

Minutes
Winter River - Tracadie Bay Watershed Association
Board of Directors Meeting

Grand Tracadie School
August 15, 2012, 7:00 – 9:45 p.m.

Present:

Ben Hoteling
Bruce Smith
Cathy Corrigan
Chris Mutch
Don Mazer

John Hughes
Lowell Vessey
Rod Dempsey
Sarah Wheatley

1. **Welcome**

The meeting was convened a majority of Board members present.

2. **Review of Minutes from last board meeting**

The minutes from the July board meeting were read and accepted with only minor corrections.

3. **Chris's summer work report**

Discussed work with students building brush mats and cleaning streams. Also discussed the work scheduling and some feedback from the crew.

4. **Chair Report (Don)**

- a. Guardian article about City water restriction bylaws and eventual use of water meters.
- b. Sean Casey did a tour of the watershed and is hosting a town hall on October 10 regarding the issue of the City water supply.
- c. PC Environment critic Hal Perry took a tour of the watershed and informed us of an upcoming motion that they are preparing regarding water issues.
 - i. We discussed this motion, and recommend more positive wording and specifics, like a 50% of recharge limit.
- d. Letter sent to Ministers Janice Sherry and George Webster.
 - i. Received response from Minister Sherry making statements about the Brackley branch routinely going dry and reviewing their attempt to address the issue with the measures that are the conditions of the permit issued to the City.
 - ii. We sent a return letter to Minister Sherry indicating how their approach was not addressing the current issues related to water extraction, and that a new permit based upon the sustainability standard was the best measure to address the current issue. We pointed out that the Brackley branch has routinely gone dry during the many years of major water extraction. We requested response to the questions of habitat disturbance posed in our previous letter, response to the idea of a new permit based on the sustainability standard, and information related to the research of Ye Fang Jiang and policy developments related to the sustainable extraction standard.

- iii. A letter was sent to Minister Webster outlining similar concerns in his capacity as the Minister responsible for the Forestry, Fish and Wildlife division, with the request that he look into methods of minimizing the impact of the city's water extraction on fish and wildlife habitat.
- iv. Going forward we need to collect more data on the issue of rivers going dry. For example, mapping the dry sections of streams and finding out if any other rivers on PEI outside our watershed go dry.
- v. Ben recommended always sending a hard copy of letters to government officials, as they technically don't have to reply to emails.
- vi. Next steps:
 - 1. Board write letter of recommendation regarding keeping the Malpeque pumping station online
 - 2. Ask if the City's toilet rebate program can be extended to residents of WR-TB.

5. **Chair Report (Cathy)**

- a. Gold cup parade float was cancelled due to time limitations.
- b. City money has been received

6. **Nutrient Management Project (Bruce)**

The entire board had very extensive discussion on the topic and reviewed all the information, got input from all members and regretfully decided that this project is too much to take on at the present time. The short time lines resulting from the late notification date, the need for substantial additional funding, the difficulties in arranging training for potential staff, and the current time demands of completing the Watershed Management Plan were major reasons for this decision. A staff member at EcoAction hinted that if we reapplied next year that we would not have any guarantees of receiving funding, but would have a better chance than the average applicant. We must write a good letter of decline as first step in the reapplication process. We discussed some different ways of redefining the project as more of a 'pilot project' with a more limited and manageable scope. We agreed that we would reapply and begin that process in the fall.

7. **Other updates:**

- a. We should work more closely with our MLAs next spring to get summer staff in place earlier so that they can be more useful.
- b. John reported that the river is currently anoxic

8. **Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held September 20.