

## **MBA ANNUAL Spring Meeting**

Sunday May 24, 2026

### **Executive in Attendance**

George Dzilums  
Maggie Thompson  
Maria Vlachos  
Lubke Storry  
Sharlene Gadsden

**Guest in Attendance** – Lee Simpson Lake Simcoe

### **Members in Attendance**

Al Turner  
Gunta D  
Dennis Walker  
Terry Thompson  
Chris Thompson  
Denise F  
Carole B Roger  
Sheila  
Michael Burns  
Michael G  
John F  
Rod Dobson

George greets and welcomes everyone and explains he is interim President and will remain until somebody else steps up and wants to be a president.

Motion to approve the minutes from last year Dennis & Maggie

**Treasury report** discussed by Lubke. Lubke reviews numbers. Nothing drastic to report.

**Annual spring cleanup** This year, we actually had one person come from Duclos Point to volunteer. We picked up about 40 bags of trash. Maria thinks about doing an October clean up as well.

**Landscape-** Justin will be continuing to do our 2 beaches. He is doing a fantastic job and will continue to do so.

**Beach Etiquette** –Clean up after yourselves. Be respectful to our neighbours and whoever else is here visiting with them.

**MBA Swag**- We are inquiring about sweatshirts and hoodies. Many people have shown interest in just the name and the establish date. We will get that out very soon.

**Causeway** -We have Lee Simpson here to give us an update since the last email that went out in January, where IAC just decided to make a premature decision and approve everything.

- We made the decision to actually sue the federal government and the Chippewas, the Ministry of Environment, at the force of Judicial Review. It is an extremely expensive process. Likelihood of success is exceptionally low. But we did it for two reasons. Number one, it delays the entire process. Number two, it forces them to show their hand on why they chose to make this early decision.
- The Chippewas actually filed their detailed project plan with impact assessment in the first quarter of 2025. They had it approved by them back then, and even though our association kept lobbying and sending additional information, IAAC did not even disclose to us that they had already received it and internally approved it. When you look at the decision letter, the decision letter says, early approval, and all these other departments may, not are required, have jurisdiction.
- We have also now gone out and hired government relations and public relations firms, to represent our interests. There are two different objectives. The government relations firm that we have hired, the individual that oversees that, is a former member of Parliament, is tight e with Carney and Associates, and has been able to get into a number of the minister ministry offices, to understand the status of this file.
- What is important now is to focus on the two Ministries. One is, obviously, the Minister of the Environment and of climate change. The other one is the Minister of Infrastructure and Housing. Both of those Ministers are new. Both are overwhelmed, and in particular, Gregor, who has taken over the post for infrastructure, is buried on the whole housing initiative that Carney's trying to get him working his way through. I can tell you that we

have intel from his team that this topic is not even on a radar file. They have not even seen it yet. So as much as IAC has approved it, the next logical step for the Chippewas, obviously, are to get their funding in place. You know, they have made it. The description was a \$450 million bridge causeway, but the design is not complete.

- We have hired a separate firm to do a review of what was submitted. Their estimates are closer to 700 million. It is assumed when WSP recognizes some of the other errors, that project is going to be closer to a billion dollars. So, where is the money coming from? The Chippewas had represented that they were going to produce 20% of it, and they were expecting the federal government to write the check for the balance.
- As much as IAC approved it, and Carney is pushing for infrastructure, being he is incredibly supportive of indigenous; our belief is the federal government is not going to step in and write a check for \$900 million.
- We are going at this on two prongs. One is that we got to get into the OBJ government. I am going to ask you for your help in a second. The second side of it is to get a PR campaign going. I think I have told you folks in the past, going to traditional routes, nobody will touch this, because it is indigenous. Therefore, an alternative route right now is to reach out to the nontraditional, investigative reporters that if you give them the foundation and freedom to do their own work, they will publish something even if it is a bit of a risk. If we do it, it may backfire on us. There was one gentleman who picked up on the story when it first got announced on TikTok, and the Chippewas went nuts. They were afraid that it was going to get out. So, the second leg of our strategy is to get a PR campaign going. We are starting to work on those angles. I have met with a couple of significant people from the island.
- There is a real division on the island which is now starting to be a division in abandoned council. They are concerned about the absolute amount that is going to be spent, and they talk of a future generation, and what is going to be taken away from the island and its future generations. You all know that they have done very well. I just came past the gas station. It is 4 cars

deep again this morning. They are making a lot of money at the gas station.

- Their first investment was an \$8 million purchase of an icebreaker. So, if any of you were around this spring, there was a firm from Yarmouth, Nova Scotia that brought a small ice breaker up here, and opened the channel in three days. When that happened, they made the decision to go buy their own. So, they now have their own icebreaker that has capability. I think it will hold about 20 people, no cars. They have the option to keep that channel open all year round if they choose to. The financing for our preferred group, which we lobbied for since day one, is to put a green ice capable, ferry that is one and a half times the size in there, and for emergency services, purchase a hovercraft. Those numbers still have not floated much above \$40 million. So, you know, the logical thing is to keep pushing that avenue. That is part of what we are going to do. That is part of our federal lawsuit, as part of the judicial review, was to say to the judge, IAC did not do their job. The ice capable ferry was never discussed. The report that they paid for was never made public. Can you at least force them to look at the other avenues? And there has been a lot of people that have filed about the environment, the effects on this lake, and for some reason, you would just put your heads down in the sand and then ignore it. We want a full environmental assessment that goes beyond this little scope. This project will have ramifications the whole way around the island, and this whole end of the land.
- In the next month I am going to send a template letter to everybody in our association. A letter that I would like everyone to email to the Minister of Environment and the Minister of Infrastructure that basically outlines all the environmental concerns. Also bringing attention to the option that has already been put in front of the Chippewas.
- Please send to those two individuals, because those are the two individuals that are going to be deciding. Right now, it is not on either one of their radar screens. And if we get 1,000 people that start emailing those two ministers, somebody in his staff is finally going to say, Hey, we need to look at this. Send to your family and friends as well. The more that we can get the better.

- Do we have anybody on the island that is willing to verbalize their opposition? One was at a meeting and was very vocal. We are working on three or four different individuals. I have the agreement from one significant person there to provide written statements. What I really want for the public relations side is for somebody to sit down and be interviewed. Nobody wants to do that. Any newspaper reporter is going to want to speak to somebody that lives over there and hear what their concerns are. There is one on the island that is quite vocal and said she was not the only one. The petition that they signed last year on the Island, over 100 of the 200 voted against it. The petition that they doctored up to submit the detailed project plan, if you work through the math, there is only 64 people that voted for it. 64 out of 200, and they still filed it.
- The Chippewas have 200 on island, and then about another 750 that are off island. They are all entitled to vote. But how many do? Very few. The old age home is going to be built on Hayden. What they are worried about is there are about 50 Chippewas that own all that land. Did you look at the whole way around the island? Under certificates of possession and they are allowed to sell those freely. You put a bridge across there, are they worth a million dollars plus. So, you mentioned a bunch of figures, 64 people on that island. That is the total population of that island. So, a billion-dollar bridge to satisfy 64 people?
- We are not allowed to even go for a country drive onto the island. Unless you know somebody that you receive an invitation from, you are not welcome there. The fact that it is private and we are prohibited in using it, rubs the wrong way because it is our tax money. We pay all the costs for this ferry. The ferry ticket is 20 dollars or 30 dollars, and we pay \$14 million per year to operate that ferry. Department of Transportation pays all the costs associated with the ferry. The bridge itself (that is the same length as the Gordie Howe bridge.) cost multiple billions. So why is it that we cannot go across this ferry now and the proposed bridge if it is built? Reasons due to Covid are not a threat anymore.

We thank Lee for joining us this afternoon and we look forward to doing our part in sending out the letters and emails.

Meeting Adjourned.