

Winter River – Tracadie Bay Watershed Association (WRTBWA)

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

Held on February 20, 2018, 7:00 pm at the office of the WRTBWA at 13977 St, Peters Road, Marshfield, PEI

Present: George Coade, John Hughes, Scott Stevens, Lowell Vessey, Ryan Winters, Sarah Wheatley, Clare Martin, J.P. Arsenault, Esther Currie, Meghan McCarthy, and Matt Steeves.

Absent: Cathy Corrigan

George called the meeting called to order at 7:02pm.

1. Minutes from the January 16, 2018 meeting:

Minutes from November adjustments completed, revised minutes read, motioned by Scott and seconded by Ryan. Moved by all.

Minutes for January meeting read, motioned by Meghan and seconded by Scott. Discussion:

- Scott attended the Recreational Fisheries Advisory committee meeting in January. No major changes have occurred. They are seeing more Rainbow Trout and Salmon, these fisheries seem to be doing well. Raised issues about RFCPP and plan to end the program. The group sent a strong message back to DFO to keep the program.
- George spoke with Willem VanNieuwenhuyzen from Vanco, regarding attending a board meeting. Willem will be away during the next meeting night, so George will follow up later.
- Fish Friends Program – Eliza Knockwood will be doing presentations to schools. L.M. Montgomery Elementary students (taught by Nancy MacKinnon) will release salmon at Mooney's Pond. WRTBWA wish to be present and involved.
- PEI woodlot tour postponed; final date set is now March 3.
- Ryan was to do an analysis for the Coastal Restoration Fund, but we decided this was not necessary given only two options.

All were in favour of the minutes and approved at 7:28 pm.

2. Chairperson's Report from George

- Hillsborough watershed group – Changed Feb 24 event from snowshoeing to hiking on Pigot's trail in Mt. Stewart.
- Our winter snowshoe hike event has been postponed indefinitely due to lack of snow.
- George and Sarah went to the Watershed Alliance Central meeting, discussed liability issues and multi group projects. George concerned about smaller watersheds groups getting lost in this, and creating extra bureaucracy.
- We applied to the non-profit property tax exemption program, so although we received a tax bill this year, we don't have to pay it. When the committee meets next, we should be approved for this program retroactively.
- Abegweit Conservation Society – developing a possible project to test water quality/stream health across PEI. Rebecca Peterson is organizing this, discussed with George and requested Sarah's help regarding the data entry. George is concerned about increasing Sarah's workload. Sarah explained that Rebecca wants data for the whole province and might help create a CABIN model for the province. There may be federal funding available if the First Nation is leading this project.
- March 16 – PEI Invasive Species Council annual workshop
- Sarah sent an email update about heavy equipment operating at the Union Road pumping station on wellheads.
- There have been calls for proposals for the Habitat Stewardship Program, and EcoAction funding program.
- Legislation now on Smoke Free Plan for PEI and the watersheds are included, employees will not be permitted to smoke. Frank Morrison called George regarding this, George referred to Mary Finch for a letter regarding this.
- Sarah and George met with Don Mazer on Feb 7. Don is concerned about the issues around communication to the public and wellfield work in Suffolk. Don wants more pertinent information to be communicated to the public. We were trying to gather accurate information before spreading it widely. Note that the Miltonvale wellfield is still not operational. Lowell expressed concern if they are sure how well the Miltonvale wellfield will perform in meeting capacity.

3. Treasurer's Report – Lowell Vessey

- January 1, 2018: Opening balance: \$75,164.59 Jan 31 closing balance: \$52,188.91
- Revenue from Wildlife Conservation Fund of \$1,589.60
- Expenses total \$18,039.17 plus outstanding cheques \$4,742.93
- Still \$26,000 to come from the DFO for the Coastal Restoration Fund

4. Committees – N/A

5. Coordinator’s Report – Sarah Wheatley

- Sarah says the donation campaign has been pushed to back burner. New grants are being submitted for 2018 now.
- Newsletters Articles – last year Sarah wrote the newsletter but she would like board members to write some articles for the next newsletter. Discussed Don Mazer’s concern and a draft article regarding the ongoing activity with the city wellfields.
- Soil health testing - Measured the physical, biological, and chemical properties of each soil sample. Lowell stated concern about the lack of crop rotation in PEI regarding soil degradation, resulting in decreased water holding capacity of the soil.
- Fishway design for Officer’s Pond – discussed excavation and soil trucking expenses. Lowell asked about erosion concerns.
- Angela Douglas is the new coordinator for the Coastal Restoration Fund projects hired by Watershed Alliance. Angela thought we’d be able to come up with the remaining money for the fishway. Angela asked if we would approach the landowner to see if he would open Officer’s Pond to the public (so that there would be more funding opportunities), Scott thought this wouldn’t be approved by landowner, and Sarah agreed.
- CBC did a story about our water makeover program. Did 6 makeovers last month, so making better progress. Advertising at Farmers Market. Have 4 more makeovers already booked.
- Atlantic Data Stream Project - creating a platform for groups in Atlantic Canada to share water data. Sarah gave water quality data to a student working with Angela Douglas on this project.
- George asked how Angela Douglas is paid by the Watershed Alliance for the Coastal Restoration Project? There is a line item in CRF contribution agreement to pay Angela’s salary.
- George submitted a letter to the city for funding.
- Meeting with Ducks Unlimited (Scott, Matt, John, Sarah) regarding fishway project for Officer’s Pond.

6. New Business

- Policy for gift of appreciation for departing board members – discussion to give a memento worth \$50-\$75 as a token of appreciation. John will develop the guidelines for this.
- State of the Watershed Report – Sarah outlined existing data that could be used. George feels we should have a report card every 5 years to note progress made on various issues. Maybe include in a newsletter. This could be used as support for funding requests, help with recruiting board members, and help with communication with politicians. Sarah says Parks Canada puts out a State of the Park report for each park highlighting changes in various metrics. Discussion regarding who would do this work – likely the Coordinator. How can we get this done and should it be more focused? Should we be thinking of the longevity? Are any other watershed groups doing a report card? Matt may investigate some details regarding this, issue tabled at this time.
- Signs describing forest enhancement project near Winter River trail have been printed but not installed before freeze-up.
- Ground Water Management Plan for Winter River
 - Report commissioned by City of Charlottetown. Sarah received a copy of this long-awaited report required by the 2010 water extraction permit (report dated November 2015) and accompanying letter (dated January 2016). Letter argued it is too costly for City to meet the provincial groundwater extraction policy (to reduce streamflow by <35%).
 - Why we were not informed when this report was finalized? Why have they not shared this with the public? They want to use Suffolk when Miltonvale is past capacity? We do not want this, we want the reduction from our area to be permanent and the city has not accepted that. Sarah will forward information to the BOD’s. This is to be on next month’s agenda. Noted that Miltonvale and Brackley wellfields are too close to each other, and are likely drawing on the same groundwater. Sarah says they may be looking for a new piece of land for yet another wellfield in the future.
- Meeting adjourned 8:56 by Meghan.

7. Next Meeting

Next meeting: March 20, 2018

ORIGINAL COPY SIGNED

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