

DOKURA NEWS

SUMMER 2010

ANNUAL MEETING

It's that time of year again, for the DOKURA Annual Meeting.

This year's meeting will be held in Vermillion Bay on Friday evening, August 27th, starting at 7:00 PM.

The meeting will take place in the Senior's Centre on Main Street in Vermillion Bay.

Plan to gather up a few of your neighbors and make the trip. You'll hear reports on Association activities over the past year, together with an up date on current happenings.

And, with all Annual Meetings, we'll be looking for membership approval of the year end financial statement. The by-laws of the Association call for the distribution of the statement throughout the District prior to the meeting, hence a copy has been included in this publication.

Please take a moment to look it over, and formulate any questions you may have. The Directors of DOKURA have reviewed it, and are recommending its approval by the membership.

Oh yes, everyone who resides in the Unincorporated Territory of the Kenora District is eligible to vote at the Annual Meeting. There is no paid membership requirement that must be met, in order to vote.

LOCAL ELECTIONS

Previous regulations had been interpreted to read that only Permanent Residents could vote – something DOKURA did not agree with, and fought to change.

Further, in the election reform process, DOKURA had lobbied the Province to cover the full cost of running a proper election in all Unincorporated Territories, should an election be required.

In the last edition of this publication, it was noted that DOKURA would be managing this fall's election to choose representatives for the District Social Services Board. The four individuals elected will serve as Directors of that board commencing January 1st, 2011 and serving thru to December 31st, 2014.

At this writing it is not clear whether or not an election will be necessary in each of the four electoral ridings, as the closing date for nominations is not until September 10th. If an election is required in any or all of the four zones, every effort will be made to advise the public, so they can exercise their right and vote for the candidate of their choice.

So, just in case you have to vote, mark your calendar that voting day is Monday, October 25th, between the hours of 10:00 AM and 8:00 PM.

LOBBYING SUCCESS

Yes, DOKURA has been successful in some of its lobbying efforts at Queen's Park!

Readers of this publication will remember articles detailing the efforts of DOKURA Directors in lobbying with the Minister of Community and Social Services, to have certain rules changed for the 2010 election.

We are happy to report that our efforts to have the regulations changed, allowing Seasonal Residents to vote, has met with success.

The new regulations published by the Province now includes a change in who can vote, extending that privilege to Seasonal Residents.

Previous regulations provided for funding of an election in the Kenora District subject to a maximum expenditure of \$15,000.00.

In DOKURA's presentations to the Minister, it was pointed out that if we had to conduct an election in each of the four electoral zones that make up the Kenora District, that it was impossible to do so for the \$15,000.00 allocated.

Fortunately, elections in previous years have not been contested, or were not contested in all four zones in the same year, hence the funding available covered the costs.

Well, DOKURA is pleased to report that their pleas have met with some success. The Province has increased the funding by 1/3, with \$20,000.00 being allotted to DOKURA to conduct elections this year.

Depending upon how many of the four electoral zones are contested – meaning the need to conduct a formal vote on October 25th, DOKURA MAY be able to do the job for the \$20,000.00 allocated.

There is further good news in that verbal confirmation has been obtained from Provincial Officials that if some areas of the province have cost over runs in conducting their election, and others have a surplus (ie – acclamation), that surplus funding from such areas may be transferred to areas where funding is lacking.

We can tell you, that IF DOKURA has to conduct a formal election in each of the four Unincorporated Areas of the District – Lake of The Woods North; Lake of The Woods South; Oxdrift and Lac Seul – that there is NO WAY a proper election can be conducted for the \$20,000.00 available.

Are we happy with results to date?

Well, we are happy in that we are making progress. It appears some of our concerns have fallen on the proper ears at Queen's Park, but others have not. We need to continue our efforts.

ELIGIBLE VOTER ENUMERATION

In the last issue of DOKURA NEWS, we reported on a presentation DOKURA had made to both Queen's Park and the Crown Corporation – Municipal Property Assessment Corporation – with respect to the preparation of a formal voters list for ALL areas of Unincorporated Territory within the Province.

Yes, we understand MPAC now has the legal authority to produce such a voters list, but have heard little since then.

DOKURA did get a response form a “Municipal Relations Representative” of MPAC explaining in

great detail, just how much effort that corporation has put into producing a Primary List of Electors for our use in this fall's election.

The individual went on to explain how the Corporation had mailed over 2.4 million forms to households where data was incomplete or lacking in some respect.

The problem is that such requests for up dated information went to property owners within MUNICIPALITIES!

The individual further tried to defend the work they have put into improving their records for our use, by noting that they were employing a secondary matching process where they accessed Canada Post change of address information.

They don't realize that the vast majority of individuals in the Unincorporated Territories of the Kenora District – particularly those in the Lake of the Woods North and South areas, do not have a post office address associated with their property.

We'll keep trying and hopefully, one of these days, we'll be successful in getting our message across to someone who actually understands what we are trying to say!

PROPERTY ASSESSMENT

Yes, we have taken this one on too.

Some individuals may not be happy with our efforts in this area, but in an effort to make sure that EVERYONE is treated fairly, DOKURA has petitioned the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation – the people who do the physical inspections of your property and mine – to get on with the job they promised to do, when Provincial Land Tax Reform was introduced. They promised to do a re-assessment of each and every property in the Unincorporated Areas of Ontario.

Unfortunately, they are a long way from completing their job.

We know of too many people who have yet to see an assessor, and who are still paying taxes based upon outdated information.

Again, we have nothing to report regarding our efforts in this respect. We are following up on our

presentation, and, hopefully, will have at least received a response in time for the next edition of DOKURA NEWS.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE AWARDS

From time to time, the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration hands out Volunteer Service Awards to area individuals who have contributed their time serving as volunteers on local Boards.

May 17th saw the Ministry host a reception in Dryden, for the latest round of recipients. A large group gathered and awards were handed out to the following Unincorporated Area volunteers;

Rocke Beatty - McKenzie-Clearwater Volunteer Fire Department - 15 years service
William Blower - DOKURA - 15 years service
Lindy Henderson - McKenzie-Clearwater Volunteer Fire Department - 5 years service
Irene Kember - McKenzie-Clearwater Volunteer Fire Department - 30 years service
Jack McKenzie - DOKURA - 10 years service
Ken Pride - DOKURA - 15 years service
Rick Suche - McKenzie-Clearwater Volunteer Fire Department - 15 years service

Congratulations to those receiving awards. Your community service is greatly appreciated.

LOCAL SERVICES BOARD

Last summer saw a group involved with the McKenzie-Clearwater Volunteer Fire Department hold meetings to consider the formation of a Local Services Board to serve the area currently served by that Volunteer Fire Department. Meetings were held at the Fire Hall in Clearwater Bay, which led to a public vote. The vote was in favor of proceeding, and a formal application submitted to the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines.

As of this writing, the approval process was still "Pending", with local Ministry officials simply waiting for word from Queen's Park.

The new Board – to be called the Keeman Local Services Board – is expected to be just a tax collection and budget approval vehicle for the local Volunteer Fire Department. IF they receive formal Ministry approval, they will be governed by an elected Board of between three and five individuals.

So far, the LSB has requested approval to provide just local fire fighting services, however the Act allows Local Services Boards to do more.

In other developments in the Local Services Board department, the group operating the Volunteer Fire department in the Storm Bay area took a look at the concept and decided they did not need the additional level of government – and taxes – to operate their department. They are so successful with their local fundraising activities, and appeals for donations to support their efforts, that the group investigating the concept for the Storm Bay area, chose not to proceed with an LSB application.

Having said that, a third group in the District, a group centered around the Pellatt Volunteer Fire Department – the LaLu area – is proceeding with the public meeting process. Public information meetings were held in mid-June and mid-July.

This group is proposing the formation of a Local Services Board that would serve the Townships of Pellatt, Gidley, Umbach and Pelican. Once again, the proposal is for such a Board to be the funding (tax collection) agent for just local fire fighting services.

The residents of that area – both permanent and seasonal – are advised that there is to be a **PUBLIC VOTE** on whether or not to proceed. This is an **important vote** and will be held at the Pellatt Community Center on Saturday morning, August 14th, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 noon.

Exercise your democratic right and get out and vote.

Residents of the area looking for additional information on the proposal, and details as to the EXACT boundary of the area, should contact Barry Baltessen at 543-3621 or "E" Mail him at bbaltessen@gmail.com.

And finally, in Local Services Board news, one of the long standing local boards – the Redditt Local Services Board, has received funding to proceed

with the construction of a water services plant as well as repairs to existing water lines. The project is estimated to cost over \$500,000.00, with most of the funding coming from government grants.

BOATERS TAKE NOTE

Most boat operators are aware that the regulations changed, last fall, with new rules requiring each and every boat operator to have an operator's license.

No, unlike so many government activities, this license does not appear to be a revenue source, as the license is good for life. You have to pay a fee to write the exam and receive the license – assuming you can pass the exam – but there is no renewal provision in the current system.

Having gotten over the requirement to make sure you have your boat operators license with you every time you get into your boat, it seems the list of paper work you MUST carry with you, is growing.

Recent reports of the activities of the Ontario Provincial Policy Marine Units operating on the Lake of the Woods indicate that officials are now requesting to see the paperwork issued when boat owners obtained their license numbers for their vessel.

You know – the 20E numbers that are fading on the front of your boat!

It appears that regulations require not only the display of the license number on the vessel itself, but that the paper work that was issued with the numbers, be carried on the vessel at all times.

The fine is \$250.00 for not having it with you.

So, boaters, be advised. If you don't have a copy of the paperwork associated with the ownership of your vessel, and carry it with you every time you get into your boat, you had better chase down a copy.

The good news here is that this is still one of the FREE government services left.

The application for a hard copy of your license is the same form that you would use to apply for a new license for a boat. The problem is that it requires a copy of your proof of ownership of the boat – something most boat owners have long ago “misplaced”.

There is good news, however, in that if you complete a Declaration under the Canada

Evidence Act, it will serve as your ownership document.

Copies of both the application and declaration forms can be obtained from Transport Canada. In the City of Kenora, the forms are available from the Federal Government's Services Canada offices on the second floor of the Market Square office building. In the case of this particular office, they will issue your replacement license while you wait.

Questions? Call 1-800-662-6232 for more information.

GAS TAX REBATE PROGRAM

Yes, DOKURA FINALLY received a reply to its letter of December 27th, 2008, from Federal Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, the Honorable John Baird. The reply confirms some of what we already knew but fails to shed any light on our main question, HOW MUCH IS EVERYONE GOING TO RECEIVE?.

Readers will remember that we have been pressing the Federal Government to let the Local Roads Boards know just how much they would be receiving in the way of continued funding, with the four year extension of the Federal Gas Tax Rebate Program.

Yes, we knew that the Unincorporated Territories of Ontario had been included in the extension of funding, but no one seems to be able to figure out just how much this funding is.

Those of you involved with a Local Roads Board will recall that the initial five years of the program saw the amount paid to each Local Roads Board, increase every year. The maximum pay out was reached in the final year - that's the current year – 2009 – thru 2010.

We have argued, on behalf of the area's Roads Boards, that they need to know what they will be receiving in each if the next four years of the program – the extension for 2010 – 2011 thru 2013 – 2014 – so they can budget and plan what work they can undertake.

We will keep on this question and as soon as we know, we'll let you know.

In the BAD NEWS department, the letter from Minister Baird addressed the subject of the many road groups – primarily known as Road Associations – who have not received their FAIR

SHARE of the Tax Rebate. It appears from the Minister's letter that he does not understand the operation of the Associations, and finds it easier to simply leave them out.

Yes, DOKURA will continue to press the various levels of government in the hope that some solution can be found and all local property owners and tax payers, receive their FAIR SHARE.

DOKURA TO MEET WITH PROVINCIAL MINISTERS

As part of its participation on the Kenora District Services Board, DOKURA has reached an agreement with that body that it will send one of the four TWOMO area representatives to the annual meeting of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, held mid-August each year.

This year is no exception, with DOKURA attending the meeting in Windsor, Ontario.

One of the activities involved with the three days of meetings, is a series of meetings where individual attendees have the opportunity to sit down with Provincial Cabinet Ministers, on a one on one basis, to discuss matters of LOCAL concern.

This year, DOKURA has requested a meeting with four Ministers, namely;

The Honorable Jim Bradley
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

The Honorable Brad Duguid
Minister of Energy and Infrastructure

The Honorable Michael Gravelle
Minister of Northern Development, &
Mines

The Honorable Kathleen Wynne
Minister of Transportation

No, at this writing, DOKURA has not received confirmation that they will be able to meet with all of the Ministers. The process is that who meets with what Minister is not announced until shortly before the actual meetings.

From past participation in this process, DOKURA expects to be scheduled for a number of the requested meetings.

And as the dates for the Windsor meetings are August 16th thru 19th, we'll be able to put together a report on the meetings for our Annual Meeting in Vermillion Bay.

Just another reason to make sure you attend the meeting.

INFORMATION REQUEST

DOKURA meets, from time to time, with the various levels of government, usually to lobby for some issue of interest to area residents.

In such meetings, the question of just who DOKURA is, and details about the people it represents, works its way into the conversation.

As most readers know, accurate information about such things as the number of properties as well as the number of seasonal and permanent residents in the Unincorporated Areas of the Kenora District, just do not exist. Or, the information that is available, is highly inaccurate.

In an attempt to build a better data base in one area, DOKURA is working to put together a record of the number of kilometers served by each Roads Board and each Road Association as well as the number of properties on each road.

A letter was sent to the Chairman and Secretary of each road in the District, asking that they send DOKURA a note with the information on their particular road.

Yes, we have heard from many of you and the information is being compiled by our Secretary. To those who have replied already, DOKURA says THANK YOU. To those who have yet to let us know your particular Road information, please take a moment TODAY and send us a note. You can do so to DOKURA's post office box, or by "E" Mail to dokuraorg@hotmail.com.

All we need is the name of your road, the approximate number of properties on your road, and the length of your road, in Km.

KENORA AREA NEW AMBULANCE BASE

Success by the Unincorporated Area representatives involved in the site selection process?

Well perhaps "success" is not the correct word to use here. Perhaps progress towards a solution is more appropriate.

With the years of delay brought about by the City of Kenora and their City Council, in approving a site for the new base, the Unincorporated Area Directors on the Kenora District Services Board brought forward a Resolution at the June meeting of the KDSB. The motion read that the site for the new Ambulance Base to serve the vast area from just west of Vermillion Bay thru to the Manitoba Border – including the City of Kenora – be in the Unincorporated Area outside the City of Kenora.

Needless to say, the Municipal representatives on the KDSB voted together to defeat the motion. What resulted from the proposal, or at least from the point of view of DOKURA? It appears to have prompted the City of Kenora's council to offer a parcel of land in Kenora, FREE OF CHARGE, for the purposes of constructing the new base.

No, it is not in what is considered to be an ideal location, but may save the taxpayers \$200,000 – the estimated cost of land.

That offer from Kenora prompted the Services Board to appoint a Task Force Committee to investigate the proposal and see if the site is one that should be considered. The committee consists of the Mayor of Vermillion Bay, Gary Parkes; the Mayor of Sioux Narrows/Nestor Falls, Bill Thompson; and DOKURA's Vice-President and KDSB representative from the Lake of The Woods South, Jack McKenzie. They have been instructed to review the offer and see if something can be worked out and report back to the KDSB Board at its mid-August meeting.

It's good to see representation of the committee from the Unincorporated Area, with their funding such a large portion (45.2%) of the local cost.

"E" MAIL

We've heard from a good number of you, not only providing an "E" Mail address so we can contact you, but also providing corrections or additions to the mailing address we have for you or your organization. To this we say "Thank you" as it helps to keep our information current, and

builds the data base we can draw on if we need to contact certain areas on local matters, quickly.

So – if you haven't provided us with an "E" Mail address for your group, or have some additional addresses you would like to see us add to our mailing list, PLEASE take a moment and send the information in an "E" Mail to our Secretary – Irene Kember – at dokuraorg@hotmail.com.

GROW NORTH PLAN FOR NORTHERN ONTARIO

Last fall, the Province of Ontario came out with its GROW NORTH PLAN which it calls its twenty-five year blueprint for prosperity in Ontario's Northern Region. Public meetings were held in November, which DOKURA attended. Subsequent to the meetings, DOKURA submitted a formal report on its view and position on a number of the subjects.

One of the most important items in the document, from DOKURA's point of view, was the promise of the Province to establish a Review Team to look into ways of enhancing planning and service delivery, throughout both the incorporated (municipalities) and Unincorporated Territories of Northern Ontario. They promise representation on this "team" from not only the municipalities in the north, but also the Unincorporated Territories.

With this commitment by the Province, DOKURA included a section in its presentation detailing why DOKURA should have representation on this "TEAM".

Subsequent to that presentation, letters have been sent to the various Ministers involved, pressing for our participation. Hopefully we will be included and can make sure that the views of those of us from the Unincorporated Territories, are heard.

Readers interested in reviewing a copy of the presentation DOKURA compiled, can find it on DOKURA's WEB Site.

EDITORIAL CONTENT

In preparing this newsletter, the volunteers who make up DOKURA's Directors are always looking for items of local interest and concern to include in the next issue.

Yes, we are happy to publish information on planned local area events – such as a community Volunteer Fire Team fund raising activity, or local road annual meeting. The problem is that we don't hear of such events in a timely manner.

We need YOUR HELP in getting the information into us – by "E" Mail if possible – well in advance of the actual event.

So, if you know of something you would like publicized, please take a moment to let us know.

The following is a listing of the planned publication dates for this newsletter, for the coming year, along with the editorial closing dates.

ISSUE	PUBLICATION EDITORIAL DATE	DEADLINE
Fall 2010	Oct. 15 th , 2010	Oct. 1 st , 2010
Winter 2010-11	Feb. 15 th , 2011	Feb. 1 st , 2011
Spring 2011	May 15 th , 2011	May 1 st , 2011
Summer 2011	July 30 th , 2011	July 15 th , 2011

NEWSLETTER DISTRIBUTION

District of Kenora Unincorporated Areas Ratepayers Association (DOKURA) tries to send copies of its newsletter to more than one individual on the various Roads Boards, Road Associations, Local Service Boards, Volunteer Fire Departments etc., Unfortunately, we are not always able to identify everyone who might like a copy, so PLEASE help us out. If you are the only individual in your organization receiving this publication, we hope you will make copies available to others in your area. If you would like a number of copies sent to you for distribution, every time we publish a newsletter (four times a year) please let our secretary know and we'll be happy to send you the required number.

ADVERTISING

DOKURA newsletter continues to grow and the comments received from those who receive and

read the publication indicate the efforts of the volunteers who produce it are worthwhile.

Unfortunately, with any volunteer organization, the benefits to the membership is based upon the ability of the volunteers to raise funds to pay for the operations.

Yes, DOKURA receives some contributions from area Roads Boards, Road Associations as well as a limited amount of advertising dollars from those running advertisements in the newsletter.

Unfortunately, there are just not enough hours in the day, nor days in the week, for the volunteer Directors to solicit advertising revenue to fund this newsletter.

They have established a rate sheet for advertising in the publication, which can be found on DOKURA's WEB SITE. It lists the dates the newsletter is to be published – four times each year – and the cost of placing an advertisement in a single, or all four issues.

If you find this publication informative, and are involved in a business that you feel may be of interest to our readers, why not take a moment to look over the advertising information and consider contracting for an advertisement. Your support will be appreciated.

CONTACT US

The following is a listing of the volunteers who make up the Board of Directors of DOKURA. Readers are invited to contact any of them if they have a matter they think should be brought to the attention of the Board.

If your organization – Local Roads Board, Local Services Board, Road Association, Fire Team, Recreation Committee, etc – is planning an annual meeting, please be sure to let the Director in your area know of the date and location. Based upon time commitment, most will be happy to attend your meeting and answer questions on DOKURA.

And yes, we have heard from several Local Roads Boards inviting DOKURA to send a representative to their annual meeting. To those who have yet to finalize their meeting for this year, it's not too late to request a DOKURA representative to attend. Give it some thought.

President	Bill Blower	Lac Seul
Vice President	Jack McKenzie	Lake
of the		

Sec/Treasurer of the	Irene Kember	Woods South Lake
		Woods
South Director Director	Bill Latham Colin Hodgson	Oxdrift
Lake of the		Woods
South Director	Gord Dingman	
Lac Seul		
Director of the	Ken Pride	Lake
		Woods
North Director of the	Penny Lucas	Lake
		Woods North

Territories of Ontario's Kenora District. What DOKURA does ask for, however, is a voluntary donation to help fund their activities.

The response, this year, for donations by individuals as well as Roads Boards/Associations and other community organizations, has been wonderful. With the number of activities DOKURA continues to become involved in, ever increasing, the need for additional revenue – donations – increases proportionately.

To those of you who have contributed, we say THANK YOU. To those of you – both individuals and local boards – who feel our activities worthwhile and worthy of support, a donation form follows.

Please take a moment to send your check to the DOKURA SPECIAL ACTION FUND (for government advocacy and consultation).

___\$20 ___\$30 ___\$40 ___\$50 ___\$
Other

NAME

ADDRESS

\$ _____
AMOUNT ENCLOSED

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO DOKURA
MAIL TO DOKURA
BOX 1245 KEEWATIN POST OFFICE
KENORA, ONTARIO
POX 1C0

DISTRICT OF KENORA UNINCORPORATED AREAS
RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION
A NON-PROFIT ONTARIO CORPORATION
AS AT MARCH 31, 2010

DOKURA FUNDING

Readers of this newsletter are well aware that ALL of the activities of DOKURA are carried out by the volunteer efforts of those who serve on its Board. No one is paid for their services.

DOKURA has been successful in building up a small bank account, through the generous donations of a few. The need continues for funds to cover the cost related to meeting with government officials, as well as preparing and delivering this newsletter.

That's where you come in, as an individual or community group.

DOKURA has no formal membership fee schedule. Membership is open to all in the Unincorporated
Director Ian Clark Lake
of the

Director	Ray Leray	Woods South Oxdrift
Director	Barry Baltessen	
Lake of the		Woods North

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

ASSETS

SHARE IN COPPERFIN CREDIT UNION	\$25.00
CASH ON HAND IN BANK	
- General account	\$8,845.37
- Special action fund	220.00
ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE	NIL
TOTAL ASSETS	\$9,090.37

LIABILITIES AND MEMBERS EQUITY

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	NIL
SURPLUS	\$9,090.37
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND SURPLUS	\$9,090.37

STATEMENT OF REVENUE, EXPENDITURES AND SURPLUS FOR THE TERM APRIL 1ST, 2009 TO MARCH 31ST, 2010

REVENUE

CREDIT UNION BANK INTEREST	\$55.76
NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING	\$350.00
DONATIONS	\$220.00
Total Revenue	\$625.76

EXPENDITURES

Printing, postage & office supplies	\$133.53
Newsletter	\$413.59
Legal	NIL
Directors Meetings	\$117.66
Annual Meeting	\$217.48
Directors Travel	NIL
Bank charges	NIL
WEB site	\$500.00
Memberships	\$200.00
Donations	\$25.00
Total Expenses	\$1,607.26
Deficit of Income over Expenses	-\$981.50