



# MEETING MINUTES

**PURPOSE** – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

*NOT YET APPROVED*

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Date & Location: Friday September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025, Ross Ferry Fire Hall

Time: 6:00PM

Meeting called to order by: Lars Willum 6:13PM

**Board:** Lars Willum, Peter Kenyon, Joella Foulds, Nancy Cronin, Jennifer Daisley, Ross MacDonald, Andrew Walker

**Regrets:** Glenda MacAskill

In Attendance: **Community:** Graca & Bruce Hollett, Rod Cronin, Helen Batherson, Jim Foulds, Gerald D'Eon, Councilor Fraser Patterson, Kendra Dove, Barb Keylor

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The Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed members and guests. The Chair acknowledged and thanked board members and key volunteers for their contributions over the season, including support for insurance, operations, canteen, finance, membership, sponsorship, and compliance items.

### **ESTABLISH QUORUM:**

Quorum established 6:16PM.

### **ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA DRAFTED BY ANDREW WALKER:**

Nancy Cronin moved to accept the agenda.

Graca Hollett seconded.

Motion passed.

### **ANDREW WALKER READ THE MINUTES FROM THE 2024 AGM:**

Helen Batherson moved to approve the 2024 AGM minutes.

Nancy Cronin seconded.

Motion passed.

### **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES:**

#### **1) Traffic Safety: Speed Limit / Intersection Visibility**

Discussion held regarding the intersection/driveway safety near the park (blind corner, speed limits varying by direction, and turning left with trailers). The Chair reported that requests must go through the district traffic supervisor and signage changes require formal approval.

Key points discussed:

- Explore private signage (on private property, not on the roadway) to warn drivers (e.g., "Park Entrance – Slow Down," "Vehicles Entering/Exiting," etc.).
- Brush/branch cutting to improve visibility was supported, with discussion of doing this locally for safety.
- Continue pursuing engagement with relevant authorities; invite Steve McDonald to view the site in person.

Action Items:

- Draft wording/design for a private caution sign and confirm placement permission with adjacent landowners.
- Identify safe brush-cutting scope and responsible volunteers.

## 2) Signage: Ross Ferry Marine Park Directional Sign

Discussion on the potential to install a larger directional sign near the roadway, noting this may be possible on private land with landowner permission (setback mentioned as "10 feet").

Action Item:

- Explore feasibility, permissions, and a cost estimate for new signage.

## LARS WILLUM PREPARED, PRESENTED THE CHAIRS REPORT:

The Chair presented a written report summarizing park operations, volunteer support, visitor counts, canteen performance, sponsorship/grants, and strategic direction.

Key Highlights:

- Canada Day visitors: 850 (up ~100 vs. prior year)
- Labour Day visitors: 450 (down ~200 vs. prior year)
- June 26–Sept 1 recorded visitors: 2,951
- Boat slip/launch users recorded: 112
- Day visitors up ~50%, boat users up ~30%, Sunday canteen orders up ~50%
- Continued interest in improving accessibility and infrastructure based on strategic planning session.

Helen Batherson moved to approve the Chairs Report.

Rod Cronin seconded.

Motion passed.

## JENNIFER DAISLEY PREPARED, AND PRESENTED THE FINANCIAL REPORT:

Key figures stated:

- Starting year balance: \$18,867.11
- Donations & sponsorships: \$5,783 (noted ~+\$1,200 vs last year)
- Boat launch fees: \$520 (down vs last year)
- Canteen revenue breakdown discussed (Canada Day, Labour Day, summer Sundays)
- Total expenses stated: \$24,903.87
- Bank balance as of Sept 19: approximately \$29,863 (up 58%)

Discussion:

- Question raised regarding canteen profitability; clarified that canteen supplies were \$5,100 and profitability appears lower than last year, with possibility of late-season inventory sales affecting final results.
- Grants: reporting/close-out requirements generally sit with the grant applicant.
- Charitable status: discussion noted that maintaining status requires filing the T3010 Registered Charity Information Return and maintaining books/records.

Jennifer Daisley moved to approve the Financial Report.

Barb Keylor seconded.

Motion passed.

## **THE MEMBERSHIP & SPONSORSHIP COMMITTEE PREPARED AND PRESENTED AN UPDATE:**

Report delivered by committee members Nancy Cronin, Joella Foulds and Glenda MacAskill (absent at the time).

### Key Highlights:

- Sponsorship outreach completed; some donors provided cash contributions without requesting receipts.
- Some businesses prefer in-kind support (Home Depot and others referenced).
- Continued challenge recruiting volunteers despite membership growth.
- Membership growth figures shared:
  - 2023: 35 members
  - 2024: 45 members (+~30%)
  - 2025: 65 members (nearly doubled over two years)

### Discussion:

- Strong interest in replacing/modernizing sponsor signage at the park; suggestion to shift sponsor recognition toward digital recognition (website/Facebook) and clearer sponsorship tiers/benefits (plaques, recognition, etc.).

### Action Items:

- Develop sponsor tiers and benefits (including options beyond roadside sign).
- Review and propose new park signage strategy (welcome sign + sponsor recognition plan).

## **HELEN BATHERSON PREPARED, AND PRESENTED THE ROSS FERRY MARKET REPORT:**

### Key Highlights:

- Farmgate model adjusted; "Farmgate" wording dropped from promotions.
- Vendors consolidated primarily to the north side (Fire Hall etc.)
- 2025 vendors: 13 regular, 3 pop-up only.
- Pop-up markets we're incredibly successful when linked to major events at the Marine Park (Canada Day; August Long Weekend; Labour Day).
- Financial report pending until markets conclude; final report to be provided after season ends and for marketing grant close-out.

### Discussion:

- Low uptake on market coupon/voucher program (only a small number reimbursed).
- Discussion on measuring market economic impact; suggestion for optional/anonymous vendor survey or lightweight data collection (e.g., customer origin, license plates, attendance).

Joella Foulds moved to approve the Ross Ferry Market Report.

Barb Keylor seconded.

Motion passed.

## **NEW BUSINESS FROM THE COMMUNITY/BOARD:**

### **1) Five-Year Strategic Planning / Infrastructure & Accessibility**

Ross McDonald provided an update on grant development and planning initiatives, referencing a facilitated strategic planning session with John Hugh Edwards.

- Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund (SCCF) – Climate Adaptation Planning
  - a. Proposal submitted for Phase 1 planning study (approx. \$100,000, ~18 months).
  - b. Includes feasibility study, baseline climate risk assessment (storm surge, wind, fire, etc.), and community/stakeholder consultation (including Victoria County, province, transport, and Indigenous engagement).
  - c. Decision expected late September/early October 2025.
  - d. Letters of support referenced from: Fraser Patterson / Victoria County, Diane Timmons, Bras d'Or Lake Collaborative Environmental Planning Initiative, Atlantic Coastal Action Program, Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Region Association
  - e. Victoria County Capital Grant \$10,000 received as matching funds; stated as held "in trust" pending outcome of SCCF application.

### **2) Destination vs. Community Park Vision**

Discussion held on whether and how the park should evolve as a "destination," noting current visitation includes out-of-province plates and increased traffic, but infrastructure (washrooms, parking, septic/holding tanks etc) would need to scale responsibly. Consensus leaned toward protecting nature while improving accessibility and core amenities, with community consultation required before major changes.

### **3) Volunteer Recruitment (Younger Families)**

Suggestion raised to attend the local school advisory council meeting to recruit younger families and new volunteers.

Action Item:

- Assign a board representative to attend an upcoming SAC meeting and share volunteer opportunities.

### **4) Canteen Menu Feedback**

Discussion included interest in:

- Including sausages on Sunday menu (noting cost concerns)
- Potentially upgrading hot dogs (ballpark-style mentioned)

Action Item:

- Review menu options, pricing, and feasibility for next season.

### **5) Propane Theft – Update**

Brief update provided: perpetrators not identified; propane company writing off the tank. Replacement expected as a smaller tank (due to low consumption).

## 6) Memorial Plaques / “In Memoriam” Concept

Discussion regarding old memorial plaques removed from wharf lamp posts and ideas for a longer-term memorial feature:

- Option 1: “Memory wall” installation on side of building (with a sculpted candle/flame concept).
- Option 2 (preferred by several): A dedicated gazebo/quiet area with more permanent materials (bronze suggested) for remembrance.

Action Items:

- Bring memorial concept options back with rough design/costing for board review.
- Confirm policy considerations (eligibility, donation amounts, placement, maintenance).

## 7) Canada Day Programming & Sponsors

Acknowledged strong appreciation for children’s programming and kite activity and thanked all those involved. This activity resulted in gaining a new sponsor Hanks Farm who would like to donate flowers for children to plant on Canada Day.

## ELECTION OF DIRECTORS:

Fraser Patterson oversaw the election of Directors.

The nominating committee nominated Ross MacDonald and Peter Kenyon as Vice-Chair. There were no further nominations. Ross MacDonald and Peter Kenyon were acclaimed as Vice-Chair.

The nominating committee nominated Jennifer Daisley as Treasurer. There were no further nominations. Jennifer Daisley was acclaimed as Treasurer.

The nominating committee nominated Andrew Walker as Secretary. There were no further nominations. Andrew Walker was acclaimed as Secretary.

The nominating committee nominated Nancy Cronin as Volunteer Coordinator. There were no further nominations. Nancy Cronin was acclaimed as Volunteer Coordinator.

The nominating committee nominated Joella Foulds and Glenda MacAskill as Member at Large.

There were two new nominations added from the floor:

- Nancy Cronin nominated Kendra Dove as Member at Large.
- Joella Foulds nominated Barb Keylor as Member at Large.

Hearing no further nominations, Joella Foulds, Glenda MacAskill, Kendra Dove, Barb Keylor were elected as Member at Large.

***An all call for additional nominations was opened to the community and with no other offers of nomination, the Elections closed. At the close of the nominations, there remained a vacancy as Chair.***

**RECOGNITION/APPRECIATION:**

- A lifetime honorary family membership presented to Gerald D'Eon in recognition of longstanding support.
- Appreciation gift presented to Lars Willum for his incredible support as Chair over the last five years.

Jim Foulds motioned to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:23PM.