



Big Rideau Lake Association (BRLA)
Annual General Meeting: Minutes (DRAFT)
July 4th 2015
Portland Town Hall, Portland, Ontario
9:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Attendance:

Doug Good: President
Brian Hawkins Treasurer
Mary Sue Evans: Secretary
Lyse Prendergast: Website/Communications
Doug Kirkland: Government Affairs
Beth Evans: Driftwords/Recreation
John Callan: Membership
Toby Spry: Marine Safety
Bill Belanger: Director at Large
Mary Ann Calzonetti: Director at Large
Hugh Burrows: Adam Lake Representative

Regrets:

Buzz Boles: Environment

General Members: Approximately 55 BRLA Members attended

1. Call to Order

Doug Good called the meeting to order at 9:34 a.m.

2. RVCA Presentation – Sarah Macleod

The subwatershed report draws from monitoring programs, land cover classification, staff input, municipal input, agency input and community/landowner input.

The Rideau Lakes subwatershed report contains:

- Rideau Lakes state of the environment indicators - water quality, forest cover, wetland cover and shorelines
- Rideau Lakes water level management

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Minutes Taken By: Mary Sue Evans

- Actions to create healthier Rideau Lakes

44% of the Rideau Lakes subwatershed is forested. This has changed by 1% over a six year period. Wetlands occupy 16% of the Rideau Lakes subwatershed. Natural shoreline cover along lakes and streams average 85% across the Rideau Lakes subwatershed.

Water Quality

Good - Round Lake

Fair - Big Rideau, Black, Burridge, Fermoy, Green, Spectacle, Tommy and Wolfe lakes

Poor - Adam, Bass, Butterill, Hoggs Bay, Long Lake, Long Pond, Loon, Upper Rideau & Westport Sand lakes

Very Poor - Lower Rideau

Portland and Rideau Ferry ratings are fair. Relatively few nutrient exceedances, good oxygen conditions for fish habitat, clear water and occasionally elevated pH levels are the factors contributing to the rating.

Natural vegetation along shorelines catches rainwater runoff and sediment, and absorbs the pollutants it carries. Plants act as a physical barrier slowing water flow and redirecting it into the soil where their roots filter excess nutrients and other pollutants. A natural shoreline helps maintain water quality and control weeds and algal blooms.

You can sign up for a visit and the RVCA will come to your property and do an assessment of your shoreline. It's called the shoreline naturalization program.

Action items for Residents, Businesses, Community Groups and Lake Associations:

- comply with development setbacks
- maintain healthy vegetated shoreline buffers
- plant trees on retired land
- undertake projects to protect water quality (livestock restriction)
- protect and enhance wetlands and fish & wildlife habitat
- ensure septic systems are functioning properly
- remove and prevent invasive species
- support clean marinas and respect watch your wake areas
- join lake associations, develop Lake Management Plans

RVCA Action Items

- review current monitoring program
- target actions and programs where they are needed
- seek opportunities to acquire ecologically valuable lands
- continue providing planning advice & administering regulation
- produce regulation limit mapping around additional lakes

3. Rideau Lakes Environment Foundation (RLEF) Report – Mike Peterson (Chair)

Mike introduced himself as Chair of the RLEF and that he does environmental law for a living. The RLEF was founded in 1991 and that it is a charitable organization and a sister organization of the

BRLA. The BRLA will appoint executive for next year. There will also be representatives from the upper Rideau.

The RLEF are a charity and are not allowed to take on an advocacy function but they can assist the BRLA and others ie. Water quality issue.

Water quality has been the major issue in 2014 – 2015. Westport has a very unusual sewage system. They store in the summer and freeze and release in the winter. It needs to be maintained and last spring all the bad maintenance with overflowing the system / venting and it went into the lake.

Last November the new municipal council said they are paying attention. There is a larger safety monitoring in play.

Mike went to various council meetings and met with local MPP Steve Clark.

A new issue has arisen with the rezoning a cottage on the lake. The Township of Rideau lakes committee of adjustment said they would approve it. The BRLA has challenged this. Mike acknowledges that donations can be earmarked to support the BRLA initiative to the Township of Rideau Lakes and tax receipts can be given out.

The RLEF will continue with water quality. In the past they have assisted in the funding of the channel markers but unfortunately their fundraising has not been effective and therefore cannot continue to fund them.

Their fundraising last year was an annual mailing to 2K – 3K people and the success rate was low. Next month they be discussing other ways.

4. Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was held in memory of those people we have lost on Big Rideau Lake in the past year.

5. Minutes of AGM held on July 5, 2014

Doug Good called for corrections, clarifications, errors and omissions to the minutes of the Meeting held July 5, 2014.

On a **MOTION** duly made by Toby Spry, **SECONDED** by Kathryn Orbanek and unanimously **CARRIED**, it was resolved that the minutes from July 5, 2014 are approved

6. President's Report – Doug Good

Doug Good thanked everyone for attending today's AGM and introduced the members of the board. Fred Goddard will be the new rep from Adam Lake taking over from Hugh Burrows.

One hundred years ago the forefathers had the insight for the protection of the lake and in 1914 spent money on stocking the lake with lake trout.

An Environmental committee has been created.

Summer Sounds is next week July 11 from 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm. The Aquatic Regatta will take place on Cow Island on August 1st 10:00 am registration.

August 8th we will be celebrating our 100th Anniversary.

- Antique boat, car, tractors and motorcycles
- Portland Historical Society will set up a museum
- Wagon ride tours given by Doug Bond
- Dowsett boats will be on display. The Historical Society is working with Delta Mills about displaying Dowsett tools
- Breakfast and Lunch will be held in the Portland Community Hall
- Food truck and Beer tent will be set up
- Manotick Boat Club will be attending

You can find further information on our Facebook page, Twitter and our Website.

The Septic in the senior's residence area will be address at the next council meeting.

Doug said the future of the BRLA holds two interesting challenges – membership and finance.

7. Treasurer's Report – Brian Hawkins

Last year there was a recommendation that we register with the CRA as an HST participant. The expectation was that as a "not-for-profit" organization, we would not have to charge HST to our members but could deduct the HST from the services and supplies we purchase in the course of running the association. With the auditors help the board decided not to do it.

Wilkinson & Company Auditors Report – In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Association as at December 31, 2014 and its operations and cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.

Our assets and liability as of December 31st, 2014 are strong financially. We currently have \$34K in cash.

Cow Island is not on our books because the BRLA never paid for it.

Comparing 2013 and 2014 RLEF was not able to give us \$6300 for shoal markers.

Donations from the fireworks are strong. There was an anonymous donation of \$3K. We cannot guarantee that this will be ongoing.

Membership – last year 265 members and the previous year 285.

Revenue overall decreased by approximately \$4K.

We currently have 3 insurance policies for directors and officers liabilities. The cost is shared with the RLEF. The cost of membership canvassing and communications was \$6K. Five new promotional signs were made. A mailing of 1K brochures to all property owners on the Big Rideau

Lake system. Publication of Driftwords. The Auditors expense was \$2K. Each member pays \$10 for Cow Island property tax.

In 2015 we received financial donations in memory of Hugh Kyle and Sean Gates.

Brian wanted everyone to understand that the RLEF is an integral part of the BRLA and you receive a tax receipt with each donation,

On a **MOTION** duly made by Brian Hawkins, **SECONDED** by Ed Brigden and unanimously **CARRIED**, it was resolved that the BRLA approves to appoint Wilkinson & Company as auditors for current year ending December 31, 2015.

There were no surprises on the balance sheet in terms of assets. Receivables are down. Total current asset is \$32K and last year was \$41K. Liabilities has no changed from last year.. Total liabilities and equities is \$10K.

37% of all active members (97 out of 265) gave donations to the Day Camp, Environment, Fireworks, Lake Safety and Recreation.

Community Programs – The Environment is an excellent committee and they have a budget. Fireworks cost is \$8600. Lake Safety costs went to shoal markers. This year we had to repair approximately 30 markers.

We did not sell out on the sailing camp this year. Currently only 50% filled. We have revenue on sailing \$65000 and we have paid \$10,700. It is now opened up to non members.

On a **MOTION** duly made by Diane Hambleton, **SECONDED** by Ed Brigdan and unanimously **CARRIED**, it was resolved that the BRLA approves the financial statements for 2014.

Membership Fees

- Issue of declining finance and we are dipping into our assets
- Cow Island and shoal markers
- 3 policies general liability, property, board of directors insurance costs \$6K
- Shoal markers \$6200 last year
- In 2014 we spent \$19K and we had a goal of 300 members
- 50% extra donations going to fireworks buy on 97 members made additional donations

The Board is proposing the membership fee December 31, 2015 be increased from \$60 to \$75.

On a **MOTION** duly made by John Callan, **SECONDED** by Nancy Watters and unanimously **CARRIED**, it was resolved that the BRLA approves increasing the BRLA membership fee from \$65 to \$75.

8. Committee Reports

I. Government Affairs – Doug Kirkland

The water level has been high. Parks Canada said water levels on Big Rideau Lake have risen as a result of significant rainfall and increased inflow from area creeks and feeder lakes. Parks Canada has been steadily increasing flows out of the weir at Poonamalie in response to these climbing

levels, but is constrained by limits in the storage capacity of the reaches downstream. Weirs from Smiths Falls to Ottawa are running at full or near full capacity while still allowing for vessel navigation. As of mid June the level on Big Rideau has crested and began to decline thanks to decreased flow from the Upper Rideau and less rainfall. With dryer conditions expected that water levels on the Big Rideau will continue to decline.

The Board asked the three townships to subsidize the shoal marks. Letters went out to Tay Valley, Drummond North Elmsley and the Township of Rideau Lakes. The smallest township Drummond North Elmsley donated \$500.

Most councillors have no understanding of the waterways. The mayor of Rideau Lakes Township said 50% of the tax revenue comes from waterfront properties and we are not getting anything back. Doug would like to take the councillors on a bontoon boat in the fall and give them a sense of how much territory they have and help them understand that there has been a disconnect.

Doug advised us that not all blue green algae are toxic. It takes 10 days for the health department to come back to say if it's toxic or not. 68% is associated with property on the lake.

II. Environment – Peter Hannah on behalf of Buzz Boles

The Environment Committee has been re-established.

There was a displacement report done a number of years ago on Bass issues. From 1996 – 1978 a study was carried out on the Big Rideau Lake to determine the fate of bass displaced in tournaments. Data was collected on the movement of 55 largemouth bass that were radio-tagged. The results of this study showed that only 37% of the bass returned to their previously held home ranges. No fish displaced greater than 8km from their captured site returned to their home range.

This year, the Environmental Committee will try to determine if the results of this study has any impact or relevance on the releasing of bass by current tournament organizers. The committee is planning to meet with bass tournament organizers to discuss this issue. This summer they will also be attending weigh in times to study current practices at the end of the tournaments.

Peter thanked Sarah Macleod for her presentation on Water Quality. This issue is a major concern for most lake residents. The RVCA completed the 2014 Rideau Lakes Subwatershed report as a report card on current conditions. Big Rideau Lake is rated fair. Upper Rideau is rated poor and the Lower Rideau very poor. Development pressure continues, primarily as redevelopment of older waterfront lots placing greater pressure on sensitive shoreline areas.

We are now monitoring municipal decisions on various variance applications and recently recommended that the BRLA board appeal one of the Township of Rideau Lakes Committee of adjustment decisions on a variance request to the Ontario Municipal Board. The BRLA Board of Directors unanimously adopted that recommendation and has launched an appeal to the OMB.

Some BRLA members have expressed concern to the board that increasing cormorant populations were detrimental to the waters and island on the lake and should be culled. The committee required some firm data on these populations in order to give an opinion on this matter.

An impact study has begun with the approval of the MNR.

- Cormorant populations seem to be about 60 – 80 for the lake in June based on preliminary surveys
- The one cormorant island rookery has 8 nests this year

- The rookery location on North Owl Island is severely damaging several pine trees but all other vegetation is flourishing

III. Membership – John Callan

As of today we have 243 members. John encouraged everyone to ask their neighbours to join the BRLA. John and Nancy Watters called and email those who did not renew and they got 25 out of the 100 or so names. John thanked Nancy for her help and he thanks Jen Kelly for asking the boaters to join at Bayview.

It was suggested we list our members on the website. Next year we will add that box on the membership form to check off.

IV. Website – Lyse Prendergast

Last year was a big year. The website is work in progress. We are now tracking visits to the website and we are getting 1000 – 2000 visits per month. On June 27th the day of the fireworks, there were over 300 visits.

There are some issues with Paypal and Lyse would like to hear about it when it happens.

V. Marine Safety – Toby Spry

There are 107 buoys on the lake. Each one is GPS and is registered with the Coast Guard and Parks Canada department of transportation. They have to be 2 – 3 feet out of the water. If we make any changes we have to inform the department of transportation.

It is against the law to touch, damage, add anything or remove the private buoys. They come under the same act as the navigation act and you can be charged. None of our buoys have lights. If you put one on it will be removed.

Toby would like everyone to let us know if you notice a buoy missing. Thomlison and Taggart Parkes Foundation made a donation towards the shoal markers.

VI. Driftwords – Beth Evans

The next issue will be online. If you have any articles you would like to appear in Driftwords please email them to Beth.

Day camp has begun and we have space available.

VII. Cow Island – Doug Arrand

Doug is looking for volunteers to help paint the outside of the cabin.

9. Elections

The following slate of officers of the corporation for the year starting July 4, 2015, including President, Directors and Committee Chairs was presented for consideration by the members present.

Brian Hawkins – President, Director
Doug Good – Director
Lyse Prendergrast – Director
John Callan – Director
Doug Kirkland – Director
Bill Belanger – Director
Mary Sue Evans – Director
Buzz Boles – Director
Mary Anne Calzonetti – Director
Caitlan Orbanek – Director
Fred Godard – Director

Beth Evans – Chair of Driftwords Committee
Toby Spry – Chair of Lake Safety Committee
Doug Arrand – Chair of Cow Island Committee

On a **MOTION** duly made by William Miller, **SECONDED** by Kathryn Orbanek and unanimously **CARRIED**, it was resolved that the slate was approved as presented.

Brian Hawkins thanked Doug Good for his dedication over the years and noted that a new Treasurer will have to be appointed,

10. New Business

Drummond North Elmsley put in new docks in at Rideau Ferry.

August 1 is the chicken BBQ in Portland and the Aquatic Regatta on Cow Island. Doug encouraged everyone to attend Summer Sounds on July 11.

13. Adjournment

BRLA Annual General Meeting was adjourned at 12:23 p.m.