

DRAFT Minutes
Friends of Presqu'ile Park
36th
Annual General Meeting
June 8, 2024

The chair called the meeting of the Friends of Presqu'ile Park to order by welcoming the attendees. The parliamentarian confirmed we met the quorum requirements of 15 members to conduct business, as 42 members were present. The Chair recognized the traditional keepers of this land and specifically our neighbours of the Alderville First Nation, with a formal territorial acknowledgement.

Agenda

The chair reviewed the agenda and asked for acceptance or amendments. Moved to accept the agenda by Phil McRae, seconded by Doug Zinnicker: Carried

Opening Comments

The chair welcomed attendees and thanked them for attending the meeting and expressed the hope that they would find this General Meeting informative. This is the Friends 36th Anniversary. Thirty-six years of providing volunteer assistance for park activities, providing funding for selected projects, promoting the objectives of the park and the Friends in the local area. That is a pretty good track record for this organization and one to be proud of. We started the year with seven Board of Directors, which is two short of a full Board. We added one more person to our Board in January. We are still in need of yet another person who would fill the position of

Corporate Secretary. We have posted the opportunity on Facebook and on our Web Site. A special thank you to Larry Paradis, who is retiring his director's position as his term is up. Yet another Board vacancy that needs to be filled. If you are interested in assisting us by serving on the board and would like more details, please make your name known to us. A special thanks to volunteers Joan Selwood, Janine McClintock and Bev Cook for the invaluable support they have given to the board and to the chair personally, over the past year and to the Park's Kristen Osborne for helping to develop this Power Point presentation.

Minutes of 2023 Friends AGM June 1, 2023

The chair advised that the 2023 AGM minutes were posted on the Friends website and hoped that everyone had taken the opportunity to review them. He asked for amendments to the minutes. It was moved by Bjorn Jacobsen and seconded by Don Davis that the minutes be accepted : Carried

Greetings from the Municipality of Brighton

The Chair introduced mayor Brian Ostrander, who brought greetings from the town of Brighton. Brian thanked the Friends for all the work they had done and noted that he had been kept up to date about Friends activities through Bev Cook's articles in the local Beacon magazine.

2023 Accomplishments and 2024 Plans

Communications

We produced a new brochure last year to distribute amongst campers, park visitors & the local community. Posters were developed and distributed for the park's display boards, advertising the BBQ, Gift Shop, Bursary Program & the Memorial Tree Planting. We had a minimum of three posts per week on Facebook, consisting of a mixture of events promotion, park announcements, nature stories and pictures. Our posts reached over 52,000 people compared to 39,000 last year. We currently stand at 1,810 Facebook followers (up 350 from the previous year) and 718 Instagram followers (up 43 from the previous year). We cross-promoted our social media posts to other Social

Media pages deemed appropriate. We will continue this activity in 2024. We produced a Spring & Fall newsletter promoting the Friends and park activity. We will continue this activity in 2024. There were interviews regarding the Friends Organization and advertising & promoting special events. The Park Tabloid included several pages about the Friends of Presqu'ile. The five-page section is an excellent read on who we are and what we do. We promoted Waterfowl Weekend, Warblers & Whimbrels, Monarch & Migrants to local media outlets including interviews as requested. We spoke to outside service clubs and groups as requested. We gave presentations to Rotary & PROBUS clubs. We plan to continue this activity in 2024. Bev Cook has been submitting articles and photos quarterly for the Beacon magazine. The website is doing what it should do. That is to say, we are seeing close to 53,000 visits to our website vs 42,000 last year. The most popular searches were the Marsh Boardwalk & the Student Bursary. Again, a big thanks to Janine McClintock, who updates our website on a continuous basis, to keep it fresh.

Photographs

Bjorn Jacobsen, a Director on the Board, who serves as the V.P. , is our photographer. Bjorn captures those smiling faces at the Friends' events for social media and website promotions.

Education

Student Bursaries

The \$3,000 J. Beverlie Cook Career Bursary was awarded to summer student and staff member Eryn Barton, who expressed an interest in a career with Ontario Parks. We received a good number of self nominations for this \$3000 bursary. The \$1,000 Staff Bursary was awarded to summer student staff member Ida MacKey. Ida was recognized for special and outstanding service to the public, based on nominations from the public. The Bursary program continues unchanged in 2024.

Community Outreach

We again promoted the use of Kids & Nature videos to teachers and libraries. Our Education volunteer Cindy Richards continues to make trips to the Brighton Library to educate young people on the importance of taking care of the environment.

Discovery Staffing

We supported three, 6-week spring positions in 2023. These students assisted with setting up the Nature Centre and Lighthouse Centre as well as assisting with school programs. For the 2024 season, we will be supporting two 6-week spring positions as well as supporting the 16-week Nature Centre Coordinator position. This year our Nature Centre Coordinator is Emma, she worked on the Discovery team last year and recently graduated from Trent University.

Environment

Common Tern Research

We have financially supported this study for over 10 years & will continue to do so in 2024. Expansion of the Protective Grid System is working. It has been our most successful year to date with 242 nests and 350 chicks fledged. We are privileged here today, to have Dr Jennifer Arnold amongst us. Jennifer is a Professor of Biology at Penn State U and an Adjunct Research Professor at Cornell University. Dr Arnold's primary area of research is the conservation of long-lived waterbirds. For the past 17 years, her collaborative work with Dr Stephen Oswald, has focussed on understanding the ecology of declining populations, of inland breeding Common Terns and developing management strategies to mitigate declines. Please give a warm welcome to Jennifer Arnold.

Jennifer's Presentation:

Good morning! Thanks for inviting me and for all the support the Friends have provided for Common Terns over the past 17 years! I'm here today with Steve Oswald my partner in Common Tern Conservation.

Some of you have been with us for the long-haul and some of you are new to the Common Tern story, so today I'm going to give you a brief introduction to the Common Tern, their overall status and then talk briefly about our success at Presqu'ile. I only have a few minutes here today, but for anyone who is interested, on June 29th, I'll be giving a longer talk right here in the amphitheater. We've learned so much over the years and this is just one small part of it, so please come and hear about tern conservation and how the work at Presqu'ile is making a difference for tern conservation both here and throughout inland North America.

Common Terns are long-lived, colonial nesting waterbirds. They breed in the northern hemisphere and winter in the southern hemisphere. They eat fish and breed once per year. They typically lay 3 eggs and it takes about 2 months for terns to lay eggs and produce chicks that are able to fly and prepare for migration to the wintering grounds. Terns have been recorded as old as 33 years old and generally being breeding around age 3. Although we have recorded them breeding younger here, but that's a story for another day. In inland North America, Common Terns are experiencing severe and frightening declines. For example, the 2023 census of waterbirds in the Canadian Great Lakes shows a 40% decline in just 10 years and that's on top of the 50 years of decline we were already aware of. Declines are worse in some areas. In the large Manitoba Lakes, declines were nearly 70% from 1990s to 2012 and then an additional 38% from 2012 to 2017 - 30% of birds that were there before. The general picture for common terns in inland North America is grim.

But here at Presqu'île thanks to the support of all of you in the Friends (especially Phil and Bev), Rob, Tom, the park biodiversity staff (past and present, the park education staff, etc. - the terns are doing great! And it's all due to these grids or tern fortresses as I like to call them. These are walled structures with wires over the top that allow terns to move in and out and exclude other predators.

So, many of you were here from 2008 to 2012 and heard our reports year after year about the state of our Common Terns at Presqu'île. Nest failure, year after year, predation, raising very few young.

And you were here from 2013-2018 when we started testing the predator exclusion grids which at first met with limited success, but then were designed to be better and better at keeping out predators.

Then in 2019 we had a boom year; we'd finally found the perfect design for the grids. But in 2020 COVID hit, and we couldn't be in the colony every day like we were before. We always came, but for a couple of years, it was just for a few weeks during key times in the season, but we continued to work daily with park staff through the year to make sure the terns were safe. The Park Biodiversity Team stepped in when we couldn't and took over grid construction and day-to-day colony work continually expanding the grids and making sure the terns were safe. Now that borders are open again and we can all travel freely, we are continuing to work collaboratively to ensure success for the terns.

And this is what our joint success story looks like:

Last year the park had 241 nests and produced over 370 chicks that survived to leave the island. In the last 2 years, we've produced more chicks than all the years in the past decade combined! (around 600 chicks). This year we already have 222 nests laid and we are only in what we call the first wave of nesting, so knock on wood, there is more to come. We've banded 181 chicks and *Presqu'ile is the one place in inland North America where terns are thriving*. They say it takes a village and this could never have happened without the Presqu'ile Village!!

We've also had some great publicity this year for Presqu'ile and the terns including to cover articles. One in Ontario Birds and one in Ontario Nature. Both of these are available online if you want to check them out. This is just such a small part of the Common Tern story, so if you are interested, I urge you to come to the talk on the 29th. There are some truly remarkable things about our terns here. How much do you think they sleep for example...I won't tell you but ponder it and I'll have the answer on the 29th.

Habitat Regeneration/Park Nursery

We support the park nursery both financially and with volunteers when required. Seeds and acorns are collected in the Fall for Spring planting. White Pine, White Birch and White Cedar are on the Park's radar for regeneration. Five beds 4' x 48', were prepared for Spring Planting. We will continue to support this activity this year.

Tree Planting

This reforestation activity is done in the fall, by park staff, hired by the Friends, and Friends' volunteers. Over 300 trees were planted in High Bluff and Hidden Valley campgrounds along with the Day Use and Lighthouse areas. We will continue to support this activity this year.

Invasive Species Removal

This project is one that the Park looks to the future as gaining traction. The Friends support this activity financially and with volunteers. We removed Buckthorn from the Group Campground and treated stumps with Roundup. Removal of Scots Pine from the Pannes was also undertaken. Other targeted Species in future include Dog Strangling Vine, Phragmites, Garlic Mustard, and others. In mid-April we applied for an Invasive Species Action Fund Grant (ISAF), asking for matching funds to hire two additional workers, and for some money for equipment and signage.

Bird Program

This project supports two bird related programs. The Winter Bird-Feeding Station in the Camp Office Parking Lot along with Bird Banding Demonstration being run by licensed volunteers on the spring and fall Special Event weekends. We also financially support new bird feeders, which we will be purchasing in 2024, and bird seed when required.

Operations

BBQ Area

A propane cage was installed next to the BBQ shed. It was deemed necessary to have storage of propane tanks outside, not inside of sheds. A shed that previously held park items was emptied and the BBQ Team was given access to store more of their BBQ items. The team appreciates the added space.

Picnic Table Construction

The park appreciates our efforts in constructing new picnic tables. The campground needed 40 new picnic tables last year. We will continue this activity in 2024 when called upon, it seems to be a fun construction event.

Trail Maintenance/Monitors

Trail maintenance went well the past year. Volunteers are scheduled to walk the trails, clean up small problems as required and notify the park of any major problems. The operations team saw 50% new volunteers offering up their time. We will continue this activity in 2024, the work required means it is never ending.

Boardwalks

After the storm of Christmas 2022, lots of work needed to be done on the boardwalks throughout 2023, including replacing some sections. Boardwalk maintenance is never ending and will continue this year. As a matter of fact, we've already removed some graffiti from the Jobs Trail Boardwalk.

Miscellaneous Projects

We replaced the Camp Permit Return Receptacle at the Camp Office this past year. This year we had to find a new storage shed for our signs and tools. The Board gave approval for the purchase of this shed, located in the Park's maintenance yard. The shed still needed interior walls to be installed and a fresh coat of paint, which now has been done.

Audrey's Place on the Marsh Boardwalk - this deck is used for school group educational programs and the public uses it as a rest spot when hiking. The current deck has no roof, thus no shade. The construction of a partial roof over the deck will allow students, the public and staff, a place to get out of the sun or rain while utilizing this deck. The Park is to seek quotes for material and possible contractors, although this could be a volunteer project. Amphitheatre - items such as projection screen and speakers/sound system are showing their age. Upgrades to modernize would be of value and beneficial. The presentation of educational programs i.e. Discovery Programs, History Weekend, is aligned with the Friends Vision and Mission Objectives, in support of education. Plus, we are welcome to use the Amphitheatre for our AGMs each Spring. Upgrades are being explored.

Operations Coordinator

This year's challenge isfinding a new Larry! As Larry states "the position is very rewarding serving on the Board as well as being the Chair of the Operational Committee. So, if there is a new Larry out there, we'd love to hear from you.

Fundraising

Memorial Tree Planting

This continues to be a very successful program. Twenty-one memorial trees were planted in April of last year. Thirteen trees were planted this past October. For those unaware of the planting area, it is on the grass island between the residential road and the entrance to the campgrounds. The small trees that are planted are currently fenced in. We have continued this activity into this year.

BBQ

Bob Engley and his team of enthusiastic volunteers offer hot dogs, hamburgers, sausages, peameal bacon sandwiches, drinks and even cookies on Saturdays in July and August and at special events like Waterfowl and Warblers & Whimbrels weekends. The BBQ has proved to be very popular with campers & park visitors. This activity will continue in 2024.

Raffle

Last year we ran a raffle named "Paddling Around the Waters of Presqu'ile". Prizes included a Canoe, a Paddle Board and inflatable Kayak plus 2024 Park Passes to each winner. Close to 1,800 tickets were sold. 1st Prize was won

by Alex Miller from Bowmanville. 2nd Prize was won by Kennedy Laufman from Beamsville & 3rd Prize went to Laura D from Port Perry. Due to last year's success, we are again having a raffle this year. This year's Raffle is named "Let's Go Camping". A big thank you to Wayne Meyers our Raffle Co-ordinator.

Lighthouse Gift Shop

We were up and running the Gift Shop four days a week this past year. The Gift Shop is a key revenue stream for the Friends with sales exceeding \$42,000. 2024 will showcase many new items such as an increase of art being displayed in our Art Gallery located next to the Gift Shop. Both the Gift Shop and Art Gallery were given a fresh coat of paint with new flooring being installed in the Gallery. The Gift Shop received its new flooring last year. We look forward to you all stopping by this summer in the hope of making a purchase.

Donations

Donations to our Environmental Fund and our General Fund are always appreciated. We received several bequest donations last year. **A bequest is a gift made to a nonprofit organization as part of a donor's will.** It can include Donations to our Environmental Fund and our General Fund are always appreciated. We monetary assets, or other valuable items. Bequests are usually a donor's way of leaving a legacy and ensuring that the organization receives continued support. Bequests can be of any size, big or small, and can be gifted from the donor's estate after their passing. Something to consider when asking, how can I help.

Volunteers

Who are the Volunteers?

Trail Monitors who monitor 9 trails throughout the park. Volunteers who assist with our biodiversity Projects like Nursery Work, Planting, Removal of Invasive Species. The Barbeque Team. Assisting in the Nature Centre, Lighthouse Centre, Raffle Ticket Sales, Gift Shop. Operations Team with Construction and Maintenance. Committee Teams and of course, The Board of Directors. Thank you all.

Friends 35th Anniversary

We supported this fun event last year by paying for the Big Band and

complimentary cupcakes. Those who attended had a great time listening and even dancing to a few tunes. We've decided that it was a worthwhile, fun event to do again this year under the label "Party in The Park". Mark your calendars for Sat July 20th @ 7 p.m. right here at the Amphitheater.

Volunteer Appreciation Day

This was held in early fall of last year. It was well attended with 45 volunteers coming out to be thanked, fed and to receive a token of appreciation for all the hours they put in last season. As we know, volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization. We look forward to your continued support this year. This appreciation event will again be done this fall.

Grants and Strategic Planning

In 2023 we received two grants from Canada Summer Jobs for a Nature Interpreter and a Lighthouse Interpreter. For 2024 we only received one grant to fund the Lighthouse Interpreter.

We initiated a School Bus Transportation grant program to enable local schools to participate in environmental education programs in the park. Five local schools were chosen for the grant.

We have developed a three-year plan to map and manage invasive plants in the park and we have applied for two invasive species control grants (clearing the pannes and combatting phragmites)

We are having discussions with foresters at Ontario's 50 million trees program about beginning reforestation in some areas decimated by the emerald ash borer.

We are having discussions with Ontario Parks about two projects. The first involves species at risk and will entail more turtle fencing and road underpass near Beach 1.

The second is a longer-term capital project, that proposes a four-season, multi-purpose building which will house the park store/concessions, a revamped Nature Centre, and a small classroom/conference centre, where events like Christmas at Presqu'île can be held.

And that, in a nutshell fellow member, is what we have been doing the past year & what we intend to do this year.

Bylaw Amendments

Next on the Agenda is our Bylaw Amendments. The chair called on Bev Cook to address the subject matter. Bev Cook discussed changes to the Friends Bylaws as follows:

Nobody wants to re-write their bylaws. This was forced upon us. Changes to the Ontario Not-for-Profit Corporations Act has meant every Ontario registered non-profit and charity has had to Amend their by-laws and apply for a new Letter Patent. The deadline is October 2024.

We tackled this by creating a small task force, researched what was involved and attended workshops. We decided we didn't have the time or volunteer resources to do this while still doing our important Mission-related work. We hired an Ottawa-based Association Management Company with expertise in this area and they did the heavy lifting, with the hands-on support from Bev and Terry. These are days of reviewing by-laws that I will never get back!! They have assured us that our by-laws are now compliant. We need you to approve them so we can file them and move on.

In a nutshell – not much has changed! I won't put you to sleep going over the little details. Primarily changes involve housekeeping and are extensively re-organized. The best change is a Table of Contents . One can actually quickly locate things now – YAY!

As by-laws go, the Friends by-laws were pretty good, and we kept it pretty simple. There were a few things that didn't need to be in by-laws like the AGM Agenda, Committee Business, Keeping Records, and Duties of an Executive Director. These should be covered by Policies.

Some things are covered by the Act and no By-law is required. For example, the powers of the Board, the minimum age of Directors and bringing new business to a General Meeting. New business can't be voted on without advising members first, so another meeting is needed.

You will wonder what is new. The minimum number of directors is 3. The eligibility and rights of members is outlined. There is a dispute resolution process, the power to make banking arrangements and accessing to annual

financial statements are now covered.

Members were asked if they had any questions. There were none.

The chair asked for a motion to accept the revised bylaws. It was moved by Wayne Meyers and seconded by Chris McIvor that the revised bylaws be accepted: Carried

2023 Financial Statements

The next on the agenda was the Accountant Reviewed Financial Statement for December 31, 2023. At this time the chair recognizes Linda Alkenbrack's contribution to the board as Treasurer and for developing Financial Statements. She is able to advise the Board, in laymen terms, how the finances are calculated, with easy-to-read, Income Statements and Balance Sheets, on a monthly basis. Thank you, Linda. A “Review” of our Financial Statement has been conducted by Accountants Welch LLP. The Financial Statement as “Reviewed”, has been accepted by the Board. The Financial Statement was posted on our website and the chair expressed the hope that everyone had taken the opportunity to review it. The chair then highlighted the areas of interest. Page # 4 of the Financial Statement (Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets) tells the story. Our revenue of \$54,677 was greater than our expenses of \$39,476 by \$15,201. As a comparison to last year, the net revenue was greater by \$13,644. The market value of our investments was up, year over year by \$5,413.00. We continue to be in a strong financial position with net assets of \$207,950. The 25th Anniversary Fund, assists the Board in determining the required funds to allocate towards environmental initiatives in the coming fiscal year. For 2023 it was \$ 8,233. For this fiscal year 2024 it will reflect \$9,131. The Board in the past, has adhered to this spending and often times allocates more money based on the project requirements for a successful completion.

It was moved by Phil McRae and seconded by Bjorn Jacobsen that the Financial Statement be accepted as presented: Carried

The chair then put forth a motion to appoint Accountants Welch LLP for the fiscal 2024 review. This motion was seconded by Larry Paradis: Carried.

Park Update

Kristen Osborne - Chief Park Naturalist | Presqu'ile – Ontario

Parks:

In 2023 the park was still seeing increased visitation and continued to be busy for camping and day use. For 2024 the park is expecting a busy season, with lots of continued interest within the park from many different user groups.

A major event for 2023 was the installation of the cupola on the lighthouse, in partnership with the Presqu'ile Point Lighthouse Preservation Society. In 2023 the endangered Piping Plovers successfully raised 3 chicks on the beach. This year there is another nest with babies expected to hatch in the next few weeks.

This season the park has a new Senior Clerk- Andrea, and a Revenue Clerk - Frankie, who you may see throughout the summer. The park would like to thank the Friends volunteers for their monetary donations and their continued support through their volunteer hours.

Board of Directors

Retiring Board Member - Larry Paradis

The chair thanked Larry, for his dedication to the board. Larry's insight & contributions to operational matters and other board details has been very much appreciated over his two terms.

Parliamentarian Bev Cook introduced the incumbents:

- Linda Alkenbrack
- Terry Buchkowsky
- Phil McRae
- Wayne Meyers
- Bjorn Jakobsen
- Michelle Buchkowsky

and nominee

- Dan Riggs

Bev asked three times for additional nominees. No further names were

proposed.

Election

Proposed Slate – Board of Directors 2024 – 25

- Linda Alkenbrack - Treasurer
- Bjorn Jakobsen – Vice President
- Terry Buchkowsky – Chair
- Phil McRae
- Wayne Meyers
- Michelle Buchkowsky
- Dan Riggs

It was moved by Ted Cook and seconded by Janet Zinnicker that the proposed slate be elected. Carried

The chair indicated that following the election of the Friends 36th board of directors it was an appropriate time to name and recognize the original board members.

- John Cole
- Elizabeth Chatten
- Margaret Jean Bain
- Glenn Spence
- Jane Irvine (nee Law)
- Nick Quickert

The chair thanked them for establishing this wonderful organization that has given so much to the park in the areas of Education, the Environment and Infrastructure.

Awards

The John Cole Award, named in honour of our first Board Chair, is given to the Volunteer of the Year. The Board of Directors has the difficult task of selecting one volunteer from the many deserving candidates. Our Volunteer of the Year is to be a shining example of the values of our organization and his or her service to the Friends organization. This year's winner has gotten his hands and boots dirty many times, not only this year, but years in the past.

The chair called **Larry Paradis** forward to accept his award and have a photo taken, for our website. The chair read the “tree sculpture” information

Questions

Before the closing remarks to today’s meeting, the chair asked if there were any questions about what had been presented or what the future holds for this organization. No questions were asked

Closing Remarks

The chair advised that he would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for attending the meeting and taking an active role in the 36th Friends AGM. He hoped the AGM had been both meaningful and informative, for them, and that they would continue to support the Friends as members and volunteers.

Motion To Adjourn

It was then moved by Phil McRae that the meeting be adjourned.

Lunch

All attendees were treated to a box lunch following the meeting.

(Revised June 26, 2024)