



BELMONT LAKE COTTAGERS' ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

JULY 16, 2022

9:30AM

MINUTES (UNAPPROVED)

Opening remarks from Peter White, BLCA President:

Introduction of HBM council guests Jim Martin, Hart Webb, Larry Ellis, Greg Clements, (HBM council candidate), and the BLCA Board Members.

Regrets: BLCA Board members Erin Dixon, Katherine Deas

Motion 22-01 to approve Minutes of the 2021 BLCA AGM (Peter White / Greg Alexander). Carried.

The entire 2021 meeting was recorded as a Zoom video meeting and can be viewed at:

https://blca.ca/BoardDocs/2020_2021/BLCA_2021_AGM_Recording.mp4

The meeting agenda, financial reports, and BLCA Board nominations can be found at:

<https://blca.ca/board-documents/>

President's Report – Peter White:

Each board member will present a summary of their areas of focus since our last board meeting. If a board member was not able to make today's meeting, I will cover their presentation
We are celebrating 40 years as a lake association this year. Thanks to those who had the foresight to incorporate our organization in 1982, and to all those who have overseen its effective operation over the years.

Volunteers have been very creative over the past 2 years, having introduced a variety of new and exciting ways to enjoy the lake. You will hear more about these new programs shortly.
The Pike Tournament went ahead this year for the first time in 2 years, although registration was impacted by the big storm on May 21st. Thanks to Brandon van Asten for organizing this event again under very challenging conditions.

We are going ahead with the regatta this year after having to cancel in the prior 2 years. Make sure you have Sunday, July 31 highlighted on our calendars, and come out for some fun.

The golf tournament is on once again on the last Saturday in August. You can register now by emailing Ralph Horton or by calling him directly. Get the information you need in our newsletter

And speaking of our newsletter, Erin Dixon and John Dixon will be providing an update on putting the newsletter together. A special thank you to Lisa Levy and Uta Peikert who did a fine job once again on our beautiful calendar.

Here is a quick update on several topics that have been important
LDD (Gypsy) moths: Much to our surprise, the infestation we experienced last year was not repeated this year. We assume it was a combination of the caterpillar virus and fungus, along with several very cold winter days. In any event, we are delighted we did not have to live through that nightmare again

Crowe Valley conservation Authority: We have been very pleased with water levels over the past year. CVCA was able to restore normal water levels within several days despite heavy rains last year and in the spring of this year. We are reminded that the work on the Belmont dam that we helped get started a few years has been a prime factor in CVCA having the tools they need to keep water levels as stable as possible

HBM Lake Association: We have had very little interactions with HBMLA members due primarily to the pandemic and its related effects on the county. We will be organizing all candidate meetings for the fall election, so watch for our email blasts and social media and try to get out to one of them. Voting can be done on line once again, and you are able to vote both in the jurisdiction you live in as well as HBM township

Peter reviewed the roster for the upcoming municipal election, including those candidates in attendance at the meeting: Jim Martin– Mayor, Hart Webb – Deputy Mayor, Greg Clements – Township Ward.

Havelock Belmont Methuen Township Update (Mayor Jim Martin)

Mayor Martin discussed affect of COVID on HBM activities. He noted that video meetings seem to be working well and will likely remain in place, with improvements made to the meeting space and equipment to better support video calls.

Budget: Reported a 2.2% increase in the budget. Public consultation put roads at the top of concerns for HNM residents. There is concern that inflation cause shortfalls in certain budget items, with fuel costs a particular concern.

HBM Grants: There is a new HBM grant available for lake associations with a total value of \$10K. Costs for the activity will be shared 50/50. As an example, Kassahabog has received a \$1000 grant to work with TrentU on invasives.

Staffing: Staff turnover continues to be a challenge, including the role of treasurer. Both building officials moved on (retired, moved). New CBO hired and will start on Monday July 18. Roads department has only six road maintenance employees and could be cleaning up storm damage for the next 12 months.

Storm cleanup: The township is looking for options for residents to dump brush from the storm.

Waste: The new clear bag policy seems to be working, waste amount (transfer) amounts are down with increased diversion to recycling.

Bylaws: AMP (Administrative Monetary Penalties) allows bylaw enforcement to issue tickets, for example being able to issue tickets on Mile of Memories.

AirBnb issues: The issue of AirBnb came up during Official Plan discussions, no consistent plan within PTBO county so each municipality is looking for ways to manage locally. HBM has identified a need to make a management plan to deal with AirBnb.

Other : There is a new bridge at hatchery road, and the country is testing new surface on Sawmill Bay Rd (micro-grain aggregate surface). Staff heads to Mile of Memories daily to deal with enforcement issues. New bylaws for fireworks and Trailer Parks have been adopted, noting that the fireworks by-law is difficult to enforce.

EORN and cell gaps - COVID brought this to the forefront. Rogers now partnered with EORN for this region. EORN is looking to double cell site counts, with a plan for 180 upgrades to existing towers. The goal is 99% will have coverage in Ontario, 95% sufficient data for email, 85% capable of streaming video.

Recreation: Received a grant for the arena (building addition), \$1M roof paid for in the grant. The new splash pad construction will begin during the week of July 18.

Comment from Hart Webb (Deputy Mayor) – Matheson Property improvements from grant money, trail improvements, geocache, talking tree app online guidebook. The new name for the property is “The Matheson Conservation Area”. ATV ban on the property will help with trail damage from ATV use. HBM is looking at installing security cameras in the area to help with issues of vandalism.

Financial Report – Valerie Marshall (Treasurer)

Val presented the financial report for the BLCA FYE2021 (December 31 2021).

The BLCA Membership count 300 currently, count at 365 at the end of 2021. Road Rep personal interaction seems to be key to membership counts.

Noted that there are challenges with payments when the individuals who don't put cottage address in e-transfer; this makes it difficult to reconcile the payment with the cottager.

For 2023 we will have a new advertising sales person for the newsletter: Angela McCurdy

Val walked through the main expenses for the associations: FOCA, insurance, events, rock marking.

The BLCA newsletter 65 pages this year (up from 45), thanks John Dixon and Erin Dixon for editing and production of the newsletter. There was minor change from printed budget in the newsletter (lake stewardship).

Motion 22-02 to accept the Financial Report as presented (Valerie Marshall /John Dixon). Carried.

Val Marshall recognized new member of the BLCA – Tishan Mills (FR26).

Question from the floor regarding declining surplus. Val notes that this is per plan as BLCA is not comfortable carrying such a large surplus.

Winners of the early membership draw (Evan Meyers)

Evan gave a shout-out to Val for the great work done in designing a new packaging and labelling system, which has made the job of the quadrant leaders and road reps much easier. Evan commented that the quality of the material we are delivering makes the job of the Road Reps much easier. In total there are 40 road reps, and that this personal contact with cottagers is important to successful membership.

Evan also thanked Peter White for his many efforts on behalf of the BLCA. Evan also commented on the success of the July Dock Concert event.

For the membership draw, there was approximately \$1600 worth of draw prizes, including \$500 BLCA-provided gift certificates to local businesses. For 2022 there 275 names in the draw, down slightly from 290 in 2021.

Water Testing

Peter White / John Dixon on behalf of Wendy Vuyk

Belmont Lake is continues to be part of “LPP” Lake Partner Program (Secchi) as well as phosphorous monitoring. Donna Peeling takes the reading for the LPP.

The BLCA also monitors Coliform (total coliform + e.coli) and phosphorus through a private lab. We had reduced testing in 2020 and 2021 due to logistics challenges around COVID. Overall water quality remains good but we need to stay on top of this. Reminder of the three main things for cottagers (natural shoreline, healthy septic, natural shoreline)

John Dixon – Newsletter & By-Law Revisions

Newsletter:

John discussed process of producing the newsletter. As newsletter editor, John:

Works with the Board in planning content and soliciting articles;
Communicates with contributors to ensure timely submissions;
Edits submissions for content, style and length;
Writes occasional articles;

Once items are edited and formatted, passes them on to Erin Dixon who handles the newsletter layout (both editorial and ad content); and
Participates in proofreading prior to printing.

John noted that we have an ongoing series in the newsletter include water quality, and lake history.

The 2022 Newsletter is the biggest yet, with profiles of BLCA activities, items in our series on the environment and water quality, invasive species, and lake history, as well as articles on other topics of local interest. Thank you to all contributors, to Erin for layout, and to proofreaders for their sharp eyes.

We are always looking for suggestions and offers of contributions – please contact me any Board member.

By-Law revisions:

Peter White and I are working on revising the BLCA By-Laws. This is required before Fall 2024 under provincial legislation, the Ontario Non-Profit Corporations Act or ONCA. We attended a webinar organized by FOCA in the Spring. Available resources should make this task not too onerous. More news to come at future AGMs.

Erin Dixon – Newsletter Production and The Belmont Expedition

Erin was unable to attend the AGM. Peter White read Erin's update as provided to the board prior to the meeting:

Newsletter

The Belmont Lake News received a layout refresh in 2021. Erin Dixon provided a new look and feel for the publication including an updated version of the BLCA logo file which makes it more appropriate for print. The newsletter is intended to be a great way to stay informed about events that are happening on and around the lake and the new format for ad organization is designed to make it easy to find local businesses to take care of cottage needs.

Our 2022 newsletter has even more great content and ads for local businesses who have supported the publication. We hope that you find it an excellent resource to have on hand throughout the year. We're always looking for member photos to be included in the newsletter. These don't have the same file size requirements as the calendar but they do need to look great in black and white. If you have photos to submit, refer to the "We Want Your Photos" article in the 2022 newsletter.

The Belmont Expedition

Introduced as a covid-safe activity for 2021, The Belmont Expedition saw teams of friends, families, adults and kids exploring the lake and surrounding area by car, boat and on foot. The activity has participants completing a series of creative and educational (and fun!) activities

called 'missions'. Val Marshall is the master mission planner who does great work behind the scenes scouting the area and route planning to ensure a smooth experience for participants. The missions are tracked in an app called GooseChase. Erin Dixon manages the app setup and maintenance, team setup and communication as well as logo design and branding. Feedback is provided throughout the game by adding bonus points for excellent submissions and deducting points for items that need work. Despite this being a non-competitive event, participants seemed to be quite focused on the leaderboard and worked hard to try and "stay ahead" of the other teams.

We've launched the 2022 Expedition and if this sounds like something you'd like to participate in, it's not too late to register. Send an email with "Register" in the subject line to: thebelmontexpedition@gmail.com and we'll get you set up.

Katherine Deas

Social media

Clothing on hiatus

Interacts with Prins and the fireworks team

Notes that we do get negative feedback from time regarding fireworks

Greg Alexander – Rock Marking and Regatta.

Greg thanked the many Regatta volunteers for making the Regatta Weekend a success.

Rock markers: Siblings Jillian Valentine and Aaron Valentine have taken over the job of rock marking on Belmont Lake. As always concerns about the placement of markers can be sent to rockhead@blca.ca

Lake History – Ellen Walsh

Ellen was unable to attend the AGM. Peter White read Ellen's update as provided to the board prior to the meeting:

This year, 2021-22, was my first year on the Board, and I have enjoyed contributing articles for the BLCA Newsletter that document Belmont Lake history. Listening to and learning about the wonderful stories and histories of Belmont Lake is a wonderful way to spend time, whether it be during the lazy summer days or during a weekend winter visit. I find it rewarding to work on and research the many tales of the lake and its residents and learn of the decades-old history of so many families, properties and milestones. Thank you to all those who have contributed! I am looking for ideas for the 2023 newsletter and would love to receive story ideas, family legacy yarns and little-known lore about our beloved Belmont Lake. Please contact me at ellenjeanwalsh@gmail.com with questions or suggestions!

Other Business

What about no parking signs and regatta (Deas): Reply that we can't officially close the parking area, we can only encourage people not to park there. This hasn't been an issue in recent years, provided the reminder signs are in place.

Question about the possibility of boat launch at Sawmill bay road re-opening? Reply that has been closed in a long time, and noted there is a launch at the north end. There is likely still a legal right of way in place for Sawmill but it may not be usable due to overgrowth.

Comment to close: Jack Lake very successful with lobbying the township, BLCA could do this if someone had the time to engage the township at this level.

AirBnb – AirBnb has a complaint line / portal. BLCA should work to make cottagers aware of this service. Noted that AirBnb is actually a great option for rentals due to the accountability built into the AirBnb platform.

Nominations for the Board of Directors (Peter White)

No new nominations were received from the floor.

Election of Board of Directors – Peter White

The following individuals have agreed to stand for election to the board of directors:

Greg Alexander
Katherine Deas
Erin Dixon
John Dixon
Valerie Marshall
Evan Meyers
Wendy Vuyk
Ellen Walsh
Peter White

***Motion 22-03 accept the roster for the BLC A Board, as presented (Peter White / Greg Alexander).
Carried.***

Comments from the floor: Congratulations to the BLCA Board on another successful year.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:57 AM