

April 1998

Greetings to all Oxbow Lake Cottagers,

It seems that Spring is here already so Summer can't be far behind. We trekked across the ice every weekend this winter. It was a fairly mild winter by Muskoka standards. Good weather for skiing, snowmobiling and ice fishing (just ask Steve Gaida about his lake trout). The water is a little high right now but definitely not at flood level.

The annual cottagers' meeting will be held on Sunday, August 2, (11:00 a.m.) at Oxbow Lodge. We had to move it back to the August Civic Holiday weekend due to the July 1st holiday being mid week this year. There will be a reminder on the notice board.

The new township building opened on Feb. 9, 1998. The first council meeting was held on Mar. 3, 1998. The total cost of the building was \$300,000. more than the amount received from insurance.

Assessment appeals must be filed between May 1 and June 30th, 1998. This is a tight time frame. If in doubt, appeal - you can always withdraw your appeal later.

In the spring of 1997, the Provincial government established the Lands for Life planning process in the hopes of striking a balance between protection and use of natural resources on Crown Land. They are holding a series of round table discussions at various locales and want public input. For more

information re: meeting dates and locations their internet site is <http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca>.

Long Lake has been officially renamed Dotty Lake East and Dotty Lake West.

Road signs are not yet in place for 911 use. This could be disastrous since road names are in the 911 system but the signs are not posted for emergency vehicle guidance when responding to a call. It is strongly recommended, by the fire chief, that everyone call 1-800-6671961 or 310-2355 to confirm your civic address.

Rescue Van #31, that was stationed at Hillside Station, has been re-assigned due to provincial downloading and township budget concerns. This move was strongly opposed by the Sinclair-Finlayson Ward Advisory Committee.

Our condolences are extended to the Wittenburg family on the death of Connie Wittenburg this past year.

Hope to see you at Oxbow on the 24th of May weekend, if not before.

Bruce Cameron

Ox-Bow Lake Cottagers Association Meeting

Date: Sunday, July 2, 1997

Location: Ox-Bow Lodge

Meeting was called to order by President Bruce Cameron.

Bruce introduced guests Tom Pinkard, Henri Bertrand and Bill McNaughton who would be speaking first.

Tom Pinkard

Mr. Pinkard provided a handout to the cottagers. The handout highlighted a few of the issues that are important to us.

- Fire in November did not destroy the hall but destroyed the inside. They are still not close to settling with the insurance company. Next week they will start construction of a new building at the junction of highways 35 and 60 at a cost of \$450,000 (excludes GST). Currently staff are working out of trailers. Estimate that the new building will be ready in January.
- If you have questions regarding issues or would like to obtain information public documents are available and can be obtained by phoning the Township.
- Vision - there are still questions about Vision. About 1,000 participated in the Vision project. They created a picture of what they would like the township including wetland, shoreline, services, growth and settlement, economic diversification and wildlife to look like 75 years from now. More volunteers are taking the Vision report and creating an official plan. Waterfront policies created now will have a big impact on what the lakes will look like in 20 - 40 years.
- August 9th in Dwight and August 16th in Baysville there will be public meetings to address the issue of property and property values.
- Market Value Assessment - the issue has not gone away. The Tories are currently in the process of dramatic changes that will mean more downloading. Suggesting that instead of 69% of taxes for education 50% will be for education. This is bad news. In handout is a picture of what it will look like at 50% on both the municipal and District level.

- Budget - a few comments
 - \$400,000 of new capital into roads
 - \$90,000 into fire
 - Ambulance will be downloaded probably through firehalls
 - 1.1 million in reserve funds
 - In 1974 79% of budget was spent on roads. Last year it was 41%. This is due to new services money being taken from public roads.
 - 1997 Budget passed in April. It is a public document. For a copy call Bill, Henri or Tom.

- Roads - 1996 Road needs study was done. Last one prior to this was done in Lake of Bays in 1981. Going forward we will not use MTO or provincial standards for roads but will set our own standards, Heritage or Cottage. The type of road is categorized by needs. The roads superintendent picks the roads to work on based on needs and makes decisions. Over the next 5 years \$500,000 in capital will be spent on roads and they will be in better than good shape. West Ox-Bow Road should be resurfaced next year. For a copy of the Roads Needs Study, call the Township or come by and pick up.

Questions:

Bruce Cameron - there used to be 2 free weekends per year at the dump. This was reduced to 1 day and now to 0. We would like a free dump day. Is this possible? A lot of other municipalities have free dump days.

Free days were abused. There will not be a free day right now. They have built a swap area at the dump for reusable items.

If anyone is interested in the hours for the dump you can get them from Bruce Cameron.

Other items of note as they relate to the dump:

1. Henri was unable to get \$32.40 per \$100,000 assessment. Did not have the co-operation of the municipality. It will remain at 3 bags per household.
2. All hazardous waste should be taken to Dwight dump. It is open July 3 and every other Thursday. The Huntsville Madill is still open but the Dwight dump is closer.
3. You can leave stoves, washers, dryers, refrigerators at the Dwight dump for \$27.00 untagged. There is a fee for tire disposal.

Ed McRobbie will get a copy of this information and staple to our board.

Information about hours and handling and disposal of hazardous waste is also available from the man at the dump.

Bill McNaughton

- Bill provided a summary of Lake of Bays Taxation. Increase from 1991 to 1996 of 64%. School Board and district 63%. Grants have been reduced by 50%. Total financing user fees reduced by 16%.
- Education - Lake of Bays cost \$12,000 per child. Huntsville \$4,000 per child. The average in Muskoka is \$7,000. Georgian Bay is paying about \$100,000. Last year 84% of taxes raised came from lakefront properties that do not have children attending school. The shift of the tax burden to waterfront properties because of MVA.

Henri Bertrand

- Who is responsible for the community dock? Federal MNR claims no municipality responsibility. Associate request that it becomes our dock so we have a choice on how to maintain. Even if the Township does not look after the dock they will continue to grade the road.
- Mail in Vote - This year you will receive an envelope with ballot inside to be placed at Township so that you can vote in advance. You will receive this at least 10 - 12 days before election and then drop into mail as soon as you decide who to vote for. The ballots are postage paid.
- Emergency 911 number will be in effect before the end of 1997. You will be getting a visit from the Fire Department before the end of September to give you a lot number and sign. You can have them put up your sign for \$30.00. You can post your own sign, in accordance with their guidelines for \$10.00. The number sign needs to be on a separate pole.

This is a one time only arrangement. If you do not post a sign by December 1997 they will do it for you and charge you twice as much. If you will not be here when they are on the lake call them to make arrangements for them to come out. Must ensure that sign is posted in a place where it would not be taken down by the snowplow.

These numbers may eventually be used as a mailing address.

- Tax appeals likely not to be resolved until the end of 1998. Tax break may only be 1.25%.
- Light at Highway 60 - District has stonewalled illuminating the intersection at Highway 60. MTO does not feel it is necessary and they control within 450 metres of the intersection. Someone at North Bay will look at this issue. Has been a suggestion that a light be put on the fire station to reflect on the intersection. Henri will look into it.

- Request that there be better lighting at the Huntsville waterstation. The plant is well lit but the road is not.
- Ed McRobbie asked Henri to take a compliment to Tom Brown thanking him for the work on the road. It is in the best shape it has been in years.

Question raised about Tom Pinkard document not being doublesided as would be expected in time of cost restraint and environmental concerns. Tom Pinkard apologized for the oversight.

Bruce Cameron thanked all of our guests.

1996 Minutes

Bruce Cameron asked that a motion be brought to approve the minutes. It was noted that there was a page missing about how land will be used in the future. Promise was made by Bruce to reprint the minutes.

Other corrections to the minutes were suggested as follows:

- fires should not be ignited before 2 hours before dusk.
- Henri's suggestion for garbage assessment of \$32.40 per \$100,000.

David Forrest move to approve minutes. Motion seconded by Ruth Scott. Minutes passed.

Financial Report - July 1997

Balance Forward		66.29
Income:		
Membership Dues	\$525.00	
Raffle	86.00	
Tasso	15.50	
Interest	<u>1.71</u>	
	\$628.21	
New Balance		\$694.50
Expenses:		
Refreshments	\$ 45.00	
FOCA	120.50	
Mail/Caone Race	43.50	
3 Guys and a Stove	30.00	
L. Brown (FOCA)	<u>42.00</u>	
	\$281.00	
Balance		\$413.50

Foca Report

Bill Wylie attended the Foca meeting. Foca is going through a difficult time right now. They have assisted with Hydro and getting better rates. They are continuing to work on Indian Land Claims issue. The Indian Land Claims are mostly through Muskoka to North Bay.

Foca has also had a lot to do with removing education off the Bill.

The new 911 number will appear on phone bill. We will get a monthly charge for service for a while.

Encourage cottagers to mail in their votes. We can vote for Mayor and Councillor. This new system is secure and will save the Township money.

We should continue to support FOCA. Lynn Brown and Bill Wylie will continue to represent us.

Incorporation

A number of other cottagers associations are incorporated. It gives the Executive some protection against lawsuits and it makes it safer for people to work for people. Cost to Incorporate is \$600 - \$2,000. depending on the lawyer. Bruce Cameron expressed the importance of us being incorporated. Asked if anyone knew a lawyer on the lake? We can incorporate everyone on the lake ourselves and get insurance at an approximate cost of \$350. - \$500.

Al Barsevich would like Executive to investigate the points to incorporate. He feels that \$500. is a bargain. He would like to move that the Executive has up to \$500. to incorporate the Executive. Total cost per cottage is \$10.00. Motion was seconded by Angie Heydon. Motion Passed.

Roads

The cost for the road to be upgraded to a winter road is about \$5 million dollars. People are happy to keep trespassers out by not having a winter road. Cottages where the road is plowed have been broken into a number of times.

Re Five
Hillside — Emergency Response Unit
Twp Lake of
Bays

Ox-Bow Lake Regatta

Dave and Cathy Wylie ran the Regatta last year but cannot do it again this year. We would like to keep this going. Would the Barsevich Family host the event on August 3? Al will get back to us.

We would like some volunteers to organize events for the day.

Peter Heydon volunteered for the Egg Toss

Angie Heydon volunteered for the Swimming races

Bill Wylie will look after the awards

Canoe Race - Bill Cameron and Evan Cambray volunteered

Al will set up the net for volleyball.

The Fowkes will look after the refreshments.

The event will start at 1:00 P.M.

Election of Executive

Lynn Jackson has resigned as Treasurer and we need a new person. Howard Cambray volunteered. Ed McRobbie moved that nominations for Treasurer be closed. Seconded by Al Barsevich. Congratulations to Howard Cambray our new Treasurer.

Balance of Executive

President - Bruce Cameron

Vice-President - Bill Wylie

Secretary - Chris Rolls

Roads - Tom McBride

Lynn Brown - FOCA

Position on Advisory Committee with Henri Bertrand. Ed McRobbie has been doing this but he is only here 6 months of the year and there are monthly meetings. No volunteers to take this over so Ed will continue. Don Folkes volunteered to attend meetings in the winter.

New Business

Bell Canada offers a new service where you can put your phone on vacation for a single fee. You can avoid the hassle and cost to disconnect and reconnect each year.

Ed McRobbie will post information about municipality library, recreation centres, arenas and parks in the Township.

Please pay dues before you leave.

Meeting Adjourned.