

Winter River – Tracadie Bay Watershed Association (WRTBWA)

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the WRTBWA
Held on October 16, 2024, 7:00 pm at the Glenaladale Schoolhouse

Board Members Present: Lowell Vessey, Jean-Paul Arsenault, Clare Martin, Dwayne McNeill, Shauna Barry, Philip Murphy, Cassandra Gautreau, Kelly Watson

Members and Guests Present: John Hughes, Melissa Lazcano - guest speaker, John Rowe, Susan Daley, Rachael McNeill, Roger Roy, Heather Laiskonis, Marylou Vessey, Kathy Martin

Staff Present: Raena Parent, Jess Dewey, Will Ingram, Em Walton

Board Members Absent: Matt Steeves and Jeff Bysterveldt

1. Dwayne McNeill called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

2. Approval of Agenda

Dwayne presented the agenda. Moved by Shauna Barry, seconded by Philip Murphy that the agenda be accepted as presented. Motion carried.

3. Opening Remarks from the Chair of the Board

Dwayne welcomed everyone to the Annual General Meeting, including Board members, staff, and supporters.

4. Guest Speaker

Raena Parent introduced guest speaker Melissa Lazcano, Manager of the Nursery Project with the Watershed Alliance who spoke with the aid of a slide presentation. Highlights of her talk included the following:

- The Watershed Alliance tree nursery project at Glenaladale is part of and is funded by the 2-Billion Tree Program.
- The provincial government will produce an additional 300,000 seedlings per year at the J. Frank Gaudet Nursery:
- She explained the role of the Watershed Alliance in managing the project.
- The Watershed Alliance's bare-root tree nursery was established at Glenaladale in 2023 and will produce the following species: red oak, sugar maple, white ash, black ash, eastern white cedar, serviceberry, American elm, eastern hemlock, and butternut.
- Seed collection is an important part of nursery operation, and Melissa and her staff were trained on this by the National Tree Seed Centre in Fredericton.
- The Glenaladale nursery is a ten-year project with the goal of producing 5,000 seedlings per year. Seedlings will be allocated to watershed groups across the Island.
- At the end of the ten-year period, the nursery will be turned over to the WRTBWA.

Raena thanked Melissa and presented her with a gift.

5. Annual General Meeting Minutes from 2023

Jean-Paul Arsenault read the October 11, 2023, AGM minutes and moved their adoption. Motion seconded by Philip Murphy. No changes or corrections were made. Motion was carried.

6. Report from the Treasurer

Lowell Vessey presented the Treasurer's report in the form of a year-end financial statement prepared by Regan Lewis of Signature Accounting & Tax. Highlights included:

- Net assets for the year ended March 31, 2024, of \$210,310 compared to \$196,312 for the year ended March 31, 2023;
- Revenue of \$299,554 for the year ended March 31, 2024, compared to \$325,668 for 2023;
- Expenses of \$285,408 for the year ended March 31, 2024, \$289,489 for 2023; and
- Year-end bank balance of \$206,609 for the year ended March 31, 2024, compared to \$192,463 for 2023.

Lowell explained that the WRTBWA's financial position is very solid, and that the unrestricted surplus of \$210,310 is needed to protect against cash flow problems when funding agencies are late with their payments. Also, the WRTBWA is setting aside funds for an office on its Suffolk Road property.

Lowell moved the adoption of the Treasurer's report. Motion seconded by Shauna Barry. In response to a question from a member, Lowell explained that a portion of the surplus was invested recently in a GIC that pays a higher rate of interest, 4%. Motion was carried.

7. Report from the Chair

- Dwayne highlighted the importance of working with people in his own work and with the WRTBWA: Board members and staff.
- He spoke about the importance of setting goals and achieving results.
- He provided an update on the office project at the Suffolk Road WRTBWA property, stating that we hope to have the septic system installed before the end of the calendar year.
- He thanked Board members, Raena, and staff for their efforts during the year.

8. Report from the Coordinator

- Raena introduced staff present at the meeting and listed all staff that worked for us in 2024.
- She presented highlights of the 2023 field season using the scorecard we've developed to track operations and other metrics, showing that most targets were achieved or exceeded.
- Water extraction by the City of Charlottetown is generally within prescribed limits, except for the Brackley wellfield. This matter will be discussed with City and provincial officials at the next Water Committee meeting.
- She thanked Kathy Martin for hosting two birding events in 2024 at Glenaladale and spoke of the important role that staff play in setting up the events.
- She thanked our funding partners and mentioned that they are acknowledged in all our publicity, including our newsletter.
- Plans for the remainder of the 2024 field season include: invasive species management, prepare 2025 planting sites, the educational trail on the Suffolk Road property, water monitoring, redd surveys, stream assessments, the Educating Youth watershed workshop for Grade 6 students, garbage cleanup, and the Seniors College course.

9. Election of Board Members

Dwayne reported that ten Board members will return for another year. Jean-Paul Arsenault reported that Roger Roy expressed interest in joining the Board and moved his nomination, seconded by John Rowe. Dwayne called three times for nominations from the floor. There being none, he declared Roger elected and welcomed him to the Board.

10. Amendment to Bylaw

Clare explained that, because of a pending donation of property on the Suffolk Road near Tim's Creek under the Ecological Gifts Program, Revenue Canada has requested a change in the WRTBWA's Bylaws. Article 15.1 of the Bylaw currently reads:

- "Upon dissolution of the Corporation, any assets remaining after payment of debts and liabilities shall be distributed to another non-profit, charitable organization or organizations in Prince Edward Island or elsewhere in Canada as the Directors may appoint."

Clare moved, seconded by Kelly Watson, that Article 15.1 of the Bylaw be amended to read:

- "Upon dissolution of the Corporation, any assets remaining after payment of debts and liabilities shall be distributed to another non-profit, charitable organization or organizations in Prince Edward Island or elsewhere in Canada. Assets acquired through the Ecological Gifts Program shall be distributed to one or more eligible Ecological Gifts Program recipients as determined by the Board of Directors."

A member asked whether the Island Nature Trust would be considered an eligible Ecological Gifts Program recipient. Clare responded that it would be. Lowell reminded those present that the WRTBWA is in a solid financial position and that the proposed change is only to satisfy Revenue Canada rules. Motion was carried.

11. Other Business

Lowell mentioned that long-time Board member and Chair, George Coade, passed away in January. He also acknowledged the presence of John Hughes, a founding member of the WRTBWA. Concluding Remarks

Dwayne thanked all for attending and declared the meeting adjourned at 8:10.

Signature – Dwayne McNeill, Chair of WRTBWA

Date

Signature – Jean-Paul Arsenault, Secretary of WRTBWA

Date