



**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**National Historic Sites Alliance for Ontario on December 1, 2011**  
**At The Cannery, The Distillery Historic District, Toronto Ontario**

**Attendance:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Site/ Organization</b>
Grant Maltman	Banting House NHS
Bill Lamb	Old Hay Bay Church NHS
Derek Boles	John St. Roundhouse NHS
Janet Hogan	St. James Cathedral NHS
Nancy Mallet	St. James' Cathedral NHS
Heather Thompson	Parks Canada
Kevin Fox	Parks Canada
Scott Davidson	Parks Canada, Bethune
Brian Malcolm	Parkwood Estate NHS
Sally Gibson	Gooderham and Worts NHS / Distillery District
Ellen Kowalchuk	Infrastructure Ontario
Shannon Prince	Buxton NHS and Museum
Mike Sawchuck	Ontario Heritage Trust
Elora Vink	NHSAO Coordinator

**Welcome:** Cloveth Smith, Co-op Employer Development Coordinator University of Toronto Scarborough

**Apologies:** Marilynn Havelka, Tim Crawford, Patricia Hamilton, John Grenville, Jennifer Rieger, Catherine Richards, Hilda Clark, Elise Brunet, Mary Smith, Patricia Phelps

**Chairpersons Report:**

*This report is from September 1, 2010 to August 31 2011.*

The NHSOA incorporated on September 9 2011 after having several years of discussion. This occurred in order to receive funding from Parks Canada which would help pay for conferences, co-op students, etc. Please see attached constitution and by-laws, the changes to which are outlined below. Incorporation allows the NHSOA to apply for Trillium Foundation Grants and government grants (e.g. Cultural Strategic Investment Fund); however, it also puts the NHSOA under a Contribution Agreement with Parks Canada, which puts limits on the NHSOA's ability to acquire money through projects.

Bellevue House National Historic Site (Amherstburg) was deteriorating and badly needed advocacy for repair. Former Vice Chair Sheryl Smith wrote a letter for Bellevue, which was copied to the Minister of Tourism and Culture, Michael Chan, among other people. Bellevue has since been identified as something to preserve and protect, which supports the NHSOA mission.

Former Vice-Chair Sheryl Smith attended the Heritage Week event “Conserving the Modern” in Peterborough in February 2011.

Brian Malcolm applied for the Cultural Strategic Investment Fund (CSIF) through the Ministry of Tourism and Culture to support the Historic Gardens workshop. This will be discussed in greater detail after the AGM.

The NHSAO continues its partnership with the University of Toronto Scarborough campus (UTSC) Arts and Science Co-op program. Students from the university are hired by the NHSAO to be a coordinator, in charge of administration, teleconferences, and NHSAO projects. Cloveth Smith, UTSC Co-op Employment Development Coordinator, will be doing a brief presentation after the AGM.

The draft for the Sacred Places Initiative was submitted to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. This project is entitled “Conserving Ontario Heritage Places of Worship” by Scott Davidson.

“Heritage Matters” magazine featured an ad for the NHSAO and the Ontario Heritage Trust.

Shannon Prince, the Chair of the NHSAO, went to the Heritage Canada conference in St. John’s, Newfoundland. There were approximately 900 people present, 19 of which attended the workshops, and only 9 of which were representatives from historic sites. There was talk about the need for the Canadian National Registry being renamed, although no decision was made.

The NHSAO continues to publish the newsletter “Site Lines” each term (tri-annual).

The 2011 NHSAO Conference was postponed because there were very few participants and not a huge draw to the topic. This was explored in a conference cancellation survey that was sent out to all national historic sites in Ontario. The results of this survey and further action will be discussed at this next NHSAO Board meeting.

The NHSAO website ([www.nhsao.ca](http://www.nhsao.ca)) is updated on a regular basis with NHSAO events, each season’s newsletters, a suggestion box and information about all of the sites in the Alliance. Members are encouraged to send articles, news, event ads, etc. to the NHSAO Coordinator to be put on the website.

The Chairperson’s report was read and accepted.

### **Treasurer’s Report**

*This report is from the date of incorporation (September 9, 2010) to the date of the first AGM (December 1, 2011).*

Previously (prior to incorporation in September 2010), Parks Canada covered all NHSAO costs. Now that the NHSAO is incorporated, their financial

guidelines are all on a project-based system; the costs of activities and events must be estimated before they are funded. Expenses like the membership fees of to the Ontario Historical Society and bank fees are not covered by this project-based funding. As well, projects could not be covered until the Contribution Agreement was signed, and it has been sent back and forth between the Board of the NHSAO and Parks Canada for months; therefore, the months prior to the signing of the Contribution Agreement were also not funded. During this time, the NHSAO continues to pay their co-op student. The \$2,646.20 profit from the 2010 Conference at Willowbank covered this expense partially, and the NHSAO also saved some money by hiring a summer student who received \$1000 for the whole summer instead of an hourly wage. Despite this, money had to be borrowed for the spring student pay from the Trent-Severn Waterway section of Parks Canada, and this \$5000 debt is collecting interest.

As well, The NHSAO cannot earn a profit from events under the Contribution Agreement because Parks Canada will reduce their funding by whatever the profit margin is so that the NHSAO breaks even. They will not ask for money back; they will only be providing less. However, this makes it difficult to generate revenue and save money.

On top of that, the current Contribution Agreement expires March 31. There is still a co-op student work term until the end of April, and a new student from May to September. Last summer the co-op student was unpaid, and doing this again from May to September will save the NHSAO from debt. However, there is still the four weeks in between when the Contribution Agreement expires and when an unpaid summer student can be hired that need to be taken into consideration. Unless the new Contribution Agreement is signed quickly and the cheque arrives right away, this could cause some problems for the NHSAO (especially considering that Parks Canada cheques are not Purolated or sent by courier and have a tendency to get lost in the mail).

All told, the NHSAO needs to find a way to generate revenue outside of the projects under the Contribution Agreement in order to make a profit. Solutions to this can be seen in the discussion attached to the AGM minutes.

The treasurer presented the annual accounts which were accepted (see attached).

**Appointment of an Auditor:**

Motion: That Christina Perfetto, OHS Office Manager and Bookkeeper, be appointed to independently examine the NHSAO's financial statements for the 2011-2012 fiscal year and report to the Board for review.

Moved: Mike Sawchuck

Seconded: Scott Davidson

**Changes to By-Laws:**

By-Law 2 "Duties of Officers", number 5: Changed to read "Numbered cheques signed by the Treasurer and **another member of the Executive** shall pay out monies).

By-Law 3 "Terms of Office for the Board of Directors", number 1: Changed to read "The Executive shall be elected every two (2) years **by the members of the Board of Directors.**"

By-Law 3, number 2: Changed to read "The Chair and Secretary shall be elected in even-numbered years **beginning in 2010** and the Vice-Chair and Treasurer shall be elected in odd-numbered years **beginning in 2011.**"

By-Law 3, number 5: Newly created to read "**The Executive may seek out and appoint new members to the Board of Directors at any time. New Board members will normally be confirmed at the annual general meeting after a general call for nominations from the floor and holding an election if needed.**"

Future amendments to be determined: Membership fees (Parks Canada Sites pay special fees?), presenting the NHSAO budget (it currently does not get presented formally because it is dependant on the Contribution Agreement.

Motion: To accept the amendments to constitutional by-laws 2 and 3, as seen above.

Moved: Grant Maltman

Seconded: Brian Malcolm

#### **Nomination to the Board:**

All nominations accepted; a vote was taken, and the following people were elected for the coming year: Heather Thompson, Fred Addis, Grant Maltman (all nominated by Brian Malcolm).

#### **Nominations to the Board Executive:**

Mike Sawchuck is nominated by Kevin Fox to be Treasurer; he accepts this nomination as no one else is nominated. Seconded by Sally Gibson.

Kevin Fox is nominated by Sally Gibson to be Vice-Chair, no one else is nominated. Seconded by Mike Sawchuck.

A vote was taken, and the list of Board members for the year 2012 is as follows:

Shannon Prince, Chair

Kevin Fox, Vice Chair

Mike Sawchuck, Treasurer

Ellen Kowalchuk, Secretary

Grant Maltman

Heather Thompson

Fred Addis

Brian Malcolm

Scott Davidson

Sally Gibson

Marilynn Havelka

**Meeting closed.**

**Please see documents below for the discussion items.**



## **NHSAO FACE-TO-FACE MEETING AND STRATEGIC PLANNING DISCUSSION**

**National Historic Sites Alliance for Ontario, December 1, 2011  
The Cannery, The Distillery Historic District, Toronto Ontario**

### **1. Revenue Generation**

- The NHSAO is aware of the financial line from Parks Canada; we must adjust to this model.
- The Alliance cannot profit from the 2011 Conference (or any other Parks Canada events)
- *The NHSAO can still fundraise for events and products outside of the Contribution Agreement*, but this is difficult to plan and turn a profit from it.
- Deliverable projects that the NHSAO and the student work on must fit into the Parks Canada mandate, and the idea is that Parks Canada will provide *assistance*, not everything required.
- The main cost for the NHSAO is staffing; the co-op students' salaries need to be broken down into how they spend their time every year for the Contribution Agreement. The co-op students are absolutely necessary to the function of the NHSAO because the members of the Board have other full-time commitments; the students take care of almost everything that the NHSAO does. However, if the NHSAO cannot afford to hire a student, the Alliance needs to find a new way to function.
- There are other options in finding co-op students: Centennial College new post-graduate Historic Site Management Program, Young Canada Works, Job Creation Program through the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, University of Toronto Master of Museum Studies students (summer only)
- The topic of membership fees has been discussed in the past; this may conflict with the NHSAO idea that any national historic site in Ontario can become a member of NHSAO, no matter how small.
- However, a small fee may maximize involvement in the organization; most members are not very active, and paying a price may give them the incentive to participate and see more value in doing more.
- It was discussed whether donations may be a better idea than membership fees – or both?
- Most organizations' membership fees are in the hundreds; paying a small price to be a part of the NHSAO should not be a problem.
- As well, members could potentially pay a small subscription fee to "Site Lines" – pay over the Internet and make it easy for members.
- Another option is voluntary membership fees that could give certain sites that pay special privileges or discounts, while still being an all-inclusive organization.

### **2. Current NHSAO Projects – Brian Malcolm's Report**

Summit/ Symposium information:

- Brian attended the Ontario Tourism Summit and the Historic Landscape Symposium; notes were handed out and will also be distributed over the website ([www.nhsao.ca](http://www.nhsao.ca))

Historic Gardens Project:

- Parkwood Estate National Historic Site hosted a historic gardens workshop in March with some national historic sites and some other heritage sites, where there was great enthusiasm for the exposure of historic gardens as a project
- Parkwood proposed to create a showcase with the NHSAO and the Ontario Garden Tourism Coalition (now renamed Gardens Ontario Coalition) as partners and received a grant from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (Cultural Strategic Investment Fund, or CSIF).
- The NHSAO started to take inventory of historic gardens in the Ontario (some national historic sites, some museums, some privately owned, etc.) and currently has a total of 28 sites that are interested in participating in the Historic Gardens showcase either this year or in the future.
- The steering/advisory committee for the project has several viewpoints represented: a few national historic sites, a garden writer, a representative from the newly created RTOs (Regional Tourism Organizations), the president of Attractions Ontario, and the president of Ontario Master Gardeners. We are trying to get a representative from FOBBA (Federation of Ontario Bed and Breakfast Accommodations). Positions on the steering/advisory committee are still open, if anybody is interested in getting involved in the project.
- Parkwood has recently received the proposals from three professional consultation services. Once a professional consultant is decided upon, they will help decide on a marketing plan at the first Steering Committee meeting. This is budgeted in the funding received from CSIF.
- Elora Vink (current NHSAO Coordinator) has helped a lot with this project and will continue to do so in the spring from Parkwood.

Attractions Ontario Heritage Passport

- This is a new and exciting marketing opportunity for national historic sites and heritage organizations: the NHSAO has created a partnership with Attractions Ontario so that sites can take advantage of extremely cost-effective marketing while the NHSAO receives a 15% commission for circulating the insertion order (which helps generate revenue for the Alliance that is not under the Contribution Agreement).
- Brian suggests creating an NHSAO specific page (1 or 2 page spread) that talks about specific sites, which will advertise for the sites for a smaller price than the original Attraction Ontario insertion, as advertise the NHSAO brand. The NHSAO would still receive 15% commission on their own page.
- Attractions Ontario usually doesn't allow co-op pages, but they are making an exception because of this partnership, and it would be a good opportunity for smaller sites that don't usually get a lot of marketing to participate in a widely circulated publication (250 000 copies across Ontario, as well as website publication).
- However, if sites want to do their own individual ad, this is also welcome (for example, Parkwood will be doing an individual ad under the NHSAO insertion

order as well as the NHSAO co-op page, if enough sites are interested in participating in this).

- The Historic Gardens Project will be doing something similar, under the discretion of the Steering Committee.
- *December 16 is the commitment date; mid-February is the date to submit artwork!*
- If there is a big enough response in interest, the NHSAO will go ahead and do this.

### **3. 2011 Annual Conference Cancellation**

- Elora created a survey regarding the cancellation of the conference, and circulated to members several times in order to get the maximum response.
- The results state that although members most commonly cited that the reason for not attending the conference as “too busy”, they do not want the time of year of the conference changed.
- In 2012, the planning for the conference needs to begin in January, and have the schedule out by June. In 2011, the “save the date” was not sent out until July/August and the conference package was sent out in September – this is way too late to expect a high number of participants. People need to be given enough notice to save money aside for conferences in their budgets.
- The conference is a good opportunity for the NHSAO to raise both revenue and brand awareness; especially if it is not marketed solely to members (e.g. the conference at Willowbank had several members of the Ontario Association of Architects attending).
- The NHSAO Conference is “different”; it is workshop-based instead of lecture-based, and it is held at different national historic sites, not a hotel. This is a marketable factor.
- The fact that the conference is held at national historic sites across the province is why it is two days long; because the membership requested in the surveys that they would like a conference length appropriate to their travel time. There are also travel subsidies available.
- It is practically too late to begin planning a spring conference now, with only 4 or 5 months notice. The NHSAO will do a conference this year, but not before September.
- The NHSAO can hold a workshop on “Accessibility: It’s Everyone’s Business”, perhaps as a regional event which would attract smaller sites. This may be combined with a networking event.
- The newly created RTOs could assist with workshops and other events; this partnership would look good to Parks Canada as well as create networking opportunities for sites in their own regions.
- Ellen strongly suggested holding the conference every other year instead of annually; The Board must create significant projects to fill the gap between conferences in order to fulfill the Parks Canada Contribution Agreement.
- Brian suggested doing a joint conference with the Ontario Museums Association (OMA), as there was a significant positive response to this from the conference cancellation surveys; this presents both great opportunities and some challenges. The OMA has approached the NHSAO several times, requesting to work together.

- Heather notes that merging conferences has been hugely successful with other organizations in the past; however, not all national historic sites are members of OMA, and the OMA is a large organization while the NHSAO is a smaller one.
- The NHSAO can have an overlapping day with the OMA conference and joint site tours; that way the two conferences could still be separate, but sites could participate in both without having to pay for two sets of accommodations and twice the travel time.
- The OMA and NHSAO could do some joint workshops as well (a lot of their issues overlap with the NHSAO mission).
- The NHSAO Board needs to take the time and plan out the next year, with long term and short term projects. The Board will meet again in early January at Parkwood, and begin planning events for March.
- Parkwood is cooperating with the OMA in their conservation certification program in April; this could be a good starting point for the two organizations to work together.

#### **4. Marketing and membership**

- When a new national historic site was created, they would receive a certificate from the NHSAO declaring the site as a member of the National Historic Sites Alliance for Ontario.
- This can be re-vamped now that the NHSAO is incorporated, and also ties in the discussion of membership fees; the sites that pay fees may receive a special certificate.
- Membership has its rewards for both sites and the NHSAO; membership fees are revenue that does not fall under the Contribution Agreement, and individuals and sites can benefit.
- There could be a “membership elite” where, as previously discussed, everybody is a member, but those who pay the fees may receive marketing or networking opportunities, discounts to conferences or workshops, etc. without excluding sites who don’t pay fees from the organization.
- Fees could also get paid based on budget and have three tiers of membership fees based on what the site can pay. The following is a suggestion of this system:
  - \$0 - \$50 000 – free
  - \$50 000 – \$250 000 - \$100 fee
  - \$250 000 + - \$250 fee
- However this would be slightly difficult to administrate, as sites organize their own budgets and it would be hard to keep track of who has what amount.
- This issue will be discussed further at the strategic planning meeting of Board members in early January.

#### **Bill Lamb’s Revenue Suggestion**

- Bill Lamb from Old Hay Bay Church NHS suggested that the NHSAO create a calendar of national historic sites and/or artefacts to sell as merchandise. This would be a project that could fall under the Contribution Agreement; however the profits from this might be retainable.
- This would advertise for sites and allow them to network across the province by seeing other members of their Alliance, and there could be a heritage

resources and contact information in the back page of calendar (e.g. UTSC co-op, Ontario Heritage Trust, Ministry of Heritage and Culture, etc.)

- The product would have to be marketed, predicted cost of production and revenue gain; unsold copies would have to be dealt with.
- Grant does this with his sites to huge success – the calendars can be sold at gift shops in all of the sites, which advertises the NHSAO name as well as the sites in the publication.