



Big Rideau Lake Association (BRLA)

Annual General Meeting: Minutes

July 4, 2009

Portland Town Hall, Portland, Ontario

10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

In Attendance

Board Officers: President: Doug Arrand, Vice President: Ed Brigden, Treasurer: Barbara Keys, Secretary: Melanie Sterling

Board Members: Toby Spry (Marine Safety); Peter Copestake (Environment); Jennifer Trant (Communications); Doug Good (Director at Large), Carol Harris (Director at Large)

Board Regrets: Peter Merkley, Heather Heins (Membership)

General Members: Approximately thirty BRLA Members attended

1. Call to Order

Doug Arrand called the meeting to order at 10:14 am

2. Welcome & Introduction of Guests and Board Members

Doug Arrand introduced Jay DeBernardi, Fire Chief of the Township of Rideau Lakes, Scott Norton (Bearwise Program) Ministry of Natural Resources, Jamie Saunders from the Mississippi Rideau Septic System Office and Buzz Bowles the President of the Portland Historic Society. Doug also wished to thank former Directors Tom Houston and Ross Walker for their continued support with the RLEF and BRLA.

3. Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was observed in memory of loved ones lost over the past year.

4. Minutes of AGM Held July 5, 2008

Doug Arrand called for corrections, clarifications, errors and omissions to the minutes of the Meeting held July 5th, 2008. They're being none, Michael Houghton moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Diane Hambleton. Approved by all.

5. Guest :Fire Chief Jay DeBernardi

Mr. DeBernardi discussed the tragic loss of the Walker residence on the North Shore due to an electrical storm. He discussed the response time from the fire department and indicated that in the next month they would be inspecting cottage roads for vehicular access conditions. Mr. DeBernardi indicated that smoke alarms are a current requirement in the fire code and reviewed other burn bylaws i.e. No daytime burning in the fall and Carbon Dioxide detectors would be a requirement in years to come. Leaflets were left at the back of the room for members.

Guest: Buzz Bowles Portland Historical Society

Buzz Bowles introduced the Portland Historical Society and its objectives. The society currently has 37 members along with a constitution and Board of Directors. The goal is to document, collect and preserve the history of Portland. A virtual museum has been started on the web www.portlandontario.com and is a work in progress. In 1-2 years time the goal is to start funding for a museum. The society would like to start recording electronically for reference purposes local history (events, photographs, maps etc) by scanning them into a computerized database. Memberships are \$10/year or \$100/15 years. Buzz noted that the BRLA has joined the society.

6. President's Report – Doug Arrand

A. Thanks & Recognition

Doug Arrand wished to thank Jennifer Trant for her support in serving six years as Communication Director and Driftwords Editor.

B. Highlights of the year

- Annual Fireworks display- Thanks to Mike Fraser and volunteers. They fill sandbags and fire pails as well as wire and design the show. Unfortunately, Doug noted that the BRLA suffered a 2nd case of vandalism on Cow Island and the water pails were stolen and locks were damaged.
- Sailing Camp- in spite of weather, there were 24 students in total- great turnout.
- Gov't Liason- worked closely with Rideau Mac Resort (a commercial trailer park) with regards to zoning. Also monitored development of the Crawley property at the Narrows for re-development.
- SummerSounds was extremely successful in 2008 and the money raised was used to rehabilitate Cow Island.
- BRLA Raffle- Members Dr. and Mrs. Amy donated a Robert Bateman print to be used for a raffle. The proceeds from the raffle will be used to rebuild shoalmakers. The draw will take place at this year's SummerSounds.
- Centennial Plans-BRLA has partnered with the Rideau Lakes Town Council. Doug Good will discuss the upcoming events.
- Doug Arrand encouraged members to use Cow Island for the recreation programs and daycamp.
- Road side signs were inventoried and new signs will be built for 2010.
- Envirocamp for children ages 6-12 will be offered July 20th-24th in conjunction with the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority
- Doug introduced Amy Shackell who was hired as the BRLA Day Camp Counsellor

7. Treasurer's Report – Ed Brigden

Financial statements were circulated and summarized.

A. Auditor's Report for year ended December 31, 2009

Ed Brigden wished to thank the auditors Wilkinson & Company for their hard work this past year. Ed offered a detailed review of the financial position of the BRLA, based on the auditor's report from Wilkinson & Company, circulated at the meeting.

Moved by Ed Brigden, seconded by Doug Good to adopt the Audited Financial statements. Approved by all.

B. Motion to appoint Wilkinson & Company as auditors for current year ending December 31, 2008

Moved by Pat Chamberlain, seconded by Ross Walker to appoint Wilkinson & Company as auditors for the year ending December 31, 2008. Approved by all.

8. Membership Report –Doug Arrand

Doug Arrand reported on BRLA Membership on behalf of the Membership Director Heather Heins. Membership renewal numbers are approx. 180 members to date which is down this year from last. There are and 9 Business sponsors. The goal is to have 400 members by the end of the year. There was mention to increase the number of membership brochures in grocery stores and liquor stores.

9. Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation (RLEF) Report – David Bearman (Chairman of the Board)

A. General

The Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation supports environmental work on and around the Big Rideau and Upper Rideau Lakes. Seven directors are elected by the BRLA (5 from BRLA and 2 from URLA) David Bearman wished to thank George Lamont for his contribution to the Foundation. David reported that early in the year, the RLEF was active with the Township and Rideau Mac Resort. An agreement was made to limit the number of trailers and open up the public lands around Rideau Mac.

In the second part of the year, there was an extended discussion regarding the BRLA & RLEF. Both organizations felt that the RLEF should be directly responsible to the BRLA Board. David explained that he disagreed with this view as he felt the Foundation should have more independence. David said that he hoped that the RLEF would continue to carry out a series of activities however he would be stepping down.

The BRLA will nominate two Directors for the RLEF.

Doug Arrand thanked David for his leadership and support with the Foundation.

B. RLEF Treasurer's Report

George Lamont (Treasurer) has been a valuable member of the Foundation and Doug Arrand wished to thank him for his contribution. George sent his regrets.

10. Committee Reports

A. Communications

Jennifer Trant explained the two methods that the BRLA communicates with its members. The first is by the BRLA website and the second is through the Driftwords Newsletter which is published 3 times a year (spring, summer and fall). Jennifer Trant encouraged the membership to send along any articles, reports and letters to driftwords@brla.on.ca

B. Environment

Peter Copestake discussed some of the initiatives around the lake:

Shoreline

Peter discussed the shoreline remediation of approx 150 trees that were recently planted on Cow Island.

Water Testing

Peter helped establish a relationship with the RVCA to provide monthly water testing at 12 sites around the lake. He described the lake as being an oliotrophic lake (very deep water) and one of the most pristine lakes in Canada. The "green" algae that can be seen in the water is called chlorophyta algae and is a sign of a healthy lake. It is not considered to be "bad algae" as it feeds fish and zoo plankton.

Cyanophyta

This is otherwise known as blue/green algae and is not found in the Big Rideau Lake. Charleston Lake is reported to have this type of algae. Peter reminded the members to keep phosphate levels low i.e. shampoos, soaps etc.

Ecoli

The BRLA is currently testing for bacteria levels in the Portland and Rideau Ferry areas. To date, none have been found.

Cormorants

Peter discussed the cormorant situation on the lake. He noted the significant degradation of the white pine trees on those islands associated the Cormorant infestation and their guano. Peter reported that he'd contacted the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and spoken to the responsible managing biologists who had advised that killing these birds is illegal except by the land owner and only after repeated unsuccessful attempts to drive the birds away with loud noise and destroying their eggs. Peter indicated that he was now reasonably sure the islands were owned by the Crown and therefore subject to Ontario's jurisdiction. This presumption of ownership was based purely on a canvass of all adjacent island owners.

Ecosystem Presentation

Peter also indicated that he'd become involved with the Lake Partners Program, a province-wide initiative that involves the training and supply of testing materials to interested individuals to test for total phosphorous and secchi results monthly from May to October at a specifically designated Lat/Long site on their own lake. Peter has asked Anna DeSellas (Lake Partners Program) to make a public presentation to the BRLA Membership. Anna's presentation will be on Cow Island on July 25th @ 10AM.

Members with concerns about the environment, or an interest in participating in BRLA's environmental activities, should contact environment@brla.on.ca

C. Marine Safety

Toby reported that several buoys and shoal markers in the west end of the lake have been refurbished. To date, the lower Rideau area had been maintained by volunteers however the Board would take over their management. From Poonamalie to the Narrows Lock there are 104 shoal markers in total. Toby reported that he'll be replacing stickers on several buoys throughout the lake this summer.

In regards to marine safety, Toby reminded the membership of the Watch your Wake program. All zones are posted with signs and regulated under the Boating Restrictions Regulations, part of the Shipping Act of Canada. Also by September 15th, 2009 all boaters must have their operator's permit. Toby offered courtesy inspections of boating equipment to the membership i.e. flares, buoy's etc.

Members are reminded that if a shoal marker in an area is missing to let the BRLA know. All shoal markers must be registered and properly marked. Contact us at lakesafety@brla.on.ca.

D. Fishing

Roy Sampson is looking forward to receiving comments on the new fishing brochure. Roy asked the membership to send feedback/comments to the website. He noted that the brochures are valid for a period of 2 years. Roy added that MNR ceased stocking Lake Trout in the Big Rideau. A question was asked regarding the idea of night fishing. Roy explained that it is allowed and to his knowledge, there is no time restriction.

Summer Sounds

BRLA will be hosting a fundraising afternoon for Cow Island on Saturday July 11th with musical group Cliff Edwards, formally of the "Bells". Thanks to Peter and Joyce Cowan for organizing this event. Proceeds will be used for Cow Island improvements. The cost is \$25 per couple or \$15 dollars per person.

Centennial Plans

Dou Arrand reported that the BRLA will be celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2011. The BRLA is looking for suggestions and ideas for the celebration. One suggestion was to have 100 wooden boats form a procession on the lake. The BRLA will also be recognizing a book by Jane Moore and everyone is invited to submit articles.

Regatta

The regatta will once again be held on Cow Island on Saturday August 1st. (Rain date August 2nd) Registration is at 10:00 am and the races begin at 11:00 am. A BBQ lunch will be provided. We encourage every one of all ages to come out and participate. Once again, a special thanks to the Evans family for organizing this event.

11. Elections

Doug Arrand, presented the slate of candidates for the BRLA Board. The BRLA looks for balanced representation from the North Shore, Rideau Ferry, local community, islanders and mainlanders. Doug reviewed the terms for the board. Directors, elected at the annual general meeting, are limited to three successive terms. The only officer elected is the President. The Board itself appoints other officers.

A. President for 2009/2010

Peter Copestake agreed to stand as President of the BRLA.

B. Directors for 2009/2010

The following members have agreed to continue to serve on the Board for 2009/2010: Ed Brigden, Barbara Keays, Melanie Sterling, Toby Spry, Doug Good, Carol Harris and Heather Heins.

The following have agreed to let their name stand: Ian Shackell (North Shore) and Sue Van Slooten (Rideau Ferry). Doug Arrand made an appeal for a Director of Gov't Liason.

Moved by Doug Arrand and seconded by Ross Walker that the Board be elected as proposed. Motion carried by all.

12. Presentations from Guests

A. Scott Norton- Kemptville District Office

Scott Norton was introduced and gave the membership an overview of bear activity in the region. Scott provided an overview of the life cycle of a bear along with several written materials on being bear wise in cottage country. In case of a bear sighting/encounter the hotline number to call is 1-866-514-BEAR. The presentation was very informative.

B. Jamie Saunders- Mississippi Septic System Office

Jamie Saunders explained that they are completing approximately 20 re-inspections every year. The authority is completing inspections using a voluntary approach. He encouraged residents to make appointments as systems need to be operated and maintained and their office is there to serve as a guide. A discussion ensued regarding Island Properties and Jamie repeated that any problems should be reported to Rideau Lakes Township.

13. Adjournment

Doug Goode moved to adjourn the meeting, Peter Cowan seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm.

As per the BRLA Constitution, the Board set a meeting date for July 11th @ 1pm at Cow Island.