

**SASKATCHEWAN PROVINCIAL PARKS CABIN ASSOCIATION  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
OCTOBER 21, 2017  
PARK TOWN HOTEL, SASKATOON**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Les Schmidt – Duck Mountain, President; Jim Craik – Narrow Hills, First Vice President; Betty Hoffart – Moose Mountain, Second Vice President; Kim Crawford – Moose Mountain; Stew Demmans – Battlefords (Delorme's Beach); Kelly Byers – Cypress Hills; Don Finnie – Duck Mountain; Jude Riou – Greenwater ; Pamela Yaremko – Good Spirit Lake; Norm Vance – Good Spirit Lake; Rick Koehn - La Ronge; Matt Klassen – La Ronge; Greg Bender – Kimball Lake; Stacey Mamer – Greig Lake ; Beverley Demers – Greig Lake; Randy Songer – Jeannette Lake; Brian Clark – Pike Lake; Glenn Thomson – Pike Lake Barry Foster – Sask. Landing, ; Mervin Backstrom – Sask. Landing

**REGRETS:**

Karen Babitzke – Cypress Hills, Secretary/Treasurer

1. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:** Called to order at 9:00 a.m. President Les Schmidt welcomed all to the meeting and explained the voting procedures. He asked all present to introduce themselves.
2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:**  
Moved by Jude Riou (Greenwater). Seconded by Matt Klassen (La Ronge). Carried.
3. **MINUTES FROM LAST YEAR'S MEETING:**  
Moved by Bev Demers (Greig Lake). Seconded by Jim Craik (Narrow Hills). Carried.
4. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE 2016 AGM MINUTES:**

**Subdivision Directives – do we need to implement a process to discuss new issues or interpretation of directives?**

- Moose Mountain identified an issue that they have encountered with the interpretation of the directives regarding demolition/removal and new builds. A cottage owner wanted a permit to remove the current cottage now, and then in the spring, apply for a permit for a new build and at that time, provide engineered drawings as required. The COA interpretation is that a permit for Demolition/Removal (Section 3) could be obtained and later a permit for the New Build (Section 14) could be obtained. The permit form includes a number of items including tree removal, and COA felt that each could be applied for separately. Park staff identified that they have always completed permits for both (demolition/removal and new build) at the same time, and PCS staff also insisted that the permit include both.
- Jim Craik from Narrow Hills identified that they had a similar situation where the cottage owner wanted to wait for spring to allow the ground to settle before determining all requirements for the new build. PCS told them the same as Moose Mountain was told.

- Discussion occurred about the timing of the demotion/removal and the new build and the importance of owners building by the required dates.
- Some members felt that there needed to be consistency across all parks in interpreting the directives, which is what PCS staff are doing.
- Les commented that at last year's meeting, Kevin Engel had mentioned the possible need for a process to review interpretations of the directives, or to introduce new directives. We decided to attempt to first clarify this issue at a meeting with PCS, rather than developing a formal process.
- **ACTION** – Moose Mountain will provide details to Les on the issue for the meeting with PCS.
- Rick Koehn from La Ronge identified that the directives do not cover timing of rebuilding when a building is destroyed by fire or other natural disaster.
- **ACTION** – Les will identify this at the meeting with PCS.

### **Policies presented by PCS for Cottage-Based Businesses and Dilapidated Structures**

- At last year's meeting members voted 50% in favor of the policy on Cottage-based Businesses and unanimously supported the policy on Dilapidated Structures.
- Les advised that the policies seem to have "died" with the retirement of Kevin Engel.

### **5. Treasurer's Report and Setting of Annual SPPCOA Fee**

- Les advised that the financial statement for 2016 was amended due to an error that was noticed after the AGM. The statement for year to date 2017 was also presented.
- Jude Riou from Greenwater and Betty Hoffart from Moose Mountain questioned why the statements were not issued as of the SPPCOA year end (which it was felt was March 31). Les will confirm with Karen Babitzke

Approval moved by Matt Klassen (La Ronge).

Seconded by Stew Demmans (Battlefords). Carried.

### **Fees for 2018**

Les recommended that the fees for 2018 remain the same at \$1.50 per cabin. Agreed.

Don Finnie (Duck Mountain) questioned why the President's expenses were not paid by SPPCOA for the Annual Meeting. Jude Riou (Greenwater) identified that only expenses for special meetings were to be paid by SPPCOA.

### **6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**

**President:** Les Schmidt (Duck Mountain) is in the second year of his two-year term.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President:** Betty Hoffart (Moose Mountain) is in the second year of her two-year term.

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President:** Jim Craik (Narrow Hills) is willing to stand for a two year term. Les called for other nominations and none were received. Kelly Byers (Cypress Hills) moved nominations cease.

Jim Craik was nominated for 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President by Jude Riou (Greenwater).  
Seconded by Glenn Thomson (Pike Lake). Accepted.

**Secretary/Treasurer:** Karen Babitzke (Cypress Hills) is willing to stand for a two- year term. Les called for other nominations and none were received. Barry Foster (Sask Landing) moved nominations cease.

Karen Babitzke was nominated for Secretary Treasurer by Kelly Byers (Cypress Hills) Seconded by Matt Klassen (La Ronge). Accepted.

## 7. PCS General UPDATE Letter

- Les reviewed the October 17 letter from Michael Roth, Director, Park Business Services Branch at PCS. Michael has been with PCS for 15 years and was previously in the Finance branch.
- Les advised that Kevin Engel, the previous Director had retired in June, 2017.
- Question Raised in Discussion: Why is PCS not selling vacant cottage lots (some park owned and some undeveloped) to raise revenues?
  - o A member commented that PCS have stated there will be no increase in the number of cottage leases in the province due to issues with infrastructure.
  - o A member commented that the issue appears to be with the building of year-round structures vs summer cottages in parks and the impact on both infrastructure and the environment.
  - o A member wondered if SPPCOA should lobby for more cottage lots, but during discussion, members felt that most parks could not handle an increase due to the infrastructure issues.

## 8. NEW BUSINESS:

### A. Update to the SPPCOA Website (SPPCOA.ca – Members Login)

- Les asked all members to review the Members page and identify if any changes were required for their local association.
- **ACTION** – Each member to review their page on the website and send Les a Word document with the complete information for their page **by October 31**.

### B. Direct Service Fee Discussions

- Les discussed the definitions provided by PCS on Direct Service Fees and provided input on the process used both by PCS and each park/COA.
- Les reminded members that it was important to have information on Direct Service Fees from the previous cycle for comparison
- Les also reviewed the Attribution of Direct Service Fees document Some members commented that they have already started discussions with their local Park Manager

### C. MLCOA Motion: Septic Holding Tank Integrity Testing (5-10 Year Cycle)

- Duck Mountain had provided background information supporting more frequent mandatory Septic Holding Tank Integrity Testing
- The following motion was presented:
  - o **Moved by MLCOA that SPPCOA lobby the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport to mandate that septic holding tanks in provincial parks be tested to ensure their integrity on a 5-10 year cycle in an effort to preserve our soil, ground water and lakes.**
  - o Motion was moved by Don Finnie (Duck Mountain).
  - o Seconded by Kelly Byers (Cypress Hills).
- Discussion of the motion included:
  - o The proposal makes sense.
  - o Are all parks doing integrity testing on sale or lease renewal? Five members felt that it was not being done in their park.
  - o If testing cottage owner tanks, what about other tanks in park (campgrounds, commercial facilities, picnic areas, etc.)?
  - o This is not a PCS issue; they can endorse as part of the lease, but it is likely an Environment responsibility.
  - o Pump-out records submitted to Park Administration should be used to verify septic removal & tank integrity for cottage leases that seem unusual.
- Les called for a vote on the motion. 5 members voted in favor; 5 were opposed (Jude Riou from Greenwater had left the meeting but advised prior to leaving that she would be against the motion)
- **Motion was defeated.**
- After discussion on the topic continued, Kelly Byers (Cypress Hills) made a related motion:
  - o **That SPPCOA lobby the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport to mandate that all septic holding tanks in provincial parks be tested to ensure their integrity on a 10 year cycle.**
  - o Rick Koehn (LaRonge) seconded the motion.
  - o **Motion was Carried (9 parks in favour, one abstained).**

### D. Land Assessment (SAMA) and Appeal Process

- The SAMA report was provided in advance to members.
- Les provided information on the process for a meeting with SAMA and PCS to discuss the report.
- Les cautioned members against making judgement on the report solely based on information for their own park—the focus should be on the validity of the process and the methodology.
- **ACTION** – Members should provide questions on the report for their individual parks to Les by **Wednesday, October 25**
  
- Lease fee is based on a multiplier—total revenues required less other revenue sources (ie. Park entry fees) less Direct Service Fees equals the amount required from Land Lease fees. Even though re-assessed lot values may increase, the lease fee may not increase at the same rate
  
- Assessment is for vacant land. If the purchase includes an old cottage, the cost of demolition is deducted from the sale price to determine the land value. A concern arises where selling lessees overstate land value to avoid capital gains revenue on the building.

- Other comments regarding the report:
  - SAMA did very few if any on-site inspections.
  - SAMA used judgements made in the last report which SPPCOA was not happy with.
  - Some parks had few sales which could impact assessment for all lessees.
  - Report combined parks on Improved Lot sales.
  - Information was not presented in a similar format to last time (charts showing each sale by subdivision & location categories).
  - Page 6 – why are “improved” sales statistics included in the report? Does that have an impact on assessment?
  - Page 7 – change in park values—is that land-only? SAMA should start from scratch vs. using previous report, which SPPCOA did not agree with.
  
- Les advised that a meeting with SAMA and PCS to discuss the report and other issues identified at the meeting will be held on either Saturday, October 28 or Wednesday, November 8 subject to availability of SAMA and PCS.
- Subsequent to the AGM, Les advised that the meeting date would be **Wednesday, November 8 in Regina**
- Les invited other interested COAs to attend and to advise him of their attendance by **Wednesday, October 25**

**E. Determine a Committee to Discuss Land Lease Fee Rate Increases (Feb-March, 2018)**

- The following members identified that they would participate:
  - Les Schmidt (Duck Mountain)
  - Jim Craik (Narrow Hills)
  - Betty Hoffart (Moose Mountain)
  - Karen Babitzke (Cypress Hills) will be invited.
  - Jude Riou (Greenwater)
  
- Les briefly discussed the SPPCOA stance to be taken in discussions regarding land lease fee rate increases:
  - Parks are funded by a mix of user fees and government subsidies.
  - Revenues are higher but not at the same level as expenses (due to higher salaries and contractual expenses).
  - Cottage owners pay 14% of operating revenues.
  - There is no increase in total number of lots or size of lots.
  - Cost for new parks and capital costs should not be paid by cottage lessees.
  - Fee discussion is technically not a negotiation—Cabinet sets fees and we as lessees have to pay, but SPPCOA is given input to the fee rate increases.
  - Increased fees should be in line with inflation (CPI) rate.

## **F. PCS Budget Cuts & Requests for Funding from Cottage Owner Associations**

- Betty Hoffart from Moose Mountain advised that in meetings with Park staff, they had been receiving requests to contribute to costs for items in the park.
- At the MMPPCOA AGM in 2016, a cottage owner recommended a donation of \$1,000 to a local non-profit group (Moose Mountain Water Management Agency), which was seconded by another owner. The local board had little information about the organization or what they would use the funds for, and had to rely on input from cottage owners at the meeting. The motion passed, and the donation was made, but the board was concerned that not all owners had the opportunity to provide input or vote on the meeting.
- As a result, the MMPPCOA board recommended changes to their constitution regarding expenditure of funds for items that were not for day-to-day operations. The changes require members to provide a proposal in writing by June 1 with justification for the expenditure. This allows time for the board to review the proposal and send to members at least 10 days prior to the AGM.
- The proposed changes to the constitution were approved by the members at the AGM.
- Two proposals from the board, which were sent to members based on expected approval of the constitution changes, were approved at the AGM. One was for purchase of a laptop computer and external hard drive for storage of MMPPCOA documents, and the other was for purchase of wireless mics for use at meetings of the members.

**ACTION** – Betty to send a copy of the revised MMPPCOA constitution to SPPCOA members.

- Some members commented that they have “Friends of the Park” organizations (some of which have charitable status) to do fundraising for capital projects.

## **9. Date of Next AGM**

Saturday, October 20, 2018 in Saskatoon

## **10. Adjournment**

Glenn Thomson from Pike Lake adjourned the meeting at 4:50 pm.

## **11. Round Table Exchange**

- **Battlefords**
  - o Concerns about fire danger since park stopped having farmers cut grasslands
  - o Security issues in winter
  - o Increased number of boats of concern—higher waves/shore issues (some parks have “no wake” zones)
- **Cypress Hills**
  - o Community hall operational; Friends of the Park raised \$570K
  - o New campgrounds; 1 private with 80 full service leased RV sites
  - o Pool renovations delayed due to budget
  - o Fire ban most of the summer; no issues from recent wildfires
  - o Lagoon updated
  - o 40 cougars in the park are a concern

- **Duck Mountain**
  - Friends of the Park planning work bees, & fund-raising
  - Park took back recreation hall and completed renovations; COA paid for recreation equipment
  - Emergency measures plan in place; doing mock plan; available for other parks
  - Commercial leases lost; new lessees for rental cabins; another for store and marina; hotel and condos not leased due to need for renovations
  - Disk Golf course set up; Park supplied labor
  - Professional fishing derby held
  - Concern with zebra mussels and contamination in lake; decontamination unit available but no mandatory inspection
  
- **Greenwater**
  - Issue with roads—do other parks have road bans? (Some parks coordinate with rural municipality but issue is enforcement; septic haulers do half loads during bans)
  - Recreation hall needs work; COA donated \$5K for siding
  - Fire bans in place
  - Security issues (only 18 permanent residents)—no patrol of subdivisions by Conservation Officers—not a priority for RCMP
  
- **Good Spirit**
  - Good Park Manager
  - 153 cottage owners; 89% are members of COA
  - Held pancake breakfasts, yard sales, Canada 150 celebrations
  - Hold can/bottle drives—donate to local charities who pick up
  - New water treatment plan; under boil water advisory
  - Evacuation/Emergency plan—have a contact list, but need warning system; working with Emergency Measures
  - Water levels controlled by SaskWater with input from Park staff; quality issues (algae)
  
- **La Ronge**
  - Have one permit for all docks if member of COA; applied for through Water Security Agency; non members pay own permit
  - Trout stock up this year
  - Water level up 2 feet; 13 inlets and 1 outlet controlled by SaskWater—issue with timing of outlet; need local means to control; water is killing trees/affects cottage lots; Park manager not assisting; not sure what COA can do
  - 3 campgrounds destroyed by wildfires being cleared of fallen trees
  
- **Greig Lake**
  - Survey issue from last year; affected cottage owners will sign agreement; don't have to move structures; agreed to encroachment
  - Some private lots outside park
  - Capital spending—new shower building/laundry in 2018
  - High water table—damage to cottage lots
  - No plans to restock fish
  - Canada 150 celebration; joint venture for permanent stage for entertainment
  - Some lobbying for increased permanent lots (200) in new development

- Concern with boat launches—if new area used facilities would be an issue (only pay park entry fee but using park facilities)
- **Jeannette Lake**
  - 51 cottages; no campground
  - High water levels; front pegs in water; closed lake so no outflow
  - Building creek 1.2m deep to Waterhen Lake (agreement with First Nation) and SaskWater; Controlled outflow (screen for fish); Owners pay 50% of \$200K cost
  - No security issues
- **Kimball Lake**
  - 56 cottages
  - Campground updates
  - Lagoon upgrade
  - Issues with boats—bigger not more
  - Need more controlled burns due to tree removal
- **Moose Mountain**
  - 88% members; members can pay fees for 5 years (21% paid)
  - Added another egress at boat launch due to high volumes
  - Water levels up; new culvert under higher for controlling outflow
  - New well for storage of water, but issue with treated water capacity
- **Narrow Hills**
  - Expanded boat launch
  - New shower building
  - New Park manager (former secretary for 8 years) doing great job
  - COA owns hall; rent to outside organizations
  - 4' snow in October/16; volunteers cleared trails; voted #2 for best trails in province
  - Good maintenance staff
  - Large bins for garbage; transfer bin available for long weekends; no issues with dumping; private lessees have own bins
- **Sask. Landing**
  - 50 cottages; split by #4 highway
  - Park RFP for developing new subdivision; 90 inquiries but only 1 serious (Proposal for B&B with rental cabins; issue with power and water supply)
  - Cactus Bloom RV Park—146 sites; private developer
  - 80 sites at golf course
  - Boat launch issues with increased number of campers
  - Issue with elm trees- can't cut down; Park staff concern with liability
  - Park manager moving to Echo Lake in November
  - Increased coyote issues
  - Fire bans affected attendance
  - Commercial leases for store and marina sold; new owners better
  - Need for AED machine in Park (one at golf course); need to ensure training
  - COA used funds to build perimeter of sprinkler system (\$75K) for fire control; to each cottage; cost \$500 per cottage; only available in summer; fire truck connections; concern that volunteers for fire would need proper training; Park will fight all but structure fire
  - Issue with power outages due to large RVs with air conditioners.