

Balsam Lake Association

City of Kawartha Lakes, Ontario, Canada

2017

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A Message from the President ...

by: Bob Nixon

When you read this the ice will be long gone and the birds should be in full song indicating that 'Spring has Sprung' and another great season at the Lake is underway. This past year your Association has been active on a number of fronts.

Our major challenge in 2016 was to restructure the organization to better orient its effectiveness and to comply with some pending legislation changes introduced by the Ontario Government. Our Board is now comprised of a full complement of Directors, each representing a section around the lake. You can find those details on page 4 of this newsletter and please feel free to contact your representative through our Association email: balsamlakeassociation@gmail.com.

Our Board continues to be involved with a number of priority issues within our community. In the Newsletter we have highlighted a few of those priorities, such as Limited Service Agreements, Cormorants and Our Lake, Fish Management and many more on the following pages. As well, we continue our ongoing program of Hazard Markings along with our involvement with the Coboconk/Norland Chamber of Commerce and the annual Fresh Water Summit. A number of our local groups/associations are involved with

Hydro One Update Spring 2017

by: Bob Nixon

Hydro rates remain a controversial subject across all of Ontario these days as the Government tries to soften the impact of the significant increases being experienced by Ontario consumers.

In the midst of these issues there remain two issues that have additional impacts on the Balsam Lake community, namely;

1. Move distribution rates across the province to a fixed rate pricing format. This process is underway and will be fully implemented by 2023.

their own initiatives like the Residents of Rosedale and their efforts to upgrade the local parkette and this year's priority – a large sign to provide a directory for local businesses. If your community is planning some special activities or events, let us know and we'll post then on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/BalsamLakeAssociation) and on our website (www.balsamlakeassociation.ca).

Your Association is comprised of 13 volunteers from around the lake who work diligently on your behalf and for the well being of our Lake. Your membership in the Association provides them the resources they need to continue these efforts and for your past support, I thank you. If you're not a member as yet, simply visit our website and click on the 'Membership' tab. You can join directly on-line through this site as individuals or better yet, organize your local community and join as a group.

This is our second annual publication and I hope you enjoy reading it as much as we did putting it together. Your comments are always welcome and we would love to hear from you.

Wishing you and your families an enjoyable and safe season at the Lake.

2. Eliminate the Seasonal class of customers. This issue appears to be stalled at the OEB as they try to decide how to cope with the potential dramatic rate increases for those 'seasonal' customers in the R2 rate class.

With the current rate structure, the Seasonal customers in R1 territory are subsidizing the Seasonal customers in R2 territory. Most Balsam Lake customers are in R1 territory. The Balsam Lake Coalition (BLC) is continuing to advocate for the elimination of Seasonal class and was a major contributor in the decision to move delivery charges to flat rate. The Balsam Lake Association continues their support for the efforts of BLC. For further details, please visit our website.

Unassumed Roads and City's Core Service Review of Limited Service Agreements

by: Doug Erlandson

Many Balsam Lake residents, particularly those who live on unassumed and private roads, will be aware that the City of Kawartha Lakes embarked on a Core Service Review (CSR) of Limited Service Agreements (LSAs) in the Summer of 2016.

Using LSAs the City historically offered limited grading and gravelling on unassumed roads (and some private roads) that met a certain minimum standard and whose residents entered into an agreement with the City. The process was cumbersome and expensive to administer relative to the work that was accomplished. The CSR was intended to look at all aspects of LSAs including City legal responsibilities and moral obligations regarding the maintenance of unassumed and private roads.

The Balsam Lake Association has been involved in this CSR since its inception including participating in two Public Meetings, submitting written comments, consulting extensively with members of Council, and attending Council Meetings. Through this process, the complexities of the challenges facing the City have become evident. The City of Kawartha Lakes, an amalgamation of numerous jurisdictions, has inherited a wide range of unassumed roads with a wide variety of service levels which has resulted in a substan-

tial degree of inequity within the City. While it is difficult to propose a solution that fully satisfies the needs of all our constituents, your Association has taken the position that whatever the result of this CSR, it needs to level the playing field and minimize the current inequities.

On March 21st, 2017, City Staff reported to Council and recommended three policies, the details of which cannot be captured here but are available on the City website as part of the Council Agenda Package. Without going into detail, the recommendations were:

1. Replace LSAs with a Seasonal Level of Service Policy that would offer essentially the same service as an LSA without the need for a formal agreement.
2. Cease City maintenance activities on private roads.
3. Make minor changes to the existing policy governing the assumption of unassumed and private roads.

For a variety of reasons, the first two recommendations failed to navigate the hurdles of a City Council Meeting and were simply received rather than approved. The third recommendation was approved.

More recently, on April 18th, 2017, the first recommendation was readdressed and approved by Council. As a result, service that was previously provided under LSAs will continue under a new Seasonal Level of Service Policy. The change will be transparent to residents but should result in substantial administrative savings. A positive incremental step in an ongoing process!

Septic Inspection Programs

by: Dave Donais

Mandatory Septic Inspection Programs – Balsam Lake Not Yet in Scope

Ann Elmhurst of the City of Kawartha Lakes has confirmed that Balsam Lake does not currently fall under the scope of mandatory septic inspection programs that are in place province-wide. However, she noted that this situation could change as the programs are expected to expand over time.

The first program is the Drinking Water Source Protection Program. The purpose of this program is to protect municipal drinking water sources from contamination before the

water ever reaches a water treatment system or tap. Septic systems around the communities of Norland, Kinmount, Manvers and Emily have been subject to mandatory inspections under this program.

The second program of note is the Lake Simcoe Protection Program. This program is designed to protect and restore the ecological health of Lake Simcoe and its watershed. Septic systems on Mitchell, Canal and Duck lakes have been subject to inspection under this program, but Balsam Lake is not in scope as yet.



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Cormorants and Our Lake

by: Barbara Peel

We share our lake with many, many living species. There is always a balance between all of these, which nature does a marvellous job of protecting. Of course, sometimes humans upset this balance. During your boating around our lake, you have probably noticed the small island south of Hogg Island, on which the trees and other vegetation are dead or dying and covered in white. This is due to nesting of double-crested cormorants. They nest in groups on islands, strip leaves from the trees and eventually (in about 3-10



Fishery Report

by: Dean Michel

Fish on!

According to Lisa Solomon, Management Biologist, Peterborough District, Balsam Lake has a healthy fishery, especially for both the walleye and smallmouth bass populations.

Our lake is located within Fish Management Zone (FMZ) 17, and the plan is slated for review every 10 years. Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) has started initial planning process for the upcoming review to determine if any changes are to be made to FMZ 17.

Current plan can be found at the following url:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/fisheries-management-zone-17-fmz-17>



years) these trees die. Vegetation also dies from their acidic guano (poop!). They eat fish (about a pound per day each). Their population has increased greatly in the past 30 years from the Great Lakes to James Bay. Areas such as Point Pelee, Toronto's Leslie St. Spit, Hamilton harbour and Muskoka, to name a few, have had large populations of cormorants. Their numbers have increased on Balsam in the last few years. At this point, we suggest that we all keep an eye on the situation. Hopefully, we will not have the large populations that some other lakes have encountered.

BLA Facebook Photo Contest Winner

Photo taken by Keenan Fernandes on a late August night. Where was the photo taken? Hint: Indian Point is to the left, view is South.

Photo submitted by Joanne Wiffen.

Did You Know?

by: Dean Michel

- Shoreline of Balsam Lake is 98 km long and the surface area is 48 square km.
- Balsam Lake contains 237 million cubic metres of water.
- On average, the lake receives 840 million cubic metres of water flow every year
- On average, the water in our lake is replenished with new water (that is flushed) approximately 3.5 times per year.
- Lake tributaries provide important ecological pathways to and from the lake. There are approximately 20 tributaries that drain directly into Balsam Lake

For more interesting facts, refer to the Balsam Lake and Cameron Lake Management Plan, which is now complete and available on our website.

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The State of Real Estate for Balsam Lake and the City of Kawartha Lakes

by: Stephanie Lange

The Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) is responsible for providing property assessments for the province of Ontario, performing updated assessments every 4 years. The updated Property Assessment Notices for 2017-2020 were delivered to residents across Kawartha Lakes in July 2016. According to the most recent MPAC data, residential home owners in the City of Kawartha Lakes saw an average assessment increase of 3.4% in 2017. The typical residential home in the Kawartha Lakes is now assessed at \$254,000, compared to the typical waterfront residence, assessed at \$359,000.

In the Balsam Lake Community, waterfront properties saw an average assessment increase of 4% from 2016 to 2017, compared to off-water near-shore properties in the same community, which saw an average increase

of 2%. While MPAC uses many factors to arrive at their assessment of a property (including lot dimensions, living area, age, and construction quality), location is the most important. MPAC collects and analyzes neighbourhood sales data to help arrive at their property evaluations. (For more information about your property, visit www.AboutMyProperty.ca)

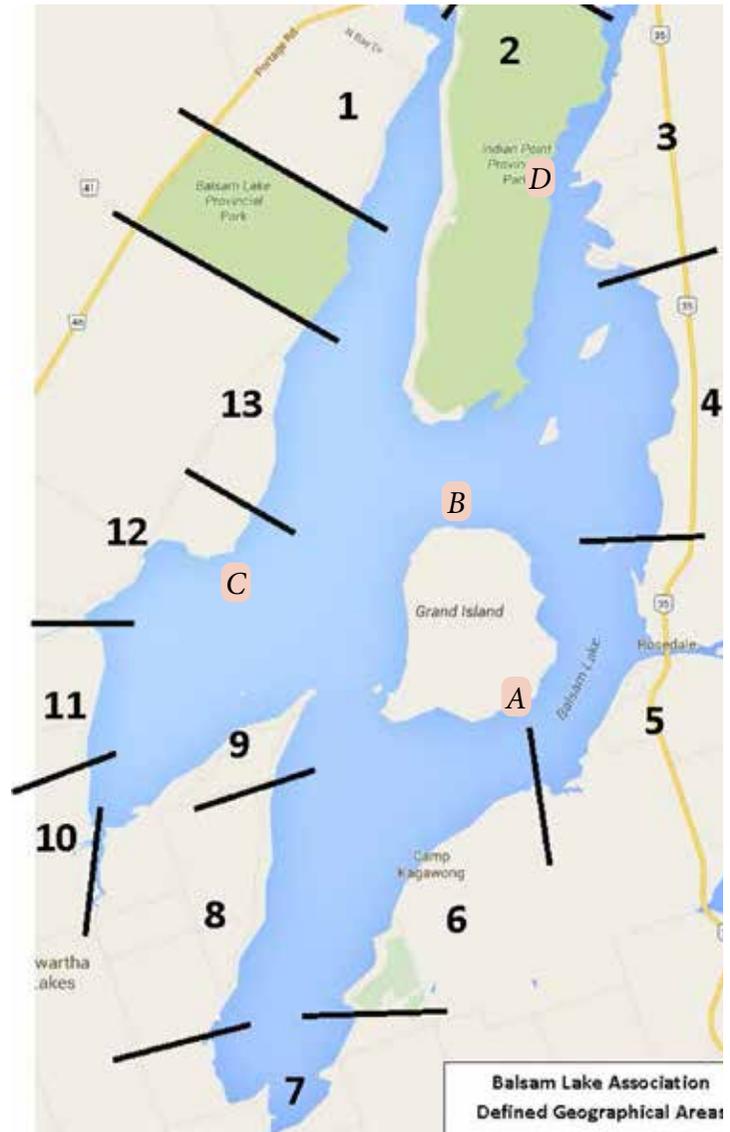
The average list price for a waterfront home on Balsam Lake in 2015 was \$673,154 with an average sale price of \$644,661. Compare that to the average list price in 2016 which was \$898,228 and an average sale price of \$840,611. Helping contribute to this 30.4% increase in sale price were 8 properties selling for \$1M or more. There were 36 Balsam waterfront properties sold in 2016, up 28.5% from 2015, which saw 28 properties sold.

BLA Marine Hazard Markings

- A Togo Rock
- B Grand Rock
- C Mackenzie Point
- D North Lightning Point

BLA - Defined Geographical Areas & Directors

- 1) North Bay - Dean Michel
- 2) Indian Point - Jane Andrew
- 3) Coboconk & Northeast Shore - Barbara Peel
- 4) East Shore - Gerry McKeown
- 5) Rosedale Area - Doug Cowan
- 6) Southeast Shore - C. Lee
- 7) Killarney Bay - Birch Point - Steve Callaghan
- 8) South Bay - Tom Savage
- 9) Long Point - Grant Fraser
- 10) Homewood Park - Staples River - Mike Lange
- 11) West Bay - Doug Erlandson
- 12) Southern Balsam Lake Drive - Dave Donais
- 13) Northern Balsam Lake Drive - Bob Nixon



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Balsam Lake Association Defined Geographical Areas