

Minutes of the Otter Lake Ratepayers' Association (OLRA) Board Meeting

Tuesday, October 6, 2020

The Zoom meeting was started by Kerry Mueller at 6:31 pm.

Attendees: Gerry McDole, Martin Chepesiuk, AJ Mueller, John Roberts, David Amy, Denise Exler, Brian Hindley, Brad Chittick, Kerry Mueller

Regrets: none

Motion: Approve the minutes of the July 14th, 2020 board meeting.

Moved by: Marty Chepesiuk

Seconded by: AJ Mueller Carried

Motion: Approve the minutes of the July 19th 2020 post AGM board meeting.

Moved by: Marty Chepesiuk

Seconded by: Denise Exler Carried

Treasurer's Report:

AJ Mueller reported that OLRA is on track despite the COVID disruptions. The 2020 OLRA BBQ was cancelled due to COVID-19 which lowered both OLRA's revenues and expenses. As of Sept. 30th, 2020, advertising revenue from the newsletters is \$355 higher in 2020 than in 1999. Interest income is also up \$290 over 2019.

So far, membership fees received are almost par with 2019 at 408 members (168 families plus 240 additional family members) represented. OLRA has \$2,000 on deposit with Tappattoo to hold BBQ dates in coming years (\$500/year). Since OLRA's 2020 BBQ was cancelled, Denise will confirm with Tappattoo as to how this year's deposit will be applied. Dec. 31, 2020 net income is anticipated to be about \$6,500.

Fawn at Scotia Bank in Parry Sound was helpful in setting up a \$10,000 GIC for OLRA.

Stewardship Report:

Brad Chittick reported that due to COVID the MOE had shut down the LPP program. Brad did secchi depth recordings 4 out of 5 months. After OLRA spearheaded doing Benthic monitoring in 1999, Seguin developed a Benthic monitoring program for 2020 for several lakes which included monitoring 2 sites in total for Otter Lake and Little Otter Lake. OLRA

paid the GBB staff to monitor the third site on Otter Lake to have data from the same 3 sites as in 1999. Three years of data is needed to establish a baseline for monitoring these “bugs in the mud”.

In the summer of 2020, 4 volunteers helped remove debris from The Narrows. The old posts marking the navigable water are somewhat submerged in The Narrows. Kerry has asked Dean Timson at MNRF if a permit is needed to remove or cut off those posts.

There has been an abundance of wildlife seen around Otter Lake in 2020: mink, fishers, otters, beavers, bard owls, timber wolves, wild turkeys, snapping turtles to name a few.

Lake Levels:

Marty Chepesuik reported that he had been in touch with Amanda Vincent at MNRF about drawing down the lake this fall. Lake levels are high due to rain but not over the target range.

STCR:

Kerry Mueller reported that Seguin staff tabled a short report Sept. 21, 2020 stating the 306 public inputs will be summarized and presented to council later this fall.

New Business

OLRA BBQ and Photo Contest:

Denise Exler confirmed that OLRA has deposits with Tappattoo for BBQ’s in 2020 – 2022.

Denise will write a reminder email for Kerry to send out re: the photo contest submissions deadline of Oct. 11th. Submissions will be posted on the OLRA website. Voting deadline will be Oct. 31. 22 entries have been received so far. Prizes will be mailed out.

Official Plan (OP) Review:

Gerry McDole gave an overview of the progress of the OP review. Likely public input will be invited until the winter (Dec.?). A Public Meeting will be held to review and comment on a draft version.

Membership Renewals:

AJ Mueller reported that 10 property owners had yet to renew and will be followed up.

It was suggested that in 2021 we ask the Jeff and Deb Smith at the marina to display OLRA’s info to raise awareness of our association.

Hydro One Cutting Vegetation near Little Otter Lake:

John Roberts reported that Hydro One plans to again cut vegetation around their facilities near Little Otter Lake in mid - late 2021. John has been in touch with Peter Koppisch, Seguin's Director of Public Works, who requested that Hydro not spray vegetation in the vicinity of the wetlands at Walters Way to protect Little Otter Lake. Hydro is willing to meet to discuss the strategy for the project. John will send out the date when he is notified. Marty and Brian expressed interest in attending too.

Relocation of the Loon Platform on Long Arm:

Kerry Mueller reported that the loon platform was relocated on Long Arm on Aug. 31, 2020. It will be observed to see if loons now take a liking to nesting on it in its new location.

Review of Otter Lake Levels and How That May Affect Lake Trout Spawning:

The MNRF manages Otter Lake's levels for recreational purposes, not with Lake Trout spawning in mind. Brian Hindley, with his background in aquatic science, said that he will investigate whether the historical lake level management affects Lake Trout spawning.

Seguin Council's Approval of a Trail Through Wetlands At The Edge of Otter Lake:

Kerry Mueller gave an update on this approval by Seguin Township which is very concerning due to the precedent it sets and the destruction of rare habitat that it allows. Where a lake begins, and private property ends is not clear. OLRA will monitor the situation and continue to raise concerns as approval contravenes the Seguin Official Plan.

Motion: OLRA opposes putting fill in wetlands as per the Seguin Official Plan.

Moved by: Marty Chepesiuk

Seconded by: AJ Mueller Unanimously carried

SQL Annual Stakeholders Meeting Update and How to Encourage Safe, Neighbourly Boating Practices:

Denise Exler gave an overview of the Sept. 25, 2020 SQL Annual Meeting. Boat traffic was up in 2020 with more personal watercraft complaints about inexperienced operators. SQL has designed new signs "This is my home" with a Loon on it. Lake Associations can approach their municipalities to erect such signs or approve their placement.

SQL ran a Wakes and Speed Pilot Project in 2020. SQL is also lobbying for a Canadian decibel limit in law. The EU and other NA countries have such laws.

Motion: OLRA will continue its support of SQL with a donation of \$200.

Moved by: Brad Chitick

Seconded by: David Amy

Unanimously carried

A discussion was had on how OLRA can promote safe and neighbourly boating practices. Education is our main option and encouraging people to talk to each other to raise awareness of the damage large wakes, especially when close to shore, are doing to lake shore property and wildlife habitat. Excessive speed and noise are also issues that adversely affect people and wildlife. It was suggested that businesses on the lake, Sunny Point, Tappattoo, the marina etc can help get the word out too.

Hiebert LPAT Appeal:

It was reconfirmed that OLRA will not participate in this LPAT appeal by the Lake Joseph North Association. Marty will send a link to the Board re: holding tanks and a municipality's responsibility for approving them.

Kerry called the meeting to a close at 9:20 pm.