

**UPPER FRENCH RIVER COTTAGERS ASSOCIATION**  
**Draft Minutes Oct 6/24**  
**Annual General Meeting August 4, 2024**  
**The Michael "Aigle" Dokis Community Complex**

Amanda Mainville, President, called the meeting to order at 10:20 and made her opening remarks. Amanda welcomed everyone and announced that we would be hearing from a number of people this morning.

The Minutes of the 2023 AGM held on August 4, 2023 was approved by Molly Finnel and seconded by Vic Paul.

Chief Gerry Duquette spoke to the group and welcomed everyone. He commented on the following activity in the community.

- Development of a new waste management system and transfer station
- The opening of a new grade 1-4 school and daycare on September 24th, 2024
- New water system is being built near the gravel pit to accommodate new homes and also help with a water supply for the Fire Department
- The fire department will be obtaining more pumps to help with growth of community, also looking into buying another fire boat, drone was purchased to conduct safety, rescue and fire checks
- Rogers is looking at 2 sites for cell tower, one in community and one near the dam
- Bell Fibe is coming in 2025
- Communication is ongoing with Henvey Inlet regarding connectivity to add to the current coverage
- Federal assistance promised for Indigenous community wifi connections is currently being looked into

## **Community Liaison**

Amanda Mainville introduced Mayor Kathleen Rochon and Councillor Georges Pharand from West Nipissing

The Mayor and Councillor spoke on the following topics.

- 2022 council - 8 councillors and Mayor includes all age ranges, different professional backgrounds such as First Nation rep, school board trustee etc.
- Working on garbage issues with stakeholders
- New short term rental bylaw passed limits rentals to under 28 days. Short term rentals consistent with other municipalities. 2 persons per bedroom plus 2, safety equipment, home insurance. \$750 per year to do inspection by municipality, acceptable septic/sewage management. Noise limitations and \$2M liability insurance. Currently there are 1.5 positions bylaw officers
- Brown's Island update - Mayor was unsure about the permits that were issued. If a proposal meets requirements, it must be considered. Concerns about archaeological sites and waste management. Subdivision was approved. Mayor will get back to us with more information.

The floor was opened for cottagers to ask questions.

**MNR Liaison** - Jon Lembke introduced Conservation Officer Richard Nadeau

- Brief discussion about forest fires, plant maples. Vic added that for additional information, members can go to Fire Smart on the website. Question about who to contact in the event of fire detection, call OPP. 1-888-310-1122
- If there needs to be an evacuation, no phone alerts

- Question about responding to non-compliant campers. He had no knowledge of such a program where community members partner up with Parks dept.
- Concern was expressed about anglers fishing too close to property and this has increased in the last few years. Lures are getting stuck and they're leaving lines everywhere.
- Trespassing laws say it's an offense while hunting/fishing. There is nothing he can do about discourteous anglers. People who observe infractions, you can call Crimestoppers, or his cell phone.
- MNR Biologist was unable to attend, however she has a presentation regarding walleye fishing. We could ask her to do an online presentation.

The floor was opened for cottagers to ask questions.

#### **OPP Liaison** - Jon Lembke introduced Andrew Stoss

- Andrew answered questions about securing cottages
- He had the following suggestions:
  - lock stuff up and mark your belongings with an engraver, record serial numbers. Store gas cans, alcohol out of sight, put pieces of wood in jams. This would also prevent bears from entering.
  - Add solar lights, keep the area maintained.
  - Add signs to pretend you have cameras.
  - Call if you see unusual behaviour or visitors.
  - Check with your insurance company to ensure coverage.
- Members can help the OPP as only 6 officers for a large area. Call emergency number, 1-800-242-1877. OPP.ca is another way to report issues or Crimestoppers, 1-800-222 TIPS (8477)
- Identify your GPS coordinates when reporting your location. The App, **'What 3 words'** will give you your location. This is being used by call centres.
- Alcohol is still a leading factor in fatalities. People are still driving without life jackets and using alcohol. Must wear approved PFD,

Anything you're using to transport yourself must be equipped with emergency equipment. This includes paddle boats, dinghy, etc.

- Licensing - under age 12 up to 10 HP, 12 - under 16 up to 40 HP, No-one under age 16 can operate a flotation device
- Inflatable life jackets can only be worn by those over 80 lb. No approved life jacket is available for kids under 20 lbs.
- Carry your Pleasure craft operators card, check batteries in flashlight
- Inboard /outboard need fire extinguisher on board
- Can keep 2 operator cards if you like
- There are still officers patrolling during the off season

The floor was opened for cottagers to ask questions.

### **Land Issues - Jaime MacDonald**

- Explained the various programs available to preserve land, through land trusts, conservation easement agreements, conservation land tax incentive program, ecological gift program
- There would likely need to be multiple landowners wanting to pursue any of these options to make it feasible
- Managed forest tax incentives available. The landowner prepares a plan using a certified forester, the plan is set up for 5 years and significant tax breaks are available.
- Another viable option is for landowners to donate land to the Provincial Park. No response has been provided from my attempts to reach the park superintendent
- Jaime offered to answer questions if anyone is interested

### **Environment Report - Tim Murdoch**

- Water Rangers: Water-testing is underway using a citizen's science water test kit from Water Rangers (kit provided by Liliane Murdoch), Canada's leading water-testing non-profit association based in Ontario. Twelve (12) different sites will be tested 30 times from

Campbell's Bay on Lake Nipissing to the mouth of the Little French River between June-August.

- Tim Murdoch stayed after the AGM and interacted with several cottagers and fishing camps to discuss the opportunity to purchase Water Test kits (for families, groups, or fishing camps) at an approximate cost of \$325 per kit.
- Lake Partner Program FOCA: A dialogue initiated by Tim Murdoch with Lake Partner Program/FOCA (Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations) to establish LPP water testing on the Upper French River in 2025.
- UFRCA members will be encouraged to request free LPP water-test kits for 2025
- An email will be sent from FOCA/LPP to circulate among UFRCA members . Tim Murdoch encouraged as many UFRCA Members as possible to request the LPP test kits for 2025.

### **Membership Report - Jenny Young**

- Jenny was unable to attend but passed along information about our current membership
- As of July 31/24: 85 members, 9 new members since 2023

### **Website - Victor Paul, Jon Lembke, Victoria Little**

- Website format changed within the last 6 months
- Survey was conducted to get information from members about what their interests/concerns were
- Used platform to reorganize structure, content in order to keep it relevant to members
- Currently working on homepage with goal to make it more interesting and attractive
- **'Members' only** section coming to give members some value for their membership
- Another survey coming in fall and winter

- Members inquired about Facebook and suggested information about the river should be available there or if not there should be a link to the website. A few members offered to help coordinate social media

### **Survey Results and FOCA Membership - Victor Paul**

- Victor explained how the FOCA membership works
- As members of FOCA, it gives us a voice to push for improvements etc. It also gives us more information on issues. He encouraged other members to check out site, join and read articles of interest

### **Financial Report for 2023/4 and Budget Outlook for 2024/5 - Victor Paul**

- Reviewed financial statements for the association.to update auto deposits, etc.
- E Transfers are allowed for Canadians and US members with Canadian bank accounts, cheques for oUS members
- Telsec service ended for savings
- Financial statements attached to minutes

A motion was made by Karen Gough to approve financials. Seconded by Bill Woodwell. Motion carried and financials approved.

### **Nomination and Election of Directors for 2024/2025**

The Nominating Committee has confirmed the following individuals have consented to their nomination as Directors for 2024/2025.

Amanda Mainville

John Lembke

Vic Paul

Victoria Little

Jenny Young

Jamie Macdonald

Tim Murdoch  
Liliane Murdoch

Shelley Belford nominated John Corbeil as Director. Seconded by Vic Paul.

Kaely McDermott, Jenny Kurtz and Karen Simpson volunteered to serve on a Social Media committee. Amanda to follow up.

Murray Somers made a motion to approve. Motion passed.

Amanda Mainville made a motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.