

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

Monday, February 8, 2021

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

Regrets: none

1. Welcome:

The Zoom meeting was started by Kerry Mueller at 6:37 pm.

2. Appointment to Officer position of Secretary:

Kerry Mueller introduced Nicole Mailloux, who applied for the Officer position of Secretary, and provided highlights of her resume:

- Nicole and her husband have owned a cottage on Otter Lake since 1987. She and her husband moved permanently to their cottage when they retired in 2019.
- Nicole was the Vice-President of Human Resources and a Corporate Officer at Guelph Hydro, with several years of experience working with and on Boards of Directors in Guelph, and as Chief Collective Bargaining Negotiator.
- She has varied experience. Prior to starting her career in Ontario's Utility Industry, she worked as a Fisheries Technician and Taxonomist at the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, the Ministry of Natural Resources, and the National Museum of Natural Sciences. It is this experience which landed her a position with Ontario Hydro's Research Division, where she eventually moved into Human Resources.
- She graduated from the University of Guelph with an Honours Bachelor of Science in Fisheries and Wildlife Biology, is a Certified Human Resources Leader and has successfully completed Director College courses at McMaster University.

Motion: The OLRA Board members hereby appoint Nicole Mailloux to the Officer position of Secretary.

- Moved by David Amy
- Seconded by Denise Exler
- **Motion Carried**

Discussion: It was clarified that this Officer position of Secretary is not a Board position, given the Board already has nine (9) members. Nicole may apply for a Board position should a Board member step down, and her appointment to the Board would need to be approved by OLRA members at an Annual General Meeting.

3. Approval of Minutes:

Motion: Approve the minutes of the June 5th, 2020 board meeting.

- Moved by Brian Hindley
- Seconded by AJ Mueller
- **Motion Carried**

Motion: Approve the minutes of the October 6, 2020 board meeting but add an “i” to correct Brad Chittick’s name and correct the time the meeting was closed to “9:20”.

- Moved by Brad Chittick
- Seconded by Gerry McDole
- **Motion Carried**

4. Treasurer’s Report:

2020 Balance Sheet and Income Statement: AJ Mueller reviewed the Balance Sheet and Income Statement as at December 31, 2020. Total Revenues of \$11,605.88 was down from 2019 (was \$12,371.88) due to the cancellation of the 2020 OLRA BBQ, but Total Expenses of \$4,938.83 were also down from 2019 (was \$9,189.71) due to no BBQ expenses in 2020 as compared to \$1,825.43 in 2019 and lower benthic monitoring expenses in 2020 of \$923.00 (was \$2,750.00 in 2019). 2020 Net Income is \$6,667.05.

Here is the finalized motion, which was moved, seconded, and adopted by email on February 11, 2021:

Motion: That the OLRA approve the 2020 Financials as presented at the February 9, 2021 meeting.

- *Moved by Gerry McDole by email on February 11, 2021*
- *Seconded by Denise Exler by email on February 11, 2021*
- ***Carried by email on February 11, 2021***

2021 Budget: AJ Mueller reviewed the 2021 budget and its assumptions. As compared to 2020 actuals, the 2021 budget assumes:

- Total Revenues of \$12,450.00 (VS \$11,605.88),
- Total Expenses of \$9,525.00 (VS \$4,938.83),
- Net Income of \$2,925.00 (VS \$6,667.05),
- Revenue from membership fees to be almost the same as fees received in 2020 (\$6,275.00 VS \$6,365.00),
- BBQ ticket sale revenue of \$1,750.00 (VS \$0.00), coupled with higher expenses of \$2,100.00 (VS \$0.00), resulting in an expected BBQ deficit of -\$350.00,
- Higher expenses related to website hosting (\$1,000.00 VS \$67.74). Expenses were lower in 2020 due to the previous 3-year prepayment in 2018, and
- Higher expenses for benthic monitoring (\$1,500.00 VS \$923.00) due to expected increased costs related to the start of trending analysis in 2021.

Motion: That the OLRA Board investigate the possibility and interest of advertisers to advertise on the OLRA website in addition to the OLRA newsletters.

- Moved by Brad Chittick
- Seconded by Marty Chepesiuk
- **Motion Carried**

Motion: To approve the 2021 Budget as approved.

- Moved by Denise Exler
- Seconded by David Amy
- **Motion Carried**

Action: Kerry Mueller will find out if it's possible to add business advertising to the OLRA website.

GIC Investments: AJ Mueller reported that the objective is to move investments with the TD Bank to Scotia Bank, as they become due, given past experience with TD Direct Investing relating to the length of time it took to transfer access from a Board member who left the Board.

5. Stewardship Report:

Brad Chittick reported that there was not much to report given that the MOECP had shut down the LPP due to COVID-19. Water testing results have not been published yet and are expected at the earliest in March, but likely as late as May. Last year the Dorset Laboratory was closed due to COVID-19. A water sample was sent to the lab in May and then again in October. Secchi disk readings were taken in May, June, July and October. The Board is expected to know if the program will go forward in 2021 later this spring.

Since 2020 was the third year of the Benthic Monitoring Program, there will be sufficient data to start a trending analysis and compare our data with that of other participants. The cost of this program in 2021 is expected to go up to \$1,500.00 due to the trending analysis.

Motion: That the OLRA Board approve the \$1,500.00 budget to conduct the required sampling, analysis and reporting.

- Moved by John Roberts
- Seconded by Gerry McDole
- **Motion Carried**

Discussion: The Board discussed at length other potential monitoring and sampling possibilities that GBB, MOECP, or MNRFP could carry out of Otter and Little Otter Lakes, and their surrounding land areas. It is generally known that there are 53 aquatic and terrestrial species at risk in GBB and GBB has estimated there may be 50 in the Otter Lake area.

Actions: Brian Hindley will ask MNRF and MOE if they are actively involved locally with regards to endangered species.

Brad Chittick will ask GBB for the list of species at risk.

6. Lake Levels:

Marty Chepesiuk reported that there is nothing to report.

Action: Marty Chepesiuk will contact Amanda Vincent at MNRF to find out who at MNRF is now in charge of managing Otter Lake water levels.

New Business

1. Official Plan Review Update:

Gerry McDole submitted a detailed written report for the Board's review. Briefly, the process is about two months behind. Council has asked the consultants to further slow up the process as many councilors feel there has not yet been enough community engagement. Other submission recommendations overlap with OLRA's, but there are some with new ideas too. The consultants summarized all the input to date into two goals: 1) protect the environment and 2) economic development. Brian Hindley explained that the issue is that Township approvals are made before other agencies have provided their approvals and there is no follow up to ensure all approvals have been completed.

Discussion: The Board discussed at length various issues relating to the apparent lack of transparency, consistency, OP compliance and due diligence by the Township when approving permits, particularly those relating to wetlands, shorelines, and other environmentally protected and sensitive areas. Many draft motions were put forward by different Board members and it was decided that this motion would be developed and approved offline.

Here is the finalized motion, which was moved, seconded, and unanimously adopted by email on February 2, 2021:

Motion: OLRA recommends that Seguin develop policies and procedures describing landowner requirements for providing evidence to Seguin that all requirements of other relevant agencies have been met as a pre-condition of municipal permits/approvals being issued, especially when concerning areas designated as Environmental Protection, Environmentally Significant Areas and Lake Shorelands.

- *Moved by Brian Hindley by email on February 2, 2021*
- *Seconded by Kerry Mueller by email on February 2, 2021*
- ***Motion Carried by email on February 2, 2021***

2. STCR Update:

Kerry Mueller submitted a detailed written report to update the Board. A Special Meeting of Council relating to considering Minutes of Settlement on the legal action taken against 129 Otter Lake Road will take place on February 9, 2021.

3. FOI Request Re: 202 Blue Lake Road & Next Steps:

Kerry Mueller submitted a detailed written report and related correspondence to the Board for their review. Kerry reported that she had to put the estimated \$135.00 cost of processing the OLRA FOI request to the MNRF on her Master Card to keep the process moving. The MNRF is anticipated to complete FOI request by the end of February, 2021.

Motion: The OLRA Board will proceed with a Freedom of Information request of Seguin Township for copies of documents pertaining to any driveway/trail application at 202 Blue Lake Road.

- Moved by Brian Hindley
- Seconded by Brad Chittick
- **Motion Carried**

4. OLRA BBQ, Photo Contest, Scavenger Hunt for 2021:

Denise Exler submitted a detailed written report to the Board for their review. A decision on proceeding with the BBQ can be delayed up to June 2 2021 at which time the Board could decide to cancel or postpone the BBQ, depending on COVID.

Board Decision: The Board agreed with Denise's proposal to continue with an online photo contest in 2021. Entries would be submitted between May 25th and October 12th. The photo contest would be promoted at the May Annual General Meeting, and at the BBQ in August and in the Spring Newsletter. The Board discussed whether or not they should hold a scavenger hunt and/or boat parade on July 1st.

Actions: AJ agreed to investigate the liability aspects of a boat parade with our insurance broker. Denise Exler, John Roberts, and Brad Chittick will propose a July 1st Boat Parade Plan for the Board's review.

5. Hydro Meeting re: Cutting Vegetation Near Little Otter Lake Facilities in 2021:

John Roberts provided emails to the Board confirming that Peter Koppisch will provide an update of the meeting with Hydro to discuss the strategy for the project.

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 had previously expressed interest in attending too.

6. OLRA AGM Plans and Potential Speaker(s) for 2021:

Kerry Mueller reported that the AGM would be virtual given COVID restrictions. Potential speakers include Councillors, Mayor and perhaps someone from GBB to speak about species at risk in our area or FOCA. All Board members voted to have GBB speak while 7 Board members voted to have FOCA speak.

Actions: Kerry Mueller will follow up with Councillors, the Mayor and FOCA. Brad Chittick will follow up with GBB.

7. 2021 Spring Newsletter Content Ideas:

Kerry Mueller provided a list of newsletter articles for the Spring Newsletter, and author.

Actions: All articles are due by March 14th, 2021

8. OLRA Digital Communications Update:

Kerry Mueller provided a detailed written report for the Board's review. Printing and mailing costs have decreased significantly since 2016. In 2020, 50 copies of the Newsletter were printed at a cost of \$288, and most were surplus.

Motion: OLRA will no longer provide printed copies of newsletters and this item will be removed from the 2021 budget.

- Moved by Brad Chittick
- Seconded by AJ Mueller
- **Motion carried.**

Action: AJ to remove this item from the Board approved budget.

9. Membership – What to post at marina, if possible.

AJ Mueller indicated that there is no place to post at the marina at this time. The Board discussed several ways to become aware of new Otter Lake property owners and residents and inform them of the benefits of belonging to OLRA.

Actions: Board members are to inform AJ Mueller of who is new to the area and inform the new resident or property owner of the benefits or being an OLRA member.

Brad volunteered to contact Real Estate Agents who may be able to insert an OLRA Newsletter in new owner packages.

10. Removing Logs from the Narrows as per MNRD Direction:

Brad Chittick reported that he and three others (Tony Buszynski, Daryle Moffatt and Rob Cribbie) cleared brush in the narrows, but the old wooden posts which supported the former bridge remain submerged. MNRD has stated that approval is not required in this

case and therefore OLRA can cut them off but should not pull them out as that would disturb the lake substrate.

Action: Brad Chittick will contact other volunteers who removed the brush last year to inform them of MNRF's permission.

11. Species at Risk (SAR) Assessment Procedures as per the MOECP:

Brian Hindley provided a detailed written report for the Board's review. This item was discussed as part of New Business Item #1, Official Plan.

12. Boating – promoting safe and neighbourly boating practices with signs:

The Board discussed how to promote safe boating practices. Several suggestions were made:

- Anchor buoys 100 feet from shore in unchartered lakes.
- Inform members of rules, what they can do and who to call.
- Call OPP.
- Signs require Township approval and must be maintained to minimize liability risks.

13. Seguin Budget Meeting Updates:

Kerry Mueller provided a detailed written report for the Board's review.

Adjournment: Kerry Mueller called the meeting to a close at 9:48 pm.

Acronyms

EP: Environmental Protection

FOCA: Federation of Ontario Cottagers Association

FOI: Freedom of Information

GBB: Georgian Bay Biosphere

LPP: Lake Protection Program

MNRF: Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

MOECP: Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

OLRA: Otter Lake Ratepayers' Association

OP: Seguin Township Official Plan

SAR: Species at Risk

STCR: Short Term Cottage Rentals