

Minutes of the
Upper French River Cottagers Association
Annual General Meeting
Sunday, July 31, 2022

1828 Call the meeting to Order by President Amanda Mainville

Present: Treasurer Sheilah Scrocchi

Absent: Vice President Martin Scrocchi, Treasurer Claire Thorpe

1029 Introduction of Chief Gerry Duquette to welcome all to the Dokis First Nation territory and brief us on events of the past two and a half years

During Covid:

There were full vaccinations for all members

They were able to bring food to every door

The elders felt they had seen it before so were less anxious about it, there were some positive cases on Dokis during Covid and the community and members acted accordingly.

In October of this year they will be starting a feast of the dead. This will be for those who passed during Covid and who could not be celebrated because of Covid. They will feast for all families who wish to submit a name and invite cottagers to participate.

There will be pavement for the whole of Main St. from the Main bridge entering Dokis down to the Dokis Marina starting in August. This will include new speed postings.

There has been some building going on with several new homes going up during Covid and new areas being cleared for further building. Included is new infrastructure and roads. They have applied to several funding opportunities presented by government and many members have expressed an interest in new housing.

They are expanding the school to provide before and after school daycare for those who need it.

The school will soon be off grid and rely on solar panels that were installed by members who trained for such and the reserve has become a training centre for other communities who wish to learn.

Dokis has successfully completed its first claim with government, this was a land management claim. 99% of members voted for it to into a trust, with 75% of the total amount going into trust, each member received a set amount and those under age had their amount put into a separate trust till they reach the age of majority. There has been a board of trustees set up that are separate from the Chief and Council with their sole job being the management of the fund. Outstanding claims include the Robinson Huron treaty claim. The band has also filed 2 forestry claims. There will be 50 hectares returned to Dokis from the park and

Band elections were pushed back 6 months and will occur in November for Chief and council.

Lagoon and Dump

Looking at a transfer station to be set up for garbage to remove it from the reserve

Blue box program is doing well

Band is looking at garbage from the river - cottagers - what to do with it. Support from the association is important with requests to West Nipissing. Dokis does not have the capacity to take on the rivers garbage.. We need to look at Taxpayer services for cottagers. You don't get garbage pick-up nor is there a station where you can put it. The station at Noelville has been closed to the public. West Nipissing takes care of the road from the bridge to the highway and any issues have been difficult to resolve as they are having their own issues trying to meet.

Dokis is attempting to meet with Provincial officials at MTO in an attempt to bypass West Nipissing and retake the road. This road used to be managed by Dokis and they are looking to maintain it on their own and make it safer for users and emergency vehicles.

Chief Duquette reminded association members that on the river, often Ambulance attendants and paramedics will not go out on the river to get someone or get on a boat. Dokis fire and emergency workers are who would come out if someone cannot be brought to the landing.

Internet towers have gone up on Reserve and they are looking to get cell towers, and require support from the association just on the basis of SAFETY on the river.

Fish Hatchery (started in 1986) is still running, appears to be a lot of males, not as many females. Looking at revamping to a Science based system, one that is self contained using distilled water. Revamp will happen through the fall and next spring.

Completing shore line clean up, using Quarry rock to create new spawning beds

Many fish are now tagged, if you catch one you are asked to return the tag to Riverview for information collection. There are two ponds behind Riverview where you can see the fingerlings. It can produce 2 million small pickerel each year and they will be looking to use it to produce Sturgeon next year.

They are looking to petition to change the name Upper French River. It used to be called "the river with two names". It causes confusion from the lower French and Little French. The water actually used to flow the other way years ago.

Approval of Agenda presented today Motion by Steve Robinson, Seconded by Paul Cormier

Approval of Minutes of 2019 UFRCA AGM Motion by Steve Robinson, Seconded by Paul Cormier
Approved by all present

Introduction of Board of Directors by President Amanda Mainville

Recap of monthly meetings

Recap of costs that have been maintained over the past two years

Financial presentation by Treasurer Sheilah Scrocchi

Notice to members that Treasurer and Vice president will be stepping down by next AGM

Reminder to group that present Board of 4 members has stood since AGM 2019 with 5th member stepping down shortly after AGM

Membership is way down with only 35 members including the 4 board members
Numbers speak volumes as to the interest after being away through the Covid Pandemic

16 members present today

Floor Open to discussion- voicing concerns on what to do about increasing membership and keeping the Association viable after Covid break

Comments regarding members not receiving email for renewal, perhaps they have gone into peoples' junk mail or emails have changed. Emails were sent to everyone who maintained membership

How do we re-engage cottagers and businesses?

To manage costs, suggestion to stop operating the website, not have food at the AGM, change monthly phone calls to Zoom meetings etc

President commented that the hope was for many to attend off the river so as to get reacquainted with neighbours and businesses and begin to rebuild

Decision to keep the present board and not have any nominations at this time

Formation of a membership committee in the absence of a Membership officer,

Bill Diehl - Karen Gough - Paul Cormier - Garrie Roman - Jenny Young - Molly Finnell

Email, Post mail and phone calls will be conducted to all old members by membership committee

Paul Cormier raised issue of paying taxes and a lack of services as a concern for potential members

Request for a Time Frame for Membership Drive to take place August 1, 2022 to Sept 30, 2022

At that time, members will be included in any decisions regarding the continuation of the Association

Motion to Adjourn - Burt Clarke

Seconded - Bill Diehl

Meeting Adjourned 1217hrs by Amanda Mainville