

Winter River – Tracadie Bay Watershed Association (WRTBWA)

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the WRTBWA
Held on May 25, 2021, 7:05 pm at the Tracadie Community Centre

Board Members Present: John Hughes, Lowell Vessey, Jean-Paul Arsenault, Clare Martin, George Coade, Matt Steeves, Jeff Bysterveldt, Dwayne McNeill, Jay Carr, Shauna Barry, Carol Murphy

Members and Guests: Scott Anderson- guest speaker, Rachel MacNeil, Vera Hughes, Susan Hughes, Leigh McIsaac, Doug Carlaw, Jackie Olafson, Dean Murphy

Staff Present: Sarah Wheatley, Lyndsay MacWilliams, Raena Parent

Board Member Absent: Patrick Lévêque

1. Clare called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM

2. Approval of Agenda

Clare presented the agenda. Moved by Jeff Bysterveldt, seconded by Jay Carr that the agenda be accepted as presented. Motion carried.

3. Opening Remarks from the Chair of the Board

Clare welcomed everyone to the Annual General Meeting, including board members, staff, and supporters. She introduced Board members and mentioned that an election would be held to replace retiring Board members.

4. Guest Speaker

Dwayne MacNeill introduced Scott Anderson of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC). Scott spoke about AAFC programs and how they are developed. He described the two streams of the Agriculture Climate Solutions Program: Living Labs and the On-Farm Climate Action Fund. The Living Labs component focuses on farmers' needs; broad and diverse partnerships; and testing in the real-life context. He explained how the innovation cycle works with respect to Living Labs and how producers are involved with AAFC scientists from the outset. Prince Edward Island was chosen for the Atlantic Region Living Labs project and is potato-focused in three watersheds: Dunk River, Kensington North, and Souris River. Scott showed a series of videos explaining the Living Labs program. He explained that 2022 is the last year for the Living Labs program and that AAFC will transition into the Agriculture Climate Solutions Program. It will focus on innovative practices to increase carbon sequestration (cover crops, shelterbelts, conversion of land to permanent cover) and decreasing greenhouse gases (nutrient management, feeding strategies). In response to questions, Scott explained that AAFC would like to work with all farm sectors, not just potatoes, and that the WRTBWA should work through the Watershed Alliance if it wants to become involved in the program. Dwayne thanked Scott and presented him with a gift.

5. AGM Minutes from 2021

Jean-Paul Arsenault read the 2021 AGM minutes and moved their adoption. Motion seconded by Jeff Bysterveldt. No changes or corrections were made. All were in favour and the motion was carried.

6. Report from the Treasurer

Lowell Vessey presented the report prepared by our independent third-party auditor, BDO. Highlights included: net assets for the year ended March 31, 2022 of \$222,547 compared to \$139,313 for 2021; revenue of \$265,525 compared to \$274,539 for 2021; expenses for 2021 of \$248,554 compared to \$255,957 for 2021; and year-end bank balance for 2022 of \$168,405 compared to \$80,864 for 2021. This larger bank balance is largely due to deferred revenue of \$66,263 which was received in 2021-22 but which will be spent in 2022-23. Sarah Wheatley reviewed details of the wage subsidies (\$97,915 in 2022 compared to \$75,847 for 2021) and other income (\$69,369 in 2022 compared to \$117,076 in 2021). Lowell explained that the WRTBWA has transitioned from a cash accounting to an accrual accounting method as suggested by our auditor.

There were no questions arising from the Treasurer's report. Lowell moved to accept the report. Motion seconded by Dwayne. All were in favour and the motion was carried.

7. Report from the Chair

Clare focused her remarks on the variety of work done by staff in the watershed and highlighted the importance we place on treating our staff well through training opportunities, competitive salaries, giving them opportunities to learn how to supervise,

how to resolve conflicts, and generally preparing them for future careers. She mentioned the importance of outreach activities, particularly those involving school children, and how we've missed out on them due to the pandemic. She thanked Sarah for her skill in finding and managing funds and in making sure all the details are looked after, including that staff get paid correctly and on time. Clare thanked members of the Board for their dedication in attending monthly meetings and for their work on committees. She spoke about our frustration when things go wrong in the watershed like the escape of goldfish in the Winter River and damage caused by runoff due to poor cropping practices and severe weather events. Clare ended her remarks by highlighting our successes: the major culvert replacement project at Tim's Creek on the Suffolk Road, and the pleasure we take in seeing former staff members pursue their careers.

8. Report from the Coordinator

- Sarah illustrated her presentation with photos of field activities and staff
- She showed examples of stream work, shoreline clean-up, cleaning garbage in the vicinity of watercourses, tree planting, footbridge construction, and the Tim's Creek culvert project
- She introduced and explained the Watershed Scorecard highlighting areas where we met, exceeded, or came up short on operational objectives
- Sarah showed a pie chart detailing funding sources for the year ending March 31, 2022
- Plans for the 2022 field season include: tree planting, a long-term project to promote forest enhancement, and a culvert replacement at MacAulay's Creek using the same partnership approach with Department of Transportation, Infrastructure and Energy as with Tim's Creek
- Sarah showed photos of trail development work done at our property on the Suffolk Road and mentioned that we are looking at the possibility of locating the WRTBWA office there at some time in the future

9. Election of Board Members

Matt Steeves reported that eight Board members will return for another year and that two, John Hughes and Patrick L  v  que, are retiring. Three people expressed interest in joining the Board. Jean-Paul nominated Shauna Barry, Lowell nominated Carol Murphy, and George nominated Philip Murphy. Shauna and Carol were present at the meeting and accepted their nominations. Philip was not present at the meeting but had previously indicated that he was willing to serve on the Board. Matt called three times for nominations from the floor. There being none, he declared Shauna, Carol and Philip elected and welcomed them to the Board.

10. Other Business

George thanked John for his service to the Board, noting that he is one of the founding members, and presented him with a gift. John reflected on his many years on the WRTBWA and how things have changed for the better for the Association. Patrick was absent and will receive his gift later.

11. Concluding Remarks

Clare thanked all for attending and declared the meeting adjourned at 8:37.

Respectfully Submitted, Jean-Paul Arsenault