



## **Lac Malaga Community Association Inc.**

### **Minutes of the Annual General Assembly Held in the Community Room at the Austin Town Hall May 22, 2022 at 9:30 am**

#### **1. Welcome and approval of the agenda**

The meeting started at 9:35 am with approximately 50 people present. The President, André Bergeron, called the meeting to order with a quorum of 30 voting members and one proxy. As David Tracy, Vice President & translator was absent, the members of the Board provided their reports in both languages.

Mr. Bergeron welcomed all to this meeting after a two-year absence, and as is the tradition at these meetings, he invited the Board and all those present to introduce themselves.

The President asked if there were any modifications to the agenda. There were none noted. The agenda was adopted as proposed by Ms. Myriane Baril (7), and seconded by Mr. Michel Julien (99).

#### **2. Adoption of the minutes of the 2021 General Assembly**

Due to the format of the minutes of last year (due to the pandemic) the proposals were adopted unanimously by electronic vote. Therefore, Mr. Bergeron did not request a vote for the adoption of the Board reports of 2021.

#### **3. President's Report**

Mr. Bergeron deferred to the other Board members to present their respective reports and he shared several other subjects of concern for the Board members.

#### **Changes on the Board**

In 2019, Mr. Bergeron underlined the need to renew the Board of Directors. Mr. Marcel Martineau took over as the road director in 2019 and Mrs. Anne Boissonneault replaced Mr. Jean Dumont last fall as director of the environment. She also volunteered to take care of communications and created a committee to help her. They have several achievements to their credit, including the "Guide to good neighbourliness" and the "Owner's Guide".

Mr. Bergeron confirmed that there would be an English version of the "Owner's Guide" following the request of several members. He noted that the burden of all translations done by the association rests with two people: David Tracy and Louise Bergeron. He appealed to everyone to help with the translation.

Mr. Bergeron thanked the three volunteers: David Malcom, Graham Weeks and Daniele Dumont.

Mr. Bergeron said he was happy to have been able to inject new blood into the Board and, as we will see at the end of the meeting, the Board members intend to continue to do so.

He also underlined that during the pandemic, the Board replaced almost all written communications with electronic communications. As we now have email addresses for almost all of the members, it is important to communicate any change of address to the following address: [lac-malaga@outlook.com](mailto:lac-malaga@outlook.com). This method makes it much easier for volunteers, while reducing costs, and allows information to be sent more rapidly.

## **Finances**

Mr. Bergeron underlined that despite the considerable increases in snow removal costs in recent years, i.e. 40% for the last contract plus 3% per year for the last two years, we were able to partly rebuild the reserves of the Association, thanks to the increase of dues that had been approved by the members. As the association is in the last year of the five-year snow removal contract, and given the increase in the cost of fuel, the Board expects a substantial increase in 2023, not only in snow removal costs but also in road maintenance. We need to be proactive and plan ahead.

## **4. Environment Report**

Ms. Boissonneault, Environment Director, introduced herself to the members and stated that she has been in her position for almost a year. As the environment is important to her, she agreed to join the team and take on the role on an interim basis.

She outlined the following objectives:

- Promote the protection in the natural state of the lake, its shoreline and the surrounding wooded areas;
- Monitor the evolution of the health of the lake;
- Inform and raise awareness about reforestation, in particular the shoreline;
- Encourage residents to have a septic tank that meets with municipal regulations;
- Promote eco-responsible actions and respect for the environment, including noise
- Follow up with the Municipality of Austin;
- Participate in RAPPEL training and stay informed of issues;
- Participate in various meetings within organizations related to the environment (RALMA, CCE of the Municipality of Austin);
- Develop and share environmental information.

She further underlined that in order to accomplish all of this, Mr. Marcel Martineau has also joined her. He sits on the Austin Environmental Advisory Committee (ECC) and has good knowledge in the field. Mr. Bergeron reminded members that Mr. Martineau who is on the Austin CCE as well as Mr. Patrice Crevier who is on the Planning Advisory Committee (CCU) are our eyes and our ears at the municipality on subjects of interest to our community.

## **Website**

Ms. Boissonneault also joined the Austin Neighbours Support Group (Voisins solidaires d'Austin), which encourages assistance with regards to activities between neighbours. As a project to get closer to her neighbours, she joined with two other members of the lake, Diane Séguin and Normand Bruneau, to create a website for the association. Currently, they have created the

structure and are working very hard to complete it. Annual site hosting costs are under \$200. For the coming year, the Communications Committee will focus on finalizing our website.

## **Communications**

Since the creation of the Communications Committee, Ms. Boissonneault has sent everyone a communication titled "A Friendly Reminder from the Lake Malaga Environment Committee" and, most recently, the "Short Guide to Good Neighbourliness". With the collaboration of Mrs. Diane Séguin and Mr. Normand Bruneau, the members received a few days ago the first "Owner's Guide", an essential reference tool to keep on hand.

## **Inventory of aquatic plants**

Many members have been wondering about the increase of aquatic plants in the lake. Last year, Mrs. Boissonneault, with the help of Mr. Martineau, Mr. and Mrs. Bergeron, completed a census of the plants along the edge of the lake to create a portrait giving an overview of the situation, allowing us to follow the evolution. A more detailed census by RAPPEL dates back to 2018. Their recommendation was to repeat it in five years. The Board inquired about having RAPPEL redo a new study this year by asking the Austin Green Fund to defray part of the costs.

As the lake is healthy (the best of Austin's lakes) according to RAPPEL, the Board decided to redo itself another census during the summer, in order to closely follow the evolution of the plants and to continue following the recommendations of RAPPEL. Volunteers are needed for this endeavour, please let us know if you are interested.

## **Questions :**

1. Mr. Michel Julien expressed concern and wonders if the lake is "old" because of the aquatic plants that are more and more present and invasive. He would like to know what can be done to preserve the future of the lake.
  - Mr. Martineau replied that the lake is not "old" and that the samples have been very good so far. We must be vigilant with regards to septic tanks and in maintaining the shoreline; two ways to maintain water quality.
2. Mr. Glenn Hewus asks if installing a dam at the outlet would maintain the level of the lake.
  - Mr. Martineau explained that it would require a permit from the Ministry of the Environment and that he would be surprised if such a permit were granted to us. The association does not want to go in this direction.
  - Mr. Bergeron explains in response to a question from Mr. Philippe Lussier, that since he has been at the lake for more than 20 years, he has not noticed anything other than a seasonal variation in the level, between spring and fall, of about six inches.
  - Mr. Claude Aquin intervenes by saying that he has a big rock in front of his house and that the level variation is minimal.
3. Mr. Noreau asks if the new road planned to create another exit to Lac des Sittelles will have an impact on our roadway.
  - M. Martineau explains that the CCE is following the file and that two exits are possible, either by Clark Road or Galvin Road; the planned connections would be far from Malaga

Road. Mr. Bergeron adds that they cannot connect to the Malaga Road, as the zoning was changed following a legal battle, several years ago, in order to protect Malaga Road.

4. Mr. Claude Aquin asks if the association inspects septic systems.

- M. Martineau replies that it is the responsibility of the municipality. He mentioned that the project to analyze the water outlet from weeping fields at Lac des Sittelles is a private project, carried out by volunteers.

5. Mr. Mario Robert has heard that there may be changes to Airbnb law.

- M. Bergeron explains that the government will now require municipalities to hold a referendum if they want to ban the short-term rental of principal residences. Municipalities, for their part, can modify the zoning to allow or prohibit the short-term rental of secondary residences. A request was recently made by residents of Crescent de l'Écureuil (development whose entrance is opposite Lake Malaga) to allow short-term rentals in this area. The municipality is aware of the association's position, which opposes any zoning change to allow for short-term rentals. The file is being followed very closely by the Board. He mentions that short-term rentals are currently only permitted along Highway 112 and in the Village of Austin.

## **5. Roadway Report**

### **Road Maintenance in 2020 and 2021**

Mr. Martineau reviewed the work carried out on the road over the past year: filling of holes (2 times), leveling and compacting of the road, reloading (10 loads of crushed stone), removal of rocks from the road (2020), removal of a culvert and digging of a ditch (2020), chipping of branches and cutting of vegetation in the ditches (2021).

This year, he is planning a budget of \$15,000. The wood-chipping at the end of May could require up to three days of work by Mr. Lacasse due to the unusual quantity of branches due in part to pruning by Hydro-Québec. He foresees a budget of \$3,000.

Road grading and compaction are scheduled for early June. Further, 10 loads of crushed stone are planned for the road at the end of the summer. Depending on the available budget, he also plans to dig some ditches. He asks the members to clean the ditches in front of their property by cutting the vegetation that interferes with the flow of water. This cleaning would reduce some costs.

Finally, a meeting with the contractor responsible for snow removal is scheduled soon. Following some complaints about the condition of the road in the spring, Mr. Martineau explained that the frost was very deep this winter and that the ground was impermeable in the spring, which caused the large number of holes in the road. The plugging of the holes could only be done after the thaw, when the water had dried up.

### **• RALMA (Group of Lake Associations of the Municipality of Austin)**

Mr. Martineau attended the RALMA meeting on February 5th. The following main points were discussed:

- o Lake water quality and timelines for obtaining test results;

- o Water quality analysis project at the outlet of weeping fields at Lac des Sittelles, which would be carried out by volunteers;
- o Short term rentals;
- o Control of 35-year-old septic systems: 400 have already been verified;
- o Invasive exotic species (IAS) in water and out of water;
- o Sampling of water quality annually and at the lake bottom (phosphorus and carbonate once every 5 years);
- o Green fund.

• **Austin CCE (Environmental Advisory Committee)**

Mr. Martineau sits on the CCE of Austin and the main topics discussed were:

- o Analysis of Green Fund grant applications;
- o Impact of climate change and actions to reduce our impact;
- o Opening up of Lac des Sittelles;
- o Gardening day (conferences and others) on May 28;
- o Participation this year in the Fleurons du Québec - Maisons Fleuries contest;
- o Nature and culture rally on July 23 (on foot or by bike).

**Questions:**

1. Mr. Noreau questioned the safety at the eastern entrance to the lake because of the width of the road there, the presence of mailboxes and the speed at which people travel when entering, as well as branches that limit visibility. Other members expressed concern about the speed on North Road and the possibility of having the speed limit reduced in the area.

-Mr. Martineau and Mr. Bergeron will examine the problem and see what can be done. Mr. Bergeron adds that he is still working on the mailbox file with Canada Post and has been doing so for two years. Boxes need to be replaced. According to the latest news, it must be done this year. He is following the case closely.

2. Mr. Yvon Morin questioned the quantity of branches to be shredded along the road and the costs related to the work of shredding this year. He suggests reviewing other ways of addressing the situation in order to free up funds for other tasks, including the digging of ditches, etc. He also mentioned that once the branches have been shredded, the owners start putting other branches out for the next year, which takes away from the beauty of the roadway. Using the brown bin to get rid of branches could help and putting branches on the road only starting in the spring.

-M. Bergeron mentioned that the accumulation of branches is exceptional this year, partly because of the pruning by Hydro-Québec and the construction sites. As for branches set out by Mr. Lacasse following his work on certain lots, he adjusts his hours billed according to the extra work. He reminded us that our forest is aging and that it requires a lot of maintenance. The Council's initiative to offer this service was taken because shredding equipment and labor are expensive. Since the association offered it, the quality of our forest has improved. Further, asking owners to put their branches on the road as of a specific date is possible.

-Several members took part in the discussion and mentioned, as a possible solution, that branches could be burned or even that those owners cutting for construction could get rid of their branches themselves. Others mentioned that the service is appreciated and that volunteers could perhaps help Mr. Lacasse to do the work.

3. Mr. Weeks mentions that the sign indicating Lake Malaga at the East entrance is parallel to North Road. It should be perpendicular.

-The Board takes note.

## 6. Financial Report

Mr. Arcand presented his financial report. (See Financial Report in appendix)

The 2021-22 fiscal year ended with a slight surplus of \$4,104.48. This surplus is mainly attributable to the increase in contributions the previous year and to a reduction in road maintenance costs.

Mr. Bergeron explained that the Board has succeeded in partially rebuilding the reserve fund which is currently at \$20,000. He reminded all that the snow removal contract ends this year. The contract has a 3% increase for the next year. However, given the substantial increase in fuel and labor, it remains possible that the municipality opens the contract and grants an increase of more than 3%. As for next year, no one currently knows what increase the association will face. We recall that nearly five years ago, costs rose by 40%. It is important to be proactive.

The Board therefore recommends an increase of \$50 for the year 2023-2024. As a comparison, it is to be noted that, at Lac des Sittelles, the contribution is \$671 per dwelling and \$248 per vacant lot.

Questions:

1. Mr. Claude Aquin asks what amount represents an increase of \$50 in income for the association.

-M. Bergeron indicates \$4,500.

2. Mr. Yvon Morin asks if it would not be appropriate to explore other avenues to reduce costs because the association is dependent on the conditions of the city and a contractor.

-M. Bergeron explained that in the past, after losing the services of the contractor at the time, the association had gone to tender alone with the result that no contractor responded to the call for tenders. Nobody was willing to plow 3 km of road and spread abrasive for \$20,000. It was at this point that the Board turned to the municipality and joined in their call for tenders. The contractor must comply with the requirements of the municipality: compliant equipment and personnel available on site.

3. Mrs. Gaby Julien suggested an increase of \$100 instead.

4. Mr. Suchorski questioned the fact that the owners of vacant lots have not had an increase for several years and asks for the number.

-M. Bergeron indicates that there are approximately 58 vacant lots and explains that the vast majority belong to the waterfront owners and therefore the money would come from the same pocket. The Board will look into the matter.

5. Mr. Michel Julien recommended the adoption of the increase to \$100: the logic stems from the increase in prices that we are experiencing.

6. Mr. David Kerr asked if it is reasonable to foresee a cost increase in the snow removal contract by 30% or 40%.

-M. Bergeron replied yes.

Mr. Graham Weeks called for the vote on the resolution.

### **Resolution R22-39**

Considering the increase in road maintenance costs and taking into account the renegotiation of the upcoming snow removal contract, it is resolved to increase the annual contribution to \$550, for dwellings, starting in 2023-2024. The annual fee for vacant lots will remain at \$60.

The resolution was proposed by Mr. Graham Weeks (155) and seconded by Mr. Michel Julien (99). Adopted by majority vote. Three voting members opposed it.

## **7. Election of the Board of Directors**

Mr. Bergeron informed the assembly that Mrs. Louise Bergeron, Secretary of the Association for 22 years, is leaving her position. Mrs. Diane Séguin offered her services and the Board is happy to see her join the group. The other five current members have agreed to serve for another year.

Mrs. Claudine Archambault (113) asks for a vote. Mr. Michel Julien (43) proposes the election of the Board, seconded by Mr. Claude Aquin (43). The proposal is adopted unanimously.

The 2022-2023 Board of Directors:

André Bergeron (9), President  
David Tracy (87), Vice-President  
Marcel Arcand (109), Treasurer  
Diane Séguin (151), Secretary  
Jean-Charles Dumont (165),  
Marcel Martineau (35) Road Director  
Anne Boissonneault (35), Environment Director & Communications

## **8. Varia**

1. Mr. Yvon Morin offered his services and the use of his equipment including a small backhoe. He also asks the boats to be careful with the buoys, because the paddles sometimes catch the rope of the buoys and cause the sediment to rise around the water intakes.

2. Mr. Michel Julien again this year offers his raft for swimming to residents at the south end of the lake. However, he reminds all that he is not responsible for any accidents.

3. Mrs. Louise Hewus (77) mentions that there is a piece of wharf that has washed up in front of their property.

## **9. Closing of the meeting**

Mrs. Louise Bergeron asks if the members would support having next year's meeting at the Community hall. The majority are in favour.

Mr. Claude Aquin (43) proposes the adjournment of the meeting, seconded by Mr. Glenn Hewus (77). The meeting ended at 12:00 p.m.

André Bergeron, President

Louise Bergeron, Secretary



## Rapport financier / Financial report Mai 2022

**2018-2019      2019-2020      2020-2021      2021-2022      Budget  
2022-23**

Cotisations /Dues	\$28095.00	\$27900.00	\$36695.00	\$37175.00	\$41900.00
Austin	\$3000.85	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Intérêts/Interests	\$126.67	\$184.49	\$112,41	\$142.21	\$160.00
<b>Recettes/Revenues</b>	<b>\$31222.52</b>	<b>\$28084,49</b>	<b>\$36807.41</b>	<b>\$37317.21</b>	<b>\$42060,00</b>

Neige/Snow	\$19229.57	\$19 806.46	\$20400.59	\$21012.66	\$21643.04
Chemin/Road	\$14584.03	\$15395,88	\$14666.94	\$10713,09	\$15000.00
Assurances/ Insurance	\$219.49	\$265,27	\$438,77	\$533.60	\$600.00
Eau/Water tests	\$5096.51	\$0	\$56,59	\$0	\$0
Cotisation / Membership	\$25.00	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Frais de gestion/ Administration	\$1306.95	\$1009,67	\$413.68	\$943.17	\$800.00
Taxes	\$10.36	\$10.29	\$10,56	\$10.61	\$11.00
<b>Déboursés/ Disbursements</b>	<b>\$40471.91</b>	<b>\$36487,57</b>	<b>\$35987.13</b>	<b>\$33213.13</b>	<b>\$38054.04</b>

<b>Surplus/Déficit</b>	<b>-\$9249.39</b>	<b>-\$8403,08</b>	<b>+\$820.28</b>	<b>+\$4104.08</b>	<b>+\$4005.96</b>
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<b>Solde/Balance</b>	<b>\$23146.89</b>	<b>\$14743,81</b>	<b>\$ 15564,09</b>	<b>\$19668.17</b>	<b>\$23674.13</b>
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**2019**

**2020**

**2021**

**2022**