

FIRA Executive Meeting Agenda September 27, 2021

In Attendance:

President: Andy Valickis

Vice President: Bill Odell

Past President: Glenn Smith

Treasurer: Joe DiFrancesco

Secretary: Carrie DiFrancesco

Member-at-Large: Wayne MacKenzie

Member-at-Large: Lynn Yake

Finance Review:

~ Joe reported that there are 14 new members with 9 of them registering for the propane program. We have collected \$7,660 in dues which is more than the last several years. The meat sale was only fundraiser this year. We expect to have an approximate \$4,000 increase in funds for the year for a total of approximately \$36,000 in funds.

~ Since we are considering to spend money on improvements, Joe took a look at our budget.

* The standard annual operating expenses are around \$6,000 per year.

* A Capital plan should be developed to be sure we have adequate reserves for major items that may need replacement, such as roof, septic, water system, well, pump, UV, furnace / AC, etc.

* After a reserve for capital replacement is determined, we can figure available surplus for improvements. We can also do additional fundraising as needed for projects.

* Andy and Joe will create a capital plan for major items so we better understand how much we can spend on improvements, determine annual dues, etc.

~ One unknown possible large capital expense is for our septic with the required inspection program upcoming. Andy noted that the revised septic tank inspection does not include the pump out so we should pump ahead of time since we do not know when it was pumped last, but believe it has been over 5 years. Next spring we should have it pumped and get opinion on it's condition from whoever does it. Our septic is most likely large enough. Andy will ask Dianne if she knows if it's original and if she knows when it was last pumped.

~ The board has agreed to keep the dues the same for 2022, especially since we would like to start making the improvements which will use some of our surplus funds.

~ For our Propane Fixed Price Program, the rates did go up for propane as everything else has. Both Budget & Kellys went up 13 cents/litre. We have 78% of member households in the program.

Property Sale Proposal Update:

~ Andy reported that at our last executive meeting, we discussed inviting the Mayor and Council to attend our AGM to explain to membership why FIRA should purchase the property so Andy did approach the Mayor. After a busy summer, they finally were able to communicate after Labour Day.

- * Last year the Mayor indicated we were expected to buy the property but now she is suggesting we can maybe come up with another arrangement such as strengthening the lease agreement and suggested a talk with Jeff Isles. Andy spoke with Jeff but Jeff deferred comment until Council gives him direction on this matter.
- * The Board agrees at this point, the issue is back in Dysart's hands. It is noted we have a lease through 2027.
- * Andy will write back to the Mayor reviewing their conversation and we'll wait until they raise this issue again. Otherwise, we are not taking any further action.

FIRA Improvement Committee Recommendations

~ Joe reviewed that we did a survey this past spring and received 68 responses and feels this is a valid representation of membership. There was interest in existing activities as well as in new initiatives. Two recommendation letters were drafted for the Board to review based on the survey results.

- * Since FIRA is a member driven social organization, the first recommendation was to formalize a structure to initiate and run activities and communicate this to membership. This includes establishing an Activities Coordinator on the Board and identifying a lead person for each activity to be a liaison to the Activity Coordinator. In addition, identify Social Event Coordinators for large events such as potlucks, happy hours, bonfires, X-mas Dinners, etc and a Special Events Coordinator for outside excursions, bringing in speakers, etc. The nominations for these roles were Carrie as Activity Coordinator, Irene Odell and Lynn Yake as Social Event Coordinators and Merron Gottardi as Special Events Coordinator. The Board accepted these nominations.
- * A full document describing the new roles will be sent out to membership before the AGM for further discussion at the meeting.
- * The second recommendation addressed improvements to the hall and contents as follows:
 - * The first priority would be to purchase items to support existing and new activities such as table games, card tables, firepits, a larger TV, etc. Some of the current items being used are owned by members and being loaned for use at the hall. A full list will be sent to membership before the AGM so we can request approval on spending for these items as soon as possible.
 - * The next phase would be to gather costs estimates and evaluate the following possible renovations and building improvements:
 - * The first involved reorganizing storage items, possibly eliminating one bathroom so the space could be used for storage, using the existing storage room for boots/ coats and creating a sitting room area in the front room. A full description will be

sent to membership before the AGM for discussion and request for approval. It was suggested to initially look for donated furniture for sitting room.

- * Several considerations were identified to evaluate before we could make a final recommendation such as any minimum bathroom requirements, handicap needs, HVAC clearance space, storage space needs, use of outdoor storage container, etc. If we eliminate one bathroom, this could also include renovating the remaining bathroom to be more functional. The Board will pursue information on any minimum requirements we would have to meet and present the concept at the AGM for member feedback.
- * Consider replacing chairs and come up with new interior paint schemes. Lynn has a friend with 2 Home Hardware stores that may be able to help us find chairs that are affordable, sturdy, easy to clean, store and comfortable. Samples will be pursued with cost estimates to follow. The committee will also develop some possible paint schemes for review.
- * Floor insulation is another consideration to allow fitness classes to do floor exercises and help keep the heat in the building for winter months. We will get estimates on spray foaming.
- * Determining if there is value in replacing windows or keeping the existing and removing the unused wall A/C units and replacing with window or drywall and siding. The Board will make some inquiries of Dennis Pope or Mike Bohn on any review in the past and then contact Dan Kay for an evaluation.
- * In addition to the committee recommendations, Wayne suggested we evaluate the need for a generator to protect the water system from freezing during power failures in winter. Options are being considered for an automatic stand-by or manual back-up.

BBQ Review

~ Andy reported that there were 30 people at the annual barbecue at his home. It was a good turnout and everyone seemed to enjoy the first big event in so long. A few new members attended.

- * Covid protocol that was sent out ahead of time put everyone at ease and everyone felt comfortable.
- * Would like to have more bonfire events, maybe do 1 per month as people want to get together.

COVID Policy / Update changes

~ Do our members need to show proof of vaccinations at FIRA? Andy says churches are requiring because their insurance providers are. The curling club, hockey rink and others are also. Right now we have an honor system as to members stating they are vaccinated but it may be the safest thing to do to have members show their vaccination certificates once and record it in our membership list.

~ The board has decided to make it official for member to prove their vaccination by showing their certificate either by email or when you walk into a building for an activity. We'll start with asking folks to bring it to the AGM.

Annual General Meeting (AGM)

~ The AGM will be in FIRA's parking lot at 3pm on Wednesday, October 13th. A rain date will be for the next day. We hope to have a few fires going and are working on permission. Members will be asked to park in the street or boat launch area and to bring their own lawn chairs, beverages and/or snacks.

~ **Proposed AGM agenda:**

- * Property Sale Proposal - Andy
- * Presidents message with re-cap of 2021
- * FIRA Improvement Committee Recommendations (send out information ahead of time - survey results and plans)
- * By-law changes for member vote. Joe to review
- * Slate of officers. We continually have a hard time finding a new Vice President every year. This is the perfect time to get involved - we are tuned in and ramping up our new endeavors. If we can't find someone to fill this slot, we need membership to give us direction on how to proceed.