

**The Friends of Presqu'ile Park
33rd Annual General Meeting
Draft Minutes
June 17, 2021**

Video Conference -due to COVID restrictions

Board Chair Christine McIvor called the meeting to order at 10:10 am. Parliamentarian Bev Cook declared a quorum with 29 voting members participating in the video conference.

The Corporation Act requires us to have an AGM within 6 months of the fiscal year end, December 31st. With the onset of COVID-19 in 2020, not for profit organizations were given approval to extend that period. In our case that allowed for the 2020 AGM to be held in September. This same extension was not given this year.

Approval of the Agenda - Moved by Bev Cook and seconded by Jenny Alker that the agenda be approved as presented. Carried.

Opening Comments - The Chair reiterated the vision for the Friends which guides the organization. *"The Friends view Presqu'ile Provincial Park as a valued and irreplaceable asset that should provide learning, recreational and conservation opportunities for all. We are an organization that believes above all that the natural heritage of this unique area must be preserved and protected for future generations to enjoy."*

Minutes of Previous Meeting - September 10, 2020 - It was moved by Phil McRae and seconded by Don Davis that the minutes as published be approved. Carried.

Review of Activities in 2020.

2020 was a time unlike any other in our 33-year history.

The impacts were immediate:

- Cancellation of education programs Kids 'N Nature and Presqu'ile to You.
- Closure of the Lighthouse Interpretive Centre and The Friends Lighthouse Gift Shop.
- Cancellation of fundraising events - BBQs, Raffles, Christmas at Presqu'ile.
- All Special Park events were cancelled
- Volunteer roles in support of the Park were cancelled or restricted.
- Board meetings were no longer in person.

However, there were some limited achievements in 2020:

Raise The Marsh Boardwalk-Donations to the Raise the Marsh Boardwalk Campaign exceeded our target, allowing us to begin the necessary repairs to the Boardwalk. In September the Friends volunteer crew elevated over 1,000 feet of the boardwalk using jacks. Unfortunately, there was greater damage than expected. With COVID restrictions, the use of Friends volunteers to complete the task was not allowed. Park Staff worked over the winter continuing the work of upgrading.

Memorial Tree Project - Launched in October 2020, the Memorial Tree Program allows an opportunity for individuals or groups to help in the reforestation efforts of the Park and to honour someone special, to remember a loved one, or to mark a milestone event. The program continues to grow in popularity with over 60 trees donated to date. Christine extended appreciation to Phil McRae and Don Tyerman for all their work in making the Memorial Tree Program a success.

Communications -The Friends Facebook page was launched in May 2020 and now has over 750 followers. Numbers continue to increase thanks to the creativity and regular updating of the site by Janine McClintock, Website Administrator. Bev Cook and the Communications Committee keep membership informed through regular e-newsletters and "Latest News" articles posted to the website.

Common Tern Project- In 2020, the Friends provided ongoing funding for the Common Tern Research and Management Project, enabling construction of new grids to protect chicks. In 2020, 60-70 chicks were hatched.

Education Initiative -Cancellation of in person education programs allowed for the development of a plan for Kids 'n Nature Online projects, which are projected to go virtual in the fall of 2021. With funding secured from Canada Summer Jobs and Brian Todd Memorial Community Fund we can hire two students. The first video filming has been done will be online in the fall.

Butterfly Tagging- Don Davis once again continued the always popular and informative butterfly tagging project over the Labour Day weekend. Don recently reported that two of the tagged butterflies from Presqu'île made it all the way to Mexico.

Plans for 2021

In 2021, the organization continues to deal with the uncertainty of COVID 19. Given the need for social distancing requirements, the Board made the decision that the Lighthouse Gift Shop would not open this summer. The Board also regrettably decided to cancel Christmas at Presqu'île for yet another year. Activities resuming or planned in 2021:

- ✓ **BBQs** – Bob Engley and the BBQ Committee will begin the Saturday barbecues in the Park on June 26th located next to the amphitheater.
- ✓ **Raffle** –The 2021 Raffle Draw, managed by Board member Wayne Meyers, has been enhanced with prizes valued at \$3,500. Draw will take place on October 31, 2021. Raffle tickets can be purchased at the BBQs and at Park Place near the entrance to the Park. All information is on our website.
- ✓ **Fundraising Calendar** –A new fundraiser calendar was developed by a group of Friends volunteers who would have normally been involved in C@P activities. The calendar features photos by local photographers. Watch the website for more information.
- ✓ **Communications** - The Friends website will be updated, and navigation of the site made easier. We will continue with the quarterly e-newsletter that has been well received.
- ✓ **Education** - filming of videos for the online project should be completed by the end of July and will be posted on the website. Virtual outreach programs will be in local libraries this summer.
- ✓ **Ecology** - Memorial Tree Planting will take place on the weekend of October 16/17, 2021. A virtual memorial site has been set up to acknowledge and encourage future donations. We continue to support the Common Tern Research project. COVID restrictions may not allow for the normal researchers to attend this year, however we have increased support to employ a professional bird bander. Buckthorn removal is on the agenda for 2021.

Management and Governance

Oversight is a key role for the Board of Directors. We have developed an annual program plan and budget with risk analysis with a regular program review at Board meetings. Updated position descriptions have been written and approved for Officers and key positions on the Board. Our financial transactions are managed and reviewed by our Treasurer Linda Alkenbrack and Finance Chair Doreen Cable. In the fall, we are planning a Board Retreat to determine future directions for the organization in the light of the impact of COVID-19.

Financial Position at Year End December 31, 2020

The Chair summarized the financial results for the period ending December 31, 2020 and reviewed the reasons for the results. As of December 31st, the Friends of Presqu'île had an operating surplus of \$5,141 and net assets stood at \$191,141. This financial position is thanks in large part to a generous gift of shares from Audrey E. Wilson, the success of the Raise the Marsh Boardwalk campaign that exceeded its target and minimal program expenses. For the 2021 operating year, a deficit of \$30,000-\$35,000 is projected but the organization remains in a healthy financial position.

Financial Statements 2020

Year-end statements were posted in advance and have been accepted by the Board. They have been reviewed by external accountants (Welch LLP) for compliance as required by law. These are being presented today for your review and approval. They will be submitted to CRA for charitable status review and will be posted on our website and publicly available CRA website. The complete financial statement is posted on the Friends of Presqu'île website and available for public viewing.

Member and former Board Chair Steve Sinclair requested the opportunity to address the meeting regarding his concerns relating to the accounting of the 25th Anniversary Environmental Fund. He briefly explained the sources from which the fund is derived and indicated the amount of \$8,085 that should have been spent on environmental initiatives in 2020 compared to the \$3,459 in the statement, leaving a balance of \$4,500 sitting in the general fund. Steve recommended that a proper footnote be added to the financial statements and that a plan be developed in partnership with the Park to use the 2020 excess in funding for environmental initiatives with a reasonable time frame. The Chair responded that she appreciated his comments and those of any other members who have concerns and the issue will be addressed with our external accountants (Welch LLP).

Moved by Beverlie Cook, seconded by Linda Alkenbrack that the Financial Statements be approved as presented with the concerns from Steve Sinclair so noted. Motion carried.

Moved by Larry Paradis, seconded by Doreen Cable, that Welch LLP be appointed as the accountants for 2021 with remuneration to be set by the Board. Motion carried.

Park Update

2020 was a challenging year for Presqu'île Park staff. Park Superintendent, Rob Cunningham, noted that during 2020 and the winter of 2021 a record number of visitors was recorded, with a 50% increase in camping and a 150% increase in day use. In 2021, camping is up 100% over the already 50% increase in 2020. Spring has been busy with increased day use. The Park has hired 8 park wardens as well as interpreters for the Nature Centre Discovery program. The Lighthouse Visitor Centre and the Nature Centre are not expected to open. Despite negative comments, the new Day Use Reservation Program is working. In the Fall, four more roofed

accommodations (Prospector Tents) will be installed. There is zero availability for the other three sites until mid-September. Currently admission to the Park is free Monday to Thursday until Labour Day. The Nature Centre may be opened on a limited basis depending on COVID-19 guidelines. Although not officially open the staff are now working out of the new Park Office.

Trash is a real problem at the Park. People must become personally responsible for trash. Bring in take out.

Election of Board of Directors

The Chair acknowledged and thanked Don Gray retiring as Director. Don was a board member for 5 years and responsible for the website and technology, set up on computers, emails, security and other issues. Don was asked to take visual applause and wished all the best and thanked for his years of contributions. Christine also acknowledged Lori Cater who resigned mid-term. Lori with her HR background continued to stay involved as a volunteer and provided valuable input into the development of Board position descriptions.

For 2021, here are six incumbent directors - Linda Alkenbrack, Doreen Cable, Phil McRae, Christine McIvor, Wayne Myers, Larry Paradis. In addition, two new candidates were introduced - Lise Beauchamp and Cindy Anthony. As required, Parliamentarian Bev Cook asked 3 times if there were any nominations from the floor. There being no further nominations, the election was closed and, Lise Beauchamp and Cindy Anthony were declared elected.

Volunteer of the Year - John Cole Award

For 2020, the John Cole Award is presented to **Beverlie Cook**. Bev is well known for her dedication and commitment to the Friends. She joined the Board in 2014 and served in numerous capacities including Chair from 2017 to 2020. She was instrumental in development of the Bursary Program. She is a familiar face at various Friends and Park events. She is still actively volunteering as Chair of Communications. It is difficult to determine the hours Bev has given to the organization. She is admired and respected by other volunteers and Park staff alike.

Special Announcement

In recognition of Beverlie Cook's leadership, continued dedication to the Friends, her support of education and young people and her instrumental role in the development of the bursary program, the Board of Directors have approved renaming the Career Bursary to **The J. Beverlie Cook Career Bursary**. Bev was congratulated by Rob Cunningham, Park Superintendent and Rachel Windsor, Assistant Park Superintendent, who acknowledged how they appreciated working with a strong woman in a field normally dominated by men. Rachel expressed her appreciation for the support and mentorship she received from Bev when she arrived at the park

Questions and Answers and Comments

A question was asked about the status of the online store. When the Gift Shop was closed, the possibility of an online store was considered, with possible expansion to include local craftspeople. Unfortunately, technological issues and staff and volunteer resources made this too difficult. The idea may be deferred until the Fall on a more restrictive basis.

Bev thanked Christine for stepping into the role of Chair for 2020/2021 and shepherding us through a difficult time.

Adjournment - the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 am on motion made by Phil McRae.