

BIRD RIVER COTTAGE OWNERS' ASSOCIATION
Annual General Meeting – September 2, 2018

Executive Members in Attendance:	Wayne Stewart	President
	Rudy Peters	Past President
	Carol Guicheret	Secretary/Membership
	Lynn Richard	Treasurer/Social Assistant
	Cathy Stewart	Chair – Water Quality
	Brian Smiley	Director
	Stephanie Jeffrey	Chair – Social
Absent:	Leah D'Errico	Director
	Greg Milhausen	Web Site Administrator

1. WELCOME – INTRODUCTION OF EXECUTIVE

Wayne Stewart called the meeting to order at 10:08 AM with 35 people in attendance. He welcomed everyone and introduced the executive.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 2017 AGM

Wayne asked everyone to review the minutes of the 2017 AGM which were distributed among the tables prior to the meeting.

Moved by Lawrence Doerksen, Seconded by Brian Smiley

THAT the minutes of the Bird River Cottage Owners' Association 2017 Annual General Meeting be approved as distributed.

Carried.

3. MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Carol reported that we have 59 up-to-date memberships and that we are always happy to welcome new members. We do not have an annual membership fee; rather, we assess fees on an as-needed basis. The last membership assessment was in 2016.

4. FINANCIAL REPORT

Lynn reported that we started the year with \$3,050 in the bank. Revenues totalled \$2,070 (grants, new memberships, Family Day raffle, etc.) Expenses were \$1,915 (advertising, Fun Day, meeting expenses, web page) for a net gain of \$154.10. Bank balance at August 31, 2018 is \$3,207. We will be receiving a \$1,250 grant from the RM for the 2018 Family Fun Day.

Moved by Stephanie Jeffrey; seconded by Lawrence Doerksen

THAT the Treasurer's Financial Report be accepted as presented.

Carried.

5. MANITOBA ASSOCIATION OF COTTAGE OWNERS (MACO)

Brian attended the MACO 2017 AGM last October as a representative of the BRCOA and is now serving on the MACO executive. MACO is a non-profit organization consisting of 45 associations across the Province and strives to promote and advance the common interests of cottage owners throughout Manitoba.

MACO's main initiative is the removal of education tax from cottage properties and they are hoping to make some progress in this area in the near future. School tax on seasonal residences is taxation without representation as cottagers cannot vote in school division elections. Dave Crabb, the President of MACO, met with the Hon. Kelvin Goertzen, the newly appointed Minister of Education and Training, who seems to be more sympathetic than his predecessors on the issue. Brian commented that Manitoba is the only remaining province to have a double education tax.

MACO has a presence at the Cottage Association Show and has contracted an individual to expand advertising and promote branding. There is also a possibility that they may partner with Snoman (Snowmobilers of Manitoba).

MACO's 2018 AGM will be held on Tuesday, October 17, 5:30 PM, at CanadInns, 1700 McPhillips St. In Winnipeg.

6. RM OF ALEXANDER UPDATE - WARD IV COUNCILLOR, MAC KINGHORN

School Taxes

Mac reported that collection and remittance of school taxes is a sore point with the RM. Taxes paid in our area are excessive considering the low demand for educational services, as most permanent residents are retired. He feels with the recent change of Education Minister there will be amalgamations which should result in reduced costs down the road. Hopefully, by spring there will some indication as to how things are going to play out.

Emergency Medical Services

Emergency services in rural areas do not compare favourably with services in urban centres. The newly created Shared Health Services Manitoba, led by Dr. Brock Wright, is assessing and coordinating health services province-wide. New criteria have been established for emergency rooms. Selkirk Health Centre meets this criteria, but many other small hospitals do not. Measures are being taken to improve this situation.

More helicopters will be used in rural areas. STARS (Shock Trauma Rescue Society) will be a very active and viable part of the emergency response system. STARS is a charitable, non-profit organization contracted by the Manitoba government to provide emergency air transport and medical care. All STARS EMT's are trained in critical care.

Ward IV Lagoon

Permits are in place. The remaining piece is funding from the government.

"Skinny" Bridge

As part of the upgrading process, it will be necessary to close the "skinny bridge" for about three weeks. This will probably occur in January. Mac feels that the estimate of three weeks is optimistic. There may also be times when 15-minute closures of the bridge are required.

Ambulance service from Pinawa will not be problematic but Lac du Bonnet will be restricted as to means of responding to their portion of this area. Alternatives will need to be established, e.g. a vehicle(s) may be parked on the east side of the bridge.

Golf Cart Regulations

The All-Terrain/Offroad Vehicle Bylaw is being redrafted to include regulations for golf carts. A driver's license will be required and the cart must be driven in a safe manner. Certain neighbourhoods will be designated as

golf cart communities and signs will be posted. Carts will need brakes, headlights, taillights and there will probably be a license fee. It's hoped the new bylaw will be in place prior to next summer.

Property Tax

The mill rate went down by .01 mill. However, if you were reassessed, your taxes will have increased. If you have any questions you can call Michelle at the RM Office, Ph.: 204-367-6174. You can also appeal your tax bill through the Board of Revisions. Appeals must be submitted by mid-October and review of applications commences October 30.

Water Treatment Plant – Great Falls

The Great Falls Plant should be operational by April 2019. It has been built to accommodate additional treatment cells. There is the possibility for the RM of Alexander to become a water provider to other areas. User hook-up cost is very reasonable at \$6,000 and can be amortized over 15 years at which time the RM will have its money back. It's a win/win situation as the RM ends up with a valuable asset.

Municipal Election

Election day is October 24th. Mac will once again be running for Ward IV. There are two candidates for Reeve: the incumbent, Raymond Garand, and Jack Brisco, current Ward I Councillor.

There is an advance poll on October 6th, 10:00 AM until 6:00 PM at the Bird River Fire Hall. You can also vote in person at the RM Offices from September 27th to October 19th from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

Other Topics

- The Bird River Fire Hall parking area has been doubled. A wheel chair ramp will be added to the entry door to the River Room. A new exhaust system has been installed so that fumes are captured when trucks are started;
- Auglen Park boat ramp will be reprofiled to make launching easier;
- Grass cutting is ongoing. The final cut is in progress;
- Tall Timber Road does not have a turnaround. The November budget will contain a provision to rectify the situation;
- Extra rock has been added on Ridge Road for stabilization;
- Asset management is under way. The province has mandated that all RM assets (cars, trucks, culverts, etc.) be costed and inventoried;
- The path to the water has been cleared and opened up at Viking Way;
- A new Snowbalance (enclosed cabin rescue device) has been purchased to replace the previous Rescue Bogan which had become outdated.

7. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Bridge Construction

Gantries have gone up for moving steel and cement trucks will be needed so there will be occasions when the bridge is shut down for 15 minutes. Wayne has spoken to the Project Engineer and suggested a Code Red Program which allows delivery of messages via land line or mobile device and through text and email. He also mentioned emergency vehicles, school buses, and maintenance of Hwy 520 during closure of the bridge. A newsletter will be published this fall. Mac advised it will be posted on the RM web site.

Emergency Services

Wayne had an experience this summer with the emergency services in our area and there are insufficiencies, Some rural paramedics have less training than those in the city. It would be ideal to increase capabilities so that optimum service is available everywhere.

There are new initiatives in progress that are impacting the spectrum of emergency services. The intent is to group departments to reduce the number of health authorities from 16 and increase efficiency. One central agency will be looking after ambulances. Wayne has asked that, as an Association representative, he be given a mandate to try to influence the direction of the changes. We will be pushing for the highest standards.

As a result of the following discussions, it was

moved by Stephanie Jeffrey; seconded by Lynn Richard

THAT the Association maintain advocacy to improve the level of emergency medical services within the Ward IV area.

Carried.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

As a result of comments and questions from various members in attendance there were discussions on the following topics:

- Port-a-potties at Tagesen Boat Launch - These were supposed to be installed this year but it didn't happen. Mac advised locations have been established throughout the RM but ours was missed this year. This will be rectified next year.
- Fire response time - We are part of NE aid district. Within five minutes of a page someone is getting ready; in ten minutes trucks are on the road; after that it's travel time. Goals have been established. The town of Lac du Bonnet wants to respond within nine minutes; rurally within 24 minutes.
- By-Law Officers – There was a request for Bylaw Officers to visit more frequently and address noise issues at night, ATV's, etc. Also need more policing on the river due to congestion and irresponsible boating, especially near the bridge. Mac replied that the RM is constantly in touch with the RCMP and Conservation about the river. Officers visit the river two or three times a year but the Lac du Bonnet detachment is understaffed and they have priorities. Complaints re enforcement need to be submitted in writing to ensure follow-up. A form can be downloaded from the RM web site and completed.
- Grant Requests – Mac asked for any grant requests to be submitted by mid-November. There is money available for water testing, events, projects, etc.
- Bird River Family Fun Day - Stephanie reported that the Family Day has been running for six years and it promotes a sense of community. It's not only for kids; it's open to everyone. She asked for volunteers for next year and advised that contact information is on the web site.
- Water Testing – There was no water testing this year. Two years ago the recommendation was to test at four to five year intervals. Unless there were additional factors, e.g. a large development or discharge from the mine, we wouldn't test more often as it is expensive. As cottagers, we need to realize that green lawns come at a cost. Nutrients from fertilizers enter the water. Heat and lower rainfall levels also have an effect. The water testing doesn't register algae content. It must be remembered that we are testing for recreational quality, not drinking quality.

It was suggested that perhaps we should test every two or three years. The process is involved and protocol must be followed closely to glean meaningful results. Samples have to be delivered to the Winnipeg lab within 24 hours. Cathy and Wayne collected our samples and took them to the lab for testing. The RM

does not offer a water testing service. Hiring a consultant would be costly. Wayne suggested that we look at 2020 as a water sampling year.

Moved by Chris Baleja; seconded by Anne Peters

THAT 2020 be designated as the next year for water sampling in the Bird River area.

Carried.

Wayne advised that a grant request will be submitted to the RM for the year of testing.

Bird River Bible Camp

Kyle Sheppard, Director of the Bible Camp, advised that they hosted 1,300 campers this year. They have 60 full time staff and there were 250 volunteers throughout the summer. An Open House was held on Saturday, July 30th, with a free lunch and activities. They value transparency and want to get people involved.

The new sewage treatment plant is now operational. They have a new emergency siren which is louder than previously and they run regular emergency drills with all staff participating. New docks have been installed due to ice damage on previous ones. New cabins will be replacing some of the existing ones.

They have some concerns regarding boating traffic and late partying on the river. Kyle asked that cottagers contact them if there are concerns about their programs and activities. Several people commented that they liked seeing the kids, enjoyed the Open House, and were impressed with the facilities and programs at the Camp.

9. ELECTION OF 2018/19 BRCOA BOARD

Wayne advised that he and Cathy will be moving from the area and, as a result, new board members are required. Brian Smiley nominated Brad Wall as a member of the Board. Brad accepted the nomination.

Wayne made the required three requests for further nominations from the floor. As there were none, it was

moved by Wayne Stewart; seconded by Brian Smiley

THAT nominations cease, and

THAT the BRCOA Board of Directors for 2018/19 be established as follows:

**Leah d'Errico
Carol Guicheret
Stephanie Jeffrey
Greg Milhaussen
Rudy Peters
Lynn Richard
Brian Smiley
Brad Wall**

Carried

Positions and responsibilities will be decided at the next Executive Meeting.

President Wayne Stewart thanked everyone for attending and extended our appreciation to Mac Kinghorn for his input.

Meeting adjourned at 11:45.