

# FIRA Annual General Meeting October 6, 2024

## Minutes

*15 members in attendance plus 5 board members*

**Presidents Message:** Cindy Woodrow thanked the members in attendance & gave a big thank you to all of our volunteers. She commented that we had a great summer, so busy with activities! We are continually looking for new ideas and activity leaders. Please remember, with the cold & flu season starting, please stay home if you are ill and keep washing your hands.

**Approve June General Meeting Minutes:** Donna Smith made a motion to accept the minutes, Dianne Kelly seconded and the motion was unanimously carried.

### Previous Business

~ Hall Improvements:

\* Remaining for Phase 1: Wall decor: Carrie commented that the decor for the bathrooms remain a work in progress. Laura Golbeck purchased a frame for the Haliburton Lake print and it is now hanging with the other 3 lake prints.

~ Outdoor sign upgrade update:

\* Cindy reported that we plan to get more word phrases for the sign. Cindy & Jeff will go through what we have and decide what to purchase.

~ Grants:

\* Resilience Community funds: Cindy announced that we did not receive this grant due to the competition. There was a huge response from groups with more needs. Will keep an eye out for new grants in the new year.

### Financial Update

\* Dues collections & Fundraising. Joe DiFrancesco reported that all the member dues seem to be in unless we get new members.

There are 5 new members this year while 2 members did not return. We received \$275 for hall rental donations. Our fundraising is close to what we brought in last year.

- \* Operating expenses: Our costs are higher due to a full year of internet payments, otherwise they are in line with prior years .
- \* Major Improvements/Expenses: This year's improvements include the new sign, small folding table and tent for \$1,582.
- \* HHHS Donations: FIRA donated \$1,554 to the hospital.
- \* 2023 Records Audit - Reviewed & approved by Peter & Gail Connelly.
- \* Propane Program Review: Propane cost is up .02 from last year. We have 117 households & 167 members enrolled in the program. 88% of our members participate in the program.

## **Fundraising**

~ Macgregor Meat Sale: Graham Newton stated that he believes we had a poor sale year because they were away, however, it was still a good fundraiser for 2024 - thank you Graham!

~ Pancake Breakfast - Carrie DiFrancesco reported for Jeff Vanderkuur:

- \* We had a record year! The number of volunteers contributing & the fact that we served 180 customers was amazing.
- \* The rainy morning may have worked in our favor bringing folks out for breakfast.
- \* Features Brasserie was a huge help! They closed the restaurant that morning with a sign directing folks to come to the breakfast. They also provided butter pats when we couldn't purchase them & donated cups of fruit compote to offer for each breakfast.
- \* As always, we offer sincere thanks to Independent for all of their years of donations that make this event possible
- \* Unfortunately, Jeff & Jenn need to step down from running the Pancake Breakfast due to family obligations and travel. We need a new lead for next year but there is plenty of support. We have a good system in place for future volunteers to follow.

- \* It was great to have all the vendors in attendance and we hope for a few more next year.
- ~ Pig Roast & AGM.
- \* Thank you Mark & Donna Smith and Wayne MacKenzie!! They have been here all day and we are all looking forward to pork for dinner after the meeting.
- \* Expenses are a little less this year due to West Guilford sourcing the pig from a new supplier.
- \* Thank you to all the volunteers!
- ~ Club 200
- \* Graham (with earlier information from Bill Odell): Not all tickets were sold but many were purchased at the Cornhole Tourney and there are a few left for sale now.
- \* There is thought to possibly find another helper with sales and we'll take a look at that for next year.
- \* The first draw will be at the Halloween Happy Hour on Saturday, October 26th. The second draw will occur at the Disco & the '70s with DJ Dave Bright Happy Hour on Saturday, November 16th. And, the third drawing is to be determined in December.

### **Activities/other committee updates**

- ~ Board Activity Coordinator
- \* Fitness groups: **All On Hold.** Cindy announced she & Gwen Mannings are resuming Yoga again on Tuesdays & Fridays in Oct & Nov. Continue to check the website for activity updates!!
- \* Carrie is discussing the possibility of Spring - Summer Yoga / Boxercise classes with an instructor that recently inquired.
- \* Games - Euchre, Cribbage and Mahjong: Cindy: All still being attended.
- \* Darts - slower in summer but starting up again for the Fall & Winter. There is talk about having a dart league club.
- \* Crafts - Dianne Kelly reported that the Wednesday Ladies Coffee & Crafts group continues to have lots of fun. This group is no longer considered a sewing day and they now have lots of interesting craft projects. Laurie Hillaby explained that the next project involves pine cones. There are crafts for sale in the

hallway and an afghan raffle. There are tickets available and the draw will take place at the cooking exchange on Dec 11. All items are priced so stop on in!

- \* Cycling club for guys: Jeff reported at an earlier meeting that there may be interest in a cycling club to begin next summer.

~ Social Events:

- \* Summer Happy hours: Lynn offered thanks all the hosts who participated this summer and commented that it is a great way to meet new folks and see the lake from different vantage points. A thought for next year is to maybe avoid scheduling on a holiday weekend.
- \* Sand Bay Happy Hour: Cindy & Carrie reported that this impromptu event was really fun, we received lots of compliments and some folks showed up that don't normally attend at the hall.
- \* Winter Happy Hours: Cindy: We are continuing with our monthly happy hours and will be themed. Also, we'll have bonfires when we can.

~ Special Events:

- \* Cornhole Tournament - Drew & Kristen Bishop hosted this tournament for the 2nd year on Thursday, September 26th. We had 28 participants and numerous spectators on a beautiful day. Thank you, Drew & Kristen!!
- \* Harvest Lunch - This year's annual lunch is taking place on Wednesday, Oct 9th. Any lady is welcome and it is not a Wednesday session lunch so consider attending. You are welcome to bring a non-FIRA friend.
- \* Spanish Lessons - Conversational Spanish lessons are being offered by Denise Gorman Wight. Dates & times are being worked out.
- \* We are going to try hosting the larger themed Happy Hours on Saturdays since they seem to run later than the 2 hours. We will see how attendance is on a weekend vs our typical weekdays.
- \* A Holiday Christmas Party of some sort is being planned.

- \* Cyber Security Session - practical tips on how to be safe on the internet is being offered by Francis Pilon on Saturday, October 26th from 2-3pm.

## **New Business**

~ Snowplow service FIRA parking lot:

- \* Wayne asked Dan Kay if he can continue to plow this year and Dan graciously agreed that he will be able to! Many thanks to Dan for all his years of helping us out!

~ 2025 Dues:

- \* Since our dues are still covering our basic operating expenses, the board proposes that we keep member dues the same for 2025.
- \* Jackie Bradbury made a motion for dues to remain the same, Dianne Kelly seconded and the motion carried.

~ Board positions needed:

- \* Vice President for 2025, Member-at-Large positions for 2025 and Secretary & Treasurer for 2026.
- \* We typically have a very difficult time recruiting a Vice President each year where that person would then become President and Past President in succeeding years. Also, there is often difficulty filling other board positions when terms expire. After much discussion, the current board would like to propose a change to to the Executive Board structure to:
  - Allow a less intimidating opportunity for members to join the Board without having to start as VP then President after that.
  - Create additional Board positions so more members are able to participate and become familiar with the Executive roles and duties. This will build “bench strength” of experienced Board members to fill vacancies for President.
  - Make the President a 2-year term like Treasurer and Secretary, changing on alternate years for more continuity.
  - Ensure the Executive Board meets ONCA Board requirements
  - Therefore, changes were proposed from the current Board structure as follows:

## **Current Executive Board**

Past President (1 yr)  
President (1 yr)  
VP (1yr)  
Treasurer (2 yr)  
Secretary (2 yr)  
Member at large (1 yr)  
Member at large (1 yr)

## **2024**

Bill Odell  
Cindy Woodrow  
Jeff Vanderkuur  
Joe DiFrancesco  
Carrie DiFrancesco  
Wayne Mckenzie  
Lynn Yake

## **2025 Proposed Restructure**

President (2 yr)	Jeff Vanderkuur-Start 2025
Treasurer (2 yr)	Joe DiFrancesco-Open 2026
Secretary (2 yr)	Carrie DiFrancesco-Open 2026
Supporting Directors (1 Yr)	Up to 8, min 4

- \* The new proposal would require changes to the by-laws to:
  - Eliminate the Vice-President and Past President positions.
  - Change the Members-at-Large position (up to 2) to Supporting Directors (up to 8, minimum 4), remaining as 1 year terms.
  - Change the President to a 2-year term, elected in alternate years from Treasurer and Secretary
  - In the event of the President's absence from a meeting, the Board member with the most seniority would fill in.
  - The Bylaws will be rewritten in the language necessary to be compliant with ONCA.
- \* Joe made the motion to restructure and rewrite bylaws to reflect the discussion noted above. Jackie Bradbury seconded the motion and it carried with everyone in unanimous favor.
- \* After discussion and nominations, another motion was made to accept the following Executive Board for 2025.
- \* Jeff Vanderkuur assuming the role of President on a 2-year term, Joe DiFrancesco as Treasurer and Carrie DiFrancesco as Secretary to complete their current 2 year terms.

- \* Supporting Directors nominated were Cindy Woodrow, Bill Odell, Wayne MacKenzie, Lynn Yake, Peter Connelly and Gail Connelly.
- \* Dave Woodrow made a motion to accept the new Executive Board for 2025, Lynda Newton seconded and the motion carried.
- ~ Other Discussion:
- \* Laurie Hillaby asked if it would help to submit a grant with HLCA in order to satisfy a grant's intent to support a community? This led to discussions on how that would work that a future Board would explore.
- \* There were discussions on using FIRA funds for improvements we cannot get grant money for. It was noted we do not have funds for all possible desired improvements. Expenditures made for improvements in the past several years were from a member survey done in 2021 by the Improvement Committee.
- \* The 2025 Board will be tasked to form a new Improvement Committee to reassess the improvement list from the 2021 member survey and possibly survey the membership again for current opinions on improvement priorities.
- ~ A motion was made to adjourn by Sue Mason and seconded by Jackie Bradbury and the motion carried.