

Winter River – Tracadie Bay Watershed Association (WRTBWA)

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors of the WRTBWA
Held on July 18, 2017, 7:00 pm at the office of the WRTBWA at 13977 St, Peters Road, Marshfield, PEI

Present: Cathy Corrigan, Meghan McCarthy, Sarah Wheatley, J.P. Arsenault, Lowell Vessey, George Coade, Ryan Winters, and Esther Currie

Absent: John Hughes, Scott Stevens, Matt Steeves

George Coade was Chairperson and Esther Currie was Secretary of the meeting. The Chairperson declared the meeting open at 7:00pm.

1. Minutes of the previous meeting held on June 20, 2017.

Draft minutes of the meeting were previously emailed with each member of the Board having an opportunity to comment. It was decided that the actions items would be added to the chairperson's report. The minutes were moved by J.P. and seconded by Cathy that the minutes be approved as read. **Motion carried.**

2. Chairperson's Report

George reported:

- The matters arising from the minutes (the last page of previous sets of minutes) were discussed. All items were closed, which includes the following:
 - June 1 - Nitrate Report as this was a project assigned to former coordinator Bruce Smith.
 - Dec. 8 - potential television commercial, decided that this potential partnership was not ideal for us.
 - July 17 - investigation of erosion issues - this task has been completed.
 - Jan. 11 - Report from Officers Pond Subcommittee - George will update Scott on this issue
 - April 18 - presentation to upload to website - this task has been completed
 - Jan. 17 - Fish Management Plan will now be included in the Coordinator's Report.
- J.P., John, and George together inspected the work completed and progress by the staff along the Winter River, accessible from the Winter River Trail at the end of the East Suffolk Road. They report they liked what the crew has done already. They noted that the trees planted last year are doing well.
- Supply kits containing bug spray, first aid kit, and tree guards were purchased and distributed by Watershed Alliance to all watershed groups.
- Invitation to the July 19 BBEMA anniversary party at Silver Fox Curling Club
- CABIN Training – Matt and Vanessa went to Moncton for field training. Money will be provided by a special funding pool from the Watershed Management Fund specifically for training.

3. Treasure's Report

Lowell reported:

- New accounting system is not yet able to automatically generate the type of report that Lowell usually creates.
- Sarah provided a spending by category report for Lowell and George, and details of the payroll expenses. In June, the payroll expenses were \$22,000 as there were 3 pays in June (about \$7,000/per pay period).
- Question asked: Are we in good shape?
- Bank Balances
 - April 30, \$19,294

- May 31 - \$102,367
- June 30 - \$90,804
- July 18 - \$71,349
- There is an outstanding grant of \$31,750 owing from 2016-17, and about half of the amounts granted for 2017-18.
- There is no Treasurer's Report to approve, but a summary showing \$19,700 spent from our bank account in the month of June. With this update on finances, the general discussion and agreement is that we are in good shape.

4. Committee Reports

A. Coordinator Evaluation

J.P. reported that all board members did Sarah's evaluation as a group at the board meeting and gave full support. JP, George, and John then met with Sarah to discuss. It was discussed that in the case that Sarah should leave, we were satisfied that we would be ok with the electronic filing system and back up procedures that Sarah has in place. Discussed possible need for additional administrative support for Sarah.

B. External Relations

JP discussed a possible meeting with the Minister of Environment, Robert Mitchell, regarding work in Winter River.

- The City of Charlottetown is doing a large project in the watershed. We only learned about this work from a media release regarding the Federal funding that was announced for the project (\$880,000 federal, \$440,000 provincial, undisclosed municipal contribution). Then we only had a two-line description of the project from the city after a request for information. The project will include the construction of two supply wells, pump upgrades, stream crossing refurbishments, and diesel tank upgrades. A wellfield upgrade in Suffolk will involve new wells. This should further reduce extraction from Brackley by increasing at the Suffolk site further downriver.
- Should we meet with the Minister to ask how to get some accountability about water being drawn and as to why the WRTBWA was not consulted about the project? **Action** – Meeting with the Minister, JP, and George.

5. Coordinator's Report

Highlights of Sarah's report, including clarification on some items from the minutes of the last board meeting which Sarah could not attend:

- Watercourse alteration permit for culvert replacement project in Black River: First permit using the new process, where Sarah sends draft application to Mary Finch for review, before it is forwarded it to Jason Affleck for final approval and permit issuing.
- First Aid: Sarah M and Trent have the course now, so all staff have some level of first aid training.
- Estuary Watch: Jill Poirier sent Sarah pictures of an anoxic event in Winter River. Crew was sent out July 7 to gather more information about the extent of the event.
- Equipment purchases: Have bought nitrate probe for YSI and a new chainsaw, no other equipment purchases planned unless a new grant is approved, then buying dissolved oxygen loggers.
- Tree planting: RFCPP will pay for tree planting in riparian areas, while EcoAction will pay for tree planting in other areas.
- CABIN vs soil sampling – both are objective ways to show improvements as a result of our efforts.

A. Staff updates:

- Richard was given the raise but got a government job so is quitting. Emma and Matt are acting as chainsaw operators now (they have course but less experience). Steve Corkum (staff member from 2016) was not available to hire as chainsaw operator.
- Marcel was hired and quit in same week. Sarah requested permission to hire Janelle MacLeod for Agriculture intern position (Agriculture Canada will pay 80% of the salary). **Action** – Permission given by the board for Sarah to hire Janelle.

- Highlights of the work completed by the staff so far this year: 23 brush mats constructed, 11 brush mats updated, 13 km of shoreline cleaned which removed 1.65 tons of waste from Tracadie Bay, 1600 trees planted, over 100 new spring and stream locations checked for nitrate levels, and assessing new areas for potential projects.

6. Other business

A. Donation of Land to Watershed

- The owner Sterling Hardy is a non-island resident and lives in the US. He is coming to PEI this summer. The land consists of 3 acres on Winter River with buffer zone on areas of the property.
- Annual liability insurance will be \$190/year. Land taxes currently \$403/year. After Watershed Management Fund bonus for owning land of \$300/year, our net expenses associated with the property will be \$293/year.
- Property is currently zoned as residential but could be rezoned as commercial. We can request to have the land taxes reassessed when our first tax bill is received.
- Ryan wanted to note objectively that he found from the previous meeting there were reservations regarding if we want to own the land. After discussion, the decision was made as a motion.
- **Motion:** WRTBWA will approach Sterling with the intention of acquiring this property, and spend up to the maximum of \$3,000 to cover the associated costs. **Motion carried.**

B. Coastal Restoration Fund (DFO)

- PEI Watershed Alliance applied for \$2.8 million on behalf of 8 watershed groups over 5 years. WRTBWA requested \$300,000 of that amount. We could not apply on our own because DFO was requesting project with budgets in the range of \$200,000 to \$1 million/year.
- Natural Fishway at Officer's Pond
 - Preliminary data from Sean Landsman showed that about 3% of gaspereau got up to the existing fish ladder this year.
 - Brian McCullough, an engineer who works with Ducks Unlimited, will be visiting the Officer's Pond on Wednesday July 19 to see if a natural fishway would be feasible at this site. He will already be on PEI to assess Wright's Pond. Sarah noted that Wright's Pond also has lots of vegetation and algae but fewer obvious sources of nutrients than Officer's pond has in our more agricultural area.
 - Allie MacLennan was consulted on the natural fishway project.
 - Smelt are not strong swimmers so they are not good at jumping up the current pool and weir fishway.
 - The fish ladder would be planned for Year 4 of the 5-year grant, with follow-up at year 5.
- Ewin VanWesterneng would like some work done on his pond. Potential silt trap location and improvements to fish passage into the pond.
- Nutrient Management Planning
 - Discussion was had regarding what we can offer the farming communities, and what we would do with this money regarding nutrient management expertise. Would Vanco or other farmers need our help? Lowell asked if we should form an alliance with famers so they don't feel threatened? There is a feeling by some farmers that they are being overly regulated.
- How is the money being distributed from the Alliance to individual groups? The Alliance will hire a person to oversee the program. Funding can increase or decrease to individual groups depending on how some projects go and if they are meeting targets, as long as the project total meets a certain budget.

C. Water Use Makeover Program

- Sarah has been delivering shrubs and rain barrels. It is a struggle to recruit for the Water Use Makeover Program.
- Have been attempting to get an article in The Guardian but having trouble getting a willing reporter and willing interviewee at the same time. Should we switch to CBC?
- Might need to give more education on the improved low flush toilets.

D. EcoAction Fund

- Tree planting (including forest improvement and shoreline planting) should get 2000 trees planted this year.

- Project can also include tree planting around Tracadie Bay to increase protection from erosion with shrubs.

7. New Business:

End of season party for staff discussed.

8. Next Meeting

August 15, 2017 at 7:00 pm. at 13977 St. Peter's Road.

9. Adjournment.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02pm.

ORIGINAL COPY SIGNED

| | |
|---|---------------|
| _____ Signature – George Coade, Chair of WRTBWA | _____ Date |
| _____ Signature – Esther Currie, Secretary of WRTBWA | _____ Date |