

October 2012 Annual General Meeting Minutes

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**MANITOBA ASSOCIATION OF COTTAGE OWNERS INC.
P.O. Box 281, Station Main, Winnipeg, MB, R3G 2G9**

Date: Tuesday, October 16th, 2012
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: CanadInn, 2100 McPhillips Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba
Present: List Attached

Dave Crabb, President welcomed everyone and introduced the speaker.

Guest Speaker: Lorne Weiss spoke about Education Financing Coalition and the Let's Pay Fair Program

Belief that all young Manitobans deserve an education and stands in the same place as health care and all other. Should be funded based on ability to pay not on what you own. Not fair way of funding schools. The City of Wpg had many challenges on tax issue in early 90's and Moody came to town to see what the problem was with respect to City's rating. When they had to return \$, they had already paid school taxes and never got it back.

Most councilors did not understand the tax bill. Bills were changed to show how where the money went – what was school and what was not.

Believe that education should be available to all and programs should be available to all and not dependent upon what area a student lives in. Survey showed that more people are understanding the tax bill now.

Believe that all should be allowed to vote for trustees if you pay taxes in that area. Spoke of the increase of rebates over the last years. The government is in the same place today as the city was many years ago.

Believe that the education funding system is at a tipping point now. How to get from this point to next point so that it is based on general revenue?

Education funding coalition has an executive policy group that creates the policy. There are 3 executive members. In the short term, it is hoped that the province will set the mill rate rather than the local school trustees for whom cottagers cannot for. They support centralized bargaining so that all are equal.

Diversion legislation has had 4.

Winnipeg has 9 school divisions and more trustees than councilors. There are 9 offices, 9 superintendents etc. Calgary has 1 division and Toronto has 1 division. Graduation rates are the lowest next to Alberta because kids quit to go to work in the oil sands.

Quality of education is largely because of the money spent and not the politics. Advocates centralization. Once province sets a mill rate there is very little reason to have separate school divisions to collect taxes.

The different organizations involved work together. It is a broad spectrum of members.

Discussion. Go to Alberta government website – Alberta advantage.

Business Meeting

Date: Tuesday, October 16th, 2012

Time: 7:45 PM

Location: CanadInn, 2100 McPhillips Street, Winnipeg

1. Call to Order
President Dave Crabb called the meeting to order at 8:30 pm.
2. Adoption of Agenda
Lorne Britton moved adoption of the agenda. Norma Kerr moved adoption of amended agenda. Second by Gus Wruck. Carried.
3. Adoption of the Minutes of the previous meeting of October 2011
Pat Dunlop moved adoption of minutes as presented. Seconded by Carried. Rilla Britton. Carried.
4. Financial Report
Jim Nicholson moved adoption of the financial report. Seconded by Ken Corbett. Carried.
5. Membership Report
Marian Jones provided membership report. Moved by Marion. Seconded by Lorne Britton. Carried.
Discussion on contacting members/previous members to renew MACO membership.
6. Education Taxes
Lorne Britton moved that we accept the education presentation as given. Seconded by Ken Corbett. Gus gave as an information about population comparisons in Lac du Bonnet. Link to Statistics Canada data **MMM**
7. Strategic Plan
Gus reviewed Strategic Plan that MACO has been working on. The balance will be discussed at the next meeting.
8. President's Report
 - Felt very lucky to be honoured with working as president for 7 years with a dedicated group of members and Directors and finds it rewarding and hopes. Hopes that MACO can draw more members. Involved with MACO for 11 years and wanted it known that anyone is capable of being a part of

this team. It is always healthy to have change, and would welcome an opportunity to step back and allow someone else to lead the team. Succession can mean a new and stronger chapter for any organization.

- 2011 ended on a very sour note for much of cottage country in Manitoba. We endured one of the most stressful and damaging years in history after experiencing the wrath of Mother Nature and man-made flooding created by the Province of Manitoba. Many people not in cottage country or flooded zones are forgetting about it already, but we have a great number of members that are still under huge duress dealing with ongoing cleanup and rebuilding. Hundreds of cottagers are not able to rebuild and many do not even have a property any more. Their plight along with hundreds of severely damaged or destroyed cottages are still not receiving the much-needed compensation cottagers were promised by our leaders. MACO still intend to follow this and a number of our Directors are actively involved in proactive groups lobbying the Province for compensation. Some have even registered for a lawsuit against the province. We at MACO are wishing them the best of luck. We also hope that those needing assistance find it. This means assistance financially, emotionally, and equality for all as a result of disaster.
- The lack of support for this has consumed many hours of MACO meetings and discussions and emails outside the regular meetings. We have been trying to develop ways to lobby for better disaster assistance for ALL property owners. Not just the ones that the Province and Federal Government have supported in past. It seems strange that one of the strongest tourism businesses in Manitoba, cottaging, is being left to rot when it was obvious that there was a great deal of damage done by decisions of a few. Cottage Country is a major part of rural Manitoba's economy. It also highlights how little support that cottage country will receive in future disasters. A majority of cottagers spend a majority of their travel and entertainment money in Manitoba while many who only own 1 property in Manitoba spend a great deal of their travel dollars outside Manitoba's fragile economy. They are receiving no recognition for the investment they choose to make within their own province. This is also crucial to the survival of many rural areas of Manitoba. They are now feeling the pinch, and some areas may not survive. Entire Municipalities are in financial trouble with their tax base wiped out by Provincial reassessment and lack of support financially for all they did to try and protect their residents. Even the school boards are suffering with a lowered tax base which is putting additional financial burden on the remaining residents within their jurisdiction. Another big reason that education taxes based on property tax are not a sound method of funding education. The province does not properly value the inputs that over 35,000 plus cottagers inject into our economy annually.
- This year MACO is reassessing the Education Tax fight. We have continued to work very hard on this since MACO was formed in 1992. We have not been able to get the public support at our rallies we expected, so we are looking at alternative ways to battle education tax. We are going to take an active role in partnership with the Education Tax Finance Coalition, better known as Letspayfair.com. We have some unique ideas to go forward with as a result of some research our Directors have spent a lot of time working on. There are other ways, and we hope that you will continue to support us,

and help us succeed as we push forward. The larger group could only be a stronger unified force for success.

- MACO continues to be the umbrella cottage organization in Manitoba with Cox Morris Insurance. This enables Cottage groups to obtain reduced costs on Liability and General Insurance for their group's activities, events and assets.
- Many issues have been brought to our attention and we try to offer whatever assistance we can to cottagers. We will not intervene in local issues most of the time as that is not appropriate for an umbrella group. We do however not take sides, and will offer whatever information we can to direct cottagers to the appropriate authorities and ways to approach things for resolution. We have to continue to impress upon associations the importance of a constitution or set of bylaws. These will usually offer answers to situations and delegate the proper authority. They will also help to maintain simple democracy which can be tough when things go awry. We have documents to help with this on our website.
- MACO has drawn up many position papers on relevant cottage topics. These are everything from health concerns to wildlife information and safety to buying a cottage. These are all posted on our newly updated website www.macoman.com Encourage all your neighbours to visit the site and get the most out of cottaging. We always welcome any person(s) who wish to attend our monthly meetings with particular issues. We are always encouraging cottagers to be good stewards of the cottage country and to find one new way every year to have less of an effect on the environment. We offer many tools on our website to help cottagers understand and respect our lakes and waterways to keep them healthy for the future.
- We hope that you can let others know what a resource and worthy organization we have. Membership is an important aspect to allow us to continue the work we do. You never know when we will be doing something for you and your neighbours. We want to be there, but we need the members to keep MACO alive. Spread the word, and encourage your neighbours and associations to support us through membership.
- More importantly, with some of our Directors moving on we have room for some more talented people to help our team. Our education tax fight is not going to be won by a handful of Directors. It will take action and participation of our membership to be successful.

9. Old Business

- Beaconia Marsh. Still not resolved. It started in 2010. Appeal has not been heard and work has continued.

10. New Business

- MACO'S position on introduction of fee for service charges to cottage leases in Provincial Parks. Spoke to new fees for garbage, dust control etc. It has not been implemented. Requested that the board discuss this at a regular meeting.

10. Elections. Gus Wruck presided over elections.
President –

Nominating committee nominated Dave Crabb.
Members were asked three times for nominations. No nominations from the floor. Nominations closed. Dave Crabb was declared elected.

Vice-President – 1-year term

Nominating Committee nominated Lorne Britton.

Members were asked three times for nominations. No nominations from the floor. Nominations closed. Lorne Britton was declared elected.

Secretary – 2-year term

Nominating committee nominated Norma Kerr

Members were asked three times for nominations. No nominations from the floor. Nominations closed. Norma Kerr was declared elected.

Four Directors - 2-years terms

Nominating committee nominated. Marian Jones, Ray Poole and Ken Corbett. Members were asked three times for nominations. No nominations from the floor. Nominations closed. Marian Jones, Ray Poole and Ken Corbett were declared elected.

11. Meeting adjourned at 10 pm.