



Skootamatta District Ratepayers Association

P O Box 146 Cloyne Ontario K0H 1K0

2021 SDRA Annual General Meeting

Date: Saturday July 3rd, 2021

Time: 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Online via Zoom

The Formal Meeting started at 10:02 a.m.

Welcome and Introduction of SDRA Board Members Joel Arthurs 5 mins

President: Joel Arthurs

Vice President: Marianne Plumb

Treasurer: Bill Blake

Secretary: Carla Baetz

Lake Steward: **Vacant**

Webmaster: Jackie Lessard-Bleecker

Communications Director: Paul Lindsay

Director: Christie Arthurs

Director: Jim Chinnick

Foodbank Update Gordon McCulloch 5 mins

Gord McCulloch was not able to attend via zoom, but he forwarded a note to Joel to thank members for generous donations and noted the increased need of the foodbank at this time, especially given Covid and the rise in price of food.

Impact of COVID Marianne Plumb 5 mins

Marianne reflected on the impact of Covid-19 on our piece of heaven here at the Lake. It was noted that for out of province and out of country members these summers have been especially difficult. Last summer was the first time for many when they were not able to get to the lake. During the Summer of 2020 we were able to have dock decorating and the Labour Day fireworks. Welcome to Summer, 2021, and notably, July 1 when we were able to have our boat parade with 14-15 boats and reinstate that tradition on our lake. Our out of province members are now planning on visiting and out of country visitors will, hopefully, be able to return this summer as well. We are not able to have the Lake Festival this year, but are hoping that the Potluck may be held in August. The Fireworks are planned for September.



Great Skootamatta Ice Contest Winners

Paul Lindsay

5 mins

On April 5 the ice went out which was very early compared to past years. There were 3 correct guesses this year: Glen Bible, Nancy Gilmour and Beth Buck. Paul rolled the dice and declared that Beth Buck was the winner. Beth will be sent her Prize which is a \$30 gift certificate for Ice Cream.

Approval of July 2020 AGM Minutes

Paul Lindsay

5 mins

Motion to accept: Wayne Arthurs; Marilyn Cole Seconded
None against; Motion carried

Approval of Slate of Directors

Paul Lindsay

5 mins

Proposed Board Slate

President: Joel Arthurs

Vice President: Marianne Plumb

Treasurer: John Coombs

Secretary: Carla Baetz

Lake Steward: **Vacant**

Webmaster: Jackie Lessard-Bleecker

Communications Director: Paul Lindsay

Director: Christie Arthurs

Director: Jim Chinnick

Director: Bill Blake

Call for New Directors

Paul Lindsay

5 mins

Please contact SDRA by email or at the website if you are interested.

Approval of Slate of Directors:

Motion to accept: John Coombs; Wayne Arthurs seconded

None against

Motion Carried


Guest Speakers

Friends of Bon Echo

Jamie Uson

10 mins

Jamie thanked the SDRA for the invitation. Jamie is the Executive Director of Friends of Bon Echo, a position which he has held for 1.5 years. Jamie moved from Toronto to Cloyne about 3 years ago, fell in love with the Park and became Executive Director in January, 2020, 2 months prior to Covid hitting. Friends is a not for profit organization with ties to Ontario Parks. This summer, Greystones



Cafe and gift shop will continue to run. The Art show and boat tours will not be running this year but hopefully will next year. Six Summer students have been hired this year. They are provided with above minimum wage pay and a rich learning opportunity that extends beyond “ringing a till”. Friends of Bon Echo also provides two \$500 bursaries to two students to assist with tuition fees. Every dollar raised is re-invested in the park.

Question: How do people become members? This summer, through Greystones Cafe is the best way. Website: bonechofriends.ca should be up and running within the next 10 days.

Question: Are services other than the gift shop running this summer? The Visitor Centre has been closed by Provincial Parks and Bon Echo is not able to run other programs. However, the Visitor Centre is running something new this summer: Free - 30 minute walk with a naturalist that is run by Park.

Vice President, Marianne Plumb thanked Jamie Uson and noted that the Cliff Top Trail excursion and Boat Tour have been greatly enjoyed by her guests, and encouraged all who have not done so, to explore these offerings when they become available again in the future.

Mazinaw-Lanark Forest Inc

Margaret Hatton 10 mins

With Matt Mertins leaving, a greater load has fallen on Margaret Hatton’s shoulders. Thank you for the MLFI presentation by Margaret who provided a brief overview of the current plan. New 10-year plan was supposed to start April 1 2021 but has been delayed. So the current plan, for the Fall of 2021, is actually an extension of the previous plan. Operations are on hold until October 2021.

Update on MLFI Issue Resolution

Jim Chinnick 10 mins


One of the key initiatives of the SDRA Board has been responding to the latest Forest Management Plan (FMP) for the Mazinaw-Lanark Forest region.

This plan is a 10 year plan, covering the years 2021 to 2031, and logically follows the previous 10 year plan that covered the years 2011 – 2021.

Some of you may recall that the SDRA Board of the day also commented on that previous 10 year plan, and indeed had some success in modifying the plan to meet concerns of the waterfront property owners. Their success was admirable, and the changes they fought for have been carried forward to this new 10 year plan – that is the good news.

In reviewing the new 10 year plan, we identified three main areas of concern:

1. The forest management guideline document (also known as the Standard Site Guide or SSG) was suspect at its inception in 2010, does not represent best science today, is totally forestry best interest focused, and does not represent the interests of other stakeholders in the Crown Land forests, such as waterfront property owners.

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2. Driven by government policy and the SSG guideline document, the new FMP does not adequately protect waterfront property owners' interests in topics such as:
 - a. No buffer zones in wood harvesting adjacent to private properties (what you saw in September when you closed up your property may bear little resemblance to what you see in the next spring)
 - b. No harvesting buffer zones along public and private roads paid for by waterfront property owners
 - c. Inadequate protection of wetlands that directly feed into our lakes
 - d. Limited protection of views from the lakes, and forest trails that we use as part of our Lake Experience

Along with 9 other Lake Associations we took our concerns through the official review process, including the Issue Resolution process with senior management at the MNRF. Our concerns were largely rejected, mostly on the basis that the FMP was developed in conformance to the forestry goals of the guidelines. There was no reflection of the multiple responsibilities of MNRF towards protecting the environment in the interests of other users of the crown forests.


It was noted that this result is consistent with the legislative direction of the current Ontario Government, which has passed legislation undoing decades of work to protect the environment. Under the tag line "Open for Business" this government has introduced several bills that take away responsibility for development zoning from Conservation Authorities and Municipalities and given this over to Ministers of the Government. They have changed provisions of the Environmental Assessment Act to make this a cabinet decision, and they have explicitly exempted forestry activities from any requirements of the Environmental Assessment Act and the Endangered Species Act.

3. The newest version of the Forest Sector Strategy (2020) requires government agencies to reduce barriers to further expansion of the forestry industry.

Question: Should we have FOCA involved in this? **Answer:** Yes, FOCA has had an involvement in re-writing the SSG planning document in the 2014 – 2018 timeframe, but this initiative was terminated under the new government. There is apparently a new version of the SSG being developed by MNRF, but this is an internal effort and we will not see anything until perhaps 2022. We should, however, re-engage FOCA in any initiatives to push back supporting our interests.

Question: If we need to make noise? How? To Whom? it would be wrong to limit our concerns to this specific riding - if 9 other Lake Associations are also unhappy, then there are many people involved which includes many ridings.

Question: is it possible to obtain a copy of Jim's comments?



Christie and Jim will work on a document (or documents) to send out to membership to act as a template for taking this issue forward..

Thank you to Jim Chinnick for his hard work on this.

Margaret Hatton was asked to visit areas around the lake with some board members and agreed to do so this August/September.

SDRA Business

Approval of 2021 Treasurer's Report

Bill Blake

10 mins

Thanks were extended to John Coombs for offering to take over the role. He comes with vast financial knowledge. Nancy Kallina was thanked for her work in supporting Bill in his role as treasurer.

As of yesterday, we have 154 members for this year, including eleven members who did not renew last year but have renewed this year and 6 new members. Our target is usually around 200 and it looks like we are well on our way to achieving that goal. The Food bank donation is commendable and generous. Financially, we are in good shape. Bill will continue to remain on the board and will continue to support John Coombs as he takes the reins as Treasurer. Joel thanked Bill for his work as Treasurer, and Nancy Kallina for the support she has offered.

Question: who are honorary members? no longer on the lake but they are still sent newsletters. People who had given above and beyond were granted honorary membership. Currently, there are 2 honorary members.

Motion: to accept treasurer's report: John Coombs; seconded by Wayne Arthurs. None not in favour. Motion Carried.

Shoreline Camping

Joel Arthurs

5 mins

Many months ago, the SDRA presented to council on this topic. Joel Arthurs, SDRA President, Henry Hogg, Reeve, Tony Fritsch, Deputy Reeve and Councillor, Helen Yanch formed a Township working committee which also included 2 staff members. Representatives from MNR/Bancroft office also joined the discussions. The Committee worked to develop a by-law. The committee's focus was on shoreline road allowances (66' from high water mark) and NOT crown land which is a Ministry concern. The Committee developed a by-law regarding camping, which was passed by council. The Committee will meet again in the fall and Joel will continue this work into the fall. Joel thanked the committee members and looks forward to continuing this work.

Question: asked for Reeve, Henry Hogg's perspective. The Reeve noted that there was nothing more to add but asked for more questions regarding issues regarding camping. He asked if there

were continued concerns regarding boat launches? Yes, there was a boat launch camping issue within the past few weeks that the OPP addressed and that required the campers to leave. Henry said he would seek an update from his staff on Monday.

Question: signage? The MNR plan to post signage at “hot spots”. There is a professionally-posted sign on the beach and at the Upper Lake boat launch which seem to be having a beneficial impact.

Question: where can camping take place?

Accessing by vehicle without a permit and cutting of trees is not allowed on Crown Land. Under the current by-law there are some restrictions. Loud noise after a certain hour (e.g, music, fireworks) is a reportable offence. Township by-law officers can be contacted but not available 24/7. However, if “disturbing of the peace” laws are broken the OPP can be contacted. Permanent structures are not permitted but a tent can be used and brush removal is permitted. Members are asking for some additional form of control. This has grown to a point where more trails could potentially be established. During the committee meetings there was a discussion about blocking those sites but MNR did not favour this. A member raised concerns about the Bay in Upper Lake where 4 cars and a camper have been present and installation of a dock is also now apparent. Four tents are currently on the site and the dock is on municipal township road allowance. A request was made for greater control including signage and disallowance of vehicle accessed shoreline camping. MNR had talked about signage and will be posting signs at hot spots. There were requests for blocking vehicle access, but MNR was not in favour of controlling this. The dock was built on township land. Can we find some way of shutting down the site or at least having this site comply with the regulations?

Henry Hogg, Reeve agreed to see what he could find out on Monday following this meeting (July 5, 2021). Henry had to leave the meeting at this point.

Constitution Update

Marianne Plumb 5 mins

A proposed amendment to the Constitution was circulated last week to members. The first part of the proposed amendment is to ensure on-line meetings are permitted by constitution.

The second part of the amendment is to remove gender pronouns from the constitution.

Motion: Nancy Kallina, Paul Lindsay seconded

None against

Motion carried

Donation By-law

Joel Arthurs 5 mins

Acceptance of monetary and non-monetary donations. This by-law was circulated last week to the membership and is aimed to increase transparency and provide direction to the Board on the handling of donations.

Motion: John Coombs; Seconded Bill Blake. None against. Motion carried



Lake Health Update

Joel Arthurs

10 mins

Joel encouraged members to consider taking on the Lake Steward role.

Bi-annual water testing was completed in August 2020 (later that year) and therefore some variations - e-coli elevated but hopefully just a blip and not a trend; Calcium levels have continued dropping which is good news, especially in regard to zebra mussels.

Lake Partner Program: has re-started this year thanks to FOCA; includes 5 locations where we test in spring and monthly Secchi depth testing. We are always looking for volunteers and will provide training and it does not take much time.

This year, we started to implement the Water Rangers Program which includes 3 seasonal testing measurements to assess how the lake changes over the year. This will bring down the cost of bi-annual testing and provide a better picture of the lake health.

Question: Was e-coli high all over? yes, in most areas, but may have been result of end of summer testing

Question: Can we test again this year? Board will discuss and get a quote for testing. Nancy Kallina offered to help

Member Questions to the SDRA Board

All

10 mins

Question: Could you include a constitutional provision to include proxies to ensure we have quorum? Perhaps in future AGMs there could be a simple proxy form to gather additional votes. Alternatively, assign a member's vote to a member of the board. This will be taken to the board at our next meeting... Carla will add to the next board meeting agenda. Available to members who know that they are not able to attend but would like their voices heard.

Formal Meeting Adjourned

Joel Arthurs

Wayne Arthurs motioned; John Coombs seconded Carried