

**Waskesiu Community Association Inc.**  
(Waskesiu Community Council)  
**Annual General Meeting**  
**and**  
**Waskesiu 'Vision 2020 and Beyond' Community Action Plan**  
**Report Card & Update**

TERRACE GARDENS  
Sunday, July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018

MEETING MINUTES

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**2017/2018 Councilors – Waskesiu Community Council**

Jim Kerby, Chair <i>Cottage Owners Representative</i>	Bryan Matheson <i>Member at Large</i>	Randy Kershaw <i>Cabin Owners Representative</i>
Nancy Wood Archer, Vice Chair <i>Commercial Lessees' Representative</i>	Janice MacKinnon* <i>Member at Large</i>	Jennifer Wood <i>Member at Large</i>
Brent Hamel, Secretary-Treasurer <i>Permanent Residents Representative</i>		

(\*Councilor MacKinnon was unable to attend the 2018 Council AGM.)

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Present: There were 91 members of the Waskesiu Community Association present. In addition, representing Parks Canada Agency, Field Unit Superintendent, David Britton, Townsite Manager, Gregg Rutten, and Norman Stolle, Resource Conservation Manager, were also in attendance.

Community Council Chair (2017/2018) and Chair of the 2018 Annual General Meeting – Jim Kerby

- 1. Coffee and Refreshments** (9:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.)
- 2. Call to Order & Welcome** (Waskesiu Community Council Chair - Jim Kerby)
- 3. Adoption of the 2018 AGM Meeting Agenda**

*A motion to adopt the 2018 AGM Agenda as circulated was made by Mike Gelsinger, and seconded by Rene Marleau.*

*Carried unanimously*

- 4. Introductions**

The following individuals were introduced to the members present by the Chair of the Meeting:

- Members of the Waskesiu Community Council (Outgoing and Incoming Councilors)

- Field Unit Superintendent David Britton (Parks Canada)
- Townsite Manager Gregg Rutten (Parks Canada)
- Norm Stolle, Resource Conservation Manager (Parks Canada)
- Waskesiu's New Fire Chief - Les Karpluk

## 5. Waskesiu Community Council - Chair's Year End Report for 2017/2018 (Jim Kerby)

The following report was provided by the Chair of the Waskesiu Community Council:

*“Good morning – thanks for being here on such a wonderful Waskesiu day. Your commitment to our community is greatly appreciated.*

*As Chair of the Waskesiu Community Council, I am pleased to report that since last year's AGM Council has once again been very active, and very productive.*

*The Waskesiu Community Council is formally recognized as the "voice of the Waskesiu community", pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding with Parks Canada Agency that was signed in 2002.*

*During the last year the Community Council - your Council – has been comprised of:*

*Randy Kershaw as the Waskesiu's cabin owners' representative  
 Nancy Wood Archer as the Waskesiu business community representative  
 Brent Hamel as the Waskesiu's permanent residents' representative  
 Jim Kerby as the Waskesiu's cottage owners' representative  
 Bryan Matheson as a Member at Large  
 Janice MacKinnon as a Member at Large  
 Jennifer Wood - our newest Councilor – as a Member at Large.*

*We have been assisted by our terrific Administrator – Noreen Matthews – who does a great job keeping us on track. Thank you, Noreen, for all that you do.*

*This is the last AGM for this Council - as part of a regular 3-year election cycle.*

*New elections were recently held and, as of the close of today's meeting, your new Council for the 2018-2021 period will be comprised of 4 returning Council members (Nancy Wood Archer, Bryan Matheson, Jennifer Wood and Jim Kerby) and 3 new Council members - being Rob Phillips (cabin area representative) who was unable to be here today, Darryl Fox (Member at Large) and Bentley Crozier (Member at Large).*

*Special thanks to outgoing Council members Janice MacKinnon, Randy Kershaw, and Brent Hamel. More to follow on each of them and their contributions in a few minutes.*

*In 2013, the Community Council initiated a "visioning" process. Council started our work, initially, with just with Parks Canada Agency. We then expanded our discussions to include all the key Waskesiu stakeholder groups. That visioning process was called “Vision 2020 and Beyond”. The purpose of “Vision 2020 and Beyond” was to collaborate on what we, as a community, wanted the Waskesiu townsite to look like, and feel like, in the year 2020 – and beyond. Last year – as was contemplated in the Waskesiu Vision 2020 Community Action Plan - we gave you a detailed update on our community's progress and status. Later today we*

*will give you a further update.*

*At this point in our meeting, I would like to provide a few highlights regarding what has happened in Waskesiu since our 2017 AGM.*

*As a reminder, in 2015 the federal government announced an extra \$2.6 billion dollars for Parks Canada Agency nationally – with those funds to be used for, among other things, completing work that had been deferred in relation to existing Parks Canada assets and infrastructure.*

*During the last couple of years our community, and PANP, has significantly benefited from literally tens of millions of dollars in federal money to improve Park and townsite infrastructure – including funding for:*

- upgrading our marina, paving our roads and fixing our sewer systems;*
- improvements to the townsite's water treatment controls, and our water main systems;*
- repairing approximately 35 kilometers of trails around the townsite;*
- funding to pay for a new force main in Waskesiu;*
- funding to replace the two existing beach houses at Waskesiu's main beach - with new buildings to be built this fall;*
- funding to replace the washroom facilities at the staff trailer park at the end of Montreal Drive;*
- upgrades to Beaver Glen campground;*
- the long-awaited infrastructure work on the Kingsmere road and the Kingsmere River boat launch was completed, including the new launch area, and the new pedestrian bridge near the rail cart portage;*
- rehabilitation of trail access to the Grey Owl cabin site; and*
- much needed restoration work on Grey Owl's cabin.*

***Parks Canada - Review of Development – “National Planning Permit Process”***

- In previous discussions with many community groups, including the Parks Canada Agency, shortcomings in the Cottage Regulations have been noted – they are dated and have some challenges in being flexible enough to effectively apply to the wide range of situations in Parks Canada Agency townsites.*
- Parks Canada has launched a process - including a recent consultation process - to review and modernize these Regulations and all others that relate to development in Canada's national parks, including in Prince Albert National Park. It's a national initiative, led by the national office of Parks Canada Agency.*
- Amongst the numerous issues that will be considered is what elements need to be in federal Regulations, and what can be better captured by local policies within individual townsites (e.g. locally administered cabin guidelines, Land Use Directives) providing more flexibility as amendments can be made locally.*
- A meeting was held earlier this summer with Parks Canada representatives. We will report more at next year's meeting on the progress associated with that initiative.*

*I would like to take a moment to say to the local representatives of Parks Canada Agency – including among others Townsite Manager Gregg Rutten and our Superintendent David Britton, that our Community Council has really appreciated our working relationship with you. We share many common goals – including enhancing the Waskesiu experience, protecting our environment, trying to keep our business community strong, and increasing visitation to the Park – all of which makes it easier to collectively, and respectfully, work together to achieve desired goals.*

*As another example of successful collaboration, in August of 2017 we enjoyed the third Waskesiu Lakeside Music Festival – an annual festival that will be held again this year during the last weekend of August. We hope to keep growing this event every year – and we encourage you to be part of that. Admission is free –so please support the Lakeside Music Festival by your attendance, by inviting your friends to Waskesiu, and by agreeing to volunteer.*

*Remember – the Waskesiu Vision 2020 process was - and is - far more than just building facilities and improving infrastructure – it was (and is) also about trying to bring more visitors to our Park - particularly outside of the June 15 to August 15 window.*

### ***Additional Points – 2018***

- *The wildfire situation in PANP, and the Waskesiu townsite, in 2018 was nothing short of frightening – and the risk of losing our townsite to wildfire was very, very real. More on that to follow today.*
- *Getting SaskTel DSL High Speed internet introduced into our townsite was yet another successful community effort, spearheaded by the Waskesiu Community Council working in close collaboration with the Waskesiu Seasonal Residents Association, the Waskesiu Chamber of Commerce, Parks Canada Agency, and the Waskesiu Foundation. Thanks to everyone involved for your generous financial and other forms of support. Installation has now begun, and the results are very positive.*
- *Waskesiu Recreation Renewal – Brent Hamel will report on this later today. Among other things he will discuss and highlight the completion of our Waskesiu Mini Golf project - "Little Al's Mini Golf" is an absolutely fantastic success - and the community should be very proud!*
  - *WRA needs additional volunteers and Directors – Charmaine Wintermute will be joining the Board of the Waskesiu Recreation Association (WRA).*
  - *Give recognition to the WRA Directors who are present for having pulled off the mini golf project.*
  - *Revised relationship – Chamber, WRA, Council (Council to become sole member of the WRA in 2019).*
- *Waskesiu Foundation – Council is the sole member of the Waskesiu Foundation – another successful year – credit to having the right people on the Board of the Waskesiu Foundation including new Director Rita Mirwald.*
  - *Waskesiu mini golf - another successful partnership*
  - *2018 Sipping Social - a major success*
  - *Gordie Howe Memorial Fitness Park*
  - *Howe Fortunate and Gordie Howe Day events on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of August.*
- *Council and Councilors*
  - *New Councilors to the WCC (Jennifer Wood last year, Darryl Fox, Bentley Crozier and Rob Phillips this year)*
  - *Recognition for Brent Hamel, Randy Kershaw, Janice MacKinnon*

*In conclusion, thank you again for being here today. We encourage you to continue to share your views with Council on how to continue to enhance the Waskesiu experience. Your dedication to Prince Albert National Park, the townsite of Waskesiu, and our community, is greatly appreciated.*

## 6. Adoption of the 2017 AGM Minutes

*A Motion to adopt the 2017 AGM Minutes, with a minor noted amendment, was made by Don Ravis, and seconded by Brian Morgan.*

*Carried unanimously.*

## 7. Financial Report (Randy Kershaw)

### • Presentation and Adoption of 2017/2018 Financial Statements of the Corporation:

**Motion:** *“That the Financial Statements for the last fiscal year of the Corporation, in the form prepared by Virtus Group LLP and presented to this Annual General Meeting, be and the same are hereby approved and adopted.”*

The foregoing Motion was moved by Darryl Fox, and seconded by Matt Baraniecki.

*Carried unanimously.*

### • Waiver of Appointment of Auditor / Appointment of Virtus Group LLP to prepare Review Engagement Financial Statements:

**Motion:** *“That the Corporation dispense with the appointment of an auditor for the current fiscal year and appoint Virtus Group LLP to prepare the Corporation's financial statements for the current fiscal year on a review engagement basis, with Virtus Group LLP's remuneration to be determined by the Board of the Corporation.”*

The foregoing Motion was moved by Simone Kerby, seconded Dan Boehm.

*Carried unanimously.*

## 8. Parks Canada Update – David Britton, Prince Albert National Park Field Unit Superintendent, and Gregg Rutten, Waskesiu Townsite Manager

*David Britton, Prince Albert National Park Field Unit Superintendent reported as follows:*

Last year, with fee admission, the park had approximately 282,000 visitors which is well above average for recent years. With entrance fees now back in place, visitation, while not at last year's levels, still continues to be strong. Beginning this year and continuing going forward, there is free admission to Parks Canada places for all persons age 17 and under.

The Prince Albert National Park management plan was tabled in Parliament on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June, 2018. It is the product of public consultation and sets the management direction for the park for the next ten years. It is available on the park website.

Significant infrastructure projects planned for the coming months are: replacement of the large and small beach houses, repairs to the four-way intersection to prevent winter flooding and ice build-up and rehabilitation of the Kingsmere rail cart system. With the large envelope of infrastructure funding that the park has benefitted from ending in 2019, park management will be looking ahead to identify future infrastructure investment priorities within the scope of the internal park budget.

After no changes to Parks Canada fees since 2008, it is expected that there will be a fee increase in 2019 and new federal legislation will allow regular changes to fees based on the consumer price index.

***Gregg Rutten, Waskesiu Townsite Manager reported on the following points:***

• **Staff Accommodation Strategy** - Townsite manager is currently working on a Staff Accommodation Strategy to address the need for housing seasonal or short term staff in the townsite. This includes both commercial and PCA staff.

Areas to be addressed in the strategy include the Spruce Ridge Trailer Park, Elk Street Lots, and the Lobstick Golf Course.

• **Waskesiu Lakeside Music Festival** - The 4th annual Waskesiu Lakeside Music Festival is being held on August 25, 2018. 7 bands featured. Headliner is "The Northern Pikes". Thank you to the WRA for organizing the beer garden, WCOC for organizing vendors, The Waskesiu Foundation for sponsoring the children's activities and to all of the many local volunteers.

• **Commercial Business Area Update** - There have been several new businesses open in Waskesiu this season (Escape Room, Wassup), the former post office has been leased as a restaurant. "At The Beach" clothing store was sold, Jason Bantle moved his photography gallery to that location. The mini-golf and recreation area renewals have resulted in a noticeable increase in activity on that licence of occupation. Congratulations to all of the folks involved in bringing that project to fruition.

• **Cabin Cottage Area Update** - Cabin and cottage sales have been brisk this season. Also construction in both the cabin and cottage areas continues to be steady. 3 new cottage builds started over the winter, 4 new cabins came into the Park over the winter. New plans for both cottages and cabins continue to be submitted for review and approval.

## **9. Waskesiu '2020 and Beyond' Community Action Plan – Report Card (Jim Kerby / Brent Hamel)**

A full update (Report Card) was presented by Jim Kerby regarding the progress of the Waskesiu community under the Waskesiu Vision 2020 & Beyond "Community Action Plan". The Community Action Plan, as updated, is available online via Waskesiu.org. A special report on the Recreation Renewal Project, including the mini golf and outdoor fitness park, was presented by Brent Hamel.

## **10. Vegetation Management\FireSmart Program in Waskesiu – Parks Canada**

Norm Stolle, Resource Conservation Manager III presented the Vegetation Management Strategy.

- Initially started in 2003 as a result of a Spruce Budworm infestation.
- The plan was to develop an integrated approach with both short term actions (use of pesticide) and long-term actions (planting program).
- Plan was completed around 2009 when a proposal to have a reforestation plan came into

being. This included the development of a native plant nursery.

- The 2003 plan was updated in 2011 and had actions for the next 20 years.
- Since its development there has been another Spruce Budworm outbreak (2012), a Forest Tent Caterpillar outbreak (2015 and 2016), numerous high wind events that have caused damage to trees, a regular hazardous tree program where trees are proactively removed before causing damage, and the threat of a forest fire.
- Climate change experts are predicting more extreme weather events and intense forest fires in the future, all of which can put the Townsite and infrastructure at risk.
- Therefore, the community needs to think proactively how to manage for these risks while maintaining an aesthetically pleasing community.
- When reviewing the current strategy, it was noted that there are a number of contradictory statements, such as plant more white spruce and increase the tree density in the area of the old compound while fire smarting the community.
- Therefore, the Park felt it was time to review and update the Community Vegetation Management strategy.
- Three management priorities have been identified:

#### **Representative Vegetation.**

- Diversify the Townsite forest structure so that species and age structure are better suited to withstand current and future environmental stressors.
- The presence of invasive species within the Townsite is minimized.

#### **Aesthetics**

- Ensure a slow transition from an even-aged mature spruce forest to a mixed age/mixed species forest.
- Retain aesthetic appeal of community. Manage vegetation to retain and improve views.

#### **Protection from Wildfire**

- Consider this more along the line of the safety of people and infrastructure.
- Fires and wind events are a reality that we will need to take into consideration when managing our community.
- Healthy younger forests are more resilient to insects and wind events.

- Land use map was found in the previous version of Community Vegetation Management Strategy. Basic vegetation management principles apply to all zones.
- Community fuel break is a good line of defense but there are areas of weakness behind the fuel break that can put the community at risk from ember transport or ignitions behind the Community fuel Break.
- The community needs to manage vegetation to reduce the risk to people and infrastructure from fire and wind events.
- Priority to inform and promote the National FireSmart program to park residents and businesses. Build on the experience from this past spring. Many of the principles in the fire smart program will also benefit protecting infrastructure from wind events.
- There is a need to work collaboratively with the businesses and larger leaseholds and implement fire smart strategies around park infrastructure.

**Communications related to the vegetation strategy.**

- Attend AGM's – WCC and Waskesiu Seasonal Residents Association
- Develop and open house/workshop for the vegetation management strategy and fire smart principles.
- Mail out to residents
- Proactive media
- PCA and Waskesiu.org website.
- Want feedback as the community will change and we need to define/find the balance between what is aesthetically pleasing, safe, and sustainable.
- Good opportunity to get people involved and become stewards of the community.

**11. Question and Answer Session**

*Member Comment:* A Member expressed appreciation to the Community Council, and to the Recreation Association, and for the planning of the fire prevention.

*Member Question:* For those who have a lot of old trees around their lot, is there any thought of a subsidy to help get rid of the trees?

*Parks Canada Agency Answer:* The Park is planning to make this FireSmart program a community project.



*Member Question:* In regards to the recreation area, specifically the new to come sports area, what size does it entail, what is the process they have to go through and the challenges they are facing?

*Recreation Association Answer:* When looking at the Stantec “Master Plan”, everything will be fenced in, it is designed for multi-use (i.e.; basketball, volleyball, hockey, shuffleboard, etc.) The challenge is it is in a wet, low area of the recreation grounds, the soil is contaminated, making it more of a challenge for the rest of the recreation area. The contamination is from the use of mercury for fertilizer (relating to the lawn bowling green) in the past and that has to be dealt with in order to move forward with the plans.

*Member Question:* Asked the Superintendent for details on the sale of property facing the lake, the Lakeview Hotel?

*Parks Canada Agency Answer:* The Park is not at liberty to discuss terms of sale. They are concerned based on reports that it is not operating as a hotel which is not consistent with the Parks Canada’s lease terms. It is something they are aware of and actively working on.

*Member Comment:* Member commends Parks Canada for the work done bringing awareness of the FireSmart programs. The member estimated that in cabin and cottage areas alone there is a value of \$300 million if the community was lost to a fire. The member made a suggestion for a communication strategy and asked if there is an appetite to create Waskesiu FireSmart signage for visitors, residents – to remind everyone that we are a FireSmart community. The member also commented that the Waskesiu Golf course has thousands of downed trees.

*Parks Canada Agency Comment:* Parks Canada is looking at taking action to make it a way of life not only in Waskesiu, but it should be country wide.

*Member Question:* Where is the Park at with the problem of all the parking in front of cabins and cottages?

*Parks Canada Agency Answer:* The Townsite Manager is planning a meeting with WSRA to review options and determine how to improve parking in cabin/cottage areas.

*Member Comment:* Member doubts a fire truck can get down the streets during busy weekends when so many vehicles are parked on the streets.

*Member Question:* What is the policy/regulation in regards to parking in the cabin area?

*Parks Canada Agency Answer:* Parking on paved portions is allowed.

*Member Comment:* As a community we do want a regulation governing parking.

*Member Comment:* Member believes the Park has failed in the removal of the deadfall on all the property they are responsible for.

*Parks Canada Agency Comment:* The plan is in effect to remove the deadfall along with removing all the dead trees. It will change the look of the townsite, there will be less spruce trees and more of a mixed forest if that is what the townsite people want.

*Member Comment:* Next week is WSRA’s AGM and the member suggested everyone should bring their concerns to them. Perhaps a committee could be set up to help with the clean-up.

*Member Question:* Are there any campground upgrades planned for this fall? If so, explain them, and is there any consideration for expanding?

*Parks Canada Agency Answer:* Parks is not considering enlarging either campground but in Beaver Glen they will be modernizing and cleaning up the sites plus making the pads larger to accommodate large motorhomes and trailers.

*Member Question:* How did the idea of the Fit Park and Gordie Howe Day come to be?

*Waskesiu Foundation Answer:* The Fit Park came to be as part of the Master Plan for the Recreation Renewal Project. It was seen as good idea to have, to promote fitness and the importance of being fit.

The Gordie Howe naming and Gordie Howe Day came to be as part of the Waskesiu Foundation's big plan for Waskesiu due to the history and love for Gordie Howe. He golfed and fished in Waskesiu, was a friend of local store owner and fellow NHL hockey player Johnny Bower, and when Gordie died, his son said in his eulogy that Gordie had always said that Waskesiu was his favorite place on earth. There is a chance, in the future, that something may be done connected to or recognizing Johnny Bower as well.

*Member Comment:* A Member wanted to remind all the stakeholders in the community they should keep in mind the other businesses when bringing in similar offerings. This is in regards to the opening of the new Memorial Fitness Park. The Member said it created a ripple affect which impacted his business. He then made a decision to close his indoor gym.

## **12. Adjournment**

*Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Chris Arnstead.*

*Carried unanimously.*

The meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.