

## OTTY LAKE ASSOCIATION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

1p.m. Sunday October 16, 2022

Zoom Meeting

### **Attendance**

Present: Kirsten Brouse (Chair), Barb Hicks, David Murray, Susan Murray, Kevin Terrion, Jen O'Donoghue, Robert Cosh, Keith Desjardins, Cathy Kari, Anne Scotton, Linda Cuthbertson (Secretary)

Regrets: Reid Kilburn

### **Introduction**

Chair welcomed everyone and did the land acknowledgement.

One item, causeway construction, was added to the agenda under the subtitle Decisions.

Motion (2022-04-01)

Moved by Keith and seconded by Susan "that the agenda be approved as distributed and amended."

Carried

Motion (2022-04-02)

Moved by Kevin and seconded by Susan "that the minutes of the June 15, 2022 OLA Board Meeting be approved as distributed."

Carried

### **Decisions**

#### 1. Confirming Projects and Priorities for 2022/2023

Kirsten had distributed a chart listing projects, volunteers associated with each project and monthly timelines for each. The projects were categorized under the following headings: Association Management, Ongoing Core Work, Projects, and Future Projects.

Some items listed needed volunteers. David volunteered to help with the new Otty Lake website. Susan volunteered to be the board volunteer for the Shoreline Planting project. Cathy and Kirsten volunteered to do the State of the Lake Report. Barb agreed to do the Spring Information Package on the web page.

Gail Read is the project lead for the Area Councillors. She has indicated she will be absent most of spring 2023 so is hesitant assuming this role without support. Barb will forward information about Rideau Round Table canoe tours to the Nature Floatilla volunteers.

Kevin indicated his work on Data Consolidation and Management will likely not be completed in 2023 but is ongoing.

## 2. Pre-Approval of Beaver Management Budget

Kevin has contacted several sources and presented his findings. There are 3 beaver dams on Jebb's Creek, 2 are on the lake side of the Rideau Ferry Road bridge. A respected and knowledgeable trapper estimated it would cost about \$1200 to remove the beaver. There has been no management of the beaver population for several years. Kevin suggested in addition to the \$1200 required, if approved, for this fall lesser amounts should be budgeted yearly to remediate the likely ongoing problem.

The beaver dams are preventing the flow of water so the lake is not flushing. Flushing of the water nutrients is important for water quality. It is estimated the water level of the lake could be 8-10 cm lower if the dams and beavers are removed.

There are several parties involved in trying to resolve this beaver problem. Private landowners, DNE, RVCA, Lanark County and OLA are all concerned participants. The trapper has been approached and is willing to work with several of the parties involved.

Experience has proven that you can remove the dams and not trap any beaver but it is only a temporary solution. The beavers rebuild the dams very quickly.

A number of questions and concerns were raised. There are ongoing concerns about lake water levels, both high and low. There were concerns raised about killing beavers and interfering with nature. There were concerns about the water quality of the lake if no action is taken.

Historically managing beaver dams to address water level concerns has been a contentious issue. At our February Board Meeting David presented a comprehensive well researched 9 page report outlining the problem and presented options to resolve the issue. After a lengthy discussion it was decided to have David investigate the use of a leveller device through an existing beaver dam. At our May Board Meeting David reported that a professional firm was contacted and they determined use of the beaver deceiver on Jebb's Creek would not work. They do not recommend the use of the device on any area greater than 10 square miles. Decisions and discussions at these meetings initiated Kevin's investigation and reporting today.

David reminded us at this meeting that the professional consultant contacted in the spring about the use of a beaver deceiver did not actually do a feasibility study but only gave a professional opinion. No one with the competence to do the study was available at the time. Although some experts don't consider beaver deceivers to be a viable solution they haven't been tried. It is an expensive alternative that might work and would be a more environmentally friendly solution.

At this time the board does not feel comfortable making any decision about approving costs for trapping beavers.

Although there were mixed and opposing views expressed during this lengthy discussion there were some areas of agreement and next steps suggested. It was agreed that water quality is an OLA priority but we need information and/or data about how poor water flow is and will affect nutrient levels in Otty Lake. If maximizing flow is essential to maintaining a healthy lake it is important that we find a solution.

It was also agreed that any solution to this issue requires conversation and cooperation with all the parties involved. Kevin has taken steps to engage with most of these parties and we appreciate all his efforts.

Kevin will contact RVCA to see if they are agreeable to removing the dams as a temporary solution.

### 3. Causeway Construction

Keith and Reid prepared and shared an updated summary report about the un-permitted causeway constructed to join an island to the mainland in early June. The causeway is not easily visible to boaters and board members indicated a number of lake residents were not aware of its construction. It was also noted that the lake map distributed last year used information forwarded by CGIS and it was based on information from the Surveyor General of Ontario. The map indicates the island in question is not an island but a peninsula. It was an error neither we or the Surveyor General of Ontario noted.

It was agreed that the report with some additional information be included in the newsletter and on the website. The report should add the location of the causeway and Reid and Keith's names as contacts if members have concerns or questions.

**Due to time constraints it was decided to move all of the items on the agenda except the discussion item about the proposed gun range to a November meeting.**

### **Proposed Gun Range at 1688 Rideau Ferry Road**

At the Drummond/North Elmsley Township Meeting on October 11th members of the public voiced their concerns about a zoning bylaw amendment to permit a private gun range on the property at 1688 Rideau Ferry Road. Kirsten attended and signed in on behalf of OLA so although no formal letter was submitted by OLA she will be on the township mailing list and updated as this issue proceeds. She estimated there were about 100 people who attended

this meeting with all but the proponent and one other expressing arguments against the application.

Two OLA members reached out to the chair, one in favour of the application and one to implore OLA not get involved.

A number of lake residents are very upset about the possibility of gunshot noises impacting the tranquility of the lake and their properties. OLA kept members informed about the application and the public meeting by forwarding mass email blasts. OLA will continue its role as an information source on this and other issues.

Kirsten will contact the township's planner to check on the timeline and next steps in this application process. The board decided our focus would be on concerns about noise pollution and land (lead) contamination not on antigun or anti hunting arguments being raised by some opponents of the application.

**The chair adjourned the meeting at 3:06. Date of the next meeting yet to be determined.**

**List of Reports and Items Shared prior to this Meeting:**

Agenda - Kirsten

Zoom Link - Barb

Minutes of OLA Board Meeting June 15, 2022 - Linda

Chart of OLA Projects and Priorities - Kirsten

Membership Report as of October 10,2022 -Susan and David

Update to OLA Members Concerned with Remediation of Causeway

Construction - Keith and Reid

OLA Income Statement as of October 2022 and Proposed Budget for 2023 - Jen