

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, November 5, 2025 | In-Person - Called to order at 7:06 pm

<p>Board Attendance</p>	<p>Carol Mitchell, <i>Park Representative - Parkway Belt</i> Daniel Scouten, <i>Director at Large</i> Martina Filipic, <i>Board Secretary</i> Melissa Persechini, <i>Director at Large</i> Robert Dowling, <i>Park Rep - Totoredaca</i></p>
<p>Board Member Regrets</p> <p>Vacancies</p>	<p>Daniel Harrington, <i>Park Representative - Jack Darling</i> Dare Olafudeji, <i>Webmaster</i> Gabriela Caro Leon, <i>Park Representative, Garnetwood</i> Linda Shang, <i>Treasurer</i></p> <hr/> <p>President Vice-President Director, Programs & Events Director, Fundraising Director, Memberships & Volunteers Director, Public Relations & Communications Park Representative, Paul Coffey Park Representative, Etobicoke Valley Park Representative, Garnetwood Park Representative, Lakeside Park Representative, Quineppenon</p>
<p>Guests</p>	<p>Members of the public and park users were in attendance. No formal City of Mississauga representatives were present at this AGM.</p>

Minutes

- 1. Call to Order:** Moved by Carol, seconded by Ellen
- 2. Approval of 2025 AGM Agenda:** Moved (Melissa P.) seconded (Carol M.)



3. Approval of minutes from November 5, 2024 Annual General Meeting:

Approved (Tim F.) seconded (Ellen L.)

4. Opening Remarks and New Logo Overview

- a. The Secretary welcomed attendees and acknowledged that the President role was vacant at the time of the meeting. The Board thanked members and volunteers for their continued support and emphasized that their engagement keeps the leash-free zones welcoming, safe, and fun.
- b. The Board provided a brief overview of Leash-Free Mississauga's updated logo, noting that the new design improves legibility for signage and digital platforms. The 'E's in the logo resemble open leash clasps, emphasizing the organization's focus on safe leash-free spaces and responsible dog ownership.
- c. The mandate of Leash-Free Mississauga was reiterated, including advocacy for and on behalf of leash-free zones, coordinating fundraising and support of leash-free activities, serving as a liaison between dog owners, zone users, neighbourhood associations, and the City, recruiting and maintaining members, providing forums for information-sharing and education, and promoting responsible dog ownership in Mississauga.

5. Presentation and Adoption of 2025 Annual Financial Report:

- a. The Board presented the 2025 financial statements. Key expenditures (\$4,134.83) included ongoing park support costs, website and IT upgrades, communications, and consultant fees for board development and governance support.
- b. Overall, the organization remains financially stable with sufficient reserves (\$60,740.41) to continue supporting leash-free zones, advocacy, and community engagement activities in the coming year.
- c. Motion to adopt the 2025 financial statements as presented. Motion moved and seconded; carried.

6. Operations, Parks and Advocacy

- a. Advocacy efforts on behalf of parks experiencing maintenance issues were highlighted, such as deteriorating surfaces, lack of wood chips, erosion, and other safety concerns. Members expressed frustration with slow or inadequate responses to maintenance requests.
- b. It was reiterated that Leash-Free Mississauga is an advocacy and liaison body rather than an operational arm of the City. The Board will continue to document concerns, escalate issues to Parks staff and councillors, and encourage members to use available channels (311 and councillor outreach) to report problems.
- c. The Board noted changes in City contacts since the previous year, with Parks staff transitions from Jamie Ferguson to a new primary contact, Leah Silverman. The Board intends to maintain and strengthen this relationship to ensure park issues are heard and addressed.

7. Membership, Communications and Volunteers

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- a. There is a continued need to diversify engagement activities and explore events that both activate the community and support LFM's mission.
 - b. Plans were discussed to enhance communications and social media presence, emphasizing education on responsible dog ownership, park rules, and etiquette. The Board reiterated that additional volunteers are needed, especially in parks without dedicated representatives, and outlined intentions to improve volunteer recruitment, onboarding, and support

8. Constitution, Roles, and Responsibilities Discussion

- a. Members and the Board engaged in a discussion about the accessibility and clarity of the Constitution and role descriptions. Questions were raised about how prospective volunteers can understand what is expected of board members and park representatives before committing to a role.
- b. The Board agreed that clearer documentation of responsibilities, decision-making processes, and communication with the City would help build transparency and support for current and future volunteers.

9. Approval of Slate of Directors

- a. Slate of officers - Approved (Bruce H.) Seconded (Craig H.)
 - i. Linda Shang - Treasurer
 - ii. Martina Filipic - Board Secretary
 - iii. Dare Olafudeji - Webmaster
 - iv. Robert Dowling - Park Representative, Tororedaca
 - v. Daniel Scouten - Park Representative, Paul Coffey
 - vi. Carol Mitchell - Park Representative, Parkway Belt
 - vii. Gabriela Caro Leon - Park Representative, Garnetwood
- b. **Open positions Remaining**
 - i. Director, Programs & Events
 - ii. Director, Fundraising
 - iii. Director, Memberships & Volunteers
 - iv. Director, Public Relations & Communications
 - v. Park Representative, Etobicoke Valley
 - vi. Park Representative, Garnetwood
- c. **Open positions filled during 2025 AGM**
 - i. Jennifer Agombar - President. Approved (Laurie D.), seconded (Monica P.)..
 - ii. Melissa Persechini - Vice President, moved from Director at Large. Approved (Martina F), seconded (Craig H.)
 - iii. Daniel Scouten - Paul Coffey Park Representative, moving from Director at Large and rejoining as Park Rep when it reopens
 - iv. Keira Penny - Park Representative, Lakeside. Approved (Janet M.), seconded (Ellen L.)
 - v. Alan Barnett - Park Representative, Quinneppenon. Approved (Glen S.), seconded (Monica P.).

- vi. Craig Hawkins - Director at Large. Approved (Jackie C.), seconded (Melissa P.), replacing Daniel Scouten's previous role

10. Open Member Forum

- a. **Park Maintenance and City Relations:** Members discussed ongoing maintenance issues, including surfacing, mud, lack of wood chips, erosion, and general safety concerns in certain parks. There was notable frustration about the pace and effectiveness of responses from the City and clarity around who is responsible for resolving issues. The Board committed to documenting outstanding maintenance issues by park, following up with the City's Parks team and new contact Leah, and providing clearer guidance to members on how to report issues through 311 and by contacting their councillors.
- b. **Standards Across Parks.** Members emphasized the need for more consistent standards across all leash-free zones, including appropriate surfacing, safe and secure fencing, clear signage, and, where feasible, separation between large and small dog areas. The Board agreed to work toward articulating a set of minimum expectations for leash-free zones to guide advocacy with Parks staff and councillors.
- c. **Board Transparency and Communication.** Members requested improved communication about Board decisions, priorities, and interactions with the City. Suggestions included clearer board role descriptions on the website and more regular updates on major motions and outcomes. The Board agreed to review website content to better explain roles, responsibilities, and Leash-Free Mississauga's mandate, and to share summaries of key motions and decisions following AGMs and significant meetings.
- d. **Membership, Volunteers, and Events.** Discussion also focused on how to better support existing volunteers and avoid burnout, as well as ideas for events and outreach to attract new volunteers and educate park users. The Board acknowledged these needs and committed to exploring additional engagement opportunities and clearer pathways for members to get involved beyond formal Board roles.
- e. **Dog Walkers.** Suggestions to give them voting rights were raised at the AGM.

11. Notices of Motion or Special Resolutions

- a. Members expressed the need for a second Jack Darling Park Representative. Approved (Craig H., seconded (Jackie C.).
- b. Making park representatives more visible via dog park bulletins, website and mailing list

12. Action Items & Follow Ups

- a. Compile a park-by-park list of maintenance issues (including surfacing, fencing, and wood chip needs) and submit it to the City's Parks contact.
- b. Arrange an introductory meeting between key Board members and the new Parks contact (Leah) to review ongoing concerns and expectations.
- c. Review and update website content to clarify Leash-Free Mississauga's mandate, governance structure, and board/park rep role descriptions. Fix contact form for member signups as "nonce error" keeps appearing. Add a second Jack Darling Park Rep posting.

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- d. Develop and communicate a set of minimum standards or expectations for leash-free zones to guide advocacy with Parks staff and councillors.
 - e. Plan a communications and social media campaign to welcome new Board and park representatives, promote volunteer opportunities, and reinforce responsible dog ownership messaging.
 - f. Continue the work begun with governance consultant Diane Lapointe to finalize role descriptions, succession planning, and onboarding materials for new directors and park representatives.

13. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm. Moved (Bruce H.), seconded by (Bob D.).

Minutes taken by Martina Filipic