



Lac Malaga Community Association Inc.

**Minutes of the Annual General Assembly
Held in the community room at the Austin Town Hall
May 19, 2024, at 9:30 am
*(Version not adopted in general assembly)***

1. Welcome and approval of the agenda

The meeting started at 9:40 a.m. The president, André Bergeron, called the meeting to order with approximately 50 people present, noting that quorum was attained with 34 voting members and 2 proxies.

He welcomed everyone and, as is the tradition, Mr. Bergeron asked Board members and all those present to introduce themselves.

Mr. Bergeron asked if there are any modifications to the agenda. Mr. Jean Venne (57) asked to add an item in Varia with regards to the municipal project 23-528-2. This item will be addressed in point 3.

The agenda was adopted as proposed by Mr. Pierre Denault (137) and seconded by Mr. Mariusz Suchorski (171).

2. Adoption of the minutes of the 2023 General Assembly

Mr. Bergeron asked if there were any changes or corrections to be made to the minutes of the 2023 general meeting. No changes were requested. The adoption of the minutes was moved by Mr. Jean Venne (57) and seconded by Mr. Claude Desrosiers (51).

3. President's Report

• Changes on the Board

Mr. Bergeron mentioned that over the past three years, actions have been taken to renew the Board of Directors. Mr. Marcel Martineau, Ms. Anne Boissonneault and Ms. Diane Séguin have been added to the Board.

Mr. Bergeron said that this commitment for renewal would continue as he presents the new Board of Directors for 2024-25 (Point #7).

• Accomplishments

Mr. Bergeron underlined that an environment and communications committee to assist the Board in its projects has been created. Several members are involved and contributed to the realisation of several initiatives.

Mr. Bergeron mentioned that the association's website has continued to grow, allowing information and reports on the health of the lake available to everyone.

- **Member involvement**

Mr. Bergeron mentioned that several people residing at Lake Malaga are involved in various community organizations in Austin. They are our eyes and ears at the municipality on matters of interest to our community:

- Patrice Crevier, Urban Planning Advisory Committee (UPAC)
- Marcel Martineau, Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC)
- Anne Boissonneault, Good Neighbors (Voisins Solidaires) & Cultural Committee
- Diane Séguin, Cultural Committee & Library Committee
- Several residents are also members of the Austin choir (Les Voix du large)

- **Finances**

Mr. Bergeron noted that when the budget for 2023-24 was adopted, the actual expenditures were unknown due to the snow removal contract up for renewal in the fall. Rather than a fixed budget, the treasurer presented two scenarios anticipating increases in snow removal costs ranging from 20% to 40%. With the anticipated increases, the association anticipated being able to meet future expenses for the 2023-2024 year, thanks in part to the \$100 dues increase approved by members in 2022. Following the municipality's call for tenders, the actual result was a 60% increase for last winter.

Mr. Bergeron mentions that the impact of this increase on our financial situation and the actions the Board is proposing will be presented under item 6.

- **Tourism Residence**

Mr. Bergeron explained the Board's position on draft by-law 23-528-2, which aims to allow "tourist residence use" at a Lake Malaga residence, subject to Kéroul certification (accessibility of the establishment for people with reduced mobility).

Mr. Bergeron pointed out that the Board is not opposed to maintaining the operations of the residence in question to accommodate people with reduced mobility, far from it. However, the draft by-law, as written, gives a "blank cheque" to current owner companies and future owners to make short-term rentals, without considering the property's original vocation. If the property holds Kéroul certification (which is already the case), the by-law does not provide for any control or obligation to offer rentals to people with special needs.

Members were briefed on the case by both the association and the owners of the residence in question. Most members supported the position taken by the council, as demonstrated by the number of owners who signed the petition and, subsequently, the register.

The municipality's decision as to whether to withdraw the by-law, hold a referendum or amend the by-law will be taken at the next council meeting on June 3. Members will be informed of the decision when it is known.

In conclusion, Mr. Bergeron emphasized the rapid mobilization of members in this matter and thanked them for their support.

4. Environment Report & Communications

Ms. Boissonneault shared about several topics related to the environment dossier at Lake Malaga.

- **Condition of the lake – Analyses completed by RAPPEL in 2023**

In 2023, RAPPEL carried out water quality tests for swimming and at the lake pit (deepest point of the lake). The results from the pit are similar to those of previous years. Based on these analyses, the lake is characterized as oligo-mesotrophic (clear). Water quality for swimming was tested on 3 occasions (June, July and August) and is considered excellent.

- **Inventory of aquatic plants (IPA)**

An inventory of aquatic plants was carried out by RAPPEL in the summer of 2023. The association received financial assistance in the amount of \$2,373.19 from the Municipality of Austin via the Green Fund. The conclusions of this expertise are as follows:

- o There are 19 species of aquatic plants and algae;
- o There are no invasive plants;
- o The weed beds around the lake are similar in size to those surveyed in 2018. However, the density of plants in these beds is higher than in 2018.

- **Shoreline characterization (Riparian buffer strip)**

A characterization of the riparian strip of all lakes in Austin was carried out by RAPPEL, at the expense of the municipality. For Lake Malaga, 81.6% of the riparian strip has a natural vegetation cover of over 80%. Ms. Boissonneault indicates that the municipality will take action for non-compliant riparian buffer strips.

- **Study to document dissolved oxygen in the lake**

Water sampling was carried out on our lake by the University of Sherbrooke's Applied Geomatics Department. Various analyses were carried out on water samples. We will be analyzing this report shortly.

To find out more about the results and conclusions of these reports, we propose to organize an information session (approx. 1 hour) during Neighbours' Day. All these reports are available on the association's website.

- **Future projects**

Mr. Martineau explained that the committee wishes to mandate the RAPPEL organization to carry out a survey in 2025 to obtain a portrait of the lake's health and better understand the influencing factors. The cost of this expertise is in the order of \$5,500 (taxes included). This expertise is eligible for a grant from the municipality's green fund. The cost to the association would be in the order of \$2,300, or about \$30 per property.

- **Malaga Lake Prevention and Protection Committee**

Ms. Boissonneault reminded all that the lake prevention and protection committee was created following the 2023 AGM. The committee initially had 11 members. It now has 9 active members.

The committee's main achievements for 2023 are as follows:

- o Creation of a "do's and don'ts" document;
- o Creation of a sign for boat washing. The signs were installed in April 2024 at each entrance;
- o Transparency measurement carried out 4 times by us and 3 times by RAPPEL;

- o Inventory of aquatic plants;
- o Green Fund application;
- o Participation in a University of Sherbrooke study on water sampling by boat and drone;
- o Participation in RALMA meetings;
- o Participation in RAPPEL water symposium;
- o Participation in CCE climate meetings;
- o Meetings with residents by committee members: 34 properties visited out of 89 (38%).

The objectives for 2024 are:

- o Training a member as a Lake Sentinel (Guard);
- o Participation in a consultative workshop on water quality in the Lake Memphremagog watershed May 7;
- o MCI (Memphrémagog Conservation Inc.), RAPPEL and CCE conferences;
- o Inventory of water withdrawal sources around the lake;
- o Measure water transparency;
- o Install 2 signs: Washing boats;
- o Presentations to residents on RAPPEL studies;
- o Water quality monitoring;
- o Participation in a training session on aquatic invasive species-OZERO June 8 - to be confirmed;
- o Distribution of pamphlet: "Have you washed your boat?";
- o Meetings with residents by committee members - themes to be defined.

- **RALMA (Lake associations of the municipality of Austin)**

Mr. Martineau attended the RALMA meeting on February 10. He reports that there was record attendance and the following items were discussed, with a presentation from each association.

Highlights:

- o APLS: 2nd exit; moratorium on building permits for lot sizing, calcium issues favoring zebra mussels, hydrogeological studies;
- o Lac Peasley: Galvin Heights development;
- o MCI: impact of Coventry landfill site in Vermont on Lake Memphremagog water quality;
- o May 4 ditch clean-up;
- o Meeting between the associations' environmental managers to present lake navigation rules to the municipality of Austin concerning the power of electric motors, and to propose that it adopt a regulation to this effect.

- **Austin CCE (Environment Sub-Committee)**

Mr. Martineau sits on the Austin CCE and there have been 3 meetings so far in 2024. Items of interest are:

- o Analysis of Green Fund grant applications for \$30,000 (+\$5,000);
- o International Forest Day (activities planned for May, June and September);
- o Enhanced EAP - Hydrological study for areas with more than 5 wells, to ensure sufficient water supply;
- o Gardening Passion Day on May 25.

- **Neighbors' Day**

Mrs. Boissonneault reminded everyone that there will be a Neighbours' Day again this year. The event will be held on June 9, at Carrefour d'Austin.

Questions/Comments:

- 1) Mr. Glenn Hewus (77) asked if it was permissible to pull up aquatic plants.
Mr. Martineau replied that it is not recommended to pull up plants to prevent proliferation. Pulling up certain plants may have the effect of helping them to multiply. However, it is permissible to make a small passage to access the water more easily.

- 2) Mr. David Malcolm (95) and Mr. Pierre Denault (137) are of the opinion that we have enough information on the lake and that we don't need a report on the lake's portrait.

Mr. Martineau replies that the weed beds have evolved over 5 years (since 2018) and that the aim of the study is to find out what action can be taken to avoid premature aging of the lake.

Mr. Luc Giroux (117) agrees with the decision to undertake the report as a precautionary measure.

Ms. Louise Bergeron (9) moved to vote in favor of a resolution to proceed with the project.

Mr. Benoît Aquin (27) seconds the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Martineau specifies that this amount will not be part of the budget and will be the subject of a special assessment.

- 3) Mr. Luc Giroux (117) asks if there is a forest fire prevention plan for Austin.

Mr. Martineau replies that the subject has been discussed at the CCE and that a study will be carried out by experts in September.

5. Road Report

• Spring roadwork and 2024 plan

Mr. Martineau reviewed the work carried out on the roadway in 2023:

- Filling of potholes in May and October
- Grading of roadway in May
- Reloading, leveling and compacting in August (11 loads of crushed rock)
- Mowing of the outer ditch in August

Mr. Martineau mentioned that the road was in poor condition this spring, especially on the East side, with unstable areas and holes, due to the effects of the freeze-thaw.

The work that has taken place in April 2024:

- Filling of potholes
- Four (4) loads of crushed stone added at East entrance
- Grading and compaction of roadway

Planned work for the remainder of 2024 is as follows:

- Filling of potholes at the end of the Fall
- Mowing of the outer ditch at the end of the summer
- Cleaning out of ditches

- **Chipping of branches**

Mr. Martineau mentions that in 2023, branch chipping was done by Mr. Lacasse and his team. Mr. Lacasse has advised us that he is retiring and will no longer be doing this work. As a result, we will need volunteers to do the branch chipping this year.

Questions/Comments:

- 1) Mr. Jean-Pierre Rogel (7) mentions that the road widens over the years due to snow plowing, the ditch portion disappears, and water cannot drain. He asks the Board to clean the ditches, but also asks members to clean their own section of ditch.

Mr. Martineau replies that ditch cleaning is one of the projects, but that it's a question of budget.

- 2) Mr. Philippe Lussier (105) adds that the snowplough has pushed a lot of stone into the ditches. He offers to help dig the ditches.

6. Financial Report

Mr. Bergeron presented the financial report. (See Financial Report in appendix).

The fiscal year of 2023-2024 ended with a small deficit of \$2,550. This deficit is attributable to the increase in snow removal costs (+60%).

Mr. Bergeron explained that the snow removal contract signed in the fall of 2023 is fixed for 3 years and provides for an increase of 3% per year, with an option for 2 additional years. This allows us to forecast budget increases for the coming years.

For the fiscal year 2024-2025, we anticipate a slight deficit of \$1,977.

To rebuild the reserve fund, the Board is recommending an increase of \$60 for dwellings for 2025-2026. Annual dues in 2025 will therefore be \$635 for dwellings and will remain at \$75 for vacant lots.

Questions/Comments:

- 1) Mr. Philippe Lussier (105) asks if the municipality's by-law stipulates that bidders for snow removal must have a minimum number of personnel on site.

Mr. Martineau replies that the snow removal contractor has employees on site.

Mr. Bergeron adds that by bidding with the municipality, we benefit from the same price.

- 2) Mr. Glenn Hewus (77) asks if the same contractor does both snow removal and road maintenance.

Mr. Martineau answers in the affirmative. The contractor has the equipment and personnel to do road maintenance in addition to snow removal.

- 3) Mr. Dominique Pelletier (109) asks if the association has a reserve fund or special budget for major work.

Mr. Bergeron replies that we have an accumulated surplus of nearly \$21,000 and that the aim is to maintain it at around \$25,000. This is reason for the proposed increase in dues.

Mr. Luc Giroux (117) called for a vote on the resolution.

Resolution R24-41

Considering the increase in costs related to the maintenance of the road and snow removal, and to rebuild the Association's reserve fund, it is resolved to increase the annual contribution to \$635 for properties with dwellings, as of 2025-2026. The annual contribution for vacant lots will remain at \$75.

The resolution was proposed by Mr. Luc Giroux (117) and seconded by Mr. Glenn Hewus (77). Carried unanimously.

7. Election of Board of Directors

Mr. Bergeron informed the members that the positions of President and Treasurer were up for election this year.

He announced that Mr. Claude Desrosiers was interested in filling the position of President, and that Ms. Linda Crevier was interested in filling the position of Treasurer.

The other four current Board members have agreed to serve for another year.

Mrs. Myriane Baril (7) moved the election of the Board, seconded by Mr. Benoit Aquin (27). The motion was carried unanimously.

The 2024-2024 Board of Directors:

Claude Desrosiers (51), President
David Tracy (87), Vice-President
Linda Crevier (127), Treasurer
Diane Séguin (151), Secretary
Marcel Martineau (35) Road Director
Anne Boissonneault (35), Environment Director & Communications

8. Varia

Mr. Michel Guertin (55) suggested sending a thank-you note to Mr. René Lacasse. Mr. Bergeron replied that there was a plan in place to send a card on behalf of all members.

9. Adjournment

Mr. Jean Venne (57) proposed the adjournment of the meeting, seconded by Mr. Pierre Denault (137). The meeting ended at 12:05 p.m.

André Bergeron, President

Diane Séguin, Secretary