



**2022 Municipal Elections, Candidates Questionnaire  
Township of Lake of Bays, Sinclair Ward Councillor  
Rick Brooks (ACCLAIMED)**

**Click on any question to go directly to the answers for that question.**

1. What should the Township/Town do to reduce its carbon footprint and facilitate movement away from fossil fuels?
2. The Muskoka Watershed Council is recommending an Integrated Watershed Management Plan for Muskoka which would require municipalities to base planning decisions on impacts to the entire watershed, not just the local municipality. Do you support this approach? Why or why not? How could this change planning decisions in the Township of Lake of Bays/Town of Huntsville?
3. What area(s) of the Township/Town budget do you think receives too much funding and why?  
What area(s) of the Township/Town budget do you think receives too little funding and why?
4. There has been an increase in year-round use of seasonal properties due to the Covid pandemic, retirement, and other factors and trends. How should this affect municipal services such as roads and garbage, and other non-municipal services such as internet?
5. How should the Township/Town evaluate its Short-Term Rental Licensing program?
6. The Lake of Bays Association has identified several Election Priorities (see cover letter). What can the Association do to help council address any one or more of these priorities.

**Township of Lake of Bays Candidates Only**

In April 2022, LOBA sent a letter to the Township of Lake of Bays outlining our concern about variances on non-complying waterfront properties and by-law enforcement. In summary, the letter expressed the Association's concerns about a perceived trend in the number of variances being granted by Council on legal non-complying lots, particularly for increased lot coverage. The Association also expressed concern about by-law enforcement particularly regarding the unwarranted removal of shoreline trees and vegetation. The following two questions relate to these concerns.

7. When faced with planning applications, how will you work to achieve balance between the need to improve or replace existing structures and protecting the environment and character of the lake?
8. Do you support stronger enforcement tools and more assertive policies to deal with people who do not comply with by-laws, particularly the Development Permit System by-laws?

Contact and other information.

**1. What should the Township/Town do to reduce its carbon footprint and facilitate movement away from fossil fuels?**

**Rick Brooks:** No response given.

**2. The Muskoka Watershed Council is recommending an Integrated Watershed Management Plan for Muskoka which would require municipalities to base planning decisions on impacts to the entire watershed, not just the local municipality. Do you support this approach? Why or why not? How could this change planning decisions in the Township of Lake of Bays/Town of Huntsville?**

**Rick Brooks:** YES. It will encourage staff as well as Council to be looking further afield, outside the box so to say. The issues with this however can start with jurisdiction, where the implicating factors may come from areas beyond our control. It could initiate a dialogue that may or may not be supportive but regardless it can be an awakening to bigger problems that we may not have thought of and answers to mitigate that were more involved than previously considered the norm.

**3. What area(s) of the Township/Town budget do you think receives too much funding and why? What area(s) of the Township/Town budget do you think receives too little funding and why?**

**Rick Brooks:** Budget is numbers, whereas the services that budget allows us to do is real, its tangible evidence that we care about that service and those who are employed to make that happen. To suggest one area is over funded is to understand completely what they do or do not do. I do not suggest any areas to be over funded at this time. Conversely, to suggest an area is under funded is somewhat easier to see, especially as the standards by which we make changes are changing so rapidly, due to ecological and environmental changes affected in part by climate change. Using those analogies, Public Works, Parks, Cyber security and our support of Fire Services are all in need of more funding.

**4. There has been an increase in year-round use of seasonal properties due to the Covid pandemic, retirement, and other factors and trends. How should this affect municipal services such as roads and garbage, and other non-municipal services such as internet?**

**Rick Brooks:** It puts a huge burden on staff and a tremendous strain on those longer range District budgets that had no heads up this was coming.

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**5. How should the Township/Town evaluate its Short-Term Rental Licensing program?**

**Rick Brooks:** It is a living document and a very good one at that. Are there need for some tweeking – yes, but let’s give it and staff the time to get ahead of the curve and then reevaluate its success.

**6. The Lake of Bays Association has identified several Election Priorities. What can the Association do to help council address any one or more of these priorities.**

**Rick Brooks:** No response given.

In April 2022, LOBA sent a letter to the Township of Lake of Bays outlining our concern about variances on non-complying waterfront properties and by-law enforcement. In summary, the letter expressed the Association’s concerns about a perceived trend in the number of variances being granted by Council on legal non-complying lots, particularly for increased lot coverage. The Association also expressed concern about by-law enforcement particularly regarding the unwarranted removal of shoreline trees and vegetation. The following two questions relate to these concerns.

**7. When faced with planning applications, how will you work to achieve balance between the need to improve or replace exiting structures and protecting the environment and character of the lake?**

**Rick Brooks:** Our planning staff are obligated to work within the parameters available to them from provincial statutes, present their recommendations to Council and it’s the role of Council to try to mitigate the difference from a common sense approach. The issue of addressing existing (and usually that means historic structures) is complex. There are those who are sensitive to the environment and wish to simply repair in place and that can be seen as fine. The issues we are more often faced with is the applicant who has no interest in the existing, however wishes to utilize that setback and some resemblance of that footprint to create a new structure. Those are the challenging applications and each taken with their own merit. It does bode the question, is it not time to revisit the Official Plan and make it more difficult for consultants to massage larger structures into non-complying situations.

**8. Do you support stronger enforcement tools and more assertive policies to deal with people who do not comply with by-laws, particularly the Development Permit System by-laws?**

**Rick Brooks:** YES, policies without meaningful enforcement is simply an invitation to abuse the system. Having said that to ensure the Township has those ‘tools’ to do the enforcement, it may need to revisit the issue of staffing levels.

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**Contact and other information.**

**Rick Brooks:** 2018-2022 Sinclair/Finlayson Ward

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