

DRAFT Minutes BIRPOA Annual General Meeting July 31 2011

Meeting called by: John Curley, President, BIRPOA Executive Committee
Recorder: Siobhan Harty (substituting for Secretary)

Attendees:

Susan Cavenagh (#57) *Bob Cavenagh (#57) Stephen Reid (#79)
*Alice Howarth (#94) *Sharron Curley (#75) *John Curley (#24)
*John Feltmate (#24) Paola Durando (#3) Al Diemert (#3)
Sylvia French (#95) Orland French (#95) *Ry Weisiger (#55)
Kathie Weisiger (#55) Gordon Chisholm (#63) Linda Chisholm (#63)
Pam Letourneau (#85) Rick Milner (#70, 78) Marg Milner (#70, 78)
Sylvia Robertson (#81) Siobhan Harty (#54) *Russell Green (#54)
Andy Greiner (#64) How Williams (#64) Donna Fish (#86)
Dough Fish (#86) Pat Dunnigan (#71) Sarah Dunnigan (#71)
Peter Hanson (#71) Dianne Hanson (#71) Adam Hanson (#71)
Laura Hanson (#71)

* = Member of BIRPOA Executive Committee

1. Opening & Welcome

John Curley (President, BIRPOA Executive Committee) opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone. BIRPOA members introduced themselves.

2. Update on Finances / Memberships

Alice Howarth updated members on the status of BIRPOA's finances and membership:

Opening Bank Balance: \$3,328.34
Deposits for 2011: \$1280
Expenses:
Mail outs: \$133
Repairs and signage \$101
FOCA membership: \$185
Directors insurance: \$918
Balance: \$3275.00

There is a total of 21 memberships paid up for this year.

3. GALA Award

On behalf of BIRPOA, Bob Cavenaugh awarded the 2011 GALA Award (Got A Lot Accomplished) to the Marion and Karl Reid Family for their significant and ongoing contributions to cottage life on Birch Island. Stephen Reid accepted the award on behalf of the Reid family.

4. Trails / Rights of Way

John Feltmate provided an update on the rights of way project as they relate to the island trails. He indicated that the process is moving forward. There were no questions from members.

5. Sand Lake Marine

No one from Glover family was present at the AGM to speak directly to marina issues. However, John Curley had spoken to David Glover before the meeting and relayed the following information to members: David suggested that BIRPOA consider purchasing a battery booster that could be kept at the marina and used by members. In mid-September, the Marine will shut down the existing fuel availability in order to update the equipment. Sand Lake Marine will not be re-opening the gas service this season and cottagers are encouraged to top up their tanks before mid-September. Sand Lake Marine will be closed on October 15 for a Glover family wedding. On October 16, Sand Lake Marine will close for the season.

6. Trails and Trail Maintenance / Signs / Causeway Safety

Ry Weisiger provided an update to members on trail maintenance. He noted that there was a lot of damage on the trails earlier this season as a result of the storms this spring. Ry offered to assist anyone in removing trees on the trails and invited members to call him at 613-359-6279.

Ry also indicated that the trails have been mowed but he would be pleased to do more maintenance work as required.

John Feltmate informed members that the project to put signage on the trails has been completed. He welcomed suggestions from members on how to improve signage on different parts of the island.

7. Loon Count

Bob Cavanaugh provided an update on the health of the loon population around the island. He reported that at last count there are approximately 28 to 32 adult loons on the lake. As well, 10 chicks of different ages have been counted.

At the end of last season there were approximately 32 adults and 5 chicks.

A few fights among loons over territory have been observed on the lake suggesting that the lake might have reached a saturation point for loons.

8. Library

Bob Cavanaugh reported on the success of the library. There have been a very large number of donations, for which he thanked cottagers. However, he indicated that it has been necessary to cull some of the books and so some of the least popular ones have been removed. Bob thanked cottagers for their patronage of the library but requested that borrowers be sure to return books so that other cottagers can enjoy them.

Treasure Island Books: Bob reported that the Library has created a collection of **Treasured Island Books** related to local history and culture. Again, Bob requested that people borrowing these books be sure to return them to the Library.

Children's books: the library has increased its holdings of children's books. Bob noted that it would be interesting to have collections of children's books.

9. Lake Plans / Stewardship

Bob Cavanaugh introduced this item by explaining to members that many cottagers / lake association in Ontario have developed lake plans to identify their strategic needs, set priorities and leverage partnerships with townships and other associations to meet shared objectives. Lake plans typically have a 5-year cycle from inception to publication. They are based on an initial survey of members, outreach work with other associations, meetings of cottagers, drafting, discussions with stakeholders and a formal approval system followed by publication.

A survey of existing lake plans shows that the issues of focus include: environment and water quality, impact on swimming, safe boating, fishing and stocking of lakes, declining fish species, access to first responders, cottage maintenance and fire prevention, overdevelopment of the natural shoreline, noise, and light pollution. Bob asked members to identify some of their values for Birch Island and Sand Lake that could form the basis of a further discussion.

Members suggested:

- Quietness and tranquility

- Invasive species, e.g., zebra mussels

- Light pollution at night

- Control of deer and coyote populations

- Weeds in the water: can machines that harvest weeds not also take them away?

- Safe boating in particular in the canal and near loon populations

- Pre-season fishing

- Health of tree population: invasive species

Bob brought the discussion to a close by noting that the issues identified by BIRPOA members were very similar to those that formed the basis of a plan developed by another lake association.

A discussion was held on the level of interest among members to create a lake plan and the process for doing so. Bob took a straw vote to gauge the level of interest in moving forward. A majority of members present signaled their interest.

10. Good neighbourliness

Ry Weisiger noted that there is a risk of fire on the island as a

result of dry wood on the trails and brush piles. He encouraged members to keep brush piles to a minimum to avoid a potential fire. He also invited members to contact him should there be an issue on the trails that requires attention.

Bob Cavanaugh added that it is important to keep limbs away from overhanging wires so that if a fire did start it would not spread. Russell Green also mentioned that the fire ban sign that is located on Davis Lock Road off of Highway 15 is covered with branches and cannot be seen easily. John Curley indicated that he would follow up.

11. General discussion

Trash day: John Curley asked whether there would be interest in having a trash day so that cottagers could dispose of unwanted items. It was suggested that the event be planned for next spring and that the Sand Lake Marine barge be rented for a day. The Curleys will look into the costs and the types of materials that can be disposed of.

Paola Durando said that she has a small ATV cart that is available for use. Please contact her at cottage #3 if you are interested.
Website: John Curley indicated that he was exploring a 'members' only' area of Birch Island's website that would be password protected.

Paola Durando thanked John Curley for setting up a Twitter account for BIRPOA that can serve as an information point for messages, especially in relationship to storms, power outages etc.
Sharron Curley reported on internet usage on the island. She did a review of companies selling internet sticks and will post it on the BIRPOA website.

Septic Cleanout: Al Diemert inquired about the process for cleaning out septic tanks. Sharron Curley reported that Dan O'Grady, who provides this service, will likely come to the Island in August to do the clean-out for cottagers who have requested it.

Canoe Race: Marg Milner announced that The Annual Canoe Race will take place at 2 pm on Sunday September 4, 2011 starting at Lot 70. There will be trophies. The race will be followed by a corn roast and hot dogs. A notice will be posted on the BIRPOA bulletin board at Sand Lake Marine.

12. Executive Committee Membership

The following property owners will form the Executive Committee for the next year:

President: Jae Shaw

Vice President: To be determined.

Past President: John Curley

Treasurer: Alice Howarth

Secretary: Andy Shaw

Members: Ry Weisiger, Russell Green, John Feltmate

Paolo Durando volunteered to work on the Library

13. Adjourn

John Curley thanked everyone for attending.
Meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.