

# **Raven Lake Cottagers' Association Annual General Meeting**

**Minutes Saturday, August 18, 2012 10:00 am**

**The Sandy Beach, Raven Lake**

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## **1. Welcome**

President Sean Lawrence welcomed, thanked people for coming, and called meeting to order. It was noted that approximately 100 cottagers were in attendance.

## **2. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting (August 20, 2011)**

Motion to approve Minutes - moved by Scott Lewis, seconded by Howard Rowilson. Carried.

## **3. Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Ronni Buwalda reported that RLCA was solvent and doing well. Balances prior to today stood at:

Chequing \$3551.22, Regatta of 2011 \$3260.71, Term Deposit \$3533.

Motion to approve Treasurer Report - moved by Jim Bringloe, seconded by Peter Buwalda. Carried.

## **4. Announcements**

a) Sean Hungerford encouraged all to follow RLCA on Facebook. It has been an effective way of sharing pictures, getting information out quickly eg. storm warnings, thefts.

Website will be maintained and used for static information such as archiving AGM minutes and newsletters.

E-mail addresses are being collected for distribution of e-blasts, election results and electronic form of Raven Lake newsletter.

b) Sandy Beach access - plan to improve access with stairs from dock.

c) Plans for summer 2013 Star Gazing workshop with professional astronomers, probably at the Lions location.

d) Algonquin natives have a land claim in for land close to Raven Lake, but thankfully does not affect Raven Lake.

## **5. Membership Report**

Membership Chair Mara Kenins announced that RLCA currently has 114 paid members. She asked that people ensure that their contact information is accurate and that they provide their email address.

## 6. Introduction of, and thanks to, our Directors for 2011-2012

Sean Lawrence introduced and thanked current Directors. He emphasized that the Board wishes to be as open and inclusive as possible. If any members want to get involved they would be most welcome on any committee or in any area that interests them.

The Board thanks Sean for serving as an excellent president over the last year.

Board members have served in the following capacities over the past year (committee heads in bold):

<b>Ronni Buwalda</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
<b>Chris Gooderham</b>	<b>Lake Steward</b> , Environment Shoreline Restoration
<b>Geoff Gooderham</b>	<b>Past-President</b> Lake Access
<b>Susan Kanitz</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>Sean Hungerford</b>	<b>Communication</b> <b>Facebook</b> Lake Access
<b>George Kenins</b>	<b>Food - Corn Roast &amp; Regatta</b> Recreational Use of the Water Lake Access
<b>Mara Kenins</b>	<b>Membership</b>
<b>Ross Lawrence</b>	Past President <b>Lake Plan Implementation</b> <b>Yearly Corporation Registration</b> Communications, <b>Newsletter</b> <b>Development/Political Liaison</b>
<b>Sean Lawrence</b>	<b>President</b>
<b>Scott Lewis</b>	<b>2nd Vice President</b> Recreational Use of the Water <b>Lake Access</b>
<b>Susan Luke</b>	<b>Regatta</b>
<b>Leslie McFabe</b>	<b>Recreational Use of the Water</b> <b>Dedicated Angler</b>

<b>Karl Mehisto</b>	<b>Insurance &amp; Taxes</b> , Lake Access
<b>Miriam Pearlman</b>	Communications
<b>Howard Rowlison</b>	<b>Events - Spring Social</b> Lake Access
<b>Patricia Smith</b>	<b>1st Vice President</b> Communications, <b>Newsletter</b> Advertising <b>POOP</b> (Pump Out Our SePtics)
<b>John Williams</b>	<b>Communication</b>

## 7. Election of Directors to Board of Directors

a) Nominations for Directors from the floor

Past President Geoff Gooderham invited nominations from the floor (or sand) and encouraged new people to come forward.

b) Nominations for Directors presented by the Nominating Committee:

With no new nominations, Geoff introduced the slate for the 2012/13 RLCA Board of Directors as follows:

Ronni Buwalda  
Mara Kenins  
Chris Gooderham  
Geoff Gooderham  
Susan Kanitz  
Sean Hungerford  
George Kenins  
Mara Kenins  
Ross Lawrence  
Sean Lawrence  
Scott Lewis  
Susan Luke  
Leslie McFabe  
Karl Mehisto  
Miriam Pearlman  
Howard Rowlison  
Patricia Smith  
John Williams

Motion to accept slate as introduced: Moved by Geoff Gooderham, Seconded by Barb Lewis.

Motion to adopt: Moved by Peter Buwalda, seconded by Jim Bringloe.

Carried unanimously.

## **8. Community/Communications**

### a) Regatta

Susan Luke announced that this year's Regatta was another great success. It is the 14<sup>th</sup> annual Regatta under her leadership and the first year that the Rain Date was necessary. Over 200 people attended, with 195 paid registrations. She thanked all the volunteers who pitch in to make it happen.

### b) Spring Social

Howard Rowison announced that the 2012 Spring Social was a success with over 30 participants. It again will be held on the last Saturday in March (March 30, 2013) coinciding with the Toronto Cottage Life Show. The social is held at the Lone Star Texas Grill with food, slide show, cash bar and potential of Raven Lake music. Many prizes are given out. Please donate if you have any appropriate prizes.

### c) Corn Roast

George Kenins announced that the Corn "Boil" would be starting immediately after the meeting. Costs were \$5 for adults, \$3 for teens, no cost for "ankle biters".

### d) Communications

Sean Hungerford again introduced the Facebook Page and announced that there were 117 followers, with 86 people following actively the posts re thefts at landing.

### e) Newsletter

Thanks again to Ross Lawrence, Patricia Smith and Andrew Cook for their excellent publication of the Raven Lake Newsletter.

## **9. Lake Steward's Report**

Chris Gooderham announced that the committee is concerned with the environmental health of water and land, including invasive species. The loon monitoring program from last year continues as a citizen-based science, relying on community to be eyes and ears. Chris liaises with organizations that monitor fish health, shoreline protection, bacteria count and nutrients of water, etc. He explained we are high on the watershed so lucky to be here.

Chris announced Board working on a map for members to display points of interest, potential loon-nesting areas, rocks, etc.

People need to be encouraged to watch their own wakes, especially in long arm and dam area. Too many signs are not welcomed.

Family Fishing Day - Leslie McFabe announced that the first annual Family Fishing Day would take place in the second week of July 2013 during the week that no license is required in Ontario. It would be catch and release. Extensive Q & A ensured showing high interest.

## **10. Lake Access & Landing**

Sean Lawrence gave background to the boat thefts that took place this season from the landing, to the value of up to \$100,000. The landing comes under three public jurisdictions - owned by Ministry of Natural Resources, maintained for snow removal by Algonquin Highlands, and managed day to day for lights, etc by Lake of Bays.

It is the public access to the lake but also the primary access for cottagers to their property. The MNR's position is that the stick docks are illegal and present a liability issue for the MNR. Any incident could bring the problem to become a priority issue for the MNR, although for now it is not one.

The OPP is taking the theft issue seriously but is understaffed.

Jennifer and Rusty Reingruber have volunteered to donate a security system for the landing, but currently we do not have jurisdiction to install.

Scott Lewis gave a well detailed presentation outlining the current situation regarding the legal status of our stick docks, the current challenge to serve the community's needs, safe and secure boat access, the ongoing communication with the MNR, and the proposal for how we move forward to provide equitable access that is safe and secure for water access only properties. The key points presented were:

### Landing Access

1. Our current situation- We were put on notice some 5 years ago that the docks were illegal and would have to be removed at some point. MNR is looking to divest itself of as much liability as possible with regard to public access areas such as our landing. At this time, not a priority for the MNR, "but the day would come" when they would order the stick docks removed. They were unclear about what, if anything, would replace those docks. This "holding pattern" could be put into 'high gear" at any time should an event, instigated either from within the MNR or at the Landing (perhaps accident or even just complaints about the current system). With regard to our rights to dock at the landing, the technical status of the stick docks is "unauthorized occupancy". We have the same rights as anyone driving down the highway to park in the landing lot and launch a boat, but not to leave cars or trailers there for any "extended length of time" (a period which has yet to be defined). The MNR is very clear that it does NOT have any obligation to provide residents with individual docks, just a few public docks
2. Our community - In the meantime, we have had considerable turnover in property ownership over the past 10 years. The current system of stick docks accommodates approximately 55 boats. The number of boat access cottages exceeds 110. The calculation is simple in that we are addressing the needs of approximately 50% of boat access cottage owners
3. Security- Over my lifetime on this lake, the reality has been that nothing can be left at the landing without risk of theft. Our first motor was taken in 1975 and we can all recite a litany of similar occurrences since then, big and small from gasoline, pfd's, trailers, wheels and tires to now most recently, several boats. With useful input from many fellow residents both via

Facebook and in person, the RLCA has looked to increase security at the landing through the use of:

Greater interaction with Police, requests for increased patrols

Camera systems, we have even had one family offer to donate one (\$2,500 value)

OPP have suggested that we re-order the parking system to work from the centre outward, instead of parking "randomly" under the trees and along the edges in order to make it easier for the police to patrol

To cut back the underbrush in order to provide better visibility and fewer places places for concealment

To have the light bulbs replaced (LOB and AH)

To name just a few.....

4. MNR - We have presented these ideas to the MNR and requested permission to implement. We have done this because we wanted to preserve the delicate status we now have and not do anything to precipitate a rash move by the MNR which may involve accelerating the removal of the docks. The MNR has responded by saying they would take our proposals under advisement but would prefer to "do nothing" at this time. They would not allow us to install cameras until they had received a legal opinion from their legal counsel, but were "not optimistic" about being able to install cameras at a public landing. In any case, we also do not have the permission to tap into the electricity currently used to power the lights, install internet access etc.
5. All in all, we are now an anomaly within the MNR's system. They do not know how to deal with us but have made it clear they are looking for a solution that will allow them to:
  - mitigate their liability, avoid controversy, have the support of the community at large, and maintain the current use of the landing, including the public access
6. We would like the support of the members of the RLCA to proceed with the building of a **proposal** that would:
  - Prepare us with a contingency plan should the MNR issue an order to remove the stick docks currently in place
  - Give us clear, permanent and legal standing with regard to access to our properties via the landing, most likely via a land lease, with a docking system with enough capacity to accommodate any member who **wishes** to participate
  - Maintain the current public access, including parking and boat launch, but most likely in a diminished proportion for those who did not wish to participate in an RLCA plan
  - Allow us to increase security and maintain control over access to members and residents of the lake community

It is expected that the approvals and implementation of such a plan would take a minimum of 2 years.

7. In broad strokes, this has been presented to the MNR which has been supportive provided:
  - It addresses the needs of the residents in the majority
  - That it primarily maintains and not expands the current use of the landing
  - Mitigates their exposure to liability

Sean Lawrence explained that the RLCA needs to go the MNR speaking on behalf of a majority of cottagers/residents on the lake. Input and support are needed and crucial.

Sean introduced a motion to address the Lake Access and Landing issue:

Be it resolved that:

*This Association endorses and approves the actions of the Board of Directors to date with respect to the landing, and directs the Board to develop and advance a long-term plan to ensure that safe and secure docking and parking is available at the landing to the Raven Lake community, including opening discussions and negotiations with the MNR, townships, and others having jurisdiction. Further, the Board is authorized to draw up to \$3000 of the Association's funds as may be necessary in connection with expenses related to the development of this plan.*

Motion was moved by Howard Rowilson. Seconded by Geoff Gooderham.

Carried unanimously.

## **11. New Business**

The issue of snowmobiles on lake in summer was raised as a concern. It was felt this was a one-time happening.

## **12. Adjournment**

Moved by Geoff Gooderham, Seconded by Mara Kenins. Motion carried.

## **13: Presentation:**

Sean Lawrence introduced the guest speaker, Bruce Lowry, who authored "Slow Death by Rubber Duck" and is now a Raven Lake property owner.