

FIRA Executive Meeting September 26, 2023

Minutes

Attendance

President: Cindy Woodrow
Vice President: Jeff Vanderkuur
Past President: absent
Treasurer: Joe DiFrancesco
Secretary: Carrie DiFrancesco
Member-at-Large: Wayne MacKenzie
Member-at-Large: Lynn Yake

Previous Business

~ Hall Improvements:

- * Remaining for Phase 1: Carrie explained that the Clubhouse's wall decor is almost complete in the main rooms (\$768 spent so far, with approximately \$750 left). Photo collages for the bathrooms are planned to be completed over the winter.
- * Phase 2 (member interest): The Improvement Committee needs to meet and discuss what is our next stage of improvement.
- * Carrie still needs to get recycle bins for inside the closet but needs to do more research as she isn't finding the right sizes. Also, that closet needs hooks and re-arranging.

~ Grant research:

- * Jeff is still researching available grants to apply for whatever is possible in the way of windows, insulated floor, generator, stove, dishwasher...
- * He did receive a letter from Walt McKecknie in support of FIRA to apply for capital improvement grants where internet & phone were specifically mentioned. No capital grants are available right now but Jeff will be keeping an eye on future availability.
- * Jeff did email the Ministry of Seniors and Accessibility for information & received a response. They currently aren't accepting applications but we need to watch for changes on their website & Facebook page. This would lead to changing FIRA into an Active Living Center, which will change our mandate and open the doors for more funding. After discussion it was determined we need to look into it further to see what it entails. Some grants may lead us to things we do not want to do (for ex, money for paid administration whereas we are looking for money for capital

improvements and to follow our mission for socialization and activities. Jeff will set up a meeting with a committee to continue the search.

~ **Outdoor sign upgrade update:**

- * It was decided Jeff can proceed with updating the sign now that we know it won't be covered under a grant anytime soon based on the approval from the last member meeting.
- * Dan Kay will be asked if he can do the wrap around the posts with aluminum and if he can't, Jeff has another person in mind. This request will be for a paid project, not a donation

Financial Update

~ **Dues collections:**

- * Joe reported that we gained 10 new FIRA member households for 2023 and lost 2 and took in almost \$10,000 in Revenue. Dues were enough to cover our operating expenses, wall decor and a donation to the HHHS.
- * \$4,800 was raised throughout our fundraising so we are ahead about \$5,000 this year. This money can go toward the sign and other desired improvements.
- * Joe suggested dues to remain the same for next year at \$70 for an individual, \$120 for a couple and minus \$10 if you are a member of another association. The motion was seconded by Cindy and was carried by unanimous vote and will be proposed at the AGM.
- * Operating expenses
 - ~ **Major Improvements** spent \$768 on wall decor
 - ~ **Check was sent to HHHS** for \$1,180 (\$180 from Pancake Breakfast 50/50 draw).
 - ~ **Update on being able to e-transfer checks out of account** - still waiting on BMO to see if it can be done.
 - ~ **FIRA financial audit** completed Sept 2, 2023 by Cindy & Bill determined the records were accurate.
 - ~ **Landline phone cost:** Bell can lower our phone rate by about \$35/mo if we sign a 3-year contract. Early cancelation of the contract results in a penalty of \$25/mo for remaining months at a \$500 max. It was noted if we get cell service we may be able to cancel and if we kept the phone service at least 15 months we would still be ahead cost wise, so we will propose at the AGM we go ahead with this.

Fundraising

- ~ **Macgregor Meat Sale** - \$915 raised! Many thanks to Graham Newton!

~ **Pancake breakfast** - Carrie: Our profit was \$1333 (includes the \$180 made from the 50/50 raffle that was directed to HHHS). Also, Mark Feagan gave a generous \$200 donation. It was unfortunate that we had a power outage for the last 15 minutes but it only forced us to turn away one family. Next year, Carrie is stepping down from the lead of the breakfast but Jeff & Jenn Vanderkuur agreed to take over. One suggestion is that possible vendors should be contacted earlier as summer is a busy time and that may help more plan to attend. Next year we'll also need 2 boxes of gluten free pancake mix and some GF sausages. Jeff added that Wood/Bamboo utensils are now easier to get than plastic ones - which is good. Four FIRA folks took the food handler course at the Curling Club in September, we just need at least 1 of them to attend the breakfast and we just need new copies of their certificates for record with the Health Unit. Sue Mason, Cindy Woodrow, Dave & Dianne Chevrefils - thank you for taking the course!

~ **Pig Roast** - Oct 1 - Cindy reported that everything is all set and we have sold out! The cost for the pig may be \$20 more than last year. Roasting will start at noon and set up at 10am for the tent & inside tables.

~ **Club 200** - update will come from Bill or Graham for reporting at the AGM.

~ **Crafts** - Dianne can update us at the AGM

Activities/other committee updates

~ **Board Activity Coordinator** - Carrie

* Fitness groups (Outdoor walking / Line Dancing, Zumba (still on hold), Walking DVD, Indoor walking

* Games - Bid Euchre, Mahjong & Cribbage night. We are open if anyone else has ideas for additional games.

* Darts - have resumed on Friday's from 4-6!

* Crafts - Dianne can update us at the AGM

~ **Social Event Coordinator**

* Both Lynn Yake & Irene Odell are stepping down as our coordinators. We are looking for volunteers for this position.

* Summer Happy hours: Five members hosted in their homes every other Thursday this past summer. Thanks to our hosts!!

* Bonfires - hope to have this winter, maybe one on October 11th.

* Potlucks - instead of monthly potlucks, we are going to see how Winter Happy Hour events are attended. Potlucks can happen whenever the situation arises.

- * Winter Happy Hours with special events continue. On October 11th - planning on a Corn Hole Tourney Happy Hours 4-6pm with Verburgs, Woodrows, DiFrancescos and Bishops.
- * Harvest Lunch 11am - 3pm October 11th. Dianne
- * Chainsaw safety session - Cindy coordinating with Mark Snell for possibly January 6.
- * Defibrillator / CPR course - Carrie: A note was forwarded to me by Donna Smith from the Haliburton County Paramedic Service. They are currently understaffed and lacking a CPR certified instructor. We are waiting to hear further information. It was asked if Donna can teach us? It is possible to hire someone for like \$30/person.

New Business

~ **Clubhouse monthly cleaner:** The Board agree with Bill's proposal to give our Clubhouse cleaner, Kendra, a Christmas bonus of \$40 and a monthly raise from \$60 to \$65. Kendra has been very reliable, does a good job and it would be difficult to replace her. Joe made a motion for approval, Jeff seconded and it was carried.

~ **Snow plowing** - Dan has agreed to plow again. We usually give him gift cards at Christmas in thanks. We are very grateful to Dan. In addition to free membership, the board agreed to give him Canadian Tire gift cards in the same amount as last year and Joe will pick it up.

~ **Starlink** - There is a deal right now where Starlink is charging \$199 for equipment as opposed to \$800. The monthly fee is \$160 per month. It is noted that our phone fee is going to go down and we may be able to drop the landline if we have a suitable alternative down the road which would save more toward the internet fee. After discussion, it was felt internet access would be a good benefit to members to have access at the clubhouse and open up other opportunities for activities as well and with our increase in membership our dues will cover the monthly cost. It was decided to propose it at the AGM. Subsequent to the meeting, we found out the \$199 offer expires Sept 30 so in a follow-up email with Board members it was decided to go forward with the purchase since we have 30 days to cancel. We will still discuss at the AGM to get the sentiment of the members.

~ **By-law changes**

- At the last AGM there was discussion to make some by-law changes and Irene Odell suggested we look at ONCA (Ontario Not For Profit Corporation Act) where the government is creating standards for all non-profit organizations.

- Cindy started looking at their information and noted that there is no ONCA “police” and our existing by-laws will be used if we do not do anything since at first review we appear to have what ONCA requires. **A governance committee could be formed to ensure complete compliance to ONCA - the grant committee will act on this also.**
- There is a 1-time fee of \$150 to be able to upload necessary documents if we are sure we qualify and pursue it.
- We are hoping to form a committee comprised of Jeff, Cindy, Joe and maybe Jack Russell. This will be a winter project.
- Also, our by-laws & the changes we are interested in making may be required for any Grant approval.
- A review of the by-law changes that were presented at the last General Meeting (June) are below.
- ~ Review of by-law discussion at last meeting:
- Reword the bylaws to change our obligation from having 4 mandatory meeting per year to 3. Meeting 1 would be in January or February for planning in the 1st quarter. Meeting 2 would be mid-year in May or June for updates, decisions on summer activities & fundraisers and improvement ideas. Meeting 3 would be the AGM in the fall. We can always add another meeting if necessary.
- The bylaw wording is restrictive and we would like to omit the requirement to having meetings on the 3rd Sunday. Meetings will be scheduled and announced by Executive at least 30 days in advance but subject to change if schedules require.
- Due to our struggle with obtaining volunteers for board positions, most especially the Vice President role, we would like to add wording to the bylaws which allows the current board to remain the same in a new year if we cannot fill roles that are open in a given year, subject to the current board members being willing to stay on. If no VP nomination is received by December 31 after exhausting all avenues, the existing board can opt to remain in place.
- ~ Open Board positions for 2024
- * We will accept nominations for Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer and Member-at-large at the AGM. If none are received, we will request the existing members stay on.

A motion was made to adjourn and seconded