

OTTER LAKE RATEPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MAY 19, 2013

APPROVED

INTRODUCTION

Meeting called to order by Chairperson, Art Coles, at 10:00 a.m.

Introductory comments made by the Chairperson. Members welcomed to the AGM and board members were introduced. Guest speakers David Conn, Mayor; Bruce Gibbons, Ward 2 Council representative; and representatives from Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) were introduced.

PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes from the May 20, 2012 AGM were presented to the membership. Moved by Kerry Mueller and seconded by Marilyn Campbell that the minutes be approved as presented. Passed by the Members.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The members were advised that the membership numbers are about the same as 2012 with 214 Family Members and 189 Additional Family Members.

A mass mailing to prior and existing members as well as all property owners on the lake who have not been members of OLRA resulted in the return of about five or six families and four new members.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The financial statements were presented for the fiscal period ending December 31, 2012. Total income for 2012 was \$5853.30. Total Expenses were \$5649.42 which left a balance of \$203.88 in the Operating Fund. The Reserve Fund balance was \$31,149.14. The Environment Fund balance was \$12,981.78. The balance of all funds held by OLRA was \$52,152.83.

The Operating Budget for the 2013 fiscal year was reviewed with the members. The budget included the \$10.00 increase in the annual membership fee which is now \$30.00 per primary family member. The budget allowed for the recovery of the extra costs incurred for the annual barbecue and also the extra events. A surplus of \$2300 is expected.

Moved by Walter Tandy and Seconded by Marty Chepesiuk, the proposed budget was passed unanimously by the members.

LAKE STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

Art Coles gave a summary about the Lake Stewardship Program and the stewardship guideline standards. He also discussed the installation of speed limit signs at the narrows and the availability of similar signs for cottage owners provided the location of such signage be first approved by OLRA after a site visit.

PHOTO COMPETITION

Cathy Morrison encouraged members to participate in the photo contest. She indicated that the categories and rules could be found in the newsletter. The winners would be selected at the annual barbecue. She identified the need for more entries from children. Photos entered into the competition will be posted on the OLRA website but such posting will not include the names of the contestants.

LOON PROGRAM

Kerry Meuller summarized the nature of the loon program and the importance of boaters to minimize boat wakes in the areas of nesting platforms. She also emphasized the high risk of young loons being killed by boat traffic or drowning. Last year, only three chicks survived – two on Little Otter and one on Big Otter. Loon Alert signs have been posted. By August, the young chicks are independent of the parents.

BARBECUE

The annual barbecue will be held at the Marina on August 10th between 4:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m. Murray Orr will be a food sponsor at the event. Other sponsorships are being sought.

EARTH HOUR

Chris Van Allen spoke of the Dark Skies Night program in which all cottagers are encouraged to turn off all lights between 10:00 p.m. to midnight and enjoy the beauty of darkness. This will allow others to enjoy star and meteor gazing. Hopefully, it will cause all of us to recognize that we do not need cottage lights on all the time.

BRUCE GIBBON PRESENTATION

Bruce, our Ward 2 representative on Council, gave an excellent summary of what is happening at the local political level. He spoke of the Seguin Lake Water Quality Program. The phosphorus readings on Otter Lake are the lowest they have been in the last ten years. Hopefully, this is a sign that people who enjoy Otter Lake realize the importance of properly maintaining septic systems and avoiding the use of detergents that may ultimately enter the lake.

He also spoke about the current review of the Official Plan for Seguin and some of the proposed changes. One change is the imposition of tighter controls on the expansion of existing commercial resorts. The municipality is also developing new policies on such things as improved natural feature mapping, active transportation and green energy.

Bruce also addressed the Lake Stewardship Program that is to be started as a pilot project on Otter Lake this year.

Another topic addressed by Bruce was local infrastructure. A proposed CRTC/Bell tower has been proposed for a location near the intersection of Blue Lake Road and Three Legged Lake Road. While this is a CRTC issue, the Township must be consulted as to compliance with its land use policies.

There are significant upgrades taking place on Otter Lake Road and Bradshaw Road during the summer. Hard topping of this road to Otter Lake Marina will be completed in 2014. There will be a re-aligning of the junction to improve the line of sight at James Bay Junction and Oastler Park.

The old fire hall has now been demolished and construction is underway on its replacement. It is to be done by November at a cost of \$750,000.

Two grants, one federal and one provincial, have been received to renovate the Agriculture Hall building into a community center and library facility. It is to be completed by March 31, 2014.

The municipality is now debt free and as a result, there has been a net reduction of .97% in the municipal tax rate.

Hard - topping of Salmon Lake Road is scheduled for 2017.

DAVID CONN PRESENTATION

Mayor Conn reiterated some of the items addressed by Bruce Gibbon. He also spoke of the concerns all northern communities have as a result of the changing water levels of Georgian Bay. Property assessments on many cottages have dropped as they are no longer boat accessible. This will increase the tax burden on other property owners. The water levels on the Bay are now one foot below chart datum. There is no short-term solution.

He also stated that the environment and particularly water quality is the first and foremost consideration in the review of the Official Plan for the municipality.

MUNICIPAL PROPERTY ASSESSMENT CORPORATION

Terry Lynn Bannon and her associate gave an excellent summary of the assessment process undertaken by MPAC in determining the assessed value of cottage properties. They reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the various levels of government and also the Assessment Review Board to make sure that the assessed value is fair and reasonable. They also summarized the procedure used by MPAC in reviewing how a cottage owner's property is assessed, how an owner can review his or her assessment and compare it to similar properties, how to make a request of reconsideration if it is warranted and finally, the process for appealing an assessment.

They directed the members to MPAC's website for more information (www.mpac.ca).

NEW BUSINESS

A member asked if the business activity of Biosentric in the commercial property adjacent to Little Otter Lake could have a negative effect on the environment. Mario Buszynski advised that he had toured the sight and there is no manufacturing activity taking place in the facility. The company treats wood pallets to make them mould-free and there is no use of water drawn from or released into the lake.

ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

The members were advised that the term of office for Todd Backman and Sonja Cigler was expiring at the end of the AGM. They were also advised that both Todd and Sonja were willing to allow their names to stand for re-election.

The members were also advised that there remained one vacancy to fill for a three year term in addition to the vacancies created by the expiration of the terms of Todd and Sonja. Sharon Link allowed her name to stand for the filling of this vacancy.

By the unanimous vote of all members in attendance, Todd Backman, Sonja Cigler and Sharon Link were each elected to be directors for a three year term.

CLOSING REMARKS

After determining from the members that there was no additional New Business, Art Cole thanked the members for attending the meeting and the meeting was adjourned.