

MINUTES OF THE 2017 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

of the

EELS LAKE COTTAGERS ASSOCIATION

Date – April 20, 2017

Time and Location - 7:00 PM at the Whitby Public Library, Whitby, ON

In Attendance -

- President: Peter Philp; Board Members: Alex Bilyk, Michael Nicholishen, Jim Tranter, Sean Davis, Shawna Barnes, Ernie Bruns, Sandy Kilgour, Don Davis, Eddie Stinson, Jolanda Baird, Sandy Moffat.
- Board Member Regrets - Betsy Blanchard and Pete Tolev
- Other Regrets - Chris Bilyk.
- Other Association Members present - 23 persons.

Proceedings -

1. Opening Remarks by President Peter

The meeting began at 7:05 pm with a warm welcome from President Peter, an outline of the agenda and a thank you to all for attending. He advised that the ice on the lake went out on Tuesday, April 11th. He welcomed Sandy Moffat to the Board of Directors.

2. Year Ending (March 31, 2017) Treasurer's Report by Michael Nicholishen

Mike noted that our cash in hand is some \$2000 less than last year as a result of the legal fees incurred in preparing the MOU with the TSW. He expressed hope that our new web-site would be able to raise money through advertisements and that consideration should be given to increasing the ELCA membership fee. It was noted that current membership revenues, although up from last year, are based on an estimate of the associations actual membership total at year end.

Questions from the Floor;

1. *What does insurance cover? Ans. Liability for the regatta and lake marker buoys.*
2. *Was our GIC cashed? Ans. Yes, to cover in-year cash shortages.*
3. *What is our total membership? Ans. Approximately 195 which is up from last year's total 167 thanks, in great part, to the membership drive undertaken by the Board last summer. It was suggested by Don Davis that membership is critical to our success and that a total of 300 is what we should strive for.*
4. *Is our annual Newsletter necessary now that we have a lake web-site? Ans. This will depend on the success of the web-site as to how well it is accepted and used by our members. Time will tell.*
5. *Should the format, size and content of the Newsletter be changed, and is it circulated at our marinas and in Apsley? Ans. Sean Davis responded by saying that over the 5 years he has been editor and publisher of the newsletter this issue has always been raised as well as how distribution costs can be reduced. All of these have been duly considered and changes have been made. The newsletter is available only at the Eels Lake Marina for pick up. The Homestead had refused along with other possible outlets in Apsley. Sean again asked for someone to come forward and act as his replacement noting that this edition would be his last. Members present thanked him for his diligence and continuing efforts and for a job well done.*

3. Membership by President Peter Philp

Peter suggested that the increase over that of last year's total membership was a good start from where to go forward. He thanked those board members who took on the task of canvassing all the cottages in their assigned area of the lake last year. He agreed that 300 members should be our goal. In particular he encouraged all those present to check with their immediate neighbours and encourage them to join. He said that the role of our new web-site in this regard will need to be considered.

4. Water Committee and Lake Fishery Report by Board member Sandy Kilgour

(Ed. The current edition of the newsletter contains a report, written by Sandy, that details the recent working history and successes achieved by the Water Committee. In particular we made substantial progress last year and members are encouraged to read this article as a point of reference. What follows are Sandy's supplementary comments made at the AGM supporting that article.)

Sandy said that as a member of the Coalition for Equitable Water Flow, which is made up of some 35 area feeder lakes to the Trent Canal System, the ELCA supports their

overall goal of balancing the water needs of the Trent-Severn Waterway (TSW) and those watershed lakes. While we have a good working relationship with the Coalition, over the last 10 years our Association has opted to take a more aggressive approach than that of the Coalition's in dealing with the TSW. In doing so we have chosen to conduct our business directly with Parks Canada and the TSW. Sandy described this as the SPC approach in our dealings with them, or "Sustained Principled Confrontation". Over that time period we have made significant progress in achieving results for our own identified needs. Sandy highlighted these;

- The application of a, "equal water drawdown system" of lake levels across our watershed,
- In 2010/11 both dams that empty water from Eels Lake into Eels Creek were rehabilitated,
- Recognition by the TSW and Parks Canada that our lake water level and safe watercraft navigational requirements are protected under the Federal Navigable Waters Act.
- Written mutual agreement through a formal Memorandum of Understanding (signed June 10, 2016) with Parks Canada and the TSW regarding the protocol to be used by TSW in withdrawing water from Eels Lake.
- The establishment of a positive and mutually respectful working relationship with senior Peterborough TSW staff. Sandy highlighted this through a very recent example wherein the summer of 2016 was reported to have been the driest in the Peterborough area in 102 years. Our lake water levels through the summer were not negatively impacted, as alternatively the TSW managed their water requirements for the canal by lowering the draft requirements of vessels using the canal, placed non-porous cinders at the base of leaking dams to conserve water, and consciously held water back in the lower watershed from the canal.

Sandy noted that it was at the suggestion of the TSW that the MOU include a requirement for our Water Committee to meet with them twice each year. The first of these was held in December 2016 and the second is scheduled for May of this year [Because of the excessive rains and subsequent workload required by TSW the meeting has been postponed into June]. At the next meeting it is our intention to begin a discussion with them as to what constitutes the "exceptional circumstances" (originally attempted to define but currently undefined in the MOU) that would have to occur causing the TSW to remove more than 2 logs at once from our dam and/or to withdraw any of the 4 logs during the fall which traditionally has been our annual winter log set. To support our position the Water Committee will, in the fall of this year, begin to

conduct a physical survey of lake bottom depths in sensitive areas of the lake where the removal of certain logs from the dam could cause very serious consequences for safe navigation and negate water access to some cottage properties.

Sandy again announced (see newsletter) that a long time cottage family on our lake has come forward with an exceptional commitment to preserve the future of Eels Lake. It is a \$100,000 pledge in support of any necessary future legal action that the Association may have to undertake in support of our MOU position with Parks Canada. All those present graciously thanked this unidentified family.

Regarding our lake fishery Sandy noted the following;

- We have a very good working relationship with the Ontario MNR and Forestry.
- In March of this year ice fishing was observed on the lake. We are a sanctuary lake and ice fishing is not permitted. We took steps with the MNR to post signs to this affect at the government landing. We understand the fishing stopped.
- Six years ago the MNR undertook to stock our lake over a 2 year period with 5000 trout fry. This year 3000 more will be placed in the lake. After 7 years in the program is proving successful based on casual observations. The MNR have asked us to identify 3 or more serious lake anglers who they can more accurately work with to monitor the results of this initiative. One of our members at the meeting agreed to participate and his name will be forwarded to MNR.

Questions from the floor;

1. *Are there any capital improvements planned for our lake by the TSW? Ans. Our lake is not included in the current \$270M capital improvement plan underway by Parks Canada. A major expenditure is planned for Dam No.1 at Trenton to address its' very high level of leakage.*
2. *Has the TSW deployed automatic lake level measurement devices? Ans. Yes.*
3. *Little Eels Lake suffers from low fall water levels. Have we considered advocating for a 5 log winter set? Ans. We have pursued that option with TSW and their analysis suggests that that would not work for their fall downstream needs.*
4. *Do any other lakes have similar agreements with the TSW as we do through our MOU? Ans. No.*
5. *Is the TSW's equal draw down rate always equal? Ans. No.*
6. *Supporting comment by Don Davis – Given the mounting consequences of global warming leading to higher daily temperatures we should take the position that serious confrontations with TSW over our lake water requirements WILL occur, not IF they will occur.*

5. Next NORKLA Meeting by President Peter Philp

A meeting of the North Kawartha Lakes Association (NORKLA) will be held on June 24, 2017 between 9:00 am and 1:00 pm at the North Kawartha Community Centre in Apsley. Presentations will be given on the impacts and mitigation steps cottagers can take for shoreline erosion, and proper septic tank maintenance procedures. The ELCA is a member of that organization and our members are encouraged to attend.

6. The ELCA's new web-site by Board member Alex Bilyk

Our all new web-site (www.eeSlakecottagers.ca) is now up and running. Alex introduced Roman Truikak who is our site developer and then proceeded with a visual presentation of the site's composition and functionality. He stressed that it is hoped that the site will be the future central place of information exchange for our membership and that it will significantly contribute to an enhanced lake spirit between all of us who share the joy of cottage life on Eels Lake.

Alex presented how to access the site, how the layout is structured and links to numerous outside resources, and off-lake local events. He opened each mast head topic and discussed what each currently are comprised of. He noted that site was created through an application called "WordPress" which is now one of the primary development apps out there and he has found convenient to use. Of particular importance is to ensure both privacy for users and site security. This is being addressed through the tools available through WordPress.

A number of questions were asked from the floor and the responses given follow in point form;

- *the site can be used for members to pay their annual ELCA dues via electronic payment. A suggestion was made here to add a line on our membership application form for anyone wishing to make a donation to the association,*
- *for the convenience of members the Board of Directors are to be photographed for reference and their cottage locations displayed on a map of the lake,*
- *a link to a FaceBook site has been established and twitter will be put in place going forward,*

- *it is anticipated that we will be able to increase the association membership by promoting the use of the site,*
- *the intention is to solicit local businesses and other like parties to post advertisements thereby adding a revenue stream for the association,*
- *at this point of time in the development of the web-site the focus is on providing a central point of information exchange directly to, from and between our members. Also, contacts to local municipal offices, government agencies and businesses used to support the interests of cottagers on our lake are provided,*
- *In the future it is intended to develop and include a “classified” section on the web-site for more personal types of interaction for members such as items for sale, barter, baby-sitting etc.*

The presentation was well received with congratulations and thanks extended to Alex and Roman.

7. Returning and New Board Members by President Peter Philp

Peter announced that he was stepping down as president, but that he would be staying on the Board as a member of the Water Committee. He was thanked by all those present.

He then announced the names of the returning board members. The list is;

Alex Bilyk, Michael Nicholishen, Jim Tranter, Shawna Barnes, Sean Davis, Betsy Blanchard, Pete Tolev, Ernie Bruns, Sandy Kilgour, Don Davis, Joe Fenwick, Jolanda Baird, Eddie Stinson, Diana Stamm, Sandy Moffat and Peter Philp.

8. Regatta Update by Shawna Barnes

Shawna said that while she had some trepidation about chairing the regatta last year for the first time she was encouraged by the results and enjoyed the experience. This year emphasis will be placed on encouraging high school students looking for local volunteer class credits to help in the delivery of the event.

She noted that the event does require the expenditure of funds and that she is open to suggestions on how to recoup some of those costs. She said that a silent auction is

planned at this year's Horseshoe Tournament to start addressing that need. Other ideas are encouraged and you should contact her directly.

9. New Business by Peter Philp

Peter said that it is his intention to discuss with the Board at the May meeting his suggestion to increase the cost of membership in the association from \$30 to \$50.

10. End of Meeting

The meeting ended at 9:05 pm

Don Davis – Minute Recorder

