

AGM Minutes

Annual General Meeting of Clear Lake Property Owners' Association

Torrance Community Centre

10am, July 1 2023

1. Welcome - Ian McClennan

- Moment of silence for Lloyd Rentner, John Cleary, Carol Sherriff, and Greg Johnson
- Minutes from 2022 approved with minor modification - Mike Silver was elected. Nominated by Mike McClennan, seconded by Tim Meadows
- Ian McClennan gives a reminder that votes are meant to be considered confidential at these meetings, unless someone explicitly would like their vote in either direction to be recorded.

2. Financials - Jeremy Silver

- Financial statements approved with no modifications.
- Bob Cleverdon queried if the beaver removal would be supported for the next two years as was his understanding. This was confirmed that it would be supported this year and beginning of next.
- There was a question posed as to the wisdom of buying GICs for our case
 - i. It was explained that GIC's are a way to have some appreciation on the cash instead of it just sitting in the bank account.
- Question about CLPOA members receiving a credit against water testing
 - i. Ian explained that the MLA is stopping the Small Lakes program whereby they would credit lakes \$30 towards water testing for every ML member they had. They no longer do that.
- Motion to approve water testing and insurance passed with all in favor. Nominated by Mike McClennan, seconded by Brian Ternoway

3. Water quality - Bob Cleverdon

- In 2022 69 tests in total were conducted for bacteria, e-coli, phosphorus, and temperature.
- Results are all normal, water quality remains excellent
- Phosphorus levels in particular remain very low (low is good)
- Only two sites had abnormalities last year (one at the west end of ridge road, and the other at the east end of ridge road)
 - i. The standard response is to do 5 retests, and if the quality keeps coming out bad, then there is a requirement to contact public health. 2 or 3 of the 5 retests had slightly higher phosphorus (?) levels but they did not meet the threshold to advise public health.
- Question about this being an indication that someone's septic tank might not be working well?
 - i. The tests with high results were after heavy rainfall, so were probably the result runoff, but tests a few days later were fine

- ii. Mike Silver noted that the east site is near his cottage. He got his septic tank tested after the water test results and the septic tank is completely fine. But there is a lot of wildlife in that lagoon. It's an active wetland. We will probably continue to see these high levels as a result of this wildlife.
- The main takeaway is that, compared to official guidelines, we are well under good levels, but will continue to monitor the situation because the results in 2022 from those two sites are higher than what we usually see.
- Sharon Cleverdon noted that the clarity test was very good. This year with the Secchi Disk test they were able to see down almost 7 meters (?). Last year they were seeing 5.8 meters (?).
- Ian McClennan publicly thanked Bob & Sharon for their work on water quality

4. Membership update - Sharon Cleverdon

- 138 memberships in 2022 = 4,140 \$
- On Aug 30 reminders were sent out to 29 people. An additional reminder was sent out on Oct 20 to 1x (?) people.
- In 2023, 91 memberships were received before the AGM. This is an improvement over last year which was ~60.
- Question asked about how many properties are on the lake?
 - i. There are 138 properties on the lake
 - ii. 138 memberships does not represent 100% of the lake cottages because several cottages pay more than 1 dues, it is simply a coincidence that the number of memberships received is the same.
- A question was raised about the camp paying dues
 - i. Sharon Cleverdon reported that they did not pay last year or this year
- Question asked about the max number of memberships of per cottage
 - i. There is no max of *memberships* per cottage
 - ii. But there is a max of 4 *voting* members per cottage
- There was a question about whether it should be 1 vote per *cottage*?
 - i. Ian McClennan noted that this is how it's currently written in our bylaws, we are open to entertain a change if that is desired, but there is some logic to keeping it the way it is because some families are more engaged than others.

5. Beaver update - Bob Cleverdon

- Summary that last year found an excessive amount of beaver dams, which meant water levels in the outflow of Clear Lake rose to a level where about 4 inches before the water flow would back into Clear Lake (which would be an ecological disaster)
- Recap that last year there was a motion passed to hire a trapper
- To date the trapper has caught 14 beavers
- Bob has been working with the trapper and they've widened the outflow area and it has helped quite a bit with keeping the water levels lower
- We will continue the trapper program this year and the beginning of next.

- So far the results are encouraging. We're seeing dams rebuilt, but they look like they were built by adolescent beavers because they are not as well built
- The cost of the trapper is \$100 each week (each visit) + \$50 per beaver killed
- These days, pelts are worth \$30 per pelt, but they are not worth the effort to get that
- Trapper costs have been shared 50/50 with Black Lake
- Note that caution must be exercised when removing dams - not to do it too quickly. It could release a large amount of water which could cause serious damage downstream
- Question raised about Echo Lake pitching in with the trapper costs
 - i. They are not pitching in. The issue doesn't really affect them except maybe slightly rising water levels from our efforts.
- Question raised about beaver buffers
 - i. They don't work because the beavers block the pipes (Bob)
- Question from Ruth Nishikawa: Is there a better way to communicate with Echo Lake about our efforts? She claims she is getting lots of calls complaining about the rising water levels.
 - i. Bob: We aren't responsible for their water level. Besides, the water levels should equalize to their natural levels in time. And they have their own systems to release their water. Furthermore it's hard to believe that our efforts would materially affect their lake water levels.
 - ii. Mike Silver: me in Another reason Echo Lake water levels could be higher is because Muskoka Lake is high, and this means less will drain from Echo Lake
 - iii. Bob: Our primary focus is to worry about the backflow coming back into Clear Lake

6. Update on Torrance Barrens - Mike Silver

- Things are going well. The working group established to preserve the Torrance Barrens is functioning well
- The Ministry of Environment is beginning to take interest in it
- Recap that we gave the Clear Lake Torrance Barrens award to Wade Murrant (the ministry person in charge of the Barrens) last year
 - i. Wade said this is the Apex of his career and he is very impressed by the local involvement from the community
- There will be 6 campsites established with designated numbers, and fires will only be permitted in those sites
- The township has declared a bylaw(?) that camping and campfires are otherwise prohibited. There will be online registration to use campsites and dark sky.
- The next step is to develop the dark sky further. It needs better road access
- There was some idea to turn the Barrens into a provincial park, including an idea to merge it with Severn River reserve
 - i. This would make it bigger but it would maybe lose the Barrens "identity"

- ii. Some history: there was once an idea to merge the Barrens with Hardy Lake trail, that could still be a possibility
 - Question was raised: if it was merged with another park, would that affect the dark sky designation?
 - i. Mike Silver: This is a good question and we're not sure!
 - The Dark Sky designation is being taken more seriously and Muskoka township has strengthened their bylaw a couple weeks ago. Gravenhurst seems to be moving in the same direction with an appetite to strengthen their bylaws.
 - i. When the bylaws were being considered, there seemed to be a lot of support from the public about the Dark Sky designation being preserved.
 - Members are encouraged to make light complaints because that's the only way the bylaws are enforced. Complaints should be made to bylaw officers.
 - Clarification about the fire ban in the Barrens. Who is enforcing it?
 - i. Ruth: MECP staff will be the ones enforcing the fire bans.
7. Update on noise on the lake - Ian McClennan
- Recap that last year there were lots of complaints about the noise levels on the lake, and especially noise coming from the resort
 - Greg Knight: noted that after some productive meetings, they came to an agreement to operate just 1 concert a year instead of the ~6-8 they had in 2022. The one concert will be held on Aug 26 and is the Tragically Hip cover band concert that they have been hosting for several years.
 - Mike Silver publicly thanked Greg for demonstrating his concern and respect for the lake.
8. Increase in Fees from \$30 to \$40 - Ian McClennan
- Last year there was a discussion about increasing the fees to strengthen the war chest in case of an emergency, and to cover higher costs of... just about everything!
 - A question was raised about the need to raise fees given there is still some cash (~\$10,000) on the balance sheet
 - i. This is meant to be a "what-if" fund
 - ii. Given that it is usually advisable to have about a year's expenses in reserves, and possibly much more considering \$10,000 would hardly cover a major emergency expense, it seems wise to raise the fees slightly
 - iii. This year we had an operating deficit that would be covered by the increase in fees
 - The point was raised that in 1991 fees were \$25, and in the last 32 years the fees have only been raised once, to \$30
 - Note raised by Bob Cleverdon that it might be harder to raise an extra \$10 and it might affect the number of members who pay
 - Motion raised by Jiri Skopek to raise fee by \$10, seconded by Mike McClennan. Vote was unanimously in favour of raising with zero votes against.

9. Regatta - Ian McClennan

- This year the regatta will be on Aug 5
- We need volunteers to help

10. Presentation of Awards - Mike Silver

- The Clear Lake Torrance Barrens Award for exemplary service to the Torrance Barrens was awarded to Ruth Nishikaw for her decades of work on getting the Dark Sky reserve in place
- The Sharon Cleverdon award for exemplary service to the Clear Lake community was awarded to the families (?) who bought the wetlands in 19XX (?) and set up a trust to protect it from development
 - i. Charlie Wilkins wrote an article about the story and had some copies which were eagerly snatched up

11. Open Floor - Misc items

- Greg Knight - Mentioned the minutes from last year referring to reducing road speed from 60 km/h to 40km/h. He and Glenn Zavitz worked to reduce speed limits.
- Ruth Nishikawa - The baseball diamond is now a dog park
- Ian McClennan - The township is looking at a short-term rental bylaw. There is a public survey which closes on July 5th.
- Ian McClennan - Speed limit on ? rd has been reduced from 80 to 60
- Ian McClennan - Reminder that fireworks are banned this year!
- Question: What is the obligation of a cottage owner to maintain their property?
 - i. Ian McClennan: There is nothing from CLPOA side here
 - ii. Glenn Zavitz: The Process is to send a formal complaint to a bylaw officer who can investigate

Motion to adjourn by Mike McClennan seconded by Jiri Skopek