

Manitoba Association of Cottage Owners

Virtual on zoom

March 18, 2021

7:00 p.m.

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**AGENDA**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Gus Wruck, Shelley Morris, Jim Nicholson, Gordon Campbell, Guy Walker, Ken Corbett, Ray Poole

**Regrets:** Val Hammond, Dave Crabb

**Chair:** Gus Wruck

**Recording Secretary:** Shelley Morris

1. **Call to Order** – the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Adoption of Agenda**  
Gordon moved and Ken seconded that the agenda be adopted as amended. CARRIED
3. **Minutes – October 26, 2020**  
Jim sent out a version of the minutes with some minor edits.  
Guy moved and Jim seconded that the minutes of October 26, 2020 be approved as amended  
CARRIED
4. **AGM Minutes/AGM Feedback** (Nov 4)  
Jim circulated some edits to the minutes which are for approval at the next AGM.
5. **Strategic Plan**
  - i. **Public Policy**
    - a) **Education Taxes**  
There is assurance from government regarding phasing out of education taxes which we will continue to monitor. The previous MACO submission called for the elimination of school boards and there have been recent provincial announcements in this regard.
    - b) **Environment**
      1. **Noise issues**
        - Decibel Coalition (see email from Alan Drinkwater, page 2)  
Gus noted that in his area, it is getting more crowded and there are issues. Guy stated that in his opinion, MACO should not be taking a position against activities that our cottage owners members are interested in. He also suggested that most recreational vehicles do not exceed the allowed decibel levels. Gordon is of the view this is not something that could be policed. Shelley said we should only take this up if it was of interest to a majority of our members. If there are issues, it should be dealt with locally by local

RCMP and bylaw officers.

Gordon moved and Ken seconded that the correspondence from Decibel be received for information. CARRIED

- c) **Park Privatization** – positive response from Province – received and circulated to Board Feb 18/21. Guy noted the difference between parks and leased parklands to cottagers. The issue was about privatization of provincial parks rather than the latter. The issue will continue to be monitored.

ii. **Information Services**

- **Cottage Show** – the website suggests the show is taking place in April but this seems very doubtful. Before considering attending, we would want to know what safety measures are in place.

iii. **Member Services**

Gus asked how we could make MACO more relevant to the membership, especially after the pandemic. Guy suggested we make the zoom account available to member associations while in-person meetings are not possible. Shelley will email the membership and Guy will post to the website.

6. **Membership Report** – Val circulated a membership report. It was noted that there were 11 associations in the past that were outstanding. Val will be asked to prepare a report on which association are outstanding and for how long, find out if they are on the insurance program and then follow up. Gordon will contact the insurance company for the list. Jim provided the contact info as David Morris, dave@morrisinsurance.ca Ph 204-885-7582 5250 Roblin Blvd., Winnipeg

7. **Finance Report**

Jim spoke to the finance report – he had circulated reports for the last six months to the Board. He made a correction to the September 2020 report. October through January was mostly interest and a small number of memberships. There is balance of \$8080 in chequing account and \$6290 in savings account. Guy suggested transferring additional funds into savings to generate additional interest.

Jim moved and Guy seconded that the Oct 2020 to Feb 2021 reports be approved.

CARRIED

Jim asked Gus to submit receipt for the zoom licence. An invoice was received from Bill Campbell and has been paid.

8. **New/Other Business**

**Zebra Mussels** – Gordon reported that a meeting has been organized to discuss the growing issue with zebra mussels. Gordon will provide Shelley with any info that comes out of that meeting for addendum to the minutes. Hillside Beach had major issues in 2020 which affects the quality of beach life. More support is needed from municipalities regarding clean-up, it cannot fall on volunteers. A meeting with the RM of Alexander is needed. Last year they gave Hillside and Lester Beaches \$5000 each towards cleaning. Jim commented that there needs to be a biological solution involving the federal government Dept of Fisheries to reduce the zebra mussel population. Gordon said in the short term, there needs to be a focus on cleanup that involves the municipalities, it cannot be left to the cottagers.

**Grausdin Point dock issue** – Guy noted that MACO had been contacted about this issue. He contacted the President of the association to get background on the issue. Hydro mandates it is

shared usage and in this case, one does not use the dock and the other uses it and maintains it. There is no documentation that there has been communication between the two parties regarding use of the dock. They are wondering if any association has documentation/policy on shared docks that could provide guidance in developing their own policy. Guy suggested they could develop a document and have it approved by their local association. Gus is aware that Granite Hills has common launch area but that would be different from a shared dock. Shelley will ask the membership if anyone has a policy that they would be prepared to share and post it on our website.

9. **Next Meeting Date** - Thursday, June 3, 2021, 7:00 p.m.
10. **Adjournment** – Gordon moved and Guy seconded that the meeting be adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

January 20, 2021

Dear Gus:

Thank you very much for your time this morning and for being willing to table this matter with your Board of Directors. As mentioned, Decibel Coalition's challenge is to gain the support of lake-oriented property owner and resident associations. If these organizations say they are fed up with excessively noisy motor boats, Transport Canada will act and implement the decibel-limit legislation we are promoting. Even if motor boat noise is not a major problem for all of MACO's members, you can help other Canadian lake dwellers/users who are plagued with excessively noisy boat by supporting our cause.

I have provided below a detailed outline of the Decibel Coalition and its objectives. (This email supersedes the summary email I sent on December 13). We will be pleased to provide your Board of Directors a brief presentation (5 minutes + time for questions) if that is desired.

Excessive boat motor noise is a persistent, pervasive and growing problem on Canadian lakes, rivers and ocean waterways. Across our country, the increase in the number of high performance boats with illegal or non-existent muffler systems is spoiling the enjoyment of our on-the-water and beach activities, and is diminishing the outdoors/cottage experience. The current legislation governing boat noise is unenforceable.

There are a number of common complaints re motor boats - noise, speed, wake, loud music. We feel it is best to tackle noise first as it is already covered by the current legislation. It will be easier to enhance existing legislation, rather than trying to have the legislation expanded to cover other issues. One step at a time.

I am reaching out to ask if MACO will consider joining the **Decibel Coalition** and supporting its efforts to deal with excessive boat noise on Canada's lakes, rivers and ocean waterways. There is no cost to being a member.

Formed by *Safe Quiet Lakes*, the Decibel Coalition is a national organization whose objective is to strengthen federal legislation to include decibel limits on motorboat noise that are easily enforced. Such legislation has proven highly successful in the EU and 27 American states. For more information: <https://safequiet.ca/decibel-coalition/>

To motivate Transport Cda and the Federal Government to strengthen the existing boat noise legislation, we need to demonstrate there is across-Canada support for implementing decibel-based motor boat noise limits. As cottage owners who enjoy tranquility, if you believe in principle that one's enjoyment of the outdoors

should not be disrupted unreasonably by a boater's actions, the single most effective thing you can do is have MACO join the Decibel Coalition. The support of MACO will carry much weight with Transport Canada.

The following information will be useful in considering this decision:

- Several Ontario organizations have signed on (Georgian Bay Association, Thousand Islands Area Residents' Association); recruiting is now underway across Canada.
- I have recently started reaching out to Western Canada lake-, river- and ocean-oriented organizations. Cowichan Lake and River Stewardship Society and Youbou Community Association on Vancouver Island have joined.
- No cost to being a member.
- Currently Safe Quiet Lakes is providing administrative and website support to Decibel Coalition.
- If in due course your individual members wish to provide financial support, that will be much appreciated.
- During the next 6 months, we are focussed on recruiting lake-, river- and ocean-oriented organizations across Canada (property owners & stratas, recreation, residents, environmental, etc) and beginning discussions with the RCMP to bring them on board and gain their commitment to delivering an effective enforcement program when the enhanced legislation comes into effect.
- A lobbyist will be hired Summer/21 to work with Transport Canada and the Federal Government.
- Patience is a virtue; it is expected to take 2-3 years to have the enhanced legislation in place.
- A semiannual newsletter is planned to keep you informed of Decibel Coalition's progress and plans.

The attached document (template) can be used by MACO to formalize its desire to join the Decibel Coalition. It outlines the specific actions we are requesting of your organization.

<Draft Motion for Organizations Join DB Coalition V4 copy copy.docx>

Should MACO decide to join the Decibel Coalition, please provide me:

- executed copy of Directors Resolution;
- digital copy of MACO's logo;
- current membership count;
- date of formation;
- key contact email address for future communications.

Please let me know if there are questions I can answer.

We would really like Manitoba Association of Cottage Owners to join the Decibel Coalition.

Sincerely,

Alan Drinkwater, CPA CA

Western Canada Representative, Decibel Coalition

C. [604 360-7405](tel:6043607405)