Minutes of the TLA "Annual General Meeting" 2024

The 93rd TLA AGM was held in person on Saturday, July 27, 2024 at Camp Wabun – on Island 981, Lake Temagami.

GREETINGS AND REMARKS:

President Nicole Brooker welcomed TLA members to the AGM and gave introductory remarks. She also provided updates on: the extension of the Headquarters land-use permit (to December 31, 2025); the demolition of the TLA building in 2025; the upcoming TLA members' survey; recent water-monitoring activities by TERAS; a Board discussion with TFN and TAA re: their "Notice of Jurisdiction"; and, other TLA initiatives (e.g., removal of abandoned snowmobile in the water of the NE Arm).

INTRODUCTION OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Nicole introduced the other Board Members in attendance (Terry Males, Paul Tamburro, Carol Lowery, and Tarik Muzaffar) and those who couldn't attend (Greg Goodman, Alec Morley, Rob Corcoran, and Diane Green), as well as new Board members whose terms begin on September 1, 2024: Lynn Buckham and Scot Paltrow (and Christopher Brooks – not in attendance due to illness).

Terry, Tarik, and Paul's terms end on August 31, 2024. Nicole thanked them for the considerable time and effort devoted to the Board of Directors on behalf of TLA members and the Temagami community.

QUORUM AND CALL TO ORDER:

48 voting members (and others) were in attendance, and 22 voting members were represented by proxies. After quorum was confirmed, Nicole called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

MOTIONS:

- A motion to approve the "Agenda" for the 2024 TLA Annual General Meeting was moved by Tim Richardson (Island 795), seconded by Liz Casper (Island 1059), and carried at 10:16 a.m.
- A motion to approve the "Minutes of the TLA Annual General Meeting 2023" was moved by Michael Bloomfield (Island 950), seconded by Brad Sablosky (Island 741), and carried at 10:17 a.m. There was no business arising from these minutes.

RESOLUTIONS:

Resolution 1: Paul Tamburro presented an overview of the 2023 financial statement (for Treasurer, Greg Goodman). Highlights included: a 3% drop in income compared to 2022 (e.g., from decreased VHF radio-fund contributions); the cost of demolition of the TLA HQ at a ~ $40,000+; and, the possible use of "Tenets" defence fund money, as Municipal protection isn't "iron clad". The motion to adopt "the Resolution respecting approval of the "2023 TLA financial statement" was made by Jim Dow (Island 1005), seconded by Pam Morgan (Island 1128), and carried at 10:24 a.m.

Paul also provided an update on the Municipal "Official Plan" (OP), which is being monitored by the TLA's "Planning and Municipal Affairs" committee and our planner, Tony Usher. The second draft of the OP will be released and discussed at a Council meeting on August 22, 2024, with a public "Open House" scheduled for the same day. A principal concern from the first draft is an appendix map showing parcels in the NE Arm that are identified incorrectly as areas of potential "residential development". They're actually old mining claims – so, MHBC (the municipal planners) will rectify this error in the second draft. Paul also mentioned the "Temagami Shoreline Clean-Up Challenge" as a good community outreach project.

Nicole has requested a copy of the second draft of the OP for distribution at least two weeks before the Council meeting and Open House. She also encouraged all members to submit comments to Council.

Resolution 2: The motion to adopt "the Resolution respecting approval of actions of the Directors and Officers since commencement of the 2023 TLA Annual General Meeting" was made by Val Hostetler (Island 49), seconded by John Russell (Island 1092), and carried at 10:34 a.m.

Resolution 3: The motion to adopt "the Resolution respecting approval of the TLA's "Articles of Incorporation" [formerly, "Letters Patent"] and "By-Laws" (amended: May 15, 2024) was made by Paul Tamburro (Island 676), seconded by Tim Richardson (Island 795), and carried at 10:35 a.m.

RECOGNITION OF TLA MEMBERS:

Nicole congratulated Allan Eustis and Marty Martelle for being selected as the 2023 "Members-of-the-Year". Both will receive complimentary, one-year, TLA memberships. Allan diligently monitors the

TLA Facebook page and makes postings frequently to provide information for members. Marty is the TLA's de facto IT person and has assisted with many technology issues (e.g., hosting the 2023 virtual AGM). He has also helped out in numerous other ways – especially during special events, such as the annual BBQ.

Carol Lowery spoke of the recent loss of TLA members and supporters who assisted the Association in various roles over the years. They include: Noel Ramey, Mathew Hartman, Bradford Hall, Linda Whyte, Alan Bangay, Rocco Tamburro, Benjamin Foster, John Hyde, Duff Shardelow, Kay Piper, Rick Muhlhauser, Alan Hyde, Stan Casper, Mrs. Barbara Scovil, and Lyndsy Manderstrom. All will be missed.

TEMAGAMI TAX AND BUDGET ANALYSIS:

TLA Board member, Tarik Muzaffar (Island 1119), presented an analysis of Temagami Municipal taxation and budget issues – focussing on 2023 Temagami consolidated revenue, 2023 Lake-Temagami-related financial items, conclusions for Lake Temagami residents, and key financial topics for discussion. It's unlikely that taxes will be reduced, but Lake residents can request better allocation of the money that we pay in property taxes (approximately $2 million) in terms of the services we receive. There is a minor expense burden imposed on the Municipality by Lake Temagami residents (~ $176,000) – primarily from operating the Lake Temagami Transfer Station and maintaining the Access Road. Further, Lake Temagami residents contribute at least 55.6% of Municipal tax revenues and, therefore, have a strong position to advocate for budget provisions that benefit us directly. Currently, the Lake Temagami Neighbourhood does not receive the services it deserves relative to the significant taxes it pays to the Municipality. Going forward, financial priorities for the Lake should include allocating more money for environmental initiatives, lake policing and security, extended hours for waste/recycling collection, and suitable maintenance of the Access Road. The bottom line is that we can have a win-win situation for both the Town and Lake residents.

Scot Paltrow added that Ontario is legislating the costs for collecting recycling to industry – which could remove these costs from Municipal responsibility.

QUESTION-AND-ANSWER SESSION + COMMENTS:

Comment by Ann Gardner (Island 765): TLA members should get, and increase the use of, VHF radios.

Comment by Jack Goodman (Island 352): Although there is some empathy for the financial issues faced by the Town, Lake residents pay a lot for schools, policing, etc. (without much direct benefit). There are, however, inequities in the costs for garbage disposal, as we are paying for this through both general taxes and "user/tipping" fees (with very poor hours offered at transfer stations). He suggested that the Municipality employ a "garbage boat" that would travel the Lake and pick up garbage directly from island properties.

Comment from Wendy Allen (Island 1024): She appreciates all of the services provided by the TLA.

Q. Is the mill rate for Lake properties the same as town properties? (Wendy Allen, Island 2024)

A. Tarik indicated that they were the same. He added that the mill rate can be changed by the Municipality, whereas the property values are determined by the provincial Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC). Although municipal taxes increased by 8% in 2023, Carol Lowery indicated the Temagami Council has instructed Municipal staff to prepare documentation to reflect another 6% rate increase for the 2024 budget. She added that the reason for this is the increase in fixed costs currently faced by the Municipality (i.e., schools, Au Chateau seniors' home, the District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board, the health unit, and policing) – which account for approximately 60 cents of every dollar collected through taxes.

Q. Is there anyone present at the AGM today who represents the Town? (Jack Goodman, Island 352)

A. Nicole said that Municipal representatives were not invited, so that TLA members could speak freely. She added that a list of recommendations would be presented to the Town Council, but reminded people that the Municipality has only 40 cents of every tax dollar for spending on non-mandatory items.

Comment from Paul Tamburro (Island 676): He indicated that although the mill rate for Temagami is average for a Northern Ontario town with less than 1,000 residents, the assessed value for local properties is approximately five times the average of other northern municipalities. Thus, we pay more taxes.

Comment from Tarik Muzaffar (Island 1119): He indicated that the findings from his presentation would be presented to the Municipal Council and that the focus would be on a productive discussion.

Q. Who pays for buoys and lights? (Brad Sablosky, Island 741)

A. Nicole said that municipal taxes pay for their upkeep.

Comment from Will Goodman (Island 352): He suggests that the Municipality bring in new businesses to create more revenue for the Town after the losses experienced from mine and lumber mill closures.

Comment from Tarik Muzaffar (Island 1119): They could add to the value of ecotourism initiatives.

Comment from Kelly Romans Bancroft (Island 1250): The spread of aquatic invasive species should be addressed by boat-washing stations in the Municipality. This could also be a revenue generator.

Comment from Nicole Brooker: To date, there has been no direct action from the Municipality to establish boat-washing stations. TLA Board member, Diane Green, has sent information to the Town and Temagami First Nation on related programs being implemented elsewhere in Canada and the U.S. The Marten River Fire Station, along with a site in the northern part of the Municipality of Temagami, might be good locations. Ontario is lagging behind other provinces in this respect, so the Temagami Regional Economic Development Corporation (EDC) Board of Directors (with good representation from the TLA and Lake Temagami) could make this a priority for their budget. Another option could include establishing a canoe-washing station (e.g., at the South Tetapaga River bridge on the Access Road). Currently, there are no safeguards to prevent the spread of Eurasian watermilfoil, invasive *Phragmites*, and the spiny waterflea into the backcountry.

Comment from Carol Lowery (Island 234): A new CAO/Treasurer (Laala Jahanshahloo) has been hired for the Municipality of Temagami. She has directed municipal staff to investigate the patch of invasive *Phragmites* along the Access Road. She also encourages taxpayers to voice their concerns (e.g., on taxation and environmental issues) along with suggestions about what the Town can do to address these issues. The Economic Development Board has now been approved by Council.

Q. Will the concerns discussed today be brought to Municipal Council? (Jack Goodman, Island 352)

A. Nicole said this would occur and encouraged Jack to attending Council meetings to present his concerns to Councillors directly.

Q. Will information provided to the Town regarding the tax and budget analysis move the Town to act? (Sean Murray, Island 820)

A. Tarik indicated that good preparation with solid data will be beneficial when approaching the Municipality regarding tax and budget matters. It can be presented as a win-win for future negotiations.

A. Terry Males (Island 49) again emphasized that a TLA delegation would be making a presentation on these issues to Council. He then outlined a list of the Board's "Priorities for Lake Temagami" (concerns re: health and safety, environmental issues, and invasive species), which would also be provided to Council.

Q. Large numbers of boats are being launched at the Access Road, along with numerous trailers left in parking areas. Can controls (e.g., fees for parking and boat launching) be implemented for non-taxpayers, and is there revenue-generating potential in this respect? (Chris Allen, Island 1024)

A. Tarik said that this might be a very good option for generating Municipal revenue.

Comment from Steve Casper (Island 1059): He sits on the Board of Directors of the EDC (which has not yet been incorporated). Unofficially included in a plan for the Access Road landing areas are charges for parking and boat launching, along with a boat-washing station. This will be managed by the Town and TFN, and he expects that an update on the plan will be available in a few months.

Comment from Brenda Ingle (Island 1197): Another water-quality issue is that pits for grey water must now be constructed on islands (using gravel and sand) and inspected (as is the case with septic systems).

Comment from Nicole Brooker (Island 663): She said that grey water from boats can be put into the Lake.

Comment from Ursula Stock (Island 820): She has noticed that the amount of foam along her shoreline has increased significantly over the last 30+ years (perhaps from phosphates, surfactants, and/or grey water). She encouraged the use of environmentally-friendly products and practices.

Comment from Tim Richardson (Island 795): Water-quality monitoring by Temagami Environmental Research and Stewardship / TERAS (and previously, the TLA) has included surveillance at over 45 sites on the Lake. Little change in phosphate levels has been discovered in recent years – even in the NE Arm. In fact, water quality over the past 40 years has remained "unbelievably unchanged". Sediment-sampling results will provide other detailed information in this regard. He added that 2024 water-quality-monitoring initiatives will occur over the Labour Day long week-end at 16 sites around the Lake.

Comment from Steve Pettersen (Island 965): He recommends using an incineration toilet – powered by electricity or propane. It's a bit expensive (~ $5,000), but worth the cost from an environmental standpoint.

Q. Do some of the TLA dues go towards TERAS? (Wendy Allen, Island 1024)

A. Nickie indicated that TERAS is it's own entity (separate from the TLA) and collects its own donations.

Comment from Wendy Allen (Island 1024): She suggested that all TLA members donate to TERAS.

Comment from Tim Richardson (Island 795): Donations from Canadians are tax deductible.

Q. How can the TLA negotiate effectively with the Municipality? (Scott Shardelow, Island 1127)

A. Tarik indicated that the TLA has to be clear in what it wants. He's not completely sure about what the Town wants – other than survival – so, the TLA should determine this, as well. He added that the Town needs other revenue streams and that some infrastructure may help in attracting more businesses and citizens.

Comment from Sean Murray (Island 820): We need a better understanding of the Town's current vision.

Comment from Ann Gardner (Island 765): There may be an opportunity for future mining opportunities in the Town of Cobalt – which could provide local jobs.

Comment from Tarik Muzaffar (Island 1119): He believes that the majority of any future mining activities in the Temagami area will be highly mechanized and will likely not result in many long-term jobs for people in the region.

Comment from Nicole Brooker (Island 663): The Town needs to engage in a new visioning exercise.

Comment from Paul Tamburro (Island 676): The Town should heed the conclusions of the strategic plan that it previously paid consultants ~ $60,000+ to produce (i.e., heavy industry is no longer feasible, and the focus should be on ecotourism) – but, was never adequately reviewed or implemented by Council.

Comment from Nicole Brooker (Island 663): Lake Temagami is the backbone of the Municipality and is keeping the community alive. Thus, we should receive value for our taxes. The Town would not exist without the Lake and its residents. She invited suggestions from AGM attendees re: communicating this.

Comment from Tarik Muzaffar (Island 1119): He thinks that the Municipality wants to be thriving and robust – so, it should study other similar, successful municipalities to become a magnet for visitors.

Comment from Paul Tamburro (Island 676): He suggested that 20 to 25% of our tax dollars could be returned in the form of services for Lake Temagami.

Comment from Tarik Muzaffar (Island 1119): He thought that Lake residents could also take over road maintenance and waste collection, and could make money for doing so by collecting user fees.

MOTION BY JACK GOODMAN:

The following motion was made by Jack Goodman (Island 352), seconded by Bob Shanks (Island 938), and carried at 11:58 a.m.

"Lake Temagami residents would like to see a more equitable allocation of the tax revenues collected from them in terms of the services they receive from the Municipality."

Comment from Carol Lowery (Island 234): Presentations can be made to Council at the beginning of each meeting. This can be done in person or by Zoom. In addition, questions regarding the content of each Council meeting can be made at the end of these sessions. She suggested that concerned members should attend and express their feelings directly to Council.

Comment from Brad Sablosky (Island 741): He thinks that it's important for Lake residents to spend money locally, when possible.

MOTION TO ADJOURN:

Nicole thanked Wabun for hosting the meeting and TLA members for attending. She also welcomed feedback about the AGM. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Brad Sablosky (Island 741), seconded by Tim Richardson (Island 795), and carried at 12:01 p.m.