



MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

DATE: February 18, 2017
TIME: 12:30 PM welcome, followed by User Group Meetings, Guest Speaker and AGM
VENUE: W.R. Best Memorial Public School

The meeting opened with a welcome from President David Kennedy to our second Annual General Meeting of the Copeland Forest Friends Association. David introduced the current Board of Directors, reviewed our accomplishments over the past year and shared our priorities for the upcoming year.

In 2016 we produced a trail map for Copeland Forest and installed extensive signage on the main trails that corresponds to the map. We re-routed 2 trails out of seepage areas. We purchased a water quality monitoring kit and trained volunteers on how to use this equipment.

In 2017 we plan to undertake a single track trail review, involving trained volunteers representing all user groups to review the viability of the trails. Our Ecology & Sustainability Committee will be identifying invasive species as well as species at risk and continue their work on water quality in partnership with the Severn Sound Environmental Association. We will continue to develop our website and are in the process of moving to a different platform that will be more cost effective. We will be making plans for our fall event with the idea of getting people into the forest instead of just in the parking lot beside it.

Some of the on-going topics we are addressing include:

Winter Parking: Cars are being ticketed for parking on the side of Ingram Road at the 4th line parking lot. The parking lot is not plowed in winter due to high costs. We will work with the MNRF and the Township to explore possible options for a solution.

Ducks Unlimited Pond: The pond is deemed to be too high a risk for Ducks Unlimited and meetings between the MNRF and Ducks Unlimited are going to take place to discuss options for decommissioning. CFFA will support both groups and try to preserve as much open water as possible and assist with the re-naturalization of the area.

Canada's 150th celebration: Martinville was once a bustling village at the north end of Copeland Forest. We would like to collect photos and post signage to share the history of this interesting time in Copeland's history. We will be seeking volunteers to work on this project.

Recruiting volunteers: David outlined the many ways members can get involved. They include:

1. Single track Trail review
2. Sign & Trail Maintenance
3. Ecology & Sustainability Cte
4. Planning & marketing a fall event
5. Copeland Forest History (Canada's 150th)
6. We welcome your ideas and expertise. Contact us!

David thanked our partners for their continued support. They include the Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry, Couchiching Conservancy, Horseshoe Resort, Casino Rama, MEC, NVCA and SSEA. He also thanked two of our former Board members, Ted Duncan and Ted Greatrix. Ted Duncan was the Angler & Hunters Director as well as Vice President and was instrumental in creating our Constitution and By-laws. Ted Greatrix was the Mountain Biker Director who volunteered many hours and provided much expertise on our signage installation project.

Guest Speaker: Carl Lesperance from the Severn Sound Environmental Association gave us an overview of the projects undertaken by this group in their watershed area. The headwaters for the Coldwater and Sturgeon River are both in Copeland and fall in the SSEA watershed. Willow Creek headwaters are also in Copeland and they fall under NVCA. Carl outlined how the SSEA can work with the CFFA and it includes teaching volunteers, invasive species training, sharing monitoring equipment, establishing monitoring stations and conducting water temperature studies.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

| No. | Item | Details |
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| 1 | Call to Order & Minutes of the 2016 AGM | David Kennedy, President called the meeting to order. Mary Anne Greatrix, Secretary reviewed the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2016. <u>MOTION: To accept the Minute of the 2016 CFFA AGM. So moved by Scott Macpherson, seconded by Pat Gotlieb. Motion passed.</u> |
| 2 | President's Report | This was given earlier in the introductory part of the meeting. |
| 3 | Treasurer's Report | Neil Craig reviewed our financial statement for the period January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016. We had an opening balance of \$5709.32. Our revenues were \$9503.00, expenses \$8319.54, net income \$1183.46. Balance at December 31, 2016 was \$6892.78. <u>MOTION: To accept the 2016 Treasurer's Report as at December 31, 2016. So moved by Paul Mullin, seconded by Brian Gibbon. Motion passed.</u> |
| 4 | Membership Report | Ingrid VanderMarel reported that we have 124 paid members whose memberships are valid until the end of 2017. |
| 5 | Election of Slate of Officers | Three user groups reps on the Board are due for renewal this year: Anglers & Hunters, Mountain Bikers and Business. Board members serve for a 3-year term.. Paul Mullin is the new Angler & Hunter Rep and Brad Turner is the Mountain Biker user group rep. The Business group did not have a quorum of five, so the Board will appoint a rep for this group. <u>MOTION: To accept the full slate of Board of Directors of the Copeland Forest Friends Association for the 2017-2018 term. So moved by Bob Douglas, seconded by Karen Anderson. Motion passed.</u> The executive positions of President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary will be appointed by the Board at the next regular Board meeting on March 15, 2017. |
| 6 | User Group Reports & Open Discussion with Q & A's | Sandy McLoughlin reported some incidents of horseback riders being chased by unleashed dogs. This group is making plans to construct several mounting blocks and install them along the main trails. Mounting blocks allow riders to mount and dismount safely. Dave Lord, Naturalist user group rep shared that his group identified the importance of marking ecologically sensitive areas, such as spots along the main trails to protect the Louisiana Water Thrush. Paul Mullin, Anglers & Hunters user group rep talked about undertaking forest management in Copeland. David Kennedy responded that the MNRF does not have the regulatory authority to allow forestry in the Copeland Forest. Forestry is outside our Memorandum of Understanding with the MNRF. Ingrid VanderMarel, Residents user group rep shared that members wish to be kept informed on the status of the Ducks Unlimited Pond decommissioning project. <u>Is there a plan to make trails accessible?</u> The MNRF states that wilderness trails on crown land are exempt from any laws on accessibility. The costs associated with building formally designated trails would be beyond the scope of our financial means. |

Is trail building allowed? No. The Ministry has placed a moratorium in trail building. If you see evidence of trail building, you can report it to the MNRF Conservation Officer.

Is bear hunting allowed in Copeland? Yes. There is a Spring bear hunt this year from May 1 – to June 15. Protect yourself by wearing a blaze orange vest and hat available at Canadian Tire for under \$10. Copeland Forest is designated Area 76E.

Is target practice allowed in Copeland Forest? Yes. It is legal year round and you must have a permit.

What is being done about the flooding on the 3rd Concession trail? The flooding has lessened somewhat since last Fall when some restoration work was done at the D.U. Pond and the water levels were lowered.

Are horses allowed on single track? Copeland Forest is a multi-use property owned by the Ministry of Natural Resources and as such supports many non-motorized recreational activities. There are no trails in Copeland that are designated for specific use while excluding others.

If Horseshoe puts in a new sewage plant, how will that affect Copeland Forest? Our Ecology & Sustainability Committee will be keeping a close eye on this project and keep members informed with updates.

Ted Duncan thanked the Board of Directors for their commitment and hard work on doing the ground work to make Copeland Forest Friends Association a success. Under the leadership of David Kennedy they have made the forest a better place for all users.

Meeting adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Minutes prepared by Mary Anne Greatrix – March 9, 2017