

MINUTES

OTTER LAKE LANDOWNERS' ASSOCIATION
(OLLA)

22ND ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

JULY 27, 2013

1. WELCOME:

President Phil Mayhew welcomed all to the 22nd. Annual general meeting, and he introduced the current executive.

2. CURRENT EXECUTIVE:

Phil introduced the current directors.

Phil Mayhew	President
Carol Schaefer	Secretary
Marcia Maxwell	Director
Frank Croft	Director
Doug Franks	Web Master and Lake Steward
Dianne Taylor	Director
Ed Wilton	Membership
Randy Hodgins	Director
Cam McKay	Treasurer
Bob Langstaff	Director

Due to family commitments, Randy is unable to attend today's meeting.

3. PRESIDENT'S OPENING REMARKS:

Phil spoke briefly about activities of the committee in 2012.

Aside from regularly tracking the lake level, and water testing, a few directors met with township officials regarding a flooding incident between Road 06 and Road 07. Township officials are responsible for clearing any beaver dams which may cause flooding of township roads. In this case, the release caused a great deal of undesirable debris to flow into Otter Lake near Toohey Bay, causing concern for the residents. However, the meeting with the township resulted in an amicable agreement on how to proceed in future clearing of dams and notification of involved landowners. In order to reach the offending dam, it is sometimes necessary to cross private property.

Two loon platforms were in place this spring to provide a safe habitat for our breeding loons. However, it's difficult to tell if they have been used, because approaching the nests will 'spook' the loons. Two chicks have been spotted, and the hope is they will survive and flourish.

The plan is to introduce one or two additional platforms. If any lake residents have information regarding loon habitat or welfare of our local loons, please contact Doug Franks.

4. APPROVAL OF AGM MINUTES FOR 2012:

The AGM minutes for 2012 are posted on our web site www.otterlake.cyberus.ca As well, copies were sent with the notices for this meeting. A few copies were available for review as members arrived at the meeting, and the minutes were displayed on the screen prior to this meeting.

No errors or omissions were noted.

MOVED by Lorna Stewart, **SECONDED** by Marion Callaghan that the AGM minutes for 2012 be approved as printed. **CARRIED**

5. TREASURER'S REPORT:

Our treasurer, Cam McKay, presented his report. An overhead was provided for all to follow, and Cam reviewed the highlights. A copy of Cam's report is attached to the file minutes.

The current bank balance as of July 19, 2013 is \$ 3,157.95
GIC value as of December 31st, 2012 was \$ 5,262.

MOVED by Gina Lewis, **SECONDED** by Bernard Ullyett that the report be accepted as presented.
CARRIED

6. SUCCESSION PLANNING – CALL and APPROVAL FOR DIRECTORS:

Three directors are up for another 3 year term this year:

- Marcia Maxwell
- Ed Wilton
- Carol Schaefer

All agreed to stand for re-election. Each individual was re-elected.

7. LAKE STEWARD'S REPORT:

A complete copy of the most recent Lake Steward's Report was distributed via our last newsletter and is also on OLLA's web site. Some copies were available at the meeting.

Doug provided an abbreviated report. Some of his comments are listed below:

- Happy to report the phosphorous levels in our lake are well below the danger zone. Otter Lake is one of 3 in the geographical area to register satisfactory levels. Each scored below 10. All other lakes in our area have higher levels.
- There are no worrisome algae problems so far this year.
- The highest levels of fecal count are found, as usual, at the inlet of Barker's Creek. This is thought to have been caused by heavy rains, and the levels have greatly improved in July. 200 ml of rain have fallen so far this year.
- Current water testing results are incomplete at this time as Doug awaits results from RVCA (Rideau Valley Conservation Authority) for their latest data.
- Oxygen levels continue to improve. It is hoped OLLA can convince the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), at a later time, that the levels will support fish stocking. The warmer the lake, the lower the oxygen levels.
- It appears we have 5 pairs of loons this year, which is about the maximum a lake of our size can support. Generally speaking, the Canadian loon population is not thriving as we would like. They are doing better in the western provinces.

Phil thanked Doug for his report.

8. RVCA REGARDING ALGAE SURVEY:

Doug introduced Kaitlin Brady who is here to discuss the Algae Watch program sponsored by RVCA.

Kaitlin distributed flyers explaining the program and business cards with contact information for RVCA plus how to access the survey. A copy of each is attached to the file minutes.

She explained the benefits of having low algae in the lake, but also addressed the benefits of algae, depending on the species. Algae are part of the food chain of the lake, but excessive amounts can be detrimental.

Kaitlin noted the concerns regarding run off from fertilizers some property owners use to enhance their lawns and/or concerns of leaky septic systems or holding tanks.

RVCA wishes to learn more about algae vegetation in local lakes, and would like property owners to complete their survey, which will take about 15 minutes to finish. The organization is hoping to obtain a research grant to investigate more thoroughly.

Property owners may request a property assessment to assist in promoting healthy shore lines. Help is available in choosing appropriate plants to act as a shoreline buffer between the lake and their lawns.

It was noted Otter Lake is in its 7th or 8th year of zebra mussels, which result in greater lake clarity, and may help improve oxygen levels. The population level seems to now be stabilized.

Doug thanked Kaitlin for her presentation.

9. CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABLE WATERSHEDS ON SHORELINE ASSESSMENTS:

A representative from RVCA was expected to address the above today, but was unable to attend. However, flyers regarding the program were available, and one is attached to the file minutes.

If interested in participating, contact Andrea or Meaghan at 613-692-3571 or 1-800-267-3504.

10. KARL FIANDER REGARDING MUNICIPAL TAXES:

It was suggested Karl's overheads be added to OLLA's web site.

A copy of Karl's overheads is attached to the file copy of the minutes. Some comments are recorded below:

- Taxation systems are not perfect!
- Property owners are only able to wield influence at the township level.
- The local tax rate has not increased for the first time in 13 years.
- Waterfront assessment has gone up by 60% since 2005.
- Eastern Ontario cottage evaluations have increased about 20% over a 4 year period.
- Karl attempted to organize local lake associations to come together and speak with one voice. However, although these other groups were sympathetic, they would not agree to such an organization at this time.
- Ron Holman is now aware of the great difference between tax rates for water front property owners and non lake front owners.
- If taxpayers wish to influence the township budget, they must provide input long before the budget is approved in April.
- Most tax dollars are spent on non-water front priorities.
- Water front owners provide 70% of township revenues, but only receive 20% of services.
- If lake front owners wish to make recommendations for next year's budget, organization should begin this fall. A new council will be elected in 2014. Karl suggests forming an ad hoc committee to make budget recommendations. Ron Homan has announced he will not run for office in 2014.
- Karl stressed seasonal residents DO HAVE A VOTE in local elections.

- It was suggested OLLA organize an all candidates information session prior to elections, so property owners can be better informed.
- Lake residents need to be educated on issues concerning the township in relation to taxes, but how to get the message out?
- Karl was asked if he would prepare an article regarding this issue for publication in a special newsletter. He agreed to do so.
- This special issue should also emphasize how well Otter Lake is doing in improving and maintaining its health.
- Emphasis should be placed on the necessary time line needed if we are to influence the budget.
- It was pointed out the township also receives revenue from building permits and requests for variances.

Karl was thanked for once again providing important information for lake front property owners.

11. LAKE PLAN:

Marcia was asked to an update on a possible lake plan. She emphasized how difficult it is for one person to co-ordinate a plan. Many people are needed to make it happen. It is not feasible for OLLA to hire a company to complete a plan due to the expense.

It is important lake residents be pro-active rather than reactive. She reminded the audience how the proposed oil transfer station on Highway 15 was staved off.

A lake plan sets a standard for lake properties, which could be translated into by-laws if necessary.

There are 315 properties on Otter Lake and approximately 100 OLLA members. Many people need to be involved in producing a meaningful plan, and for many reasons, it is challenging to find enough people to participate.

Why have lake plans? A lake plan will help ensure future water quality, healthy flora and fauna and a healthy wild life population.

It was estimated there are about 30% full time residents now on the lake.

If anyone is interested in getting involved with organizing a lake plan, please contact Marcia.

Residents are asked to be careful regarding wake from their boats when close to shore for the sake of nesting wild life and to help prevent erosion.

12. ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.