MINUTES

Regular Meeting of the Morrisburg

Waterfront Sub-Committee

April 26,2023 7pm

South Dundas Municipal Center

Present:

- Trish Morrow – Chair
- Keith Robinson
- Nancy Waldroff
- Bert Marcellus
- Chris Moran

Absent:

- Cole Veinotte (Councilor)

Staff Present:

- David Jansen- Director of Parks, Recreation & Facilities
- Jason Broad –Mayor

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at the South Dundas Municipal Center at 6:58pm.

2. CONFIRMATION OF AGENDA

The agenda was amended. To include within item g) Beach Sand Update and h) Waterfront Events.

Changes to the Agenda moved by Nancy and Seconded by Chris.

CARRIED

3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF

None.

4. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

a. None

CARRIED

5. DELEGATIONS

a. None

6. GENERAL BUSINESS AND REPORTS

a. Selection and Appointment of a Secretary

Committee had discussion with regards to the role. Staff to complete the minutes for this meeting but going forward would be on the secretary to work with staff. Chris Moran was nominated/volunteered to be the Secretary.

Resolution No. 1

Moved by Keith

Seconded by Nancy.

THAT, the Chris Moran be appointed as the secretary for the Morrisburg Waterfront Sub-Committee.

CARRIED

b. Lookout Pier Completion

a. Director Jansen provided an update on the status of the project which was started in 2022. The wood framing was installed in December 2022. Funds have been carried to complete the remaining work on the ramp. Expected to be completed within the next 30-45 days based on conversations with the contractor.
b. A follow up discussion was had over lighting. Originally the lighting was removed from the project due to budget overruns in 2022. The committee discussed lighting alternatively and the amount of ambient light given by ornamental lighting.

   Chris M discussed the possibility of going to more directional lighting options. Director Jansen discussed solar as likely the more cost-effective solution in this location provided an option lower cost option if the committee wanted to stay with ornamental with its own pro/cons. Committee deferred discussion as Chris M was going to research a directional light option and present to the committee.

ACTION: David to work with Contractor to complete Ramp. Chris to review lighting options for future presentation to committee.

c. Light Post Bases

a. The committee noted that there was some settlement around the bases of the new light posts in the park. Director Jansen was aware, and staff are working to get additional topsoil installed.

ACTION: Staff to install additional topsoil.

d. Official Opening of the Pathways

a. Discussion on the OPG Event that was suppose to take place in fall 2022 however, was Cancelled. Staff to reach out to OPG for days which work them and plan around that.
b. Discussion on a Pathway Opening Event. A preliminary date was selected of June 11th for further planning at the next meeting exactly what the event would include. The preliminary discussion was to have a BBQ and ribbon cutting event in the park.

ACTION: David to reach out to OPG for a few days that work for them. More planning for pathway event to be discussed at next meeting.

e. Shoreline Plantings

a. Chris M provided an overview of the shoreline plantings and issues with Canada geese. A document is attached to the minutes which provides further information on the geese. Chris provided an overview of some of the options available to help control geese.
b. A discussion took place with regards to growing wildflower along the water edge. An overview of the project completed last year was given by Director Jansen. Chris was going to reach out to Watershed Canada to see about continuing the project.
c. A discussion took place with regards to having multiple deterrents for geese. A discussion took place with regards to planting a wildflower meadow to have longer grass in Earl Baker Park. Committee to review further with some overhead photos at the next meeting while working on this project.

ACTION: Chris to reach out to Watershed Canada with regards to continuing the project. Keith to provide maps of existing waterfront for next meeting discussion.

f. Trees planted Near Beach Mulch

Committee noted that some of the tree mulch had levelled out west of the beach.

ACTION: David to investigate and repair as required.

g. Beach Sand

Staff provided the committee with an update with regards to the sand loss at Morrisburg Beach and the plan and timeline for repairs to the Sand. Mayor Broad did note that the council had approved the additional funding.

ACTION: New Sand to be installed as discussed.

h. Waterfront Hosted Events.

Nancy provided an overview of some events the committee could hose at the waterfront. This included:

- Parks and Arborist information sessions
- Movie in the Park Nights
- Coordinating breakfasts with the Legion and events
- Crafts and Markets.

Nancy provided an overview of some events the committee could host at the waterfront. This included a discussion with regards to insurance and logistics to hosting these events. Further discussion is required on the topic of the events.

ACTION: Committee Discussion to continue in future meetings

7. CORRESPONDENCE

None

8. OTHER BUSINESS

1)

A discussion came up with regards to removal of the basketball nets from the parking lot/basketball court on the north end near the baseball diamonds/Sir James Morris. Committee agreed that the nets should be removed and would like to send a request to council to direct staff to complete the work.

Resolution No. 2

Moved by Chris

Seconded by Keith.

THAT, the Morrisburg Waterfront Committee request that staff remove basketball nets from the parking area located on the northside of the waterfront.

CARRIED

2)

A quick discussion took place with regards to the Morrisburg Boat Launch. The committee had some preliminary thoughts. However, it was decided to wait until Councillor Veinotte was in attendance to discuss further.

9. CLOSED SESSION

10. NEXT MEETING

- Next Morrisburg Waterfront Sub-Committee May 16, 2023

12. ADJOURNMENT

Resolution No. 3

Moved by Bert

Seconded by Chris.

THAT, the Morrisburg Waterfront Sub-Committee meet again at the call of the Chair.

CARRIED

Trisha Morrow

CHAIR

David Jansen

STAFF LIASON

COMMITTEE REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

COMMITTEE NAME: South Dundas Waterfront - Sub-Committee – Morrisburg

MEETING DATE: April 26, 2023

TOPIC: Basketball Nets in Parking Lot

BACKGROUND:

Basketball nets are currently located in the middle of a parking lot typically used by baseball and park users. The nets are reaching the end of their lifespan and are not in the ideal locations. Many have already been hit by cars and are bent. The committee supports basketball and a new multi-use pad within the park as outlined with in the Master Plan. However, these nets are currently getting limited usage and causing parking issues at the park and the committee feels like the can be a step towards getting new nets.

HOW DOES THIS RELATE TO THE COMMITTEE:

The asset is currently located within the waterfront park.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council provide direction to staff to complete the removal and disposal of the nets. The cost is expected to be low for disposal and can be assumed with the recreation budget. There would be approximately a day of staff time to remove the nets, backfill the holes safely.

April 29, 2023

Information Package - Morrisburg Waterfront Committee

Subject: Canada Geese

Background:

Canada geese are a valuable natural resource that provide recreation and enjoyment to bird watchers, hunters, and the public. The sight of the distinctive V-formation of a flock of Canada geese always brings a special thrill. Their calls herald the changing seasons. But in recent years, flocks of local-nesting or "resident" geese have become year-round inhabitants of our parks, waterways, residential areas, and golf courses, where they can cause significant problems.

South Dundas Parks have expanses of short grass that attract Canada Geese to feed particularly during the moulting season when they cannot fly and are searching out food resources for their young. Our parks have few natural predators, hunting is not allowed, and they feel very safe and at home in the park environment. While most people find a few geese acceptable, problems develop as our resident flock grows and the droppings become excessive (a goose produces a pound of droppings per day). Problems include over-grazed lawns, accumulations of droppings and feathers on play areas and walkways, nutrient loading in the St Lawrence River, public health concerns at beaches, aggressive behaviour towards the public, and safety hazards near roads and airports.

In essence, the current architecture of South Dundas Waterfront Parks provides an ideal habitat for Canada Geese. Large areas of mowed grass provide an ideal food source, an absence of trees, shrubs, tall grass etc. provide an excellent line of sight to watch for predators, the St Lawrence River provides night time safety, islands provide nesting sites and nearby farm fields provide a secondary food source.

Goose Biology

There is a distinction between what is generally referred to as "resident geese" and "migratory geese". Resident geese, as their name implies, spend most of their lives in one area, although some travel hundreds of miles to wintering areas. Resident geese are distinct from the migratory populations that breed in northern Canada. Banding studies have shown that resident geese are not simply migrant geese that stopped flying north to breed. In fact, Canada geese have a strong tendency to return to where they were born and use the same nesting and feeding sites year after year. This makes it hard to eliminate geese once they become settled in a local area.

Resident geese are long-lived in urban areas. Some will live more than 20 years. Most geese begin breeding when they are 2-3 years old and they nest every year for the rest of their lives. They mate for life, but if one member of a pair dies, the other will mate again. Geese lay an average of 5 eggs per nest, and about half will hatch and become free-flying birds in the fall. A female goose may produce more than 50 young over her lifetime.

The annual life cycle for geese begins in late winter when adult pairs return to nesting areas in late February or March, as soon as waters open up. Egg laying and incubation generally extend through April, with the peak of hatching in late April or early May. Geese will aggressively defend their nests, and may attack if approached. Non-breeding geese often remain nearby in feeding flocks during the nesting season. After hatching, goose families may move considerable distances from nesting areas to brood-rearing areas, appearing suddenly "out of nowhere" at parks and residences.

After nesting, geese undergo an annual molt, a 4-5 week flightless period when they shed and re-grow their outer wing feathers. Molting occurs between mid-June and late July, and the birds resume flight in August. During the molt, geese congregate at safe locations near the water where they can rest, feed and escape danger. Severe problems often occur at this time of year because the geese concentrate on lawns next to water. Some geese without young travel hundreds of miles to favored molting areas. These "molt migrations" account for the disappearance or arrival of some local goose flocks in early June.

After the molt and through the fall, geese gradually increase the distance of their feeding flights and are more likely to be found away from water. Large resident flocks, sometimes joined by migrant geese in October, may feed on athletic fields and other large lawns during the day, and return to larger lakes and ponds to roost at night. This continues until ice or snow eliminates feeding areas and forces birds to other open water areas nearby or to the south, where they remain until milder weather returns and nesting areas open up.

Community-based Goose Management

Simply chasing geese from one place to another does not address the underlying problem of too many geese, and may simply transfer the problem from one property owner to another. This is not an effective strategy for communities with widespread goose problems. Therefore, a concerted and sustained effort between our council, the Province of Ontario, farmers, golf courses and residents to work together to implement comprehensive management programs that include a variety of techniques and control measures throughout South Dundas would be most effective.

Discouraging Geese

There are many ways to discourage Canada geese from settling in your area. No single technique is universally effective and/or socially acceptable. Persistent application of a combination of methods is usually necessary and yields the best results.

Goose problems in parks are especially difficult because birds are not afraid of people and may become accustomed to scaring techniques. Also, some techniques are not compatible with desired uses of suburban properties. For example, loud noisemakers in residential areas, putting grid wires over swimming areas, or letting grass grow tall on athletic fields are not practical remedies in those situations. But don't rule out any technique that might be feasible; dogs under strict supervision can safely be used in parks and controlled hunting has been successfully used at some golf courses.

Initiate control measures as soon as you notice geese in your area, and be persistent. Once geese settle in a particular location, they will be more tolerant of disturbances and be difficult to disperse. No method works well with just a few attempts, and a comprehensive, long-term strategy is usually needed.

Control measures work in various ways. Some reduce the biological capacity of an area to support geese by reducing availability of food or habitat. Other methods disperse geese to other sites where, hopefully, they are of less concern. Some techniques reduce the actual number of geese to a level that people can tolerate ("social carrying capacity").

Discontinue Feeding

Although many people enjoy feeding waterfowl in parks and on private property, this often contributes to goose problems. Feeding may cause large numbers of geese to congregate in unnatural concentrations. Well-fed domestic waterfowl often act as decoys, attracting wild birds to a site. Feeding usually occurs in the most accessible areas, making a mess of heavily used lawns, walkways, roads, and parking areas.

Supplemental feeding also teaches geese to be unafraid of people, making control measures less effective. Feeding may be unhealthy for the birds too, especially if bread or popcorn becomes a large part of their diet. Once feeding is discontinued, geese will disperse and revert to higher quality natural foods. Geese that depend on human handouts are also less likely to migrate when severe winter weather arrives, and are more vulnerable to disease.

Supplemental feeding should be stopped as a first step in any control program. Wild geese are very capable of finding other foods and will survive without handouts from humans. Some success in reducing goose feeding may be achieved through simple public education, such as posting of signs.

Vegetation Management

Geese are grazing birds that prefer short, green grass or other herbaceous vegetation for feeding. Well-manicured lawns and newly seeded areas provide excellent habitat for these grazing birds.

Alternative types of grass and hay may be naturally repellent to geese. Check with your local lawn seed supplier for coarse grass species suitable for your climatic conditions. Geese may be discouraged from remaining in the area if these grasses are planted in habitats that they normally use.

Wherever possible, let grass or other vegetation grow to its full height (10-14") around water bodies so that it is less attractive to geese. In time, most geese will stop feeding in those areas. Instead of grass, plant or encourage native shrubs or less palatable ground cover, such as ivy, pachysandra, or junipers, around the shoreline of ponds and along walkways where geese are a problem.

Apply Goose Repellents

Application of "goose repellent" to grass can discourage geese from using a habitat, but it may have limited success. There are a number of goose repellent chemicals available that act as a taste deterrent and are not considered harmful to grass, wildlife or people. Check with pest control service providers of wildlife control product suppliers for availability. The user must check to see if these chemical repellents are authorized for this type of use or if permits are required for their use.

Install Fencing

Fencing or other physical barriers can be effective where geese tend to land on water and walk up onto adjacent lawns to feed or rest. Fencing works best during the summer molt, when geese are unable to fly and must walk between feeding and resting areas. In these situations, fencing, dense shrubbery, or other physical barriers installed close to the water's edge are effective ways to control goose movements. Fences must completely enclose the site to be effective. Fencing may also be used to block aggressive birds on nests near buildings or walkways. Although birds can get around most fencing, direct attacks may be prevented. Fencing around large open areas, such as athletic fields or ponds, has little effect on free-flying birds. Goose control fences should be at least 30"

tall (48-60" to block aggressive birds) and solidly constructed. Welded wire garden fencing (2" x 4" mesh) is durable and will last years. Less expensive plastic or nylon netting is effective, but will have to be replaced more often. Fences may be beautified or hidden by planting shrubs close by. Snow fencing or erosion control fabric may be used as a temporary barrier to molting geese. Fencing made of two parallel monofilament fish lines (20 pound test) strung 6" and 12" above ground and secured by stakes at 6' intervals can work, but is less reliable. Some success has been reported with low voltage electric fencing.

Use Visual Scaring Devices

Various materials may be used to create a visual image that geese will avoid, especially if they are not already established on a site, such as newly seeded areas. Geese are normally reluctant to linger beneath an object hovering over head. However, visual scaring devices are not likely to be effective on suburban lawns where trees or other overhead objects exist and where geese have been feeding for years.

One very effective visual deterrent for geese is Mylar tape that reflects sunlight to produce a flashing effect. When a breeze causes
You can also plant grass species that are less palatable to geese, including some that go dormant in the winter. Geese tend to prefer Kentucky bluegrass, and are less attracted to fescue. Also, minimize use of lawn fertilizers to reduce the nutritional value of grass to the birds.

It is very difficult to eliminate goose nesting habitat. Geese rarely nest in open lawns where they feed. Typically, they build nests on the ground close to water, hidden by vegetation. However, geese are very adaptable and nest in a variety of habitats, including woodlands, flower gardens, and rooftops. Islands and peninsulas are preferred nesting sites, and often support many more nesting geese than mainland shorelines. Avoid creating such features during landscaping of ponds in problem areas. Local zoning regulations may be a way to discourage habitat developments that favor geese.

Install Low Wires

Geese normally rest on open water or along shorelines to feel safe from predators. They also tend to land and take off from open water when feeding on adjacent lawns. Where practical, construct a system of suspended wires over the water to deny the birds access to such areas. Single strands of #14 wire or 80-100 pound test monofilament line can be arranged in a grid with 10-15 feet between wires. Each wire must be secured so that it remains 12-18" above the water surface, and perimeter fencing may be needed to keep geese from walking under the grid. To reduce the risk of birds flying into the wires, attach brightly colored rope, flagging or other markers to make them more visible.

Wire systems are not practical for ponds used for swimming, fishing, or other recreation. However, golf course ponds, reflecting pools, wastewater ponds, and newly seeded lawns with limited public access, may be suitable. Human disturbance (vandalism) of grid wires may be a problem in public areas the tape to move, it pulsates and produces a humming sound that repels birds. This product comes in 1/2"-6"widths. To discourage geese from walking up onto lawns from water, string the tape along the water's edge. To ensure maximum reflection and noise production, leave some slack in the tape and twist the material as you string it from stake to stake.

Another visual scaring technique is the placement of flagging or balloons on poles (6' or taller) or other objects in and around an area to be protected. Flagging can be made of 3-6' strips of 1" colored plastic tape or 2' x 2' pieces of orange construction flagging. Bird-scaring balloons, 30" diameter, with large eye-spots and helium filled, are sold at some garden or party supply stores. Numerous flags or balloons may be needed to protect each acre of open lawn. These materials should be located where they will not become entangled in tree branches or power lines. They also may be subject to theft or vandalism in areas open to the public. If geese become acclimated, frequent relocation of the materials is recommended.

For small ponds, remote control boats can be used to repel geese, and may be practical if local hobbyists are willing to help out.

Use Noisemakers

Geese may be discouraged from an area through the use of various noisemakers or pyrotechnics. Shell crackers are special shells fired from a 12-gauge shotgun that project a firecracker up to 100 yards. Other devices, such as screamer sirens, bird-bangers, and whistle bombs, are fired into the air from a hand-held starter pistol or flare pistol. These devices generally have a range of 25-30 yards.

Automatic exploders that ignite propane gas to produce loud explosions at timed intervals are effective for migrant geese in agricultural fields, but are not suitable for residential or public areas.

Noisemakers work best as preventive measures before geese establish a habit of using an area and where the birds are too confined to simply move away from the noise. At sites with a history of frequent use by geese and people, the birds may become acclimated in 1-2 weeks. Noise devices are often not effective for moving nesting geese.
Before using any of these techniques, check with local law enforcement agencies (police) about noise control ordinances, fire safety codes, or restrictions on possession and discharge of firearms. Obtain special permits if necessary. In some areas, starter pistols are considered a handgun, and their possession and use may be regulated. Federal and

state permits are not necessary to harass geese with these techniques, as long as the birds are not physically harmed. Where discharge of firearms is allowed, occasional shooting of geese can increase the effectiveness of noisemakers, as geese associate the sound with a real threat. Special Federal and State permits are needed to shoot geese except during established hunting seasons.

Use Dogs to Chase Geese

Dogs trained to chase but not harm geese have been used effectively to disperse geese from golf courses, parks, athletic fields and corporate properties. Border collies or other breeds with herding instincts tend to work best. The dogs must be closely supervised during this activity. Except where permitted, compliance with local leash laws or park regulations is still required. Initially, chasing must be done several times per day for several weeks, after which less frequent but regular patrols will be needed. Geese will not become acclimated to the threat of being chased by dogs.
This method is most practical where the dog and handler are on-site at all times, or where daily service (as needed) is available from private handlers. Another approach is to allow dogs to roam freely in a fenced (above ground or "invisible" dog fence) area that is not open to the public, but this may be less effective. Dogs generally should not be used when geese are nesting or unable to fly, such as during the molt or when goslings are present. Use of dogs may not be practical near busy roads or where a property is divided into many small sections by fences, buildings, or other barriers. Also, dogs can not easily repel geese from large water areas, but may be able to keep geese off shoreline lawns or beaches. Although this technique has proven effective, it is often expensive and labor intensive.

Hunting

In order to hunt Canada Geese, hunters must obtain a federal Migratory Game Bird Hunting Permit in addition to provincial permits that may be required. The length and timing of hunting seasons have been adjusted, and larger bag limits have been implemented in many areas to increase the harvest of temperate-breeding Canada Geese. Band recoveries from hunter-killed birds show that most banded temperate-breeding geese are shot near to where they were banded. This suggests that harvesting of geese by hunters helps limit local populations.

In South Dundas, Canada goose hunting season opens September 24 and continues through to December 28. South Dundas is located in district #65 which allows a daily limit of 3 geese from September 24 to October 28 and a daily limit of 5 geese from October 29 to December 28.

To hunt migratory game birds in Canada, you must have a valid federal migratory game bird hunting (MGBH) permit on which the Canadian Wildlife Habitat Conservation (CWHC stamp) appears. The MGBH permit is valid anywhere in Canada. The cost of the MGBH permit (including $8.50 for the CWHC stamp) is $17.00 plus applicable taxes. It is not transferable and can only be used by the person who is named on the permit.

Control Goose Nesting

Geese usually return in spring to the area where they hatched or where they nested previously. Over time, this results in increasing numbers of geese in areas that once had just a few birds. Local population growth may be controlled by preventing geese from nesting successfully. Although it is difficult to eliminate nesting habitat, harassment in early spring may prevent geese from nesting on a particular site. However, they may still nest nearby where they are not subject to harassment.

If nest prevention fails, treating the eggs to prevent hatching is an option. This can be done by puncturing, shaking, freezing or applying corn oil to all of the eggs in a nest. The female goose will continue incubating the eggs until the nesting season is over. If the nest is simply destroyed, or the eggs removed, the female may re-nest and lay new eggs. Federal and state permits are required to disrupt goose eggs or nests! Additional information on egg treatment will be sent to individuals who obtain a USFWS permit to control goose nesting on their property.

Egg treatment helps in several ways. First, it directly reduces the number of geese that will be present on a site later in the year. Second, geese without young will be more easily repelled from a site after the nesting season. Finally, if conducted on a large enough scale (throughout a town), it can help slow the growth of a local goose population, and over time lead to stable or declining numbers. Egg treatment may be necessary for 5-10 years before effects on goose numbers are evident.

Capture and Remove Geese

An effective method of relief for sites with problems during the summer, or to help reduce year-round goose numbers in an area, is capture and removal of geese. Federal and state permits are required for this activity.
Geese are easy to capture during the molt by simply herding them into holding pens. In large areas, it may be necessary to remove geese for several years to get maximum results. After geese are removed, the capture site will have substantially fewer geese for the rest of the summer or longer. Over time, geese from surrounding areas may move in if preventive measures are not in place.
Geese removed from problem areas can be processed and donated to charities for use as food. If properly handled by a licensed poultry processor, goose meat is a healthy and

well- received source of food for needy people. However, this method is very controversial. Media interest, protests and legal challenges from animal rights activists can be expected. Relocation of geese is not an option at this time. In the past, DEC captured and transported thousands of geese from problem areas and shipped the birds to other states that wanted to establish their own resident goose populations. Opportunities for out-of-state transfers have been virtually exhausted as resident goose flocks now occur throughout the Unites States and Canada. In some states, problem geese are relocated to public hunting areas to reduce the likelihood of the birds returning. In New York State, there are no known areas where problem geese from other areas would be welcome.

Relocation of geese is also less effective than permanent removal. Banding studies have shown that many relocated geese return to their initial capture locations by the following summer. Some have returned to New York State from as far away as Maine, South Carolina and Oklahoma. Geese taken short distances (less than 50 miles) may return soon after they are able to fly. Adult geese are most likely to return, whereas goslings moved without parent birds will often join a local flock and remain in the release area. Birds that don't return may seek out areas similar to where they were captured, and may cause problems there too.

Many wildlife and animal health professionals are concerned that relocating problem wildlife increases the risk that diseases may be spread to wildlife or domestic stock in other areas.

Not Recommended

For almost every method that has been tried to alleviate problems caused by geese, there has been success and failure. However, some methods were not recommended in this document for various reasons. These include: use of swans (real ones create other problems; fake ones don't work); bird distress calls (effective for some bird species, but not proven for geese); scarecrows or dead goose decoys (ineffective for resident geese); use of trained birds of prey to chase geese (labor-intensive, generally not available); sterilization (very labor-intensive for surgery, no chemical contraceptives available in the foreseeable future); fountains or aerators in ponds (not effective, may even attract geese); introduction of predators (already present where habitat is suitable, but none take only geese); disease (impossible to control and protect other animals); and use of poisons (illegal).

References:

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