



MINUTES OF THE 2016 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
MCDONALDS CORNERS/ELPHIN RECREATION & ARTS (MERA)
2 pm, March 20, 2016 in the MERA Schoolhouse, McDonalds Corners, ON

1. **Welcome:** Judy Watts, Vice-Chair of the Board, sitting in for Chair Danny Sullivan, called the meeting to order at 2:10 pm and welcomed MERA members and guests to the 2016 MERA AGM.

2. **Introduction of Guests:** Township of Lanark Highlands Mayor Brian Stewart and Ward 5 Councilor Jeannie Kelso were introduced and our Mayor said a few words, commending MERA on its continuing solid presence in Lanark Highlands, offering so much to the community year round.

3. **Approval of the AGM Minutes of March 22, 2015:**

MOTION: It was moved by Tom Shoebridge, seconded by Bob Mingie that the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of March 22, 2015 be adopted. **Carried.**

4. **Presentation of Annual Report of the Board of Directors.** (this and all following reports are available online on MERA's website at http://www.meraschoolhouse.org/about_governance) Board Vice-Chair Judy Watts presented a Report from the Board highlighting the year. She commended the Fundraising Committee for raising nearly \$30,000 over three years in the "I Believe in MERA" Pledge Campaign. As 2017 is Canada's 150th and MERA's 20th anniversary we can look forward to lots of activities in 2017. Volunteers are encouraged to help with the planning.

5. **Treasurer's Report:** 2016 financial statements and summary (this and all following 2016 reports are available online on MERA's website at http://www.meraschoolhouse.org/about_governance) were presented by MERA's Treasurer, Bob Mingie. He said that the existing model is working very well i.e. to 'go it alone' after the cut of OAC funding in 2011. The "I Believe in MERA" Pledge Drive, has now completed a three-year campaign had raised over \$29,000. It was also stressed that MERA needs to continue to have every activity held at MERA make a little bit of money i.e. to not go into the red and to encourage membership renewals which at \$30 per year as a pre-requisite for attending ongoing activities at MERA was eminently reasonable. **MOTION** Moved by Peter Cochrane, seconded by Gloria Shoebridge that the Treasurer's Report and Budget be received. **Carried.**

6. **2016 Committee Reports**

Program Committee: (report available online. See above) was presented by Ankaret Dean, MERA's Artistic Director. Highlights: ongoing Fibrearts, Knitters, Weaving, Quilters, Book Club, Arts Camp for Kids, Monthly Art Exhibitions, Workshops, Knitting and Spinning Groups, Pottery, Arts Circle and the success of the Around the World on a Dinner Plate Friday suppers and the Arts Festival held in 2015.

Ankaret also spoke about the **MERA Schoolhouse Weavers** and their ongoing activities.

Arts Circle Report (available online) was presented by Gloria Shoebridge. Highlights: Gloria stated that this

group is going strong and has attracted several members interested in visual arts. They meet the first and third Fridays of the month. Over \$500 in Christmas and all-occasion cards sold at MERA Christmas Fair.

Pottery Studio: Report (available online) was presented by Molly Forsythe. Highlights: Empty Bowls another success. The Pottery Studio sold several items at the Christmas fair making \$500 for MERA. Several pottery workshops are planned for the fall as well as two all day Pottery Days for Perth and Smiths Falls High School students. George Fisher asked if the kiln was being run only during non-peak hours and it is.

Music Committee: Report (available online) was presented by Peter Cochrane. Highlights: 2014-15 saw the end of the successful Sunday Schoolhouse Concert Series. 8 concerts helps in 2015 Peter thanked Danny Sullivan for his exceptional ability to line up great bands and Danny's wife Cathy Dorner for feeding them all and Noah Sullivan for being the sound man and Michael for running Wizards Café during the concerts. Tom Shoebridge spoke about the Blue Jeans Classic events which continue to be popular although it is getting harder to find classical musician to perform.

Fundraising Committee Report was presented by Judy Watts: (available online) Judy thanked Tom Shoebridge Steve Kotze and Debbie Duffy as well as the membership for their outstanding contribution to MERA during the first two years of the 3-year "I Believe in MERA" Pledge Drive. Fundraising will continue to be a reality at MERA but the membership has 'stepped up to the plate' in a very generous way.

Fibre Arts: (full report online) Susan Berlin presented the report. Highlights are: the continuing success of Thursday Fibrearts which includes the Knitting & Spinning Group, and the Weavers, in the a.m. and a wide variety of Fibrearts activities in the afternoon. A thank you to Cathie Huffman for overseeing fibrearts activities for many years. This very active and generous group donated many items made over the year to MERA's Christmas Fair which amounted to over \$1,000 donated to MERA last year.

7. Election of Directors for 2016:

MOTION It was moved by Tom Shoebridge and seconded by Janet Mrenica that Wayne Stryde be approved to serve his first-year term on the Board of Directors. **Carried unanimously**

8. Presentation of MERA's Annual Volunteer Award, the ANKARET: The Board recognized **Gloria Lee-Shoebridge** who started the Arts Circle at MERA which has encouraged visual art making at MERA. The Arts Circle also creates hand-painted, crafted cards to sell at the Christmas Fair. Thank you Gloria!

9. Other Business:

a) Proposed By-Law Amendment to Paragraph 4.1:

MOTION: Moved by Tom Shoebridge, seconded by Bob Mingie that the term of office of a Board members be extended from two years to three years, renewable once. **Carried unanimously.**

b) Stone Labyrinth: Ankaret and Marilyn explained a plan to replace the Living Willow Labyrinth with one made of stone. Members will have an opportunity to donate toward the new Stone Labyrinth and have their names on a Donor Plaque.

10. MOTION to adjourn: Moved by Bob Mingie seconded by Ankaret Dean that the meeting adjourn at 3:35 pm.

JUDY WATTS, Vice-Chair

MARILYN BARNETT, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer