

LEASH FREE MISSISSAUGA
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AGM MEETING MINUTES



Wednesday November 4 2020

Virtual AGM Meeting via Zoom

7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Board Attendance	Board Member Regrets	Board Member No Regrets/Vacancy	Guests
Angela-President and Communications	Margaret-Garnetwood	Gayle Laws-Past President	Jamie Ferguson- City of Mississauga
Kevin Pullis- VP		vacant-Q Park rep	Peter Parnuk Andrea Shields Jonathan Edwin
Rose Shao-Treasurer		vacant-Director of Fundraising and Event Planning:	Virginia Cook Kimberlee Hutchinson Bruce Hunter Renee Skea Theodora Philos Suzan Michez Allen Usypchuk Manny Binaday Stewart E Danker Janet McLean Dave Carty Lisa Bailey Jan Smirti (Pim) Dan H Veronica Cheng Sim Capo
Jill Sellar–Secretary			
Hugo Reinoso-IT			
Ryan Verwymeren-EV			
Jeff Meisui- JD			
Ellen Lockley-Lakeside			
Carol Mitchell- Parkway Belt			
Bob Dowling-Totoredaca			

1. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 7:08. Carol moved and Jeff seconded that the agenda be approved.
2. Approval of Minutes
The AGM minutes from November 6 2019 were reviewed. Angela moved and Hugo seconded that the minutes be approved.
3. City of Mississauga-Jamie reported that this year was unique due to Covid-19. They did not accomplish as much as they wanted because they were understaffed. The City recently passed some new Parks bylaws. The first one prohibits children under age 12 to enter the

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leash free zones. This was due to dog attack on a child in 2018, recent complaints to the City and survey results from Leash Free park users. The second bylaw limits professional Dog walkers to access the leash free zones from 9am-4pm, Monday-Friday only. New signs will be posted this month. Effective 2021, non-resident fee for dog walkers has increased to 10% more than resident fees. This is inline with City policy.

The Sutera dog waste containers pilot program of continues. The actual Sutera company has recently taken over and service has improved.

No update on temporary/permanent Paul Coffey park LF zone. When Jamie has an update, he will notify Angela.

The new Director of Parks met with the park planning team to potentially revise leash free zone policy so it will be quicker and easier to put in new leash free zones. Funds are allocated each year for leash free zone development. Looking to identify new possible sites. New dual garbage/recycling bins are being phased into all parks. LFM will get them too, Toto already has them.

Peel Reigon will do work late next summer along the road near Toto's north parking lot. It will take 6-8 months. Not sure yet how it will affect the LFM, but Jamie has requested that temporary fencing be used so that the entire park is not shut down. Jamie will do his best to have minimal impact on the LF zone.

The City is ensuring that sand is in place for each zone. Jamie reminded us to use sand **only in zones and not on paths leading up to gate**. Too much sand is a problem for storm water management. If paths leading to LF zones are icy, call 311 immediately. It's a health and safety issue, so the City will respond quickly. The City will use Eco traction or salt depending on how close it is to the gate.

LFM will soon get an email to renew CORA (community group program) with the City within 90 days of the AGM.

Installation of donated Metrolink park benches was delayed due to Covid-19. Rose asked about purchasing weather shelters. Park development handles shelters. Bus shelters are too small now, we would have look into other options. Jamie will have updates in 2021. Rose asked if lighting has to be paid by LFM and Jamie confirmed that we do. A request to 311 needs to be made for lighting. Difficult to pick up dog poop if you can't see it in the dark. The Park team that deals with that is very busy with other tasks right now.

Allan asked for wood chips for Q-park. Jamie asked that requests are done by park reps or the board, otherwise the woodchips sit and get mouldy. **Jill to order woodchips. Allan also said Q-park lights are coming on an hour after it gets dark. Jamie to adjust light schedule.**

Dan H asked for JD and Lakeside to have water access in the winter. Jamie replied that the City can't provide water in winter because it freezes. Dan replied that the bathrooms have water. Bathrooms are heated and there is not viable way to get it to the zone. Susan M requested a water bottle filling station be installed in the bathroom at JD to access water. Sink clearance is too low to fill a bottle. **Jamie to bring that recommendation to the City and respond to LFM.**

Dan H added that parking at JD and Lakeside wasn't sufficient and parked cars were damaging the park. He requested that certain spots be reserved for LFM users, but Jamie said its not allowed. All parking was a problem this summer due to increased use because of Covid-19. Corporate security can be called to ticket cars parked improperly.

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4. Park Rep Updates

- a) Etobicoke Valley: Ryan reported a lot of change this year. A lot of trees were removed and some grass grew. The parking lot is small so fortunately local business allow parking in their lots. No personality problems with people dogs this year. Storm drain issues have been solved by City with few disruptions to the park. Green space people volunteers came and planted trees and were respectful of the dogs.
- b) Garnetwood: Margaret was absent. Kevin reports that there are no more problems with people accessing shed since the combination was changed. **Kevin is still waiting for material from the City to fill hazardous holes.**
- c) Jack Darling: Jeff reported that the park has been well maintained by the City.
- d) Lakeside: Ellen reported they are enjoying the newly fenced area around the swamp. Lots of woodchips were spread by lots of volunteers. Lighting is not good. One of the Suterases were full but the City addressed it the same day.
- e) Parkway Belt: Carol says city has been slow with requests for wood chips and soil and a downed tree. Gate needs repair. Good otherwise.
- f) Q-Park: Robert resigned, so position is vacant. Jill tried recruiting for a new rep, but no luck so far. Jill says the city replaced the fence on the west side of the park with a good chain link fence. Unfortunately, there are gaps at the bottom that are being currently being addressed by the City. **Jamie and Jill will meet at the park to discuss options.** We would like to see the cow fence removed from the middle of the south section and move the gate to the narrows. This would divide the park into north and south instead of the current configuration of east and west. Park user Susan M emphasized the problem with the extensive gaps along the new west fence. She can no longer use the park because her 30lb dog often escapes. She said the east fence construction was perfect and the City should follow the same model. Jill added that City workers were at the park today and left the service gate wide open. Three dogs left, but all returned without incident. Jill suggested to the workers that the wood chips would be better used by spreading over the grassless areas than being put into the gaps under the fence. Dogs are excellent diggers. The City workers respectfully declined and put the wood chips in the gaps. He was following the directive of his supervisor (below Jamie).
- g) Toto: Jamie reported that the water will be off by the end of the week. Bob reported that the water line broke 4 days ago and park users fixed it temporarily. The City has still has not addressed it even though they have been called three times. Garbage cans are attached to fence, but Bob would like it moved to the other side of the fence or it will be used instead of the Sutura. Seven to eight trees marked to be removed are still there. Jamie says that Forestry, not Parks, would deals with tree removal. Forestry would have done a risk assessment and removal could take up to a year. Rear gate needs repair, 311 has been called. Jamie says no decision has been made regarding the hoses distributing water throughout the park. Will the City allow them to remain or not? Holes are staying filled.

5. Reports:

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- a) President Report: Angela said Covid-19 is a problem for all, however, people are social distancing and using the parks responsibly. All meetings are through Zoom and things are taking longer. Angela is happy with work board members are doing. New bylaws for children and dog walkers. People are not picking up poop, it is a health hazard and some dogs eat it. The poop situation will be worse when the snow melts. Please pick up yours and anyone's else you see. Park reps are picking up more than their share. Please remember to close gates securely when leaving even when being Covid-19 cautious. Some parks are close to major roadways and it a danger to our dogs. LFM had a plan for a big fundraiser and awareness event but it was put on hold due to Covid-19. Please contact anyone on the board if you can volunteer with events or anything else, or have suggestions or comments. Angela will email membership with any important items.
- b) Vice President: Kevin had nothing to report.
- c) Financial Update: Rose shared a power point presentation. Since we no longer require membership fees, revenue is down 40%. Donations are up 7.7%. We have \$56,000 in the bank. We have over 350 registered members even though there are many, many more park users. Donations are up 7.7%. Toto has the highest revenue. We spent less than \$1000 on administrative costs this year. We need to improve fundraising to offset loss of membership fees. Purina grant still unknown. City rules means that Purina is the only sponsor allowed to advertise in the park. Stewart knows people at Purina and will help Rose contact them. We still have not received a reply to our annual request for \$5000. We can allow anyone to advertise on our website and social media. Rose recommended that the money be spent instead of just sitting in the bank. Link to financial statements: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1QHwtCNf3bz4-X5X0ATVvAW_7--6pChqegeqSPeJdunE/edit?usp=sharing
- d) Director of IT and Webmaster: Hugo reports that we are meeting the needs of LFM and being kept up to date. There have been few postings and not much activity due to Covid-19. Meeting minutes are being posted. Hugo asked if we should invest more in website or social media? We need to determine a strategy for the future.
- e) Director of Fundraising and Event Planning: vacant

6. Nominations and Elections

There are two important vacancies on the Board

- a) Director of Fundraising and Events

Sim would like to help with social media and website, but does not have the time to be a director. She has 50,000 people following on social media already and can connect them to our website. Veronica would like to help with social media as well. Veronica asked what the expectations of the position were. Jill to send director job descriptions to them. Angela to send meeting invites to Sim, Veronica and Stewart.

- b) Q-Park rep-Angela asked, but no one volunteered. Anyone interested, can contact anyone on the board.

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7. Not-for-Profit vs Charity-Rose presented the pros and cons. We are currently an NPO but could potentially become a charity since we no longer collect membership fees. NPOs are less regulated regarding spending. Charities can't keep \$50,000 in the bank with no plan like we are currently doing. Only charities can issue tax receipts and this could generate more donations. We would need a very stable board and qualified Treasurer to become a charity. Something to think about going forward. Ryan says it would be easy to spend money on advertising. Ryan suggests spending money upgrading parking lots and making them more accessible. Perhaps we should speak to city council regarding becoming a charity because it's complicated. Angela recommended that we remain an NPO for now. Pim supported us becoming a charity eventually.

8. New Business/questions/discussion

Ryan suggested that the City should pay for lighting since it's a safety issue. Ryan offered to write a letter to the city asking for risk management assessment for lighting. He recommends that LFM refuses to pay for lighting. Jill raised the concern that if we emphasize the danger of poor lighting, the City may consider closing the parks after dark. Ryan suggested that the cost of lights would be less than the cost of potential lawsuits. **LFM will discuss this with Jamie at next meeting.** Cost of installing a light post is about \$40,000. Rose suggested lighting along the fence or ground could be an option. Jill added that piggy backing on existing municipal lights may be an option. We need to increase our membership numbers to have influence with city and councilors. Rose recommended reaching out to City councilors to get support for park lighting especially if it is a safety issue. Jill added that not all regular parks have lighting and they are used at night as well. LF zone are probably used more in the evening though. Angela suggested that Jamie tour the parks and view the lighting at night. The board agreed to discuss the issue with Jamie before approaching councilors. **Park reps to inspect their parks at night to look for hazards.** Rose suggest that this be our goal for the upcoming year and it be posted on the website. Rose asked about other cities. Jill reported that High Park has minimal lighting for a huge, secluded park. Many other Toronto LF parks are on residential streets and have street lighting. It would help influence the city if we had more members.

Park reps reported on their lighting situation:

EV doesn't have its own light, but gets light from adjacent commercial buildings. Coyotes are present.

Garnetwood has lights

Lakeside could use light, one light exists, but is not effective.

Parkway Belt has no lighting

JD gets some light from the tennis courts but they are on timers because residents complain.

Q-park needs light at the north end-perhaps we can piggy back from light on adjacent water municipal pumping station. Susan added that there is a gate at the north end and the park is beside a ravine where coyotes live.

Toto is really dark, there is only one light in the parking lot.

Jill asked that park reps please take down your AGM signs and store in your shed.

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Next Meeting is on December 2 2020 at 7pm.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52 pm.

Minutes taken by Jill Sellar, Secretary