

Winter River – Tracadie Bay Watershed Association (WRTBWA)

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

Held on April 20, 2022, 7:05 pm by Zoom

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

Guests: Carol Murphy, Shauna Barry, Philip Murphy

1. Introduction of Guests

Clare introduced the three guests in attendance and noted that they may be interested in joining the Board. She invited them to participate in the meeting.

2. Minutes of the March 16, 2022, meeting

Draft minutes were reviewed. No changes were requested.

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

3. Treasurer's Report – Lowell Vessey

	<i>Chequing account</i>	<i>Savings Account</i>
Opening Balance: Mar. 1, 2022	\$103,800.63	\$71,161.20
Less o/s cheques	\$3,955.24	
Plus deposits	\$23,246.06	\$6.04 (Interest)
Plus o/s cheques	\$15,566.95	
Less expenses	<u>\$25,388.32</u>	
Closing balance: Mar. 31, 2022	\$113,270.07	\$71,167.24

- The reserve fund policy is not yet ready to present to the Board for final approval.
- There were no questions arising from the Treasurer's report.
- Sarah noted that some planned April expenditures were covered in March.

Moved by Lowell, seconded by John that the Treasurer's Report be approved as presented. All in favour. Motion carried.

4. Chairperson's Report – Clare Martin

- Clare provided a summary of the Winter River Water Committee meeting. At the meeting, the City reported that the volume of water used in 2021 was comparable to the amount used in 2020. No large capital projects are planned in the near future. The City recently received a draft 20-year master plan, which suggests there is currently enough wellfield capacity to supply water needs for the next 25 years. This calculation projects the city population to increase 2% per year for each of the 20 years. Unfortunately, according to the City, this will mean an increase in water pumped from the Brackley wellfield in future years, to amounts more similar to what was previously extracted at this location. Presently, they are using less than 3/4 of wellfield capacity.
- The Province reported that, as of two days ago, the York groundwater monitoring station shows the water level is at a record high unlike other provincial ground water monitoring stations. Quite likely, this is due to less historical data for the York, although its 20-year history is considered sufficient to establish minimums and maximums. For the surface water monitoring at Union and Suffolk, as of April 19th, the water level is mostly within a normal range. Unlike Union and Suffolk with their real time communication, Brackley is read manually and only quarterly. The last reading was in February which had low flow as expected. In general, recharge has been good so far this year for most of PEI. Last fall, the Province told us the Water Withdrawal Regulations were out for review and it was hoped they would move forward during the winter. This did not happen. Now they want the timeline for finalizing the Water Withdrawal Regulations to go forward along with the closely related Irrigation Strategy. There is no clear timeline for that to happen, but hopefully, not too far out. It was clarified that the 5-year deadline for implementation for the various aspects of the *Water Act*, such as permits, will be June 2026 (with the 2021 implementation date of the Act as the starting point of the five-year transitional period).
- A Board member asked whether the City's long-term projections indicate that withdrawal rates at the Brackley wellfield would return to the peak 2008 level. Sarah responded that it could, but with the new *Water Act*, the City will need a new permit. This new permit may not allow increased extraction from Brackley.
- Clare reported that she, Jay, and Dwayne will conduct Sarah's annual performance review in the coming weeks.
- Clare also mentioned that she is collecting Guardian articles cited on our website since the links no longer work. She was able to copy quite a few of the articles through her digital subscription and will try using the Guardian's archives to copy the rest. PDF files will be included in our website, instead of relying on links to articles, which do not work for many people.

5. Field Committee

There was nothing to report.

6. Office Committee

There was nothing to report.

7. Hiring Committee

Clare reported that Lyndsay MacWilliams was hired as Field Supervisor following an interview by herself, Jean-Paul, and Sarah.

8. Coordinator’s Report (sent in advance)

- Sarah requested that the committee tasked with developing a Reserve Fund Policy complete its work as soon as possible.
- Most grants for FY 2021-2022 have been sorted out and reports are in progress where required.
- The Watershed Management Fund contract for FY 2022-2023 has been signed.
- No response has been received from the City regarding our grant request, but the Water and Sewer Utility budget indicates the amount will be the same as last year.
- Staff are all on seasonal layoff.
- Sarah is working with our accountant on the year-end audit.
- In response to a question from a Board member, Sarah replied that there has been no response from Rosie MacFarlane, Provincial Fish Biologist, to our suggestion that a section of the Winter River be considered a conservation zone to reduce angling pressure.
- Sarah reported that Raena completed a two-day chainsaw course put on by MacPhail Woods and that she is registered for the course to be put on by the Province.
- The culvert replacement at MacAulay’s Creek will go ahead in this coming summer; with the province purchasing the culvert, and WRTBWA pay \$66,000 toward the total cost and the Province paying the balance of \$41,812.50.

9. Review of the Scorecard

- All work scheduled for FY 2021-2022 has been completed and the scorecard will be presented at the AGM.
- The 2022-2023 Watershed Management Plan scorecard will depend on pending funding decisions.

10. AGM Update

- It was decided that the AGM will be held on May 25 at 7:00 pm at the Tracadie Community Centre. Clare will verify the availability of the Centre and Sarah will verify the availability of our guest speaker, Dr. Sarah Stewart-Clark. If COVID rules allow, we will provide refreshments for those in attendance.
- Board members agreed that the date of the AGM could change if Dr. Stewart-Clark is not available on May 25.
- Sarah will look after advertising the meeting as required by our bylaws.
- Three people have expressed interest in joining the Board. Patrick and John announced that they will not re-offer, and Clare announced that she will return to the board, but will not re-offer for the role of Chair.
- It is customary for the WRTBWA to publish a newsletter before the AGM. Sarah noted that the printer’s deadline is coming soon. Jean-Paul offered to help with writing an article, providing Sarah provides some background. Jeff suggested we include brief updates on what some of our “graduates” (former staff members) are doing. Jay suggested that we include a profile on John, our longest-serving member.

11. Next Meetings

- The date of the next Board meeting will be determined pending the finalized date of the AGM. If AGM will be May 25, regular meeting will be May 18. But if AGM is scheduled for May 18, then the regular meeting will be May 11.
- Following the AGM, a meeting will take place, tentatively on June 1, to elect members of the Executive.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20

Signature – Clare Martin, Chair of WRTBWA	Date
Signature – Jean-Paul Arsenault, Secretary of WRTBWA	Date
