

Birch Island Residential Property Owner's Association

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting, Sunday, August 5, 2007

Introductions

The meeting was convened at 10:10 am. Orland thanked everyone for coming and for the support received from members this past year. Everyone introduced themselves via name and lot number. There were 30 persons in attendance. An updated list of Birch Island Property Owners was provided as a handout.

Minutes of 2006 AGM

Motion to approve by S. Curley, seconded by B. Cavanaugh...so moved.

President's Report

Orland provided an overview of initiatives undertaken by the executive in the past year some of which would be covered later in the meeting. He noted that as of June the Rideau waterway has been accepted as a World Heritage Site and that there were many local activities celebrating this designation as well as the fact it is the 175th anniversary.

Treasurer's report : Alice Howarth

Alice provided her financial report highlights of which are noted below. The report was accepted. (Moved by B. Johnson, seconded by J. Feltmate...car).

- As of Aug 1st 2006 the balance on account was \$4948.45
- As of Aug 1st, 2007, the balance on account is \$3343.25
- A complete copy of the Treasurer's report is included with these minutes.
- The increase in membership fees from \$25 to \$40 was required as the cost of membership in FOCA plus Director's Insurance is \$1000/year. Unfortunately, the insurance is a required item due to potential liability. See AGM 2006 minutes for more information on Director's Insurance and FOCA. .

Membership report: Alice Howarth, John Curley

2005 paid members: 22

2006 paid members: 38

2007 paid members: 30 (At start of AGM)

Associate Membership: Orland French

There is a potential for the Sand Lake Association to become inactive and existing members may be interested in joining BIRPOA with a main interest in keeping informed on lake stewardship issues. With this in mind the executive has had several discussions regarding associate membership “ where an associate member is non-voting and the cost of membership is ½ the cost of a full membership.” This concept was introduced and was endorsed provided it was clear that this in no way implied access to Birch Island/BIRPOA facilities.

Loon Report: Chuck Laudermilch

Loon counts are done on behalf of the Canadian Lakes Survey. The annual survey covers the whole lake. Chuck reported 30 pairs of loons and 3 young this year. There are also more Osprey pairs and Blue Herons. Some of the loon platforms need maintenance. Chuck would welcome anyone interested in helping out.

Trail Report: Chuck Laudermilch

The trail committee (Chuck, John Curley, John Feltmate, Bill Johnson) started this year with a survey of all existing trails in order to come up with an action plan and priorities. In the past residents have taken care of the trails near them. However this is not always possible for a variety of reasons. BIRPOA still encourages people to take care of their own area but if you can't, you can call a member of the trail committee who will organize getting it done. At times BIRPOA may contract for any trails that may be too big for the committee to take on.

- Bob Cavenagh mentioned several of his neighbours have commented that they would be willing to pay for additional clearing. *To be discussed at the next executive meeting.*

Thanks go out to Art Horton who has used his machine to trim the grass on all the major trails in early and mid-season. Everyone appreciates his volunteering his time and effort for the enjoyment of all.

MPAC Follow Up: John Curley

Assisted by John Feltmate, assessment data was gathered for 56 Birch Island properties. John then analyzed the data and found that in general the assessments were in line with potential sale values. He also provided a formula for working out your assessment to compare with your actual assessed value. (\$80K + \$60/sq. ft is the base line formula). See the website for the complete report.

Web site: John Curley

The site is a mix of news, reference and archival information including directions, maps, minutes, newsletters, Birch Island history, etc. John is always looking for content whether it is photos, local events, useful contact numbers and anything else members would find useful. Send him your input. Contributors welcome. The photo area has really grown since last year. The site averages 17 visitors a day up from 10 daily last year. The only website cost is the \$25 for the domain name registration. New to the site is an area for members to use to post free ads. (Suppliers can post to the site for \$40/year which may bring in some income!)

Septic Tank Reinspection Program: Ralph Robertson

The municipality has agreed to a pilot program to run this summer. The scope was to test 10 units per lake and 5 lakes would be covered, Sand Lake being one of the five. They have contracted the RVCA (Rideau Valley Conservation Authority) to run the program. James Saunders of the RVCA contacted Ralph in his role as president of the Sand Lake Association and a long time advocate for such a program. The logic behind a reinspection program is to start with older septic systems as they are the most likely to have problems. The municipality however plans to ask for volunteers for the reinspection program rather than select older systems. Fears are that the program will fail with this approach and it is disappointing that council is showing poor stewardship for this heritage resource. Ralph noted that an inspection is not an invasive ordeal and that they normally find 20% of systems need remedial work. Ralph will go to council with BIRPOA concerns along with those of the Sand Lake Association. He noted that Sand Lake does have problem systems and knows of areas where raw sewage is entering the lake.

Signage & Trails: John Feltmate

Using a large laminated map, John was able to point out where existing and proposed signs. Cottagers are encouraged to purchase a cottage/lot sign. Cost is \$10 for one sign and lower if you need two. You can order yours by contacting Alice Howarth.

Marina Business

The marina asked everyone to ensure their guests/renters know that there is no garbage disposal at the marina. The dumpsters at the marina are for private use for scrap metal etc. only.

Fire (& Cottage) Safety: Bob Cavanaugh

Bob has written a Fire Document for the web site. This covers the status of the pumper and broader fire safety issues. David Glover noted the pumper is in good shape but cannot be operated easily. ***Don't rely on it for emergencies. It's main use should be for "controlled" burning. In case of fire, call 911 and then call the marina.*** Note that a burn permit (available at Gordanniers Hardware) is required at all times. Camp fires are the only exception and then only when there is no burning ban in effect. There are severe financial penalties if you cause a fire.

Bob plans to broaden the fire document and create a Cottage Safety Plan - what to do in any emergency and not just for ourselves but our guests, pets etc. He passed out a questionnaire looking for input.

"Branch" Library: Bob Cavanaugh

The "Branch" Library will be located under the trees(hence the name) at the rear of lots 55 & 57. It will be a simple shed built sometime in September. He is looking for:

- volunteers to help with the construction

- materials - new & used
- books
- volunteer librarians
- cash is welcome as well!

Garage Sale: Bill Johnson

The 1st annual Garage Sale is scheduled for Sat. August 10th. This is a garage sale with a new twist. Sellers put their items on their docks and buyers boat around looking for treasures. Both “for sale” and “free” items will be available.

Telephone List: Bill Johnson

Bill created a list of useful phone numbers and they are now posted on the website. Further additions and refinements will be done so contact Bill or any member of the executive with your suggestions.

Election of officers

Ralph noted that all the existing executive were willing to stay on and asked if anyone was interested in joining the executive. Jay and Andy Shaw and Ceyhan Lennon put their names forward. It was moved by John Calu, seconded by Karl Reid to accept the proposed executive slate. Motion approved.

Other business

Bob Cavanaugh noted his concerns with boats going at high speed near to shore damaging boats tied to docks and dangerous for swimmers. He has also observed boats coming out of bays at high speed, an additional danger to swimmers and other boaters. He suggested we minimize our impact on the landscape by leaving trees and shorelines as untouched as possible. At night we should be aware of light pollution and use the minimum lighting necessary.

One of the great things about Birch Island is the trails and interiors and knowing children have a great place to roam. A reminder to not let your dogs roam. They can frighten people and go where they are not welcome. There is also danger to the pets themselves as has also happened. A reminder will be included in the next newsletter.

A question was asked about testing of water at the spring. No formal testing is being done. Many cottagers have installed systems to purify lake water and don't use the spring. Anyone who uses the water on a regular basis should undertake the testing themselves. You can have your water tested at the Ministry of Health offices in Kingston or Smiths Falls Monday thru Thursday.

Adjournment: @ 12:00

TREASURER'S REPORT

B.I.R.P.O.A. Annual Meeting August 5th, 2007

An error (due to incorrect addition) was made in last year's report, the total of dues collected from January to August 5th, 2006 was noted as \$1,100.00 and should have read \$1,005.00. Therefore the final balance originally calculated as \$5,043.61 should have read \$4,948.61. The forwarded balance is less a .16 cent bank deposit fee on July 31 st, 2006, at \$4,948.45.

Forwarded Balance **\$4,948.45**

Credits	Fees Aug. 6, '06 -Aug. 1, '07	\$950.00	
	Payment for signs	\$70.00	
	Total Credits	\$1,020.00	\$5,968.45

Debits	FOCA fees '06	\$152.48	
	FOCA fees '07	\$196.10	
	Director's Insurance '06	\$837.00	
	Director's Insurance '07	\$837.00	
	Lot # Signs	\$426.36	
	Attendance at Rideau Waterway		
	Symposium	\$36.19	
	Banking deposit fees	\$0.80	
	Food annual mtg. '06	\$24.00	
	Fallen Tree Clearing	\$75.00	
	Total Debits	\$2,624.93	

Balance on Account August 5th, 2007 **\$3343.52**

Outstanding credits are for signs ordered (\$70.00).

Outstanding debits are for stamps and food for this meeting (approx. \$30.00).

Submitted by Alice Howarth, Treasurer.