

MINUTES OF THE MAY 23, 2017 HARMONY RESIDENTS GROUP ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IN THE SIMPSON ROOM NOTL COMMUNITY CENTRE.

The meeting began at 7.00pm with approximately 40 people in attendance including 8 Board Directors and 2 Parks Canada officials, Louis Lavoie, Field Unit Superintendent and Eric Nielsen, External Relations Manager.

HRG President, Finn Madsen opened the meeting by reviewing HRG's history from 2008 to 2017 and introducing the 2 Parks Canada officials. Louis Lavoie, a new addition to the NOTL Parks Canada staff, talked about his role as Field Unit Superintendent and accepted questions from the floor. These covered the following issues: the new PC Management Plan, shoreline erosion and high lake levels, the proposed Lincoln- Welland Regiment museum, and grass mowing schedules for the Rifle Range.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Director Alison Waller focused on two proposals for the use of the DND/PC Lakeshore Lands (LL). First, she outlined a work in progress by two Niagara College students, Patrick Deri and Jake Bianancello. Using drone photography they will make maps of the LL showing various aspects of the terrain such as shoreline erosion, vegetation distribution and routes for walking trails, etc. The maps will be useful for planning future projects. Alison followed this with a summary of Brock University student, Sarah Topham's outline for using the LL as a site for an Outdoor Education Centre. Examples from the grades 1 and 6 curriculum showed how suitable the lakeshore setting of shoreline, forest and creeks was for the field trip activities. She concluding by emphasizing that the site offered an even wider choice of outdoor education topics at all levels of the curriculum such as reforestation, water run-off, wastewater treatment, studies of fauna and flora, shoreline erosion and water pollution.

Director Peter Harvey read the second presentation, Bruce Smith of the Indigenous Diabetes Health Circle (IDHC) being unable to attend due to sickness. Bruce's paper "Onghiara: The Traditional Teaching Lodge and Cultural Heritage Park" proposes that the LL be used as the site for a traditional healing and learning centre for Indigenous and other interested people. Healing trails and a learning centre would be built in locations that did not encroach on environmentally sensitive areas. Such a use would be of interest to visitors, especially those from Europe, and would harmonize well with the other tourist attractions in the area. It would also provide an additional rationale for the preservation of the old WWTP's settling ponds as an ideal site for wild rice, a traditional food in a healthy diet.

President Finn Madsen thanked both speakers for their proposals while reminding the membership that the final decision for the future use of the LL lay with Parks Canada and must accord with the new Management Plan, now expected to be made public in 2018. Finn also stressed that strong support from the community was essential for all future use of the LL proposals.

ELECTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

There being no additional nominations from the floor, the following nominees were elected unanimously: Debi Goodwin, Peter Harvey, David Hennessey, Finn Madsen, Ryder Payne and Cathy Simpson.

ADJOURMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8.30pm.