

Combined notes for all questions

Note: each table/question was hosted by a different moderator. The style of note-taking was different for each person and the goal is to retain as much of the original content as possible. For this reason, the style of each section varies.

Question #1

What is the unique selling proposition of the BC Greens? What makes BC Greens different?

- i)
 - * BC Greens have no vested interests; no corporate or union obligations; no strings attached.
 - * We have a global perspective on environmental and social affairs
 - * Green Party means good business; green business
 - * We can/must develop and articulate the 'Green Business Case'
 - * We can define the jobs & investments to transition from oil to a renewable energy economy
 - * Greens have a greater authority & knowledge to address climate change than other parties

- ii)
 - * A vote for BC Green is a vote for holding the balance of power
 - * We cover a broad political spectrum but, ... not enough formal First Nations involvement
 - * We can/should reach out to Shuswap Nation Tribal Council ... a unique move
 - * We have a unique relationship with First Nations – supporting the UN Declaration
 - * We are unique in how we see the environmental effects and how they will play out
 - * Our focus on the environment is a strength of continuity (yet a perceived weakness re breadth of our messaging and policy development)
 - * We have a growing critical mass of Green energy/participation
 - * Green consistency on 'values'
 - * BC Greens do not have a party whip – not tied to 'Party Politics/structures'
 - * Greens can develop and articulate an economic transition plan from oil to renewables

- iii)
 - * The BC Green 'Brand' of Honesty; we are not beholden to big interests
 - * We see/recognise the 'crisis' in climate change
 - * We articulate the jobs of tomorrow in renewable energy projects
 - Williams Lake wind farm with First Nations
 - Warren Buffets's wind farm investment in Alberta
 - Technology developments/advancements in solar and renewables
 - We see this in 'systemic terms' vs just one-off projects;
 - We transcend the silos and 'issue of the day' reporting
 - * We can and do collaborate with other political parties for the public good
 - * We can consider how to produce food for nutrition rather than as an investment model
 - how to produce morally as well as for the environment
 - * Consider a plant based diet

- iv)
 - * We see the environment is more important than anything
 - * Be the party of truth and principles
 - * Be the party of the Future, the party of Hope for your Grandchildren
 - * We are the party of the 21st century
 - * We have diverse people, we have fun; we are community focused; grassroots; bottom-up;
 - we are evidence based (not just idealistically driven – is this true?)

- * We have a long term Vision; Democratic change; Proportional Representation;
 - participatory democracy; Education
- * We address the spread between long term Vision and short term day-to-day practicalities

- v)
- * We tell the truth about what is going on
 - * We present an opportunity to be involved in government
 - * We are people centric vs party centric
 - * We care about things – jobs; people; environment; wildlife;
 - * We create a green investment climate with policy refinements
 - * We recruit green business investments
 - * We can/could create a First Nations Secretariat
 - * We partner; we listen; we learn
 - * We need to understand your issue so we can develop solutions; we are strong together

FACILITATORS COMMENT

Five separate small groups addressed the Question

Several common points came forward

- * Environmental awareness and advocacy
- * Importance of collaboration with First Nations
- * Need to articulate a long term vision
- * Freedom from traditional political alliances and obligations
- * Need to develop an economic plan or the 'basket' of economic policies

UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION:

- * We see a big picture beyond the election cycle
- * We provide hope for a workable future
- * We are the party of the future; the party for the 21st century

BC GREEN DIFFERENCE:

- * No 'party whip'
- * Not beholden to 'big interests'
- * Aligned (through awareness and consciousness) with other Green parties
- * Collaborative in working across party lines
- * We have a growing member base; a growing appeal, especially among a youthful electorate
- * We can learn (not hide bound in the old ways of doing things)

Question #2

If the BC Greens are to appeal to a broader range of voters and win more seats in the next election, what are the 5 most important things we must do?

Note: this record of the discussion was prepared more as minutes. Names have been replaced with "Participant" and some items have been deleted for clarity.

- RAISE OUR VOICES – We must identify key national, provincial and local issues, and speak out on these in BIG WAYS
- EDUCATION – SPEAK THE TRUTH THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CRISIS ON WORK, ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH, AND THE AVAILABLE SOLUTIONS. PUBLIC LECTURES?
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- BE IDENTIFIABLE – WEAR OUR HOCKEY SHIRTS

The following comments are a rough summary of what was discussed at café discussion rounds.

Participant gave a description of what Jordan did for Greens in PEI which resulted in them becoming the official opposition, as **Participant** recalled from her discussion with the deferral Green Party campaign manager post-election.

- PEI Greens put together a shadow cabinet, which enabled them to put out regular press releases / comments on a wide range of issues of public interest
- They carefully used 'inclusive language' with the objective of drawing as many people as possible into the Green fold, avoiding pushing people away.
- PEI Greens have a well-developed Fund-Raising Plan, a program with includes a huge annual fund-raising event with crowd pleasing attractions such as silent auction

Participant then added the following comments:

- Pointed out that it is much harder to raise money "if you can't fill a room". (Suggests we should talk extensively with the campaign manager before he leaves town!!)
- Greens could form an 'environmental caucus'. (the caucuses would be jointly with other groups to support greater community networking and consensus)
- BC Greens can make presentations before community influencers (such as the Rotary Club) to raise our profile in the community. **Participant** notes that such presentations can't be partisan, but they can address matters of community interest (such as green energy).
- Developing connections with complementary organizations, like the "Blue Dot" campaign can help grow funds, membership and community influence. Even though privacy requirements prevent sharing of member lists, developing connections for mutual support could accomplish similar results.

Thoughts which were added to that discussion included:

- The idea that Kamloops Greens / BC Greens could have local spokespeople in various communities (a local presence and perspective)
- Greens should include people of various perspectives, and to stay away from partisanship
- Greens could give 'kudos' to those that do good things (which supports inclusion, partnerships and connection within the community)

Participant raised the idea that Kamloops Greens should be trying to connect with Local and Regional First Nations, to raise our profile, understand their issues, and encourage their support. This is consistent with

the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) which the BC Government has just announced that there will be legislation to implement UNDRIP in BC.

- Get in touch and stay in touch with Rosanne Casimir, Chief of the TK'emlups Band
- Meetings of the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council are open to the public, held every month or two. Council of the Chiefs is held on the first Wednesday of every month.
- Sending a 1 or 2 delegates to attend publicly open meetings could help establish connection with the bands and their issues.
- Could also meet with individual chiefs and attend the individual band council meetings.
- A suggestion that we get a First Nations person to run for office.

It was suggested that Kamloops Greens might consider developing an email dialogue with Greta Thunberg.

Considerable discussion was focused on the public perceptions of weakness in the Green Platform (often from conservative disinformation) and what we can do correct / reverse those perceptions.

Myths that cage Greens, preventing us from communicating effectively

- Single issue party (just climate change and environment)
- Not fiscally responsible
- Greens are 'pie in the sky'

SOME SOLUTIONS

- We must build a robust reputation BETWEEN ELECTIONS – IT TAKES TIME & EFFORT
- Hammer so hard on “NOT A SINGLE ISSUE PARTY”
- BC Greens need to be known as more than just an environmental group
- Need to communicate the full party platform beyond environment & climate change.
- Our Candidate needs to get out into the communities of the riding to raise (their / our) profile – maybe volunteer
- Get members working with other groups – building connections
- Need to get young people voting – they are the ones who will be impacted most by Climate Crisis
- We must keep Greens alive in all ridings by providing a viewpoint on issues.
- We need to continue to build a platform in all ridings by bring a Green viewpoint to issues – AND MAKE IT KNOWN!!

Issue – FEAR OF JOB LOSS PREVENTING PROGRESS IN TRANSITION

Communicating the Just Transition Plan is BIG. People now employed are not currently interested in change – as in 'show me the money in transition'

People just don't see a transition plan from where they are to where they need to be. Consequently, people resist transitioning away from fossil fuels to a sustainable economy because of fear of losing their jobs. People / workers / unions buy into the myth that you need pipelines and tarsands to generate jobs.

- Transitioning away from fossil fuel will create enormous opportunities for trades, as there is a requirement to quickly build alternate infrastructure: wind turbines, solar arrays, transmission lines, electric ferries, charging stations, retrofitting old buildings, building better passive houses and buildings.
- Tech is not just construction and welding pipe, it is also bugs, birds and trees. We need so much work to monitor and learn about the natural world so we can protect it. So many jobs!!!
- Trades want to help make the world a better place

- Trade schools, unions, contractors should be receptive to the message that transitioning is better for them as it will create many more jobs
- Failure to transition is a dead end with no recovery
- Therefore we should be able to make inroads with construction and tech
- We can speak to the industry
- We can bring in speakers to talk about green jobs
- We need to go where people 'are' to take to them (mentally & physically)

CONCERN: Will hammering on disaster scenarios bring a bad reaction?

- Some people fear talking to the public about the real projected results of climate crisis will meet rejection.
- Others feel that it is important to talk in a direct and honest about it.

Suggestion:

- People need to be educated to reality
- A suggestion that we arrange a Public Presentation on the issue – not necessarily from the Green Party

COMMUNICATING THE PLATFORM

- Need to prepare a succinct presentation of the platform
- Something clean and neat
- Easily understood
- AND easily shared on social media in an easily digestible way

MANY PEOPLE LACK OF FAITH IN MODERN POLITICS

- Need a platform that stands out from the rest – so people can see the difference
- Greens need to STAND OUT IN A GOOD WAY
- **ENGAGEMENT** - you get about 5 secs to capture someone's attention

COMMUNICATING TO YOUNG PEOPLE

Several people suggested that we must be on social media to reach the young people

To spread the word to young people, we need to occupy space in social media.

- Need to spread the word through social media
- If we don't spread the word, then all people hear is that Greens want to shut down pipelines and take their jobs
- We need to address this

FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Focus on fiscal responsibility
- People vote Conservative or Liberal because they believe this is the fiscally responsible thing to do
- We must appeal to those people who voted for fiscal responsibility – they don't know what a Green Economy looks like – so we need to show them
- We should also show them what it looks like if we don't start the transition
- The economy will implode if the environment implodes
- Make a transition or nobody will have a job!!
- Highlight what suckers we've been to be taken in by Oil & Gas (Fossil Fuel industry)
- Package up truth in a better way – so it's more easily understood

- Infinitely more jobs in transition to renewable electrical economy – so big you almost don't know where to start (but just dig in – that's the way to get it done)

COMMUNICATION, AGAIN

- But make sure the message is easily understood
- Make a series of short videos for distribution online to highlight how to transition and what a difference it will make.
- Issue videos weekly
- Include a cat in the video

THE INDIVIDUAL CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

- The individual can make a difference

(Moderator Note: I THINK THIS IS A TRAP. I was reading a note that other day about how BP (British Petroleum) was stressing how people can make a difference by eating less meat, recycling, etc, to divert the major done by the fossil fuel industry including BP – so I agree the individual can make a difference in a very tiny way – but that will never be enough to solve the major climate crisis. I have also noted that conservatives make a big deal about minor details of Greta Thunberg (or Elizabeth May's life ('she was caught drinking from a disposable cup' – suggesting hypocrisy) but it is important to know such comments are part of their major disinformation campaigns.

Emphasize Industrial Credentials/backgrounds of Green Party Candidates & Members

- Leverage contacts with professional associations
- Identify extinction as an immediate threat
- Have people with professional/industrial credentials provide short videos about why they are Green Party members

EDUCATING THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE GREEN PARTY PLATFORM

HOST COMMUNITY FORUMS

- Discuss the need for transition, why it is needed, and how industry has used disinformation to block action
- Not that the climate crisis and action incites a lot of anger
- The anger is based on fear
- Note that while climate crisis evokes fear (potential job loss, fires, floods, food security, fear for our children, etc), show how transition is not the end of the world
- Get to point how the Green Party Platform addresses these issues

COMMON QUESTION – WHO'S GOING TO PAY FOR THIS?

- Note that, by going to a war footing to deal with the Climate Crisis, it will generate great opportunity. More jobs, opportunities and distributed wealth will be generated in a transition, than will ever be generated without it.

BETWEEN ELECTIONS

- Start early and continue public engagement throughout the period between elections, educate by sharing GREEN policies and opinions on topical issues in news and social media
- ACTIONS indicate that you care all of the time – not just at elections.
- Need more social media to appeal to young voters
- Be activist, Voice-of-the-People – not just copying what others are doing

- Keep grounded, Be on the front lines, address pertinent issues
- Be inclusive, avoid marginalizing others
- When you're on the front lines, you may be more sensitive to who is getting marginalized

There was a comment that a weakness in Extinction Rebellion may be that many of its leadership and followers are white, and they were relying on their "white privilege" when they demonstrate.

(Moderator Note: The comment was not to imply that Extinction Rebellion was racist, only that the commenter was observing that much of the group was white – and that maybe it could be strengthened by reaching out more a broader segment of society. I know that ER are working as hard and as fast as they can to turn governments to realize it is critical that they apply themselves whole-heartedly to address the Climate Crisis. Internecine criticism within the progressive movement is counterproductive and could prevent us from reaching the necessary goals, and should therefore be gentle or avoided altogether.)

ART CONTEST

Suggestion made that we hold an Art Contest with a \$1000 prize – for posters demanding action to address the Climate Crisis. This would get the issue address in schools across British Columbia – reaching students and teachers alike. It could also generate media attention.

{Moderator Note: If, by entering the competition, we would take ownership of the submitted posters – maybe there could be a travelling exhibition.}

SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE TABLE 2 DISCUSSIONS

- We should seek to **maintain public visibility continuously between elections** (in good ways)
- We must demonstrate that we are **not a single issue party**
- We must continuously explain that there are **more longterm good jobs in transition to a green renewable economy than in any of the old fossil fuel economy** (pipelines generate very few jobs once construction is finished).
- The **trades will be in big demand in both the transition and New Economies.**
- **Greens should take our message to the Trade Schools and Unions** – as both will benefit greatly in and following transition
- Right wing parties often claim that they are fiscally responsible – and that the Green programs are not. **Greens must strongly and continuously own that our programs are the ones that support the people and are most fiscally responsible**, and explode that right-wing myth.
- **To connect with young people, we must show we care and that we are out front on key / important issues.** We need to stand out in a good way.
- **We need to be inclusive – to gather people in, rather than divide people.** We need all hands on deck!
- **We should connect with the Shuswap Tribal Council regularly.**

Question #3

What are the 5 most important things that we can do to build the party for continuing success after the next election?

Engaging youth (this came up in every group)

- Working with the schools
- Finding a local champion
- Acknowledge it is a struggle engaging youth
- Using social media

- Getting information more directly to youth

Economic development (promoting this to the general public)

- Green technology
- Transitional jobs
- Have speakers/info sessions on how transitional jobs could work
- How to deal with immediate job losses (eg mill closures), specific plans

Environment

- Promoting the concept that it's not a winner vs loser model
- Getting more buy-in from the general public

Social Justice

- Promote a culture of care

Day-to-day practices

- Share ideas
- What can individuals do in their daily lives?
- Speakers, workshops

Marketing/promotions/outreach

- Physical merchandise (eg the online shop)
- Platform video
- Outreach that is demographically appropriate
- Green socials: coffee chats, living room socials, town halls
- Targeting missing groups: unions, First Nations, Chamber of Commerce
- More direct messaging (eg graphics with facts, stats, etc)
- Getting involved in community engagement like volunteer events like river clean-up (not our own events, but showing up at existing community events)

Fundraising

- Make sure there is a healthy fund heading into elections

Elections and beyond

- More active/assertive and quicker in counteracting negative/false claims by other parties
- Keeping local RAs more active between elections
- Building membership
- Door-knocking between elections Note: some people love this idea, others absolutely do not
- Expanding outreach to groups between elections, gather their input and concerns now
- Having a greater presence in the media between elections, maybe a environmental column

Platform outreach

- Highlighting specific events and how it relates to the platform (eg forest fires)
- Showing the connection between specific events and climate change
- Taking it out of the abstract
- Distributing the shadow caucus throughout the province (eg Dan Hines was forestry)
- Should the party focus on the environment or "spread out"? Note: the consensus was overwhelmingly in support of showing the party is NOT a single-issue party
- Hosting more workshops for the community
- Continue to develop policy/platform at grass-roots level
- Focus on smaller groups

Question #4

What are the most important things NOT to do or change about the party?

Note: the original notes from this table have been mis-placed. When they are available, we will update this section.

A brief summary from the moderator:

To keep promoting our specific green values, not engaging in negative politics whether between campaigns or during elections.

-continue to reach out into the community to different groups, not acting in a polarized manner

-not wavering on our goals regarding climate change, social issues and programming, health care et al

Question #5

What are the most important things we can do to communicate our message to British Columbians?

- We need to “get out there”. Out of our comfort zone.
- We should be showing up at all public events and be in touch with as many clubs and organizations as possible. Someone mentioned that is what Elizabeth May did when she first ran in Victoria
- More effort to communicate should be undertaken between election periods

- Communicate our issues
 - Work on changing the perception that we are a one issue party. We need to avoid being pigeon holed – we need a broader but concise message
 - A slogan that sticks
 - Financially we should be making use of financial experts who have a green message
 - Again we need to work on the perception that the “Green Party does not understand the economy”

- Working with the Media
 - The disappearance of local newspapers and other traditional means of communicating requires new approaches
 - Youth get much of their information via social media
 - We need a strong social media team on most platforms
 - The messaging should be consistent in content and quality. Too many people giving input without editing or review is confusing to the public
 - People are overloaded with information so GP news and advertising has to be:
 - High quality
 - Engaging – preferably containing both graphics or picture and text – some use of humour if possible
 - Concise (the average window for people to read and decide if they want to investigate your post more thoroughly is 5 seconds)

