

Resort Village of Cochin
Council Comments
1 of 2022

The fifth Annual General Meeting of the current village council was held on Saturday, July 2, 2022, at the Cochin Community Hall. There were approximately 110 persons in attendance. All members of council were on stage to respond to comments by the audience.

Five years ago, to avoid previous council's failure to hold regular AGMs, the current council amended its Policy and Procedure manual to require the holding of an AGM on the July 1 weekend in every year. These meetings are designed to allow members of council to inform ratepayers of the decisions of council over the previous year, set out its plans for the future and allow ratepayers to pose questions, make suggestions and provide recommendations to council. Covid prevented a meeting in 2020.

A significant number of attendees took the opportunity to engage in an adult conversation with members of council and for that council members are appreciative. In all such instances, these were valuable interactions. Regrettably, some in attendance displayed an inability to communicate at an adult level or in a calm and thoughtful manner and that reflects on them and not on most persons in attendance.

Without meaning to minimize areas of discussion not included below, the following were some of the matters of importance identified by ratepayers and these, along with others, will be considered by council:

1. *Council's decision on the future manner of garbage pickup and the unintended consequence of residents placing their bins out for pickup on Sunday and then leaving Cochin, not to return for at least a week. The issues include: who will ensure that the bins will be replaced onto residents' property and not be "left out" to be tipped over by the wind or vandalized?*
2. *Absence of Cochin's most recent financial statement along with its budget for the current calendar year as part of the agenda.*

3. *The general appearance of the village and the perception that council is failing in its obligation to keep the village looking neat and tidy.* Specific mention was made of mowing over paper and similar trash and turning one piece into many pieces. One ratepayer reported that he and members of his family regularly go to the Hunt's Cove beach and clear trash. Kudos to him and his family. Implicitly, why can't all residents take on similar volunteer contributions – at least in their own neighbourhood. After the meeting one ratepayer suggested an organized "village clean-up day and/or a 'mow' day" early in the season and prior to Cochin Days.
4. *The issue of the lakes' water level.* It was noted that the provincial government dictates if and when the water control gates at the south end of Jackfish must be opened and closed. None of Cochin, the other municipalities bordering wither lake or Jackfish Lake Watershed authority have any control over these decisions. A suggestion by one ratepayer is to encourage all ratepayers to write to the responsible Minister of Government with a copy to their own MLA requesting intervention to vary the specified lake levels prior to July 1 to allow for evaporation. Information on who is the responsible Minister is, or shortly will be, displayed on the village's web site.
5. *The perceived failure of council to keep its constituents fully informed.* Council posts information on its web site and on its Facebook page. In addition, council urges all ratepayers to "sign up" for regular email communications. Simply send a request to cochinadmin@sasktel.net Even if one is now receiving informational emails from the village, the new request should be emailed as the form of request has been amended to better comply with privacy issues. This observation has led to a commitment by council to revive Council Comments. They will be sent to everyone who has requested contact by email.
6. *That our seasonal water supply system is subject to massive water loss.* The only two contributory factors council can identify are leakage and residents bypassing water meters. Leakage is the village's and Interlake's challenge. One case of meter bypass has been identified and is being investigated by the RCMP as theft over \$5,000. Whenever such bypass lines are located, they will be closed and a complaint registered with the RCMP along with a request for investigation.

7. *Graffiti on the lighthouse and the need to repaint over inappropriate comments on the “signing boards” and even repainting them, as a matter of course at the beginning of each year.*
8. *The issue of unsafe boating practices on the creek and on Jackfish Lake at the mouth of the creek.* This is an ongoing issue and includes speed on the creek and at its mouth on Jackfish along with “stunting” in the area adjacent to the creek mouth.
9. *The continuing issues of theft and vandalism and break and entry.* These are a concern in all communities bordering on the lakes. Cochin and other municipalities in our area are in continuing discussions with the RCMP on how to deal with the matter. The RCMP is sympathetic but notes that they have limited officers available to provide better coverage and often must prioritize their responses to calls. For example, a call about a personal injury will be dealt with before a complaint about a shed break in at Cochin.
10. *The state of repair or disrepair of playground equipment.*
11. *The need to better maintain Hunts Cove hill road.*

Council meetings are open to the public. It meets at 4:00 pm on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month in the summer and on the second Tuesday of each month in the early spring, late fall and winter. Council meeting minutes are posted on the village’s website and will be emailed to persons subscribing to our email list.

July 6, 2022