

OTTER LAKE RATEPAYERS' ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING MAY 17, 2015

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.

PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes from the May 18, 2014 AGM were presented to the membership. Moved by Todd Backman and seconded by Sonja Ciglar that the minutes be approved as presented. Passed by the Members.

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

There are currently 152 Individual members and 81 Family members in the Association. All members for the current year 2015 are renewals. It was shared with the meeting that all Members need to encourage neighbours and new residents to join the Association.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The financial statements were presented for the fiscal period ending December 31, 2014. Cash on Hand at January 1, 2014 was \$9836.54. Total income for 2014 was \$8045.79. Total Expenses were \$8002.38 which left a balance of \$9879.95 in the Operating Fund. The Reserve Fund balance was \$33,983.28. The Environment Fund balance was \$13,743.18. The balance of all funds held by OLRA was \$57,604.41.

PHOTO COMPETITION

This year, there will be two categories for the photo contest. They will be Scenery and People. The Members will vote on their favorite photographs at the annual barbecue which will be held at Grand Tappattoo Resort. Members were encouraged to submit their photographs. Sixty-five entries were received on the web site this past year.

LAKE STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

The Lake Stewardship Program and its aim to protect the lake shoreline and water quality was presented to the Members. Art Coles discussed the procedure for applying for a Flag using the self-evaluation form in the Lake Stewardship flyer. To qualify for a Flag, a score of 75% is required. To date, twenty-six flags have been issued.

WATER QUALITY REPORT

Mayor Bruce Gibbons presented the results of last year's water quality report. Water clarity was down significant and had been below average throughout the year. This was typical of many lakes this past year and it was felt that the amount of rain and poor weather conditions were the contributing factors. The phosphorus results were consistent with the long-term average for the lake.

“Ice In” for 2014 was December 31/14 and “Ice Out” was April 21/15. There was 111 days of ice coverage on the lake. The coverage for the previous two years had been 136 days in 2013/14 and 60 days in 2012/13.

WATER LEVELS AND MNR COMMUNICATION

Tony Buszynski provided a history of the dam, which is managed by the Ministry of Natural Resources. It was originally built in 1916 and replaced in 1928 and again in 1967. In 1982, a six inch batter board was added to the structure. In the 1990’s, a concrete wall addition was built to the dam.

Tony advised that there needs to be sufficient water retained in Otter Lake to ensure sufficient water levels for the lakes below the dam should there be a dry spring and/or summer. In addition, the water levels need to be high enough to maintain a healthy habitat for Lake Trout and the spawning beds required by the trout.

In his discussions with the MNR, Tony was advised that a new staff member had been appointed to deal with the dam and the water level issues. Tony spent three hours with this staff member discussing the concerns of the Association concerning water levels on Otter Lake. He will take the staff member on a tour of the lake to show him areas of concern on the lake and how water levels impact these areas.

LOON UPDATE AND BLUE DOT PROGRAM

Kerry Mueller advised that there has been a greater presence of Loons on the Otter Lakes so far this year. The Loon nesting platform on Little Otter, constructed by Marilyn and Allan Campbell, has been used repeatedly by the Loons with consistent hatching success. In 2014 two chicks again hatched and survived on Little Otter while only one was hatched and survived on all of big Otter Lake. The Loon nesting platforms on Big Otter have not been successful as yet. Loons typically like to nest on islands to avoid predators.

According to Bird Studies Canada, we should observe our Loons to find nesting attempts that are unsuccessful over a couple of years and then place a Loon nesting platform there if a platform will help the Loons overcome their challenges. Kerry asked people to report to her any such unsuccessful nesting activity. A typical Loon nest is only six inches above the water line right at the water’s edge. Unfortunately, large boat wake continues to endanger our Loon nesting habitat.

Kerry also spoke about the Blue Dot Movement, a grass roots initiative started by the David Suzuki Foundation in the fall of 2014 to raise awareness that municipalities are often taking the lead in recognizing the importance of a healthy environment. To date, fifty municipalities across Canada have passed formal declarations as part of the Blue Dot Movement, in support of their citizens’ right to a healthy environment including clean water, fresh air, and healthy food. These municipalities will also speak up to their provincial and federal governments as well as other municipal organizations to which they belong in support of the right to a healthy environment with the ultimate goal that the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is amended to include these rights. Canada is one of the few UN countries to not recognize the right to live in a healthy environment as a basic human right. People can sign up on-line to help support their community’s Blue Dot Movement.

TOWNSHIP UPDATE:

MAYOR BRUCE GIBBON:

Bruce advised that OLRA is probably the largest ratepayer group in Seguin Township.

He advised that, because of the new OPP billing model for policing within the Township, the Township has retained the services of a consultant to determine the feasibility of establishing a municipal police force and the costs associated with doing so. Once the report is finalized, the council will review it with the consultant and undertake such additional due diligence as considered necessary to determine if establishing a municipal police force would result in a significant cost savings for the municipality. A decision is not expected until 2017.

Tom Stockie, the Chief Administrative Officer for Seguin, has resigned and a consultant was hired in January to assist the council in finding a replacement. A decision on who will replace Tom Stockie should be made by June.

Bruce also advised that the budget for 2015 was finalized and the municipal tax increase has been limited to 0.9%. He indicated that, for a cottage with an assessed fair market value of \$450,000, the resultant municipal tax increase would be \$20.

COUNCIL REP MARIO BUSZYNSKI:

Mario spoke about the issues he has been addressing as the Councillor for Ward 2 which include:

- Discussions with Hydro One to prevent blanket spraying of vegetation in hydro line areas near Otter Lake;
- Addressing with CN Rail spraying guidelines re vegetation control
- Speaking to the concerns of the Association as to the application of the Camp for the Deaf to allow Rock Crawl activities; and
- Encouragement of local employment.

Mario also gave an update on the Otter Lake Road road improvement project.

OLRA BARBECUE

The annual barbecue will be held at Grand Tappattoo resort on August 2, 2105 between 5 to 9 p.m. It will be a rib-fest with a two piece band and will be held in a tent by the beach. The cost will be \$5 per person

BYLAW AMENDMENT (Art: this section requires amendment following my review of the bylaw)

Art Coles advised the Members that the cost to mail the Notice of a Meeting of Members was prohibitive. The postage to send the newsletter is in excess of \$1000. He proposed that the provision contained in the Otter lake Rate Payers Association Constitution as Incorporated in Jan 1989 and previously amended July 1990, May 2002 and May 2005 in the section titled "Meetings" section 1, 5 and 6] of Article VI of the current bylaw of the Corporation be amended as follows:

Meetings:

1) Notice of any Annual Meeting or general meeting of the Corporation shall be given by prepaid ordinary mail and or electronic-mail addressed to the last known address of all members at least ten (10 days) before the date set for such meeting.

5) Notice in writing shall be deemed to have been given on the day following the day on which it is mailed by prepaid ordinary mail. Notice sent by electronic mail shall be deemed to be given on the day that it was sent

6) The board of directors may inform the membership by prepaid ordinary mail and or electronic mail on any matters that require a resolution by vote. Any votes received by mail that are post marked on or before a date set by the board and or received by electronic mail dated on or before a date set by the board of directors shall be deemed to have been cast at a general meeting on that date

Items 2, 3, and 4 of Article VI are fine as they stand

AJ Mueller moved and Marilyn Campbell seconded the said motion. The motion was unanimously passed by the Members.

NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING POLICY

The issue of permitting advertising in the newsletter to help offset costs associated with its publication was discussed. Moved by Kerry Mueller, seconded by Mike Bernhardt and passed by the Members that advertising be permitted but that it not be an endorsement of the services or products of the advertisers. It was recommended that the Board develop an advertising policy.

REVIEW OF BOARD ACTIVITIES

Art summarized some of the accomplishments of OLRA over the past year including input into the Henvey Inlet transmission line route and concerns regarding the environmental impact of the proposed routes.

ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

The terms of Art Coles, Tony Buszynski and David Amy expired at the end of the Annual General Meeting. All three individuals consented to stand for re-election. There were no further nominations from the floor for additional directors. It was moved, seconded and unanimously passed by the Members that these individuals be re-elected to the Board.

SAFE QUIET LAKES PRESENTATION

Nancy Cohen gave an excellent presentation on the Safe Quiet Lakes Association, an organization whose purpose is to promote respectful and safe operation of boats in accordance with a Boater's Code established by the Association. The intent is to make lakes safer and quieter so that they can be enjoyed by everyone. The key to accomplishing this is education and regulation as to the amount of noise that boats should be allowed to make. All boat operators need to speak to their neighbours about these issues and reflect the message in the way in which they operate their own vessels.

Nancy made copies of the Boater's Code available to the Members.

NEW BUSINESS/ADJOURNMENT

There was no additional business. Art thanked the Members for attending the meeting and the meeting was adjourned.