

Winter River – Tracadie Bay Watershed Association (WRTBWA)

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors of the WRTBWA

Held on July 21, 2021, 7:05 pm by Zoom

Present: Clare Martin, John Hughes, Patrick Lévêque, Jay Carr, Sarah Wheatley, Jeff Bysterveldt, Jean-Paul Arsenault, Dwayne McNeill, George Coade, Hilary Shea, Matt Steeves.

Absent: Lowell Vessey

1. Presentation to Roger Townshend

- Clare thanked Roger for his time on the Board and noted the value he added with his knowledge of the aquaculture sector. She presented Roger with a token of our appreciation and expressed the desire that he keep in touch and consider serving on the Board in future. Roger responded that he enjoyed his time on the Board, that it was a learning experience for him, and that he now has a greater appreciation for the work being done by the WRTBWA.

2. Minutes of the June 16, 2021 meeting

Draft minutes were reviewed with no changes.

Moved by George, seconded by Hilary that the minutes be adopted as written. All in favour. Motion carried.

- There were no questions arising from the minutes.

3. Chairperson's Report – Clare Martin

- Clare reported that the 2021-2022 grant request to the City of Charlottetown has been approved and is being processed
- Regarding COVID-19, in-person meetings still require social distancing. Therefore, the Board is not able to meet at the office. According to the CPHO, no change to this rule is expected until September 12. Outdoor activities are still respecting CPHO guidelines. Members decided to stay with Zoom meeting format for the time being.
- Clare received an invitation to attend a meeting of the Coalition for the Protection of PEI Water at the Farm Centre on July 27; she will participate and invited other Board members to do so

4. Treasurer's Report – Sarah (in Lowell's absence)

	<i>Chequing account</i>	<i>Savings Account</i>
Opening Balance: June 1, 2021	\$78,299.49	\$ 71,108.00
Less o/s cheques	\$6,190.92	
Plus deposits	\$36,797.75	\$5.84 (Interest)
Plus o/s cheques	\$2,719.62	
Less expenses	<u>\$30,243.31</u>	
Closing balance: July 31, 2021	\$81,382.63	\$71,113.84

Moved by George, seconded by Patrick that the Treasurer's report be adopted as presented. All in favour. Motion carried.

- The reserve fund policy is not yet ready to present to the Board for final approval.

5. Field Committee Report

- Committee has not met since the last Board meeting; one will be held before the next Board meeting
- Sarah reported that staff were polled on car pooling; all but one agreed. Most staff are still using their own vehicles but are easing into the idea of car pooling as COVID rules loosen.

6. Coordinator's Report (sent in advance)

- Regarding the microplastics sampling project, Hilary offered to check with UPEI on the availability of a boat.
- Sarah outlined changes to the funding formula for the Watershed Management Fund due to a budget shortfall. WRTBWA is one of four watershed groups that will bear the brunt of the funding shortfall and resulting last-minute formula change, but not sure on the final amount of the grant.
- No results yet on sampling from the Black Creek fish kill. Conditions are still anoxic. We may ask the province to replace the defective highway culvert using our CRF funds to improve fish passage.
- Sarah described a planting project on private land on the East Suffolk Road, adjacent to the Winter River Trail. Work was done by our crews and the plan was to charge the landowner approximately \$1,800 for seedlings and labour which did not fit within any of our funded projects for this year. There was discussion about how to handle requests like these. Some members felt that we should avoid competing with private contractors who do that work while others believe it is a service

that we should continue to provide in certain cases, hedgerows, for example. It was decided that Sarah should use her own judgement in dealing with such requests and defer decision to the Board when she has doubts or concerns about a particular request.

7. Review of the Scorecard

- On target for the most part
- Regarding media activities, it was suggested that we consider working with the Hunter-Clyde Watershed Group to feature our respective Coastal Restoration Fund projects: their nature-like fishway and our culvert replacement at Tim’s Creek.

8. Update on the Suffolk Pit Incident

- Sarah explained that the pit is used as a storage area for rock and concrete, along with being a shale pit.
- Members briefly reviewed a report done for the Province by Stantec, an engineering firm, that examined whether there was any adverse soil or groundwater contamination from the illegal dumping of excavated material from the Stratford sewage system project. The report found no evidence of either soil or groundwater contamination. Some neighbours are still not satisfied with the outcome and want to see the pit closed.
- Members agreed that the WRTBWA has acted responsibly by following up on the incident with the Province and the investigation to determine whether soil or groundwater contamination occurred. According to Sarah’s preliminary review of provincial rules, there is currently no legal reason to force the owner of the pit to close. In future, perhaps the wellfield regulations under the new *Water Act* could apply given the pit’s proximity to the City’s Suffolk wellfield.

9. Centre of Excellence in Watershed Management

- Jean-Paul gave a summary of the feasibility study he conducted for Holland College last fall. Clare noted that the Watershed Alliance has asked for volunteers from watershed associations to serve on a committee with representatives from Holland College and the Andrew family.

10. Private Funding Sources

- Sarah reported that she had not had time since the last meeting to review what other watershed groups are doing, i.e., how much they spend on private fund-raising and how much its costs.
- Members wondered whether the time and effort required would pay off in the end. It was generally agreed that we should focus our efforts on government funding sources.

11. Next Meeting

- The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 18, at 7:00 pm by Zoom.

Meeting adjourned at 8:44

Signature – Clare Martin, Chair of WRTBWA

Date

Signature – Jean-Paul Arsenault, Secretary of WRTBWA

Date