

MEETING MINUTES



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday November 7, 2018

Mississauga Valley Community Centre, Program Room 2 from 7-9 pm

Board Attendance	Board Member Regrets	Board Member No Regrets/Vacancy	Guests
Gayle Laws- President Kevin Pullis- VP Karen Forrest, Treasurer Dave Carty – Past President Kim Miedema – Toto Jeff Meisui- JD Jill Sellar– Q Park Mary Smith- Garnetwood Carol Mitchell- Parkway Belt	Alex Izzo – Etobicoke Valley and Director Membership and Communications Colleen Connor-- Lakeside	Secretary Director IT/Webmaster Director, Fundraising and Events	Jamie Ferguson- City of Mississauga Park users/ members

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:05. Jill Sellar was appointed Secretary.

Carol Mitchell moved and Jeff Meisui seconded that the agenda be approved. Carried.

It was confirmed that the AGM had quorum.

2. The minutes from November 8, 2017 were reviewed.

Dave Carty moved and Jeff Meisui seconded that the minutes be approved and posted on the website. Carried

3. REPORTS:

a) President Report—Gayle Laws: First “thank you” to:

To the 7 park reps who have done an amazing job this year, with fundraising, park clean-ups, ordering and spreading wood chips, being available to park users. They are the foundation of LFM and their time, energy and commitment is invaluable. Please help them out

To Kira Wilkinson, a former board member, who formatted two newsletters for us—Fall 2017 and Fall 2018. Amazing job—really appreciate it

To Marc LeBlanc who provided beautiful pictures that were taken of dogs at the parks for the newsletter

To Hugo Reinoso—who saved the day for me- -by stepping up to help with our website after the former webmaster quit three weeks ago. He emailed out the newsletter, notices of the AGM, and the agenda. He proactively asked each person to update their profile—if you have not done that, please do.

To Karen Forest, who has been our treasurer for many years—who tracks our money coming in, and ensures all proper accounting procedures are followed.

To Jeff and Kevin—for your social media presence on the various FB pages -- many laugh out loud posts—help develop a sense of community to LFM

To Gavin Longmuir, the city manager who oversees LFM. He has been a good support to us this past year—and has ensured many initiatives have been accomplished. We now have Jamie Ferguson as our main contact. The LFM board welcomes you and looks forward to a collaborative relationship.

This past year

Once again we had vacancies on the board, which limited our ability to undertake initiatives that we wanted to do.

1. Our biggest challenge this past year was the lack of functionality of the website. It was upgraded to WordPress the year before, but after an upgrade on WordPress, many of our customized Plug Ins broke. We could not accept online memberships; we could not develop our business sponsorship page—it was a mess. Thankfully a volunteer stepped up, Krista, and she spent countless hours sorting it out and getting it fixed. We did eventually have to pay a contractor to do some programming for us, under Krista's experience direction, to streamline the programming and reduce the number of plug ins. It took a very long time—almost a year to sort it out....but it is now done and functional.

However, the website needs a lot of work—new updated content, development of pages, the coordination and outreach to various rescue dogs, etc.

It has a huge possibility to raise our profile and do some real good for dogs. But it needs dedicated volunteer hours to get there.

We want to promote and expand our Dog Memorial page to honour our loved ones who have passed.

We want to promote local businesses – those that support services to dogs such as dog walkers, groomers, etc but also supporters of ours—veterinarians, florists, accountants, lawyers, etc

2. There were some serious incidents of dog bites and injuries—in a few parks—dog bites human, dog bites and injures other dogs. Quite upsetting. LFM identified in its Business Plan three years ago that it would like to do educational programming in the parks. Teach people about dog behaviour, signs of aggression vs play, when and how to intervene. How to report incidents, etc. We have not had the dedicated time or volunteers to do this but it may be a priority for the 2019 board.
3. Children in the park. This issue came up due the very unfortunate, high profile incident where a little girl was bitten by a dog. The LFM Board had come up with a Code of Conduct for children in the parks that was originally posted on all the display boards. It is on our website not as visible as it should be. It's an emotional issue, with arguments on both sides as to whether children belong in dog parks. I understand that the city may be conducting a consultation process.
4. The city wrote and posted new signage at each park entrance. LFM was provided an opportunity to have input.

5. The city took over the grass cutting and generally it was pretty good—better than in previous years. We had a few incidents of trucks in parks while dogs were running around, or gates being left open but we let the city know and they will take appropriate precautions this does not happen again.
6. Another project for next year's board is to update the LFM manual, as it is now 3 years old. A very good resource for board members as it is a source for transferring knowledge among the board members, as the turnout can be high for certain positions.
7. We would like to promote the parks, in addition to attending Dog Fest, but also have articles in local rate payer magazines, Mississauga news etc, so would really like someone who has experience in publicity and communications to step forward. LFM is only as strong as its volunteers—we urge everyone to get involved—if a whole bunch of park users do a little then lots will get done to make the parks better.
8. Sadly there is not much movement on getting more leash-free parks in the city, even though the general population is growing and we know the number of dogs is increasing too. This is of particular interest for me, as I would love to see a whole bunch of “dog runs” made available throughout the city—where people can walk to, and not drive. Still hopeful and we will continue to promote this idea to the city.

Lastly, we need you to consider being part of the Board. There are vacancies open. We have a supportive team to help orient you. We have a manual, we have previous minutes, we have the love of dogs. We need you.

- a) Update from City of Mississauga: Jamie Ferguson was introduced. Jamie has six years of experience with the city in the Department of Forestry and has been Manager of Park Services since September 2018. Recent updates include:
 - City plans to deliver sheds to each park before winter for LFM to store its equipment such as rakes, shovels, wheel barrels, tarps etc.
 - City plans to install benches in each park next year.
 - City plans to fence the wet area at Lakeside the week of November 12 2018. Will look into placing gates at each end.
 - Poop recycling receptacles will be installed at Q-park Tuesday November 12, Lakeside Wednesday November 13 and Toto. Looking at Jack Darling but need to coordinate with Region of Peel.

Children in the Parks

City looking at other municipalities and their bylaws for children in leash free parks. Issue was last brought to city council in 2013 and 2015, LFM was consulted, and recommended no ban. LFM to be consulted again next year with the new council addressed this issue again. Animal Services reviewed LFM Children's Code of Conduct.

Signage

City is reviewing their signage regarding code of conduct at the parks and may update those signs. For instance, they may clarify ways to report problems (who to call) and are considering that there is already too much info on the boards.

Call 311 to get Animal Services. However Lakeside calls are routed to Halton Region and Garnetwood to Toronto, so need to clarify on those signs to call the full number.

Dog walkers

Dog Walkers need a \$250 permit to take 4-8 dogs into the parks. An extra \$50 is charged for extra walkers. This bylaw is enforceable and fines can be levied. Bylaw officers are monitoring the parks. Question whether walkers need to have the permit visible, and/or with them while in the parks. Tess from Lakeside/JD questioned whether 8 dogs per walker is reasonable and what other municipalities do. Renee from JD is an experienced dog walker and has extra walkers for extra dogs. Eric from Etobicoke considered control with dogs off leash vs dogs on leash. Marisa from Lakeside said there was a lot of consultation with the city to arrive at the decision to allow 8 dogs per walker. Michael added that in Mississauga, the clients are geographically spread out, so bringing less than 8 dogs to the park was not economical. In Toronto, the maximum number of dogs per dog walker is 4, but the geographical area to collect dogs is smaller.

Injuries from dog bites

Jamie reported that there were five dog bites to humans reported to the city in the last two years. One was a child, two were adults, and two were caused by breaking up dog fights. Marisa questioned how many of the bites were caused by dogs with owners vs dogs with walkers, but Jamie did not have this information.

Renee added that walkers are liable for the dogs under their supervision, they love dogs, and don't want injuries to their clients' dogs. Just because a dog is wearing a muzzle does not mean it's aggressive; it may be a poop eater. If the number of dogs per walker is reduced in Mississauga, the dog walkers will not be able to stay in business.

Eric suggested that it would be beneficial to provide info on how to prevent dog bites, what to do after an incident and that often, humans fights follow.

Dog poop

George said that dogs with walkers scatter and poop all over. Renee said they do their best to pick up. Jessica said is not offended if she was directed to a missed poop. Marissa and Michael mentioned 'poop karma', and that dog walkers pick up lots of extra poop. It has been observed that there is an abundance of poop leftover from the weekends when walkers are not there.

b) Financial:

The treasurer Karen Forrest presented the year end financials.

Moved by Kim Miedema and seconded by Kevin Pulls, that the yearend financial reports be accepted. Carried.

The LFM fiscal period is October 1 to September 30 each year. The current balance is \$42,216.90. Upon inquiry from the members, it was apparent that some fundraising dollars were not allocated to specific parks (but were put into general revenue). This will be corrected in future statement.

LFM is in good financial condition with funds in reserve and able to cover its expenses, including upgrades to the website and support for new parks. LFM no longer pays for grass cutting but the expectation is to pay for hydro, park enhancements and education. LFM paid for a wind shelter

fort Parkway Belt as a pilot project. The previous year, LFM paid for the fencing and a display board for the JD small dog area.

100% of donations and park fundraising are allocated to specific parks, unless not specified. 50% of membership fees are allocated to parks and 50% to LFM general fund for its operating expenses and projects. LFM is appreciative of the \$5000 annual grant from Purina.

LFM plans to post a list of members at each park with date of membership, member's first name and dog(s) name only. LFM will focus on memberships next year.

Susan from Q-park asked how to request an enhancement. First ask park rep, then the board, then the city to price out the enhancement and offer a work plan.

4. Zone Updates:

- a) Etobicoke Valley: Had a large clean up in May 2018 with volunteers. Needles were found in the woods, and at LFM request, the city cleaned them up safely. There are new entrance gates and the parking lot was fixed. The very tall weed/grass were cut.
- b) Lakeside Park: The wet area is to be fenced. The city provided lighting at the entrance at no cost to LFM. Light from an adjacent, pre-existing fixture was added to shine into the park at no cost to LFM.
- c) Garnetwood: Kevin said the wind blew a tree down; there was land erosion, ants and they need dirt. They did a fundraiser and raised \$800.
- d) Jack Darling: Water is turned off for winter. They had a successful BBQ in June. Sponsors donated gift baskets.
- e) Parkway Belt: Park users are enjoying the wind shelter. Panels blew down during the wind storm and the city arranged for it to be fixed. They had BBQs and raised money due to great volunteers. Noticed new dogs at the park.
- f) Q Park: Both lights are out, and 311 has been notified. More wood chips and gate repair have been requested to 311. Bulletin board is being renovated and notices will be posted. Wish list includes lighting for the north end. Maybe possible to use existing Peel building to add lights to shine into park. We would like to expand the park to the north east, where land is currently not being used by Peel. We would like a new fence on the east and south side. Fence is only 3-4 feet high and large dogs can easily jump it. This fence is adjacent to Erin Mills Parkway and it is a safety issue for dogs and drivers.
- g) Toto: Will have Marc do Santa photos again this year and request donations for this. A chiropractic clinic donated loot bags. They would like someone to come in and talk about dog behaviour. The water line leaked and was fixed. Some dogs had a great time in the spray. They lost some trees due to wind and infestation.

5. Nominations and Elections

There are four vacancies and nominations are being sought for:

- a. President
- b. Secretary
- c. Director Fundraising and Events
- d. Director IT and Website

After people are elected/acclaimed to the board, they are assigned specific positions after considering interest and skills. This is usually done at the December transition meeting. Being on the board requires a time commitment of 2-6 hours per month.

Angela from Toto volunteered because she's been using the parks for six years, and wants to give back to LFM.

Hugo from Parkway Belt volunteered as he's already been helping out with the website.

Jessica, a dog walker from Lakeside, volunteered as she is at the parks 2-3 times a day, 7 days a week.

Angela, Hugo and Jessica were approved to be on the board.

Others can still come forward after the meeting as there are still vacancies.

6. Open discussion:

- a) George from Lakeside asked if LFM paying for the fence around the wet area and was informed that the city is paying for it.
- b) Sarah from JD asked for water in the small dog area. This request can be placed on a list of enhancements, but it may be very expensive.
- c) Someone requested that Toto place a sign for the small dog area. The sign vanished years ago. Kim responded that she needs the city's permission to post again. Some problems keep reoccurring with a latch; Kim is aware, calls 311 and fixes it herself.
- d) Hugo from Parkway Belt said the garbage cans have been gone for a while and would like them back. Perhaps a lid with a small opening so that household garbage cannot go into it.
- e) Peter from Toto said people were using marijuana in the park. It's legal to smoke marijuana, but not to drive under the influence. Jamie stated that the parks have a bylaw that cannabis is not allowed in any city parks. For those who smoke regular cigarettes, please discard of butts safely.
- f) Renee from JD stated that it's very busy on summer weekends. Some park goers park their cars in the parking lot near the LFM entrance and accidentally walk into the park without knowing its leash free. A bolder sign is needed.
- g) Eric from Toronto said that a lot of Torontonians are using Mississauga leash free parks. Perhaps LFM could speak to Toronto to help them improve their own parks.
- h) Arthur from Q-park requested signage regarding dog behaviour. Sheridan College has art students who will do free art and *Drawings by Lili Chin* may do free graphics.
- i) Someone recommended the book *How to Speak Dog* by Canadian Stanley Cohen. Jill from Q-park agreed it was a good resource.
- j) Marissa said there are many YouTube videos available and we could advertise these in the parks. Kim from Toto said dog training is an unregulated industry, anyone can call themselves a trainer. Dog Behaviourists are regulated. Tess recommended *the 77 website* which shows that most dog bites to children are from dogs they know.

7. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm. Minutes taken by Jill Sellar