

**Minutes**  
**Organizing Committee**  
**Winter River/Tracadie Bay Watershed Association**

**Corran Ban Hall**  
**November 19, 2008, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

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1. Welcome

Don Mazer opened the meeting, which was attended by 31 people, with several general comments on the Winter River/Tracadie Bay watershed including the need to ensure that the ecological health of the watershed is enhanced and protected.

He indicated that the meeting was planned by the Organizing Committee as a way to engage the community to begin the process of creating a new group with representation from across the watershed. He also stressed that the Organizing Committee was simply a group of individuals who had been meeting for several months to complete the ground work necessary for tonight's public meeting and that all the documents that would be presented were draft documents.

Don concluded his remarks by recognizing the presence of Bruce Raymond and Dale Thompson from the P.E.I. Department of the Environment, Craig Walker from the City of Charlottetown, and Mark Ashley of the Winter River Environmental Committee.

2. Purpose of Meeting/Review of Agenda

John Hughes explained that the purpose of the meeting was to share information with the public in preparation for the meeting next week when bylaws would be adopted and a Board of Directors would be elected.

Everyone present at the meeting was invited to complete a membership form.

3. Recognition of Previous Work in the Watershed

John reviewed several of the successful projects completed by the Winter River Environmental Committee in the upper part of the Winter River.

4. History and Work of the Organizing Committee

Don began by explaining some of the history behind the Organizing Committee. Last November, Wayne Corrigan and Rod Dempsey were invited to a meeting at the Department of the Environment. The purpose of the meeting was to expedite the development of a new organization to address the collective needs of the Winter River and Tracadie Bay watersheds. The reason for establishing a new watershed group was rooted mostly in the difficulties that had developed between the Department of the Environment and the Winter River Environmental Committee (WREC). Both Wayne and

Rod were uncomfortable in becoming involved in creating a new organization that would, to some extent, run in parallel with the WREC and they eventually withdrew from the process.

Don, John, and Rod then met the WREC to offer their help in restructuring the organization and restoring their relationship with the Department of the Environment. Unfortunately, after a few months, the WREC decided to pursue an alternate agenda that did not include this rebuilding.

During the remainder of the winter and spring of 2008, nothing happened in the watershed. Then, in late August, Dave Latimer (Co-Chair of the Friends of Covehead and Brackley Bay) convened a meeting attended by 17 people, mostly from the watershed. The WREC was invited but chose not to send a representative. At the meeting, concerns were expressed about the need to address watershed issues and to have a working watershed group – and so began the formation of the Organizing Committee.

Members of the Organizing Committee initially met with the Department of the Environment to clarify the nature of the difficulties in their relationship with the WREC.

Subsequently, six meetings have been held for the purpose of discussion and planning toward the formation of a new watershed group representing the Winter River and Tracadie Bay watersheds. The WREC was also invited to these meetings but also chose not to send a representative. Despite this, the WREC has been kept informed of the Organizing Committee's activity through emails and paper copies of minutes.

Don finished his remarks by emphasizing that at this immediate point in time, there is no new organization - just concerned individuals who want to address the needs of the watershed. The formation of the new organization will begin next week.

## 5. Open Discussion

Don also chaired the open discussion. The main points are presented below.

Darren Riggs, a member of the Central Queen's Wildlife Federation, indicated they are now looking for people to assume executive positions in their organization. He elaborated that since the Federation is already well established (having a Business Number, charitable status, etc.) it might be beneficial for the Organizing Committee to consider using the Federation as a means to address the health of the watershed rather than creating a new organization.

Mark Ashley, of the Winter River Environmental Committee, passed along his best wishes for the new organization and indicated his willingness to come to meetings.

Mark MacLeod suggested that an effective way to protect land in the watershed - particularly land of special ecological significance - would be to purchase it.

Darren Riggs advised that a study has been completed on water issues around the Corran Ban Bridge and that it would be interesting to invite the oceanographer who completed the work to make a presentation at a future meeting.

6. Focusing on the Future

Allan MacCormac stressed that once the new organization has bylaws and an elected Board of Directors that planning can begin to improve the ecological health of the watershed. Alan then reviewed the draft mission statement and bylaws.

Ideally, there would be between six and twelve members, from across the watershed, on the Board of Directors.

7. Guest Speaker

John Hughes introduced the guest speaker – Fred Cheverie, Coordinator for the Souris and Area Branch of the P.E.I. Wildlife Federation. Listed below, in bullet form, are several of the points Fred made in his presentation.

- It is wonderful to see young people present tonight.
- It is important to listen, really listen, to everyone.
- Don't point fingers at groups or individuals.
- Obtaining funding will allow for the hiring of a coordinator to do much of the leg work.
- Do some stream enhancement work early on to show the public that something is happening.
- Easy projects are a good way to start building public exposure. That exposure must never decrease.
- The probability of obtaining funding will increase as the organization becomes better organized.
- Water quality issues will always attract public interest.
- Make good use of the resources offered by the Department of the Environment.
- It is critical to have major landowners on side.

Cathy Corrigan thanked Fred for his presentation.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.