



# Port Elgin & Saugeen Township Beachers' Organization

Annual General Meeting Minutes August 2, 2003

The Annual General Meeting of the Port Elgin & Saugeen Township Beachers' Organization was called to order by Dave Martin at 10:05 am at Rotary Hall in Port Elgin.

## **Attendance**

**General membership:** List on file with Business Manager

**Board Members:** Dave Martin, Cameron Yule, Bill Martin, Phyllis Fagan, John Mann, Mac Campbell, Todd Aitchison, John Kyles, John VanBastelaar, Peter Waldock, Bill Rose, Anne McNeilly

**Guest Speakers:** Mark Kraemer (Mayor), Dave Preston (Chief of Saugeen Shores Police Services), Mike Myatt (Community Services), John VanBastelaar (Property Assessments),

## **Welcome/Introduction by Board President-Dave Martin**

Dave Martin began the meeting by introducing the attending members of the Board of Directors. He informed the members that Cameron Yule will be resigning his position on the Board and recognized his contribution over the years. Dave introduced Mayor Mark Kramer, Chief Dave Preston, Mike Myatt and Counselor Thead Seaman to the members and thanked them for coming, indicating that Mayor Kraemer had limited time due to several other engagements on the same day so would have to leave immediately following his remarks.

## **Welcome and Saugeen Shores Update-Mayor Mark Kraemer**

Mayor Mark Kraemer welcomed the membership and noted that Harry Thede was also in attendance. The municipal election is on November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2003 and as it was last election, the voting will be by mail. He expects the process to run much smoother than it did last election.

Mayor Kraemer said it has been a very busy year with construction. He expects that Turner Bridge will be open by the end of August. Gustavus Street is under construction and Izzard Road is now paved. The request for a stop sign on Izzard Road is now under consideration by the Works Department and he expects the decision will be favourable. There was an extensive highway analysis done where some roads were changed from town to county and vice versa (example County Road 40 now turned over to the county). There have been 53 building permits issued this year valued at approximately \$12 million. The last 2 years have seen 74 and 75 permits issued for the year where the first year of amalgamation saw only 16 permits issued. It has been decided that there will be a single water treatment plant for Saugeen Shores, located in Southampton. This state of the art facility was not the cheapest option but was the best option (approximately 15% extra cost) and will allow for expansion. The Port Elgin water treatment plant will be removed. The Shipley Avenue water and sewer construction is scheduled to start the Tuesday after Labour Day.

He indicated the intent of the plan concerning beach access routes is to ensure the municipality's interest is protected and to allow public access where appropriate.

Mayor Kraemer informed the membership that Chief Preston has spent a large amount of personal time on the Community Watch program that he would be speaking on and that he deserves full accolades. Chief Preston organized and chairs this program which is working extremely well.

The Bruce County Museum and Archives is being rebuilt. It will go to tender in October with demolition expected at the end of the year and construction to follow. The new cultural and historical centre will include a 115 seat theatre and quality archives to maintain the history of Bruce County.

Mayor Kraemer indicated that the harbour wall dropped about 18 inches 6 weeks ago. The harbour is owned by the federal government and leased to the town therefore the federal government will fix it, hopefully by next year.

Mayor Kreamer thanked Thead Seaman, Mike Myatt and Dave Preston for coming.

## Approval of Minutes

*John Mann Sr. made a motion to pass the July 27, 2002 AGM minutes as written.*

*Seconded by Jarath Anderson.*

*Motion passed.*

## Disclaimer/Mission Statement

Bill Martin read the following disclaimer:

**I move that all acts, contracts, by-laws, proceedings, appointments, elections, and payments enacted, made, done, and taken by the Directors and Officers of the Port Elgin and Saugeen Township Beachers' Organization since the last Annual Meeting of the Organization as set out or referred to in the Minutes of Meeting of the Board of Directors or in the Financial Statement submitted to this meeting be hereby approved, ratified, sanctioned and confirmed.**

*Seconded by John Kyles.*

*Carried*

Peter Waldock read the Beachers' Organization Mission Statement.

## Review of the Past Year-Dave Martin

Dave Martin characterized the past year as having a few success stories and a few near misses. The board has kept sand migration on their agenda and have repeatedly asked that the town follow the January, 1999 report on coastal conservation more closely. For example, the board has been in contact with The Waterfront Committee in regards to increased rows of snow fencing and decreased grading of the beach, however the grading does continue. The town has indicated that there is not enough funds to increase the number of rows of fencing but Dave believes that the town has listened and does understand the need.

The organization is healthy and we will be canvassing for new members, Dave explained. The board is also discussing ways to increase communication with its members, for example extra newsletters and the newspaper.

Jen Oliveira has taken over the position of Business Manager from Carol Dick. Gary Scammel has agreed to continue as the Beachers' Organization Patrol Person again this year. There were only a couple of issues that Gary came across last winter.

Dave closed his review by explaining that the Organization has tried to be productive and constructive in its approach to issues instead of just complaining about them. The Organization is working to offer solutions but needs involvement from members. There are currently about 270 members and Dave wished there were more at the meeting, however many more were in attendance than at last year's meeting. Dave encouraged members to solicit non-members as the more involvement we have, the more we can do.

**Member:** Why not invite the Southampton Organization to join us?

**Dave:** The Southampton Organization is a recently amalgamated "ratepayers organization". Dave went to the Southampton meeting and was very impressed with the turn-out of approximately 120-150 people. This issue has been discussed with our board and theirs and it was decided that at this point, amalgamation is pre-mature.

**Bill Martin:** There are also legal issues that would have to be dealt with.

## Financial Report-Jen Oliveira

Jen Oliveira stated that this year's budgeted income is \$14,160.00 of which \$10,115.74 has been received to date. The expense budget is \$13,235.00 of which \$9,039.10 has been used. The Organization's net worth is \$8126.55.

## Director of Community Services-Mike Myatt

Mike Myatt opened his remarks by letting the membership know that he and his wife moved to Saugeen Shores 1½ years ago and that he will be moving to Saugeen Beach Road in the near future.

Sand Migration is an important issue and it has not been ignored. This year the fencing has been increased to 2 rows with the long term goal being 4 rows. Hopefully it can be increased to 3 rows this winter. Grading is a Public Works issue but he has been in contact with them about it. Loss of sand is recognized as a major issue. Grading has been reduced by 75% in Gobles

Grove and by 50% in Port Elgin. The other side of the issue is that the beach areas look nicer with grading. As well, it provides a safer beach by reducing holes which can be a liability issue.

The Waterfront has seen the addition of the I dock as well as increases of other docks. The Gobles Grove and Gerry's Fries washrooms will be renovated this October. This year counsel approved the addition of a second washroom crew increasing cleaning of the washrooms from once a day last year to 2-3 times this year. Mike noted that the kids on the washroom crew work really hard and that complaints have decreased this year. There are also 3 kids on garbage duty and that situation has also improved this year.

Public Beach Access Points has been a hot issue this year. There are 55 points. The final recommendations will be received from the consultant in October and the decisions will be made after that.

**Member:** What is the liability issue regarding grading?

**Mike:** There are past Ontario suits where someone has tripped on a hole and sued. Southampton wants theirs done weekly, however it is a different type of sand. Jeff Peach has produced a manual on sand migration, beach grass, dunes etc. He will be coming this fall to do a workshop.

**Member:** Saugeen Beach Road #25-55 has standing water that is attracting flies etc. It was promised to be looked at but hasn't yet.

**Mike:** Will make a note and forward to Gord Eagles.

**Member:** Spoke to Gord already and he realizes it as a problem. The Conservation Authority will not allow filling it with stones etc., you can only move in sand to fill pond areas. As well, the beach weeds should be cut.

**Mike:** There are two sides to the issue, many people do not want them cut and have gotten in front of the machine to stop it.

**Mac Campbell:** Mosquitoes breed in temporary ponds with no predators, therefore this is not a problem with the standing water on Saugeen Beach Road.

**Peter Waldock:** The Beach Access meeting was good and the consultant is sensitive to concerns. The consultant stated that they will not interrupt areas with building/planting etc. on them. Peter feels this is undemocratic and will fight it. He feels it takes advantage of those who have maintained the areas and those that haven't get away with it.

**Member:** With the "give and take" of roads, which ones are given and which are taken? Will there be a canoe launch at the new Turner bridge, in original talks there was supposed to be one.

**Mike:** Will look into it.

**Member:** The member wanted to remind everyone that no landowner owns the beach, it is owned by the municipality.

**Todd Aitcheson:** Mike has done a great job, the beach maintenance is excellent, much improved.

## **Saugeen Shores Police Services-Chief Dave Preston**

### **2003 Update**

In 2003, Saugeen Shores Police Services met all adequacy standards. To achieve this they had to increase technology in order to connect with 43 other police services and the OPP. This was a huge cost but through many grants the cost was able to be cut in half. Officers have been trained but there is still a learning curve with the new system.

There is a new Criminal Investigation Unit as well. Currently there are 4 part-time retired officers working on it. As well, due to a court decision, starting in 2003 there has to be an officer in Walkerton court 2 days per week. The part time officers are also involved in this. The Criminal Youth Justice Act has brought an increased workload to police. There is a process that must be followed before charges can be laid, for example there might have to be several offences first. Police are having to find new ways to deal with kids.

The cost of insurance has tripled and the cost of benefits has increased. This year's budget increase is the largest in at least 27 years. Chief Preston congratulated the mayor and counsel for approving the budget with nothing cut from it.

### **Community Watch Program**

The community watch program started with a meeting between Mike Myatt, Gord Eagles and Chief Preston regarding an increase in vandalism. From that counsel gave approval to start a task force. On November 18, 2002, a meeting was held with a cross section of 18 people including schools, merchants etc. and the task force was launched. There have been numerous grants received, including Youth Initiative and Vandalism Initiative, all totaling \$55,000, yet to be received. In February the committee was formalized and in late March training began. There are 43 members of the committee with 12 core members and is run by two officers, Dan Rivett and Dave Butcher.

The program is in effect on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights and more often in the summertime. Volunteers use cell phones and patrol in their own vehicles. Each week Dan Rivett analyzes hot spots and the patrols will focus in those areas. The requirements to become a volunteer are 19 years of age, a criminal record check, they must attend a 3 hour training session and rules, such as safety and confidentiality, must be followed at all times.

The program has been very effective at bar closing and at the beach etc. It has the potential to stop things before they become a larger issue. Statistics are unofficial, but there has been a decrease in vandalism since the program began. A full statistical report will be due next year.

Chief Preston invited a Port Elgin & Saugeen Township Beachers' Organization member to become a stakeholder, meeting twice each year. Dave Martin thanked him and said he would let him know who the person would be.

**Member:** Will Saugeen Shores be posting signs stating they are a "Community Watch Community"?

**Dave:** Yes, it will happen in the near future.

**Member:** Increased access to fireworks has caused a problem at the beach. When should it reported?

**Dave:** This is a huge problem. Please always report this. The Police position is that they want the bylaw changed and in September they will be going to counsel to ask to have the bylaw reversed. The largest concern is for safety and damage, not noise. The bylaw at this time is that you must be 18 years old, they must be finished before 11pm and can only be used on holiday weekends. There is also a restriction on the types that can be used.

**Peter Waldoock:** There is also an issue with the garbage left behind.

**Dave:** It does leave a mess, for example in Bieners' Bush.

**John Mann:** Congratulations on this program and a great job on running police services.

**Bill Martin:** It has developed into a great program.

**Dave:** We would like to expand the program. It could be used in the future for missing kids etc.

### **Property Assessments-John VanBastelaar**

John VanBastelaar, member of the Board of Directors, offered to speak to the membership on property assessments. John had previously contacted Brian Dean at the Owen Sound office to speak at the meeting and although he was willing, was unable to attend due to a previous commitment on this day. John feels very strongly about this issue and is willing to work with members to have their questions answered.

Recently, John appealed his own property assessment/taxes and in speaking with eight property owners found that they did not even realize they had received a property assessment.

John stated that to calculate the property tax, you multiply the assessment by the mill rate. If the assessed value is equal to the rest of the town you get a fair tax bill. If the assessment is too high, your tax bill will be too high. It is also possible that your property could be assessed low, resulting in a lower tax bill. Property assessment is based on true market value. Next year there will be changes to the yearly market value assessment and people need to be prepared to determine whether it is correct in their case. In John's opinion, the guidelines are perfect.

Brian Dean has agreed to work with John and members on their assessments. Members were asked to forward any questions they might have to the Board of Directors and they would be passed on to John. Your assessment is mailed to you once each year and can be appealed, although it is too late this year. They will discuss it with you in person or you can use the 800 number. John stated that Terry Gibbons in the Owen Sound office is the representative for our area and she knows the area and is very well informed.

**Member:** Said he sent in his assessment saying "want to appeal" and it was sent back with a reduction.

**Member:** Challenged the statement that Terry Gibbons was "well informed". The member's assessment increased by 163% and she didn't come to the property, said it was based only on property sales.

**John:** Indicated the member had a right to appeal to an independent arbitrator.

**Member:** It's a problem that it is based only on sales as a very high value sale can mean an increase for everyone in the area.

**John:** You must investigate, go beyond your own neighbourhood and look at similar ones.

**Member:** Could there be a check list to help people figure out what to do?

**Dave Martin:** The board will undertake such a list and publish it in an upcoming newsletter.

**John:** People need to get informed about their assessments.

### **Nominations to the Board-Dave Martin**

Cameron Yule is resigning from the Board of Directors. At this point there are no nominations. Dave opened the floor for nominations from the membership, none were received.

**Motion to close: Bill Martin**

**Seconded: Todd Aitcheson**

**Carried**

## Questions

**Member:** Concerning public beach access, we must stop to think who will clean up the garbage, where will people park, what about broken glass etc.

**Peter Waldock:** These were the fears expressed prior to the meeting but it was explained that the intent is to help direct people to the main beach and ensure residents can get to beach areas. The issue is those without vested interest, not residents and seasonal residents. The promised revised proposal will be distributed to meeting attendees. The board should get a copy and may be able to post it on the website. The organization and members should educate people that they do not own the beach in front of their home.

**Member:** At Mitchell and Izzard Rd the odour is back. The member encouraged people to call Gord Eagles and Counsel members and suggested a call from the organization.

**Dave Martin:** Indicated he would call Gord Eagles regarding the issue.

**John Mann:** Told members there was a Fish Fry at the Southampton Firefighters Station today, August 2 from 4pm to 7pm.

**Member:** Asked about the Patrol Report

**Dave Martin:** Gary Scammell is the Patrolman and looks for vandalism, lights left on etc. He will also report an excessive amount of snow. In the past, no news has been good news. The board will be looking at his list of duties and reviewing them in a meeting with Gary.

**Member:** How often is a patrol done?

**Bill Martin:** There are 2 drive by's and 1 walk around each month.

**Todd Aitcheson:** the lights at the beach are a problem and he will be contacting Mike Myatt.

**Member:** Is there a list of counselors and their phone numbers?

**Dave Martin:** There is a list in the directory.

*A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Cameron Yule.*

*Seconded by Steve Shoemaker.*

*Carried*