valuable monitoring. Even if most members don't want or need to see detailed information, we all benefit from the openness of allowing anyone to see it. Similar reasoning must underlie the Sunlight Foundation's redefining "public" information as meaning "online".

Information every co-op should post on its website, on conveniently linked pages:

- All current bylaws, rules and policies.
- Financial statements: At least the past 5 years of annual statements and 2 years of quarterly statements, including membership statistics.
- Board meetings: Agendas and minutes for the past 5 years at least, including Board committee meetings.
- Director nominations: Procedures, deadlines, forms.
- Member resolutions: Procedures, deadlines, forms.
- Any changes in the above should be announced in a news feed (such as a blog).

When I started learning about the Fed in October 2018, I was impressed with its transparency. For example, the Board meeting minutes were publicly available on their website's "Handbook" section at handbook.mountainclubs.org/board-of-directors/minutes/.

Then on January 3, 2019, the club reps received this message from the Fed's Communications and Administration Manager:

to: reps@fmcabc.groups.io
date: Jan 3, 2019, 2:40 PM
subject: [reps] The FMCBC Handbook has moved!

Hi everyone,

The FMCBC Handbook has moved! It used to be found at handbook.mountainclubs.org but it's now on Groups.io. You can find it in the Reps group on the Wiki page (<https://fmcabc.groups.io/g/reps/wiki>).

If you haven't checked out the Handbook yet, now would be a good time to give it a look over. It contains a ton of useful info about the Fed, including a hefty FAQ section that'll answer your burning questions about invoicing, insurance, and much more.

You'll need to log into Groups.io to view the Handbook. If you haven't done that yet, you'll need to set a password first. Here's how:

Go to <https://fmcabc.groups.io>.

Click "Log in" in the upper right-hand corner.

Click "Email me a link to log in"

Type in your email address and click "Email link to log in"

You'll soon receive an email with a link. Click it.

You'll see that you're logged in the site, but you still need to set your password, which can be done by accessing your account details in the upper right-hand corner.

If you have any questions or need help logging in, please let me know!

Happy New Year,

Communications and Administration Manager
Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC

So Handbook information is now hidden from the public, available only to club reps, the Fed Board and staff. The 5000 club members who are paying for the Fed's operations can no longer see this info. You can still see a contents outline at:

web.archive.org/web/20160215021258/http://handbook.mountainclubs.org/

As a rep-in-training, I had been added to the reps online group, so I logged in and looked at the Wiki page (<https://fmcabc.groups.io/g/reps/wiki>). There I found the Handbook information, but some sections were missing. In particular, I couldn't find the Board minutes. Since I was a newbie, I waited to see if anyone would tell us more about this, or if any rep would ask. Maybe I was looking in the wrong place.

This tale continues below, after another relevant quote from WWOCB:

Member-to-Member Communications:

In countries like Canada with legal guarantees of free speech, we co-op members are already free to communicate with each other in any way we choose. So what's the problem?

The problem is the voters' free rider problem: A co-op member who spends time and effort to monitor the Board and staff, and to inform fellow members so that all can vote better, creates benefits for all the members. With no mechanism for those receiving the benefits to compensate the member making the effort, there is not enough incentive for typically self-serving voters to monitor and inform, so very little is done. This is the root cause of democracy's decline into oligarchy.

Therefore it is in the members' interests (but not in a self-serving leader's interest) for a co-op to facilitate member-to-member communications. This should be part of our co-ops' democratic systems.

Most co-ops now have websites with member logins, so one obvious way to facilitate member-to-member communications is by creating an online member forum. To be most effective, it should have these features:

- (a) Especially for co-ops with open membership (i.e. most co-ops): Anyone can read the discussion, even if not logged in.
- (b) Logged-in members can create any discussion topic.
- (c) Discussions are permanently archived and readable.
- (d) Comments can include links to other websites. (This is a standard feature, but important.)
- (e) Every thread and comment can be linked to, directly via its own tag or anchor.
- (f) Criticism of the co-op's policies and leaders is welcomed, not censored. (More on this below.)

Such a forum would substantially enhance democratic empowerment of co-op members.

Most online discussions can benefit by having a moderator screen out some harmful comments, such as spam and extreme personal attacks. However, if the moderator is a co-op employee under the direction of possibly self-serving leaders, the subjective judgments in screening comments could mask some censorship of legitimate criticism.

Reading the above quote, you can see why I was especially impressed with the Fed as a democratic organization when they added me to the reps online group, which features a discussion forum.

Continuing the tale from the previous section above:

I waited more than a week for anyone else to ask or explain about the Handbook info that was no longer available even to reps. Hearing nothing, I thought this would be a good question for the reps forum, and posted:

From: <reps@fmcbc.groups.io> on behalf of Mark Latham <mark@votermedia.org>
Date: Saturday, January 12, 2019 at 10:18 AM
To: <reps@fmcbc.groups.io>
Subject: [reps] Can reps see board minutes?

Can club reps see the minutes of Fed board meetings?
I don't see them at <https://fmcbc.groups.io/g/reps/wiki/home>

Mark Latham
North Shore Hikers
(604) 806-0652

By the next day (Sunday), I had been removed from the forum with no warning. Later on Sunday, I received this email reply from a Board member:

I think we decided to supply them if you request.

On Monday January 14, I received a detailed explanation by email from the Fed's Executive Director. The full text is in Appendix B. Quotes:

Board docs are for Board members only. This is a decision of the Board and is neither unusual nor unique to the FMCBC. For us to protect our initiatives the Board has staff put the minutes in the Handbook behind a "member access only" wall.

...

In the meantime I have put your access to [\[fmcbc.groups.io/g/reps\]](https://fmcbc.groups.io/g/reps) ... in abeyance until I address the matter with the Board on January 22nd. If the Board agrees to reinstate your access privileges I will advise.

Compare the above two responses to the B.C. Societies Act, under which FMCBC is incorporated:

20 (2) ... a society must keep the following records:
(a) the minutes of each meeting of directors...

24 (2) A member of a society, without charge,
(a) ... *[specifies types of records that even bylaws can not hide]*
(b) may, unless the bylaws provide otherwise, inspect any other record the society is required to keep under section 20 (2).

As far as I can see, the [bylaws](#) do not "provide otherwise".

Note that the Executive Director could have simply answered my question on the forum, so that all reps would know that "Board docs are for Board members only." Why suddenly remove me from the forum?

As mentioned above, on January 17, North Shore Hikers officially appointed me as their rep to FMCBC. On January 19, the North Shore Hikers President emailed the FMCBC Board a request for us to discuss the Executive Director's January 14 email (in Appendix B) with them. That request was turned down, but on January 22, FMCBC reinstated me on the reps forum.

On February 19, I emailed the Executive Director a formal request to see the Board minutes, citing the BC Societies Act which legally entitles members to do so.

On February 25, I emailed an earlier draft of this report ("Democratic Accountability in FMCBC") to the Board.

On March 4, all approved Board minutes appeared on the Club reps' group web pages.

On March 22, I notified the Club reps that they once again can see the Board minutes. My post and the Executive Director's response are in Appendix D below.

FMCBC Governance Changes 2017-2018:

The Fed's organizational structure went through substantial changes during 2017 and 2018:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Change</u>
Jan. 2017	Executive Director Jodi Appleton became Administration Manager.
March 2017	New Executive Director [ED] hired.
June 2018	At Fed AGM, members voted to shrink the Board from all 45 member reps to a maximum of 11, elected by members at each AGM.
Sept. 2018	Administration Manager Jodi Appleton resigned.
Oct. 2018	Fed Board member Sherry Durnford resigned.

Insurance Policies:

Like the Fed Board minutes, the full text of our insurance policies had been available to Fed members until soon after the smaller Board was elected. See Appendixes A, B and C for relevant emails.

Quotes:

[ED]: "Also the complete insurance documents are only available to the Board."

[Fed President]: "All member clubs are provided with the Certificate of Insurance. That is all they are provided with. The full insurance policy and any documents specific to that are the sole property of the FMCBC."

Appendix A: Insurance policies inquiry 1

from: [ED]
to: reps-insurance@fmcabc.groups.io
date: Aug 7, 2018
subject: [reps-insurance] FW: FMCBC insurance policies

I have had a couple of coincidental inquiries today about this question. Please see the answer below. I expect them any day.

When I receive them you will as well.

Thanks

[ED]

Do you have copies of the insurance policies that you can share with the member clubs?

I have been asking as well. **Aon replied on July 31st:** *I have followed up with insurers. Seems to be a trend with all policies right now. Summer time is busy and everyone is short staffed due to holidays. Will forward as soon as we have them.*

The above was the most recent reps-insurance post – a five-month gap – until I posted the next one below:

from: Mark Latham <mark@votermedia.org>
to: reps-insurance@fmcabc.groups.io
date: Jan 11, 2019, 4:08 PM
subject: [reps-insurance] FMCBC insurance policies
Does FMCBC have copies of the insurance policies that we can share with member clubs?
I don't see any at <https://fmcabc.groups.io/g/reps/wiki/Waivers%2C-forms-and-documents>
Thanks...
Mark Latham
North Shore Hikers Rep
(604) 806-0652

from: [ED]
to: Mark Latham <mark@votermedia.org>, reps@fmcabc.groups.io
date: Jan 11, 2019, 4:13 PM
subject: Re: [reps-insurance] FMCBC insurance policies
Hi Mark
Are you now your club rep?
All Fed members who have coverage have access to their policies.
"Sharing" is not required.
Thanks
Executive Director
Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC

from: [ED]
to: Mark Latham <mark@votermedia.org>, reps@fmcabc.groups.io
date: Jan 11, 2019, 4:13 PM
subject: Re: [reps] [reps-insurance] FMCBC insurance policies
Fer now... he who laughs last...

From: Mark Latham <mark@votermedia.org>
Sent: January 11, 2019 6:03 PM
To: [ED]
Cc: reps@fmcabc.groups.io
Subject: Re: [reps] [reps-insurance] FMCBC insurance policies
Thanks [ED], quite right, I'm in training until June when the transition from Cristina Jacob to me becomes official. Meanwhile, I appreciate being added to these reps discussion groups. North Shore Hikers Executive Committee web page already shows both Cristina and me as "Delegate to FMCBC".
Mark Latham
In training to become North Shore Hikers Rep in June 2019 <= better?
(604) 806-0652

Appendix B: Why removed from forums

FMCBC Executive Director [ED] email explaining why I was removed from the forums "reps" and "reps-insurance":

from: [ED]
to: mark@votermedia.org
cc: [Fed President], [Fed Secretary]
date: Jan 14, 2019, 2:41 PM
subject: re: FMCBC policies

Hi Mark

I have to tell you that it's not easy dealing with more than one rep – "in training" or not - from one club, at one time...! Also staff does not generally work weekends so when emails come in on Friday evenings responses are provided as soon as possible.

The Fed extended a favour to Cristina, you and the NSH – that you could be included in rep correspondence. You also requested to be on, and were appointed to, the Rec&Con committee. Your interest was – and is - really appreciated.

Where things appear to have gone sideways was enquiring of the Fed reps for information pertaining to, first the bylaws, and then insurance and Board documents - from the groups.io I'm uncertain why you took this action and did not simply ask staff especially after last Wednesday when I sent you an email when you were enquiring about the bylaws creation. I replied, "Is there anything in particular you were curious about? Perhaps I could help you...?" You said 'no' but I gather there was.

I do not want to appear to be overly secretive and I don't want to come across as overbearing here. That is not my intention. However, there are confidentiality and protocol issues pertaining to your requests and it's important to explain them and why. As you will see from the attachment below the roles and responsibilities of reps and directors are distinct.

Board docs are for Board members only. This is a decision of the Board and is neither unusual nor unique to the FMCBC. For us to protect our initiatives the Board has staff put the minutes in the Handbook behind a "member access only" wall. Handbook information is shared by both Board and Club Reps.

Also the complete insurance documents are only available to the Board. However, all members receive a Certificate of Insurance which clearly details their coverage and limits. If members have enquiries about aspects - we're here to help! This full document is proprietary information and, as such, is confidential. It is the property of the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC **society** and the society's Board of Directors is responsible for it. It does not belong to individual clubs who are simply components of it. FMCBC insurance is provided as a product to its member clubs. If changes or improvements are sought this is generally accomplished via committee - certainly not the entire membership. If we were to make the full documents available to all the reps they could go **anywhere** and I, as Executive Director protecting the

organisation's exposure, would have serious concerns about having these documents distributed to 43 individuals without guaranteed control of circulation.

To close: this email is for **your** information. I hope it assists in helping you better understand how the Fed operates – and why. If you have questions please direct them to me or [Fed President] - or even [Fed Secretary] (who is also a NSH member...). I promise if I am unable to provide you a correct answer I will either find it or refer you.

In the meantime I have put your access to insurance and directors [*sic – should be "reps" not "directors"*] access in abeyance until I address the matter with the Board on January 22nd. If the Board agrees to reinstate your access privileges I will advise. Obviously the rep matter could be resolved immediately if Cristina was to resign and you were officially made the NSH representative.

Thanks. If you have questions just email – or call.

Cheers

Executive Director

Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC

www.mountainclubs.org

604.873.6096

Soyons réalistes, nous allons rêver l'impossible!

Appendix C: Insurance policies inquiry 2

After officially becoming the North Shore Hikers rep to FMCBC on January 17, I tried asking again to see what [ED] meant by "All Fed members who have coverage have access to their policies." (from Appendix A, January 11 email)

from: Mark Latham <mark@votermedia.org>
to: [ED], [Communications Manager]
cc: [NSH President]
date: Jan 28, 2019, 9:22 AM
subject: FMCBC insurance policies
Good morning [ED] and [Communications Manager] --
Please forward me the current FMCBC insurance policies covering North Shore Hikers.
Thanks!
Mark Latham
North Shore Hikers Rep
(604) 806-0652

from: [ED]
to: mark@votermedia.org, [Communications Manager]
cc: [NSH President], [Fed President]
date: Jan 28, 2019, 9:40 AM
subject: RE: FMCBC insurance policies
Hi Mark
Unsure why Cristina was unable to provide this to you. I sent her this on October 18th. Her response: *"Thank you. Certainly more than I need to answer any questions our club member may have. Pretty tough legal language for the regular folks."*
As I said to Cristina, "Just let us know if you have any questions we can address..."
Thank you
B

from: Mark Latham <mark@votermedia.org>
to: [ED]
cc: [Communications Manager], [NSH President], [Fed President]
date: Jan 28, 2019, 9:59 AM
subject: RE: FMCBC insurance policies
Thanks [ED]. What you sent me is the Certificate of Insurance, which is available at <https://fmcbc.groups.io/g/rep/wiki/Waivers%2C-forms-and-documents> and only tells us a few features of our insurance, in general terms. I'm asking for our insurance policies, which show us in detail what coverage we have purchased.
-- Mark

from: [Fed President]
to: mark@votermedia.org, [ED]
cc: [Communications Manager], [NSH President]
date: Jan 28, 2019, 11:48 AM
subject: RE: FMCBC insurance policies

Hey Folks,

Just to get us all on the same page on this. All member clubs are provided with the Certificate of Insurance. That is all they are provided with. The full insurance policy and any documents specific to that are the sole property of the FMCBC. The Board of Directors is responsible for this policy and documents. This policy has been entered into between the insurance provider and the FMCBC. The Board of Directors has a responsibility to maintain this policy and any related documents in confidence. That confidentiality has been violated when that policy is shared with any number of 40 odd clubs. I believe the Executive Director is open to taking and responding to any insurance related questions the various clubs may wish to bring forward from time to time through their Club Representatives.

At the 2018 AGM the FMCBC went from a Board where all clubs had a seat on that Board, to a Board and Executive of 10. In part this was to allow for a greater level of confidentiality where appropriate, and provide greater consistency and efficiency regarding FMCBC operations. This matter concerning how the FMCBC is dealing with the insurance is an example of how the organization functions, and in my view how it should function.

Sincerely,
[Fed President]

Appendix D: Reps can now see Board minutes

Posted on FMCBC Club Reps forum:

from: Mark Latham <mark@votermedia.org>
date: March 22, 2019
subject: Reps can now see Board minutes

TO: Club Reps

I'm writing to let you know that as of January 3, 2019, we reps could no longer see the FMCBC Board minutes. When I asked about it on this forum (Jan 12), [ED] removed me from the forum and replied by email:

"Board docs are for Board members only. This is a decision of the Board..." (Jan 14)

I also learned that we reps can no longer see the full text of the insurance policies we are buying through FMCBC:

"All member clubs are provided with the Certificate of Insurance. That is all they are provided with. The full insurance policy and any documents specific to that are the sole property of the FMCBC....At the 2018 AGM the FMCBC went from a Board where all clubs had a seat on that Board, to a Board and Executive of 10. In part this was to allow for a greater level of confidentiality where appropriate..." – [Fed President] (Jan 28 email)

On Feb 19, I sent [ED] a formal request to see the Board minutes, citing the BC Societies Act which legally entitles members to do so. I started drafting a report about all this (see attached pdf) and sent it to the Board on Feb 25.

On March 5, [ED] emailed me:

"Per your request I want to advise you that all approved Board meeting minutes currently reside on the repsgroup.io..."

We reps can now see the Board minutes at fmcbc.groups.io/g/reps/files

I welcome your comments, ideas etc.

Mark Latham
North Shore Hikers Rep to FMCBC
(604) 806-0652

*Attachment:
DemocraticAccountabilityInFMCBC-2019-03-22.pdf*

from: [ED]
date: March 25, 2019
subject: Re: Reps can now see Board minutes

A note to the FMCBC Club reps at the request of the Board:

This matter has been dealt with some time ago and the Board believes the matter resolved.

This began as a unique issue as it was the first time an individual member had made enquiries and demands of the Board **prior to** becoming a Club rep. Individual club members are entitled to specific information, Club reps additional information, and the Board all docs. This is policy. Now if the Fed wishes to change that policy, that is a matter for the membership to address.

I'm uncertain why there was the perception of Board minutes being "hidden". Following the Board meeting November 22nd, they were moved so that appropriate issues related to land, legal and labour matters could be sheltered from **the public**. A concern was expressed that club reps were unable to view them and the matter was addressed. They now reside in the repsgroup.io. **All** reps have – **and always will have** – unfettered access to approved minutes. That said, the Board does expect its club reps to be mindful of the nature of the work we do and respect their content.

Regarding access to the full insurance policy: clubs do not purchase the policy. The Federation does this on their behalf. Clubs are provided complete information as to what the policy coverage consists of and what the limits and deductibles are, based on the Fed's constitution, club needs and activities. Specific questions related to the policy are **always** addressed by staff. How much is disclosed is a matter the Risk Management committee will soon consider so the Board can decide. As these documents carry some sensitivity as far as fees and content, there are real reasons for nondisclosure. Do we want these documents unknowingly shared with other parties? What is the necessity for distribution of proprietary documents? Just a couple of the questions...

The enquiries were helpful for staff, Board, Club reps and ultimately the membership, as they allowed us to clarify and improve our information sharing protocols and better explain policy to all Club reps.

Finally, if any member **ever** has questions the fastest way to get assistance is to just call. If we're all dedicated to improving transparency and democracy in the Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC an open-minded individual should start with a chat with staff so their issues may be initially discussed and understood. That offer stands for any – **and every** - Board director, Club rep or Fed member! My number is below.

Thanks!

Executive Director
Federation of Mountain Clubs of BC
www.mountainclubs.org
604.873.6096