

FIRA Executive Committee Meeting June 17, 2020

In attendance:

President: Andy Valickis
Vice President: Bill Odell
Past President: Glen Smith
Treasurer: Joe DiFrancesco
Secretary: Carrie DiFrancesco
Member-at-Large: Wayne MacKenzie
Member-at-Large: Lynn Yake

Finance Report

Joe handed out the report and gave an overview. Dues have been collected at about the same pace as last year. For anyone that paid last year that have not yet for 2020 we will send personal emails to them to determine their intentions so they can participate in the supplier group pricing program which Laurie starts working on in July. There is some concern members may choose not to join this year with no activities due to COVID-19. The meat sale is most likely the only fundraiser we will have for this year. The dues should cover our basic operating expenses but we may dip slightly into our bank balance from 2019 depending on meat fundraising and any other expenses we incur which are discussed further into agenda. Utilities will be lower this year with the hall vacant and we have discontinued having someone clean the hall for now.

Previous business updates

~ **Property purchase, legal opinion:** The lawyer we retained, David Shapiera, provided a legal opinion on the questions we posed to him regarding our rights and obligations should we purchase the property from Dysart, the possibility and process for property tax relief in that situation and what our rights are if we do not buy the property and Dysart attempts to repurpose the property. Andy sent some follow-up questions to further clarify the realistic extent of liability risk should we take ownership as well as risk of having adverse changes to our lease should we not take ownership. Due to COVID, the lawyer is only working on necessary cases and will not be answering our additional questions until his firm re-opens for normal business and most likely will not receive a bill until they do so. Since we also have not heard from the Municipality in some time, we are tabling this discussion.

~ **Door Installation** - Wayne spoke to Dan Kay yesterday. Dan is swamped right now with only 2 guys in his crew and is not taking anymore work this season. Should we find that we need the door installed sooner than later, we may look for someone else but we most likely can wait as nobody is using the building at this time. Wayne will ask Dan to at least give us a quote and see if he can fit us in before the snow. Another contractor said he could do it for about \$400 but he hasn't looked at it yet, which is a concern.

~ **Water testing costs** - There was a suspicion of a film of oil on the lake surface water when the ice started to go out this spring and some concerned residents contacted an oil remediation company that was doing work at a local cottage. They sent an inspector up to get samples for lab testing which confirmed that the film on the water was simply

from the natural breakdown of organic material from the various streams that flow into the lake. While this was very good news, it did result in a bill for the cost of the inspectors time, travel and lab work to do the water testing being charged to the property owner. Since we were assured by the Ministry of Environment that the homeowner had fully, timely and successfully complied with all the necessary remediation work on her property and had nothing to do with the organic film that caused the water testing costs to be incurred, FIRA Executive felt that she should not have to carry the full burden of this cost and offered to share in a portion of the travel and testing costs. The property owner submitted a copy of her bill showing \$331 for travel costs for the testing and her appreciation for helping with that amount. Andy feels the labor and inspector costs billed to her for the testing were likely much higher, but the Executive approved the \$331 cost submitted as a moral obligation to help somewhat offset the additional cost she incurred for something that did not have anything to do with her property, and which provided some peace of mind to all property owners on the lake that there was no oil concern. It was also discussed that this situation was a learning process for all as in discussions with the Ministry they stated that naturally occurring organic films such as these are very common, especially during the spring snowmelt, and offered some simple ways to identify an organic film from that of a hydrocarbon film from oil or gas. Several board members mentioned seeing similar film on the surface in other areas of the lake and we felt this would be useful information for all so Andy will create an educational letter to send out since we can't discuss this at a general meeting in the near future due to COVID. We will also ask Glenn Scott to include the educational piece in his newsletter.

New Business

Review activities in light of COVID-19 - As a community center under Phase 2, FIRA can only open on a limited basis for educational, counseling type programs and services that are not recreational in nature, and these activities would be subject to all the Workplace Safety guidelines issued for COVID-19 safety. Unfortunately, this would restrict the FIRA building from being used for recreational activities at this time. For the safety of our community, activities will continue to be suspended at the FIRA hall. Should guidelines from the governmental authorities change, FIRA executive will review our activities at that time.

Fundraising review

- ~ Meat sale is still occurring as it's easily physically distanced.
- ~ Silent Auction - Cancelled unless we can do later in the year
- ~ Summerfest - Cancelled
- ~ Quilting and craft activities (Dianne Kelly) - Suspended
- ~ Casino Night - Cancelled unless we can do later in the year
- ~ Pancake breakfast (Carrie DiFrancesco) - Canceled
- ~ Pig Roast - (Keith Clarkson) - Canceled
- ~ Club 200 (Graham Newton) Skip a year per last General Meeting
- ~ New fundraising ideas? On-hold

- ~ New member promotion? On-hold
- ~ Grants for adult community centres and senior active living centres (Bill Odell) - on hold for now as applications for discretionary municipal funding may not be easy to obtain at this time, especially when we do not have any programs running.

Activities/other committee updates

- ~ Potlucks - Suspended
- ~ Fitness (Sue Mason) - Suspended but Jane is conducting her class via Zoom 3 days a week.
- ~ Propane/Oil supplier agreements (Laurie Hillaby) - Laurie starts working this over the summer. Joe will follow-up with her in July.
- ~ Property management: Wayne MacKenzie - has been working on electrical panel and cleaning up old wiring that is no longer in use. Wayne is also going to keep the yard trimmed. Dianne Kelly cleaned out the fridge.
- ~ Social Coordinator of Happy Hours (Gord Cochrane) - Happy Hours suspended
- ~ August BBQ - cancelled
- ~ DiFib training update (Carrie DiFrancesco) - Suspended
- ~ Road garbage clean up for 2020. Several people volunteered on their own to clean up area roads and it was decided best to keep it informal like this so FIRA does not have to provide vests and cones, etc for a larger scale program. We will continue to encourage folks to pick up garbage on their own during daily walks and for all not to litter.

Other business

~ **FIRA Google Group Email list:** So individuals do not receive unsolicited emails that are not direct FIRA business, this list has been restricted only for use of the Executive Board with the exception for Dianne Kelly for crafts and Graham Newton for the meat sale. Those sending to the group list are to address it using the bcc option. Other FIRA members who may have information that would be of benefit to the entire FIRA membership are to contact the board for consideration of distribution to entire membership.

~ **FIRA By-Law changes:** Joe noticed that our by-laws were not changed after certain decisions were voted on by membership:

- We now have 2 Members-at-large, not 1 as in previous years. This change began in 2017 but by-laws were never changed. Joe will change them, we'll approve at next general meeting and will have Ken Loney post on the FIRA website.

- Executive discretionary spending's limit was raised to \$500 at the November 21, 2018 General Meeting. Bill asked if we amend or pass a new by-law with changes? Joe will look to see what's been done in past but we are thinking it is better to do as an amendment so we have the history with an amendment date.

~ **Propose 2 new FIRA By-Law changes:**

- The board agrees to propose removing the by-law requirement to distribute member information list annually since we are not authorized to provide personal contact information of members to others. Anyone who needs someone's contact information can contact someone on the board and who will request the members permission to release.

- Existing by-law requires a finance audit annually by 2 FIRA members or 1 qualified non-member. The board agrees to propose that we change to the audit being done by 2 FIRA members or 1 qualified person, member or non-member. Joe will do the audit for Keith Clarkson's 2019 records and we will need to find someone new for 2020 next year.

~ **Expense reductions while Hall closed** Wayne will program the heat / air conditioning system so fan will come on periodically for the summer. In the winter, the heat will remain down. As mentioned, our cleaning person is not needed at this time. The phone will not be suspended as we have defibrillator and it may be needed in an emergency situation. Andy would like to wire a jack and hook up a new phone.

~ **Storage area clean-out:** Wayne will gradually clean it out.

~ **Procedure manual review:** Bill, Lynn, Joe & Carrie cleaned out the file cabinet at the hall. Many copies of procedures for FIRA were found and Bill is reorganizing them. He has reviewed everything and found that some procedures are outdated but it could be a helpful tool. Bill will give us a summary and Carrie will re-type what we are going to keep.

~ **2021 Dues:** A few members have suggested a discounted rate for households vs doubling the single rate to get more second members joining in a household. At this time, a significant percent of 2 person households already have both members joining as members. There is a concern that we may not get enough additional members to join at a lower rate to offset the discount provided. Given the loss of fundraising revenue for this year, it was decided to suggest dues remain the same for 2021 when we hold the next general meeting. We may explore again in future.

~ **FIRA information pamphlets:** Carrie will update FIRA pamphlets for perspective FIRA members. One idea is to give them to area realtors for folks moving to the area.

~ **FIRA Hall Waivers:** Carrie will pursue to see who we still need waivers from and email those folks to obtain their signatures.

~ **Speed limit signs for Haliburton Lake Road:** Paul Carey has been pushing council to install speed limit signs N of Ft. Irwin for 50kph for the safety of walkers, bikers, animals and other drivers. The limit is believed to be 50 but with no signs, many assume that it's 70. A speed study done by the municipality this spring showed many driving in excess of that. A broad speed study is in process by the municipality that needs to be completed this year before official speed limit signs will be installed, likely next summer. In the interim, the group that Paul Carey has been working with is looking to get 5-10 community safety signs in place. The proposed signs cannot include the 50 kph limit on them but will be asking people to slow down. FIRA Executive has approved the draft signs and authorized Andy to work with Paul's group and HLCA to share in the cost up to \$300 for as many signs that is agreed upon.

~ **Free Membership for 2020:** The board has agreed that a FIRA membership for Andy Patterson will be granted for his donation of a snowblower. Wayne will get Andy to fill out the member forms.

~ **Next Communication update:** An email will go out soon and will include an update on Hall status and activities related to COVID & other highlights of these minutes, speed limit sign update, nominations for next year's executive board and the education piece on organic oil films on the lake.

Motion to close meeting made by Wayne and seconded by Joe before Andy's head burns any more!