

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**DRAG AND SPRUCE LAKE PROPERTY OWNERS' ASSOCIATION**  
**JULY 7, 2024**

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**1. Call to Order- Rick Wesselman**

Rick called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. We have a quorum with 36 members present. We invited 3 municipal officials and Murray Fearrey said he would be here after the official annual meeting, if he was still available. The session with Mr. Fearrey would not be recorded in the minutes.

**2. Introductions- Rick Wesselman**

Rick introduced the current members of the DSLPOA Executive, noting open positions which will be dealt with later in the meeting.

		<b>Year Elected</b>
President	Rick Wesselman	2022
Past President	Barb Bohlin	N/A
First Vice-President	open	
Second Vice-President	Sheelagh Kemp	2022
Secretary	Larry Olivo	2022
Treasurer	Hunter Smith	2023
Director, Lake Stewardship	Rob Norris	2023
Director, DSLPOA Newsletter and Directory	Merla Russell	2023
Director, Membership	Jennifer North	2023
Director, E-Communications	Martin Rist	2022
Advertising Co-ordinator	Merla Russell	2022
Officer at Large	Laurie Jennings	2021
Officer at Large	Jim Miners	2023
Director, Event Co-ordination	Jennifer Thompson	2023
Director, Area Representatives	Barb Bohlin	2022

**3. Charitable Donations- Barb Bohlin**

Barb Bohlin was unfortunately unable to attend today's meeting. Rick Wesselman reported on the donation made to Haliburton 4Cs and Sirch Community Services. Members were encouraged to use services provided by these organizations (e.g. Lily Ann Thrift Store, Thrift Warehouse, Bistro and Bakery) as an impactful way to further support the work they do in the community.

#### **4. Secretary's Report - Minutes of the 2023 AGM Larry Olivo**

Larry noted that The Minutes of the 2023 meeting has been posted online, sent out as part of the AGM package and summarized in the 2024 Directory, and to save meeting time, we should dispense with a reading of the Minutes at this meeting,

**MOVED**, Larry Olivo, seconded Peter Markel, that we dispense with the reading of the 2023 Annual General Meeting Minutes.

**Passed unanimously**

**MOVED**, Larry Olivo, seconded, Jim Miners, that the Secretary's report of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 2023 be accepted.

**Passed unanimously**

#### **5. Treasurer's Report - 2023 Year End Financials Rick Wesselman**

Unfortunately, Treasurer Hunter Smith was not able to attend the AGM so Rick Wesselman presented a summary of the financial report for the 2023 year in his place. A detailed Financial Statement was sent as part of the AGM package and is set out in the 2024 Directory.

Our cash assets were \$77,059 in 2023 up from \$60,175 in 2022. The Fund balances were \$29,175 for the General Operating fund, up from \$26,430 in 2022. \$30.00 of the membership fee is paid into the General Operating Fund and \$10.00 goes to the Lake Stewardship fund. The Lake Stewardship Fund 2023 balance was \$20,680, up from \$20,437 in 2022. This fund has a reserve fund to use for future unanticipated developments to protect and preserve Drag and Spruce Lakes. The EWM [Milfoil] Operating Fund was at \$26,664 up from \$13,808 in 2022, much of the increase coming from donations.

There were several questions about the Milfoil fund and transferring funds from other sources, but for the moment the fund will be left in its current state for further donations.

**MOVED**, Rick Wesselman, seconded, Merla Russell, that the Treasurer's 2023 financial report be accepted.

**Passed unanimously**

#### **6. Membership Report- Merla Russell**

The total number of lake properties, excluding those on Drag River, total 542. The names in the database amount to 460. The number of DSLPOA members paid to date in 2024 is 270, with 49 members from 2023 having not paid up their 2024 membership fee, and 130 past members have not paid for the past 3 years. 203 members requisitioned DSLPOA signs for 2023.

It was also noted that that Fire Safety booklets were available at the table at the back of the meeting hall.

## **7. Communication- Martin Rist**

Martin gave a summary of our current communication tools, and their operation.

- **The website:**

The website is drangandsprucelakes.ca and Facebook is Our community of Drag and Spruce Lakes. The website is primarily for transmitting DSLPOA news and news updates. We also post available email updates to those who have signed up to receive them. Currently, there are 200 subscribed individuals signed up. The lifetime pageviews amounts to 110,550. There is an average of 20 views per day, with 657 in the last 30 days, and 878 as of the morning of today's meeting.

The website is inexpensive to set up but not very flexible. Martin walked the members through the website and what is on it, and how it can be used.

- **Facebook:**

Martin also reviewed our Facebook site which is a private group. It can be reached at Our community of Drag and Spruce Lakes, and it serves as our community bulletin board. Anyone can view the site, and DSLPOA members can post on the site. If a person wants to join our Facebook site, they need consent to join. Currently, 970 members, which includes the family members of property owners, are allowed to join and have access to the site. There has been good, steady activity with 86 posts in the last 60 days.

To access the Facebook site, go to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/dslpoa>.

Martin reminded members that privacy on Facebook is limited. If you quote something on the site everyone can see it. If you post your name, it shows up on the site. Despite fairly open access to the site and to posting on it, our site has not had inappropriate postings except occasionally and Martin screens them. No one has complained about personal security on Facebook, but Martin will continue to monitor the site.

Merla suggested that anyone should be allowed to post to Facebook, for example someone looking to buy a property, rather than restrict it to association members.

Martin also indicated that he would like to have someone take over management and monitoring Facebook as he will be having much more to do with the development of a new website platform.

- **Where are we heading**

We can keep Facebook as it is, as it serves our needs as comments and suggestions are always welcome. Also running a Facebook site comes at no cost to the DSLPOA.

We may be making changes to our website. The website's current blogging service [Typepad] is approaching the end of life. To continue its operations, the website will require migration to a proper functional and updated platform. There is a preliminary discussion currently ongoing with a local website developer. If and when we move onto a new site, our old system will be cut down for the new one to be put up in which case notice to members of the upcoming site and any URL changes will be given well in advance.

- **Website options:**

Do noting, and the website continues as is until it reaches its end of life and ability to function, which is coming up. There are also potential security risks due to no available platform security updates on the current site.

A new website appears to be required. We will need members who can volunteer to assist with the development and support of the new website. The local website developer that Martin is working with, is willing to work with volunteers.

Volunteers will be invited to step forward and ongoing volunteer support to develop and set up the new system is an essential requirement to its success. Volunteers are encouraged to contact Martin.

- **Other possibilities:**

We could simply eliminate having a website and rely on Facebook alone for online communication to members. However, this would have a more limited functionality and would probably be inadequate, and less accessible.

It is suggested that we hire an outside contractor to develop a new website framework, with considerable and significant volunteer effort to migrate content from the old site to the new, and to control the cost of setting up a new system.

The development of the new site would maintain the current functionality and initially remain largely as it currently is. Accessibility will be improved, and the new platform will allow for enhanced functionality to be added if we choose. And the new site will be on a solid, updated technical footing going forward, able to access future changes and improvements to the online system.

We will need to have volunteer time and expertise available to move forward, and we do have funds in the bank for which the new website development should have priority worthy of DSLPOA investment.

Martin then took questions and comments as noted here. It is worth checking alternative website options but we need volunteers to do this and they need to be experienced with a background to deal with website development.

If we put forward a website development proposal, it should set out a workplan in detail. It is hoped that a \$5,000 fund would cover development costs, which would be likely if there were skilled volunteers working on the project. Martin was asked if costs would be above \$5,000 if there were no volunteers. Martin said he wasn't certain of what the price would be, but it would likely double. In any event the funds would come from the general operating fund.

Martin was praised by members attending for the work he has done in moving this project forward to be able to get it underway.

**MOVED** Barb Clive, seconded Rick Wesselman, that the DSLPOA Executive is authorized, after investigating and assessing alternatives (including grant funding), to spend no more than \$7,500 to contract the development of a new DSLPOA website.

**In favour: 34**

**Opposed: 2**

**MOTION PASSED**

## **8. Lake Steward Report- Rob Norris**

The Lake Steward's updated report is in the 2024 Directory.

Rob noted that water quality remains high, and the shoreline remains intact. He noted that the most significant issue involves invading species including Milfoil, Phragmites Plant, and Chinese Mystery Snails (although there has been no sign of the snails, so far). The Phragmite plants grow alongside roads and can dominate on lake shores and wet lands. There is one site in the pond near the Sandy Cove boat launch which hopefully can be managed, although this may be a multi-year task. And there may be others.

### **▪ WVEW Testing the Waters Pilot Program**

Rob noted that we are participating in the water testing pilot program which is being developed and used on a number of lakes including several in Haliburton County. The goal is to gather more information about lake water quality, using community members to assist in the data gathering procedures, and ensuring that the data findings will result in policy follow ups. Data will be collected on Drag and Spruce Lakes, with testing in early and late summer and in late winter.

Water test will include monitoring temperature and oxygen concentration, taken at one-meter intervals, at sites on both lakes.

### **▪ U-Links: Benthic**

Benthic biomonitoring will begin this Fall. It will collect samples of bottom sediment at a number of sites, with the samples being examined and the types of creatures identified. It is thought the number of and type of natural life found in the samples will, over time, will give some indication of changes in lake health.

Most of the samples will be taken by students, and we will need volunteers to ferry around the students who are working on this in late September.

### **▪ EWM Control Activities**

A program run by the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters has set up an awareness program to educate boaters on ways to stop the transfer of invading species, with instructions on "clean, drain, dry" procedures to avoid spreading Milfoil and other invasive species. And a seminar on this topic will be held at the Sandy Cove boat launch on the second weekend in August.

The removal of EWM from identified sites will be undertaken by our lake volunteers on July 14, and 17 when rocks are being made ready for matting existing beds, and dive week will be July 16, 17, 18 and 19 at several EWM sites marked for matting. Details about the sites and joining volunteers can be obtained from Dominique Binkley at [dslpoavolunteer@gmail.com](mailto:dslpoavolunteer@gmail.com).

**MOVED**, Rob Norris, seconded, Rick Wesselman, that DSLPOA continues to consider up to 3 community based environmental research projects offered by U-Links in the next 12 months, and to donate up to \$1,000 to U-Links on completion of each project. Funds will be drawn from the Stewardship Fund.

**Passed unanimously**

## **9. Elections Rick Wesselman**

Rick noted that there was three executive position open, that of 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Director Event Coordinator and Officer at Large.

**MOVED**, Rick Wesselman, seconded, Merla Russell that Dominique Binckley be elected 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

### **Elected Unanimously**

No one present was prepared to be elected to the position of Director Event Coordinator or Officer at Large, and the positions will remain vacant for the time being

Anyone interested in being appointed to either position should contact President Rick Wesselman.

## **10. Question & Answer All**

It was noted that the stream lined version of AGM was very helpful and effective. Rick noted we will continue to do this and guest speakers will come at end of the official portion of the AGM in future.

The executive was thanked from the floor for all its efforts.

A discussion ensued about short term rentals and Airbnb and the town response. There was apparent concerns expressed about how to enforce the town by law.

It was also noted that there are about 20 EWM sites on our lakes. And we are likely to find more.

Although Murray Fearrey was to appear in a Q and A session, he indicated he might not be able to make the meeting, and in fact he did not appear.

## **11. Close of Meeting**

**MOVED**, Judy Neiman, seconded, Peter Markle that this meeting be now adjourned.

### **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'L. Olivo', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Laurence Olivo, Secretary DSLPOA