



**MANITOBA ASSOCIATION OF COTTAGE OWNERS INC.
P.O. Box 281, Station Main, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 2G9**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
CanadInn, 2100 McPhillips Street, Winnipeg
October 16, 2018**

MINUTES

5:00 PM Registration

**5:45 PM Dinner
Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. by President Dave Crabb. Dave commented on the history of MACO which formed in 1992 and acknowledged the work of the volunteer Board. He introduced guest speaker Matthew Schaubroek, Corporate Communications Manager, Economic Development Winnipeg

Matt gave a very interesting presentation on the behind the scenes organization of the whiteout parties during the Winnipeg Jets 2018 playoff run. He commented on the volume of people participating, the costs involved and the positive publicity generated. 9 parties, 120,000 participants and no major incidents, in part due to lessons learned from other cities hosting major outdoor parties.

Introductions

Attendees: (Val, do you have attendance list?)

Dave Crabb - Balsam Harbour

Val Hammond – Hillside

Brian Smiley – Bird River

Joe & Marlene Vechina- Lake Manitoba Narrows

Marvin & Diane Leschyshyn – 50 km north of Gimli

Kyle Breitreitz – Willow Bay Cottage Association, near Steeprock

Ray Poole – Brandon MB – Oak Lake

Ken Corbett – Oak Island Resort

Norm Wolk – Winnipeg Beach (cottage for over 40 years)

Gus Wruck – Lac du Bonnet since Jan 1983

Jim Nicholson

BUSINESS SECTION

Dave made some introductory comments about the interest MACO has in reforming property tax in MB. MB is one of the last provinces to deal with an archaic application of education costs on property taxes. MACO has compiled research, initiated petitions, organized tax rallies for about seven years and circulated information but has not yet been able to create the

political will to effect change. As a not for profit voluntary organization with limited resources, there is only so much that can be done. Tax reform is only one issue that MACO addresses. The website is an excellent resource on a variety of topics of interest to cottage owners. More volunteer resources are always welcomed to fill vacant Board positions.

Guest comment regarding the need for MACO to build more awareness – even though the organization has been in place since 1992, some of the attendees this evening were not familiar with MACO.

In response to a question, MACO has worked with municipalities to bring forward messaging to AMM to take to government. Municipalities are typically on side with MACO's position. Question re: the situation in other provinces with requirement to pay school taxes on more than one property. Reform has taken place in SK and it was questioned how that came about. Collaboration with other groups is needed – for example SNOMAN, where many of the members are cottage owners. Grassroots cottage associations have a role to educate their members.

1. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 7:20 p.m.

2. Adoption of Agenda

It was moved by Gus Wruck and seconded by Ken Corbett that the agenda be adopted.

CARRIED

3. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting of October 17, 2017

It was moved by Brian and seconded by Ray Poole that the minutes of the 2017 AGM be adopted. CARRIED

4. Financial Report

Jim Nicholson circulated the report from September 2017 to September 2018. Last year there was 11,909.42 in assets, income \$2220. 89, most coming from memberships. Expenditures relate to postage box, website, AGM, corporate filings – \$1452.43 total expenditures. Net assets increased to \$12,677.88

It was moved by Jim Nicholson and seconded by Gus Wruck to receive the financial report to the end of September 2018. CARRIED

5. Membership Report

Val Hammond reported that MACO represents 2570 cottage owners from 46 cottage associations and 3 individual memberships. In order to communicate more effectively, we are trying to communicate by email but it is difficult to keep email addresses current and accurate. Val noted that the website is up to date showing the latest dates of payment for local cottage associations. The yearly fee is \$1 per member in the local cottage association with a minimum of \$30.

Brian asked for feedback from attendees on their experience in local cottager associations. Some expressed that there was minimal activity.

Dave noted some of the benefits of membership such as insurance for the association (which covers any local events) and the website.

6. Education Taxes

Jim Nicholson referred to former MACO Board member Larry Baker and his expertise on taxation research. MB has 39 school divisions compared to SK at 27 and AB has 42 public school divisions, BC has 59. NS has replaced all school trustees with a single advisory board. NB removed school and education taxes off residential property holders in 1996 and reduced the number of school divisions from 28 to 7, with 60%/40% split English/French in NB. MB has a bureaucratic and expensive school division model. There are 6 public school divisions in Winnipeg, while other major Canadian cities (Toronto, Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver) only have one. He cited an example of how the divisions are increasing transportation costs, as well as the administrative costs which amounts to almost \$200 million in school board expenditures. And in spite of these costs, MB has relatively poor results in student performance based on Canadian national Grade 8 testing, which begs the question of what value Manitobans are getting for this expenditure. The requirement in MB for University 1 year at U of M due to the past experience of some first year students failing courses. Ontario eliminated their Grade 13 by 2020 and reduced their costs. School boards could be phased out and have principals report to the MB Department of Education, and parents who wish to have input could do so through school PTAs. Jim spoke to the potential with technology in education with an example being online education at the website www.khanacademy.org. Dave Crabb referred to the articles on the MACO website regarding taxation. MB's annual high school graduation rate is about 66% with almost 1 in 3 is not finishing Grade 12 high school. The evidence clearly shows there needs to be real change in Manitoba public school education.

7. Website Report

Gus Wruck spoke to the MACO website and referred to the list of local cottage owner associations – 26 are from RM of Alexander and RM of Lac du Bonnet. Many member associations are slow payers, thus MACO has to look at new ways to bring value to members.

8. Old Business

Dave Crabb

- MACO new meeting schedule – MACO previously had monthly meetings but last year changed to quarterly meetings to make it less of a burden on volunteers.

9. New Business

Gus Wruck/Brian Smiley

- **Promoting and growing MACO/Media Project** – Brian Smiley spoke to opportunities with earned media vs social media – reaching out to media through phone, news releases, articles – to grow the brand more aggressively. A news release was sent to MB Community newspaper association which has 65 local papers, which had worked to bring some new people to the AGM. Brian suggested re-initiating contact with AMM and other organizations to broaden awareness, as well as getting more coverage of MACO information to educate cottage owners who can then be informed in bringing issues forward to elected officials and creating political will for change.

The other component is to build our social media presence and Cyndy Mitchell was brought on board for that purpose. Her company specializes in digital

advertising and social media. They work with tourism industry and with non-profits. About 80% of the population is on Facebook at least once a week with many being on multiple times per day. There is value in repetition in order to build awareness so it is important to be using multiple channels. Social media allows MACO to showcase its personality and build friends/supporters for MACO's values. If local associations are not forwarding messaging, individuals can access information on MACO's Facebook. From Jan-Aug, about 100 people engaged with the page. Regular content needs to be posted to build relevancy with Facebook and get into feeds and be in a position to deliver messaging. Facebook has life of 90 minutes and the time of day information is delivered matters. The goal is to engage with light friendly material first and build interest and friends before delivering on more important issues. There is an opportunity to appeal to cottage owners' other interests and build the network of potential followers.

10. President's Report

Dave Crabb

Dave thanked everyone for attending. He noted that MACO was formed in Belair area in 1991, with the first meeting in 1992. Founder and Past President Doug Neil was enthusiastic regarding the need for MACO to help cottagers and rural residents of MB. The province continues to recognize MACO as a resource and force to be reckoned with. MACO assists with problems and threats to enjoyment of cottage properties and has been involved in and provided resources on issues such as water levels, consultation on park fees, land entitlement reform, sewage, safe water, wetlands, Lake MB flooding and disaster assistance funding. MACO has had many volunteers contribute to the organization – with providing content for the website, reviewing drafts, updating strategic plan. He noted the struggle with maintaining membership and focusing on what members need.

Dave noted that he became involved in MACO over a sewage issue, he became President in 2004, and is now pleased to hand the reins to someone else. He will be proud to serve as Past President and encouraged others to get involved. He thanked the Board for its support over the years. Gus suggested that Dave's message be posted on the MACO website.

11. Elections:

Dave noted the following nominations and for each position called for further nominations from the floor. The following were elected by acclamation

President – Gus Wruck – 2 year term
 Vice-President – Brian Smiley – 1 year term
 Treasurer – Jim Nicholson
 Secretary – Shelley Morris

Gus moved and Val seconded the appointment of Shelley as a non-member volunteer.

Existing directors are Ray Poole, Ken Corbett, Val Hammond and 3 vacant positions are available.

11. **Adjournment** – Gus moved that the meeting be adjourned.