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Chair Klinck and Council,

My name is Lawton Osler. I am the current President of the Muskoka Lakes Associations. My address is 1052 Longhurst Rd. Windermere, Ontario.

Thank you for allowing me to speak to you today on this important issue.

I would like to begin by noting that we certainly appreciate the one year grace period put forward in the resolution. Therefore we support this resolution; however at the very least we recommend that the wording be altered **that bin removals will not occur until reasonable solutions are implemented.**

We have questions, concerns and potential solutions to offer that we hope will help this initiative come to a truly successful conclusion.

Make no mistake, we and other lake associations are environmentally aware. Today we are here to support our members, other lake associations, and in fact all water access cottagers who rely on bins for garbage services in Muskoka.

A little background: I met with Chair Klinck earlier in the fall and bin removal was discussed. On Oct 18th the MLA had what we view as a positive meeting with Fred Jahn and Stephanie Mack to explore the best way to work with the District re bin management or relocation. There are many members of the MLA and other associations who will be affected by this drastic change – we think overall the number is in the thousands. Out of our five person sub-committee, three are members with skin in the game (islanders). This is a VERY important ongoing file for us.

Today I will talk about working with the District to clarify what bins are being moved or removed, where and when will they be moved and the education about this process to stakeholders. I will also share ideas we hope might be positive and creative solutions. We intend to develop more in short order to help solve this issue.

First, let's look at the October 23rd resolution and some of MLA's concerns arising from it. I'll comment on specific passages.

“Correspondence received from the MECP on Oct 10th, 2019 strongly recommends that the plan be revised to advance the removal of 11 additional high risk bin sites in 2020 as part of Phase 1”. **No information about high risk locations has been published that we know of, and we are still waiting for details on the original list. Is it unreasonable to expect information on where are these high risk sites are located now? Why are they high risk? Do they fall within the 15 meters or roughly 50 feet of the water that we have been told is the high risk benchmark? In general, we have well founded concerns that the “high risk” categorization has not been properly undertaken – there are at least 2 bin sites**

that we are specifically aware of, that do not meet the criteria and should not therefore be in the High Risk – Phase 1 category. We can do better!

“Now therefore it be resolved that as it is preferred to provide the affected residents adequate notice provide public education for the transition and allow time for consideration to address the potential for increased ILLEGAL DUMPING . THE BIN SITE transition be delayed by a minimum of one year”. **What is the adequate notice and education to be provided? We believe many bin users have no clue about the impending changes – this is a huge concern – and it should not be the case.**

“Staff be directed to support the delay of transition of bin sites in cooperation with the MECF”. **MLA would be more comforted if the emphasis was not the supporting of delay, but rather be solution oriented. The establishment of a properly licensed new site is expected to take at least a year, delay is certainly appropriate, but we believe that quite a few new sites might be needed, it is imperative that an aggressive development of alternative action plans be a top priority – coupled with education.**

“The required plan be revised and amended to include the revision that the transition of bin sites be delayed pending the results of the risk mitigation assessment” **What exactly is risk mitigation? Is the risk mitigation assessment going to occur on all bin sites or the high risk sites? When is that risk mitigation assessment going to occur? Has it started? Who does it and are they known to be qualified to do a proper assessment?**

The following are the MLA’s questions:

1. Can we have a clear reconciling of the four phases of bin removal, locations and removal dates including months of each phase?
2. Which are the high risk or phase 1 and phase 2 bins, and the exact current planned dates of removal? We need to inform people.
3. In our October 18th meeting we asked, was there an alternative garbage disposal method in place for those islanders whose bins were to be removed? We were disappointed then that alternatives have not been firmed up yet considering the environment act demands a one-year approval period.

Enough of the questions! Let’s talk **Solutions!**

Solutions:

- 1) Compliance Education

Behavior change is part of the answer. On October 18th the MLA discussed signs could be put on bins ASAP to inform users of district bin removal ie: signs at bins explaining the abuse the district is experiencing, providing alternative waste disposal sites, or notification in tax bills. Again, the MLA agreed to offer to use our communication arm to educate and inform bin users of proper waste management procedures (IE: Bins that have been abused). Education is a major on-going concern.

2) Phase Implementation Schedule

Phase 1 and 2 bin users need to be advised asap on their early bin removal ASAP. The MLA communication arm could also be used here.

3) What positive/creative ideas can be suggested to manage the bins properly and avoid wholesale removal?

- Fenced off bins – This is a provincial suggestion. We think access could be electronic (or old fashioned keys) (issue cards to official bin users who will use the key to open the access gate to dispose garbage .There would also have to be access gate for trucks to empty bins.
- Use of surveillance cameras – today’s technology is better, cheaper and can be “off grid”
- Bins on concrete pads, perhaps with retaining features?
- Supervised bin sites – a great way to employ students or other underemployed persons.

To Summarize:

1. We need to know the placement of all bins and exact bin removal time for each phase. In particular the high risk bin details.
2. When is the risk mitigation assessment going to occur and what are the parameters.
3. The MLA will use their communication arm to help educate.
4. Alternative garbage sites. This needs to be in place now.
5. We need more positive/creative ideas to help address the immediate and longer term issues of concern. For instance, can we come up with solutions to manage the existing bins properly and avoid wholesale removal? This would be the best overall – and likely the cheapest answer, in the long run.

When Bob Ensor and I meet with Fred Jahn and Stephanie Mack tomorrow at 10.00am we will follow up on this list.

We welcome ideas anybody has, to work with and solve this drastic initiative.

Thank you very much.



Lawton Osler
President, Muskoka Lakes Association