

Winter River – Tracadie Bay Watershed Association (WRTBWA)

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

Held on February 20, 2019, 7:00 pm at the office of the WRTBWA at 13977 St, Peters Road, Marshfield, PEI

Present: George Coade, John Hughes, Sarah Wheatley, Lowell Vessey, Esther Currie, and Cathy Corrigan

Absent: Ryan Winters, Jean-Paul Arsenault, Clare Martin, Scott Stevens, Matt Steeves

George called the meeting called to order at 7:10 PM

1. Minutes from the January 16, 2019 meeting

Minutes from the January 16, 2019 were read by Esther, and some corrections were made. The minutes were tabled, rather than voted upon as there was not a quorum of board members present.

2. Chairperson's Report – George Coade

- Waves of Change - Sarah attended this event held at the Guild in Charlottetown. A reporter from CBC asked Sarah to ask a question of the panel members about Styrofoam buoys. Minister of Communities, Land and Environment Richard Brown was present as part of the panel and spoke with Sarah after the meeting.
- Office Heating - a service man repaired the pellet stove for \$180. It is important to have the stove working properly so the staff working in the office are comfortable.
- Mary Finch shared details of the upcoming workshops/education sessions. See Coordinator's Report for the list of dates.

3. Treasurer's Report – Lowell Vessey

Opening Balance: January 1, 2019	\$34,292.50
Less o/s cheques clearing	\$10,061.58
Plus deposits	\$2,368.32
Less expenses	\$5,365.07
Plus o/s cheques	\$4,218.13
Closing balance: January 31, 2019	\$24,732.35

- An adjustment was needed to correct a misinterpretation of the cheque log from Simply Accounting showing more than one cheque for Maritime Electric.

4. Committees

- Nothing reported

5. Coordinator's Report – Sarah Wheatley reported (see report)

- Received an email from Wanson Hemphill with Covehead/Brackley watershed group, regarding a new job creation program.
- Grants - Sarah discussed the status of the grants for current year and upcoming year.
- Staff - Sarah detailed status of her banked hours, employment insurance plans and owed hours, see report.
- Sarah working with Dept. of Transportation, since we were selected for the TIE watershed pilot project.
- Sarah checking into the aquaculture leaseholders in Tracadie Bay after our field trip with one grower.
- Participated in a webinar on rain gardens, though it was not as educational as she had expected.

6. Municipal funding requests

A. North Shore Municipality - John

- A letter has been sent to the North Shore Municipality that we would like to discuss possible funding. George will contact Nancy from the North Shore Municipality to respond to their invitation to attend their board meeting.
- George discussed the request for cash of \$2,500 and felt it would be better to stay at our current location and receive the cash than get in-kind support in the form of office space in a community centre.

B. City of Charlottetown - George

- The letter has been sent to the City for our request, which has been increased from the usual \$32,000 to \$36,000 due to inflation over the years.

7. Watershed Management Plan Review - Sarah

- Sarah reviewed the sections she thinks should be altered or added to the plan. Sarah could use some help, and it was suggested she ask Ryan.
- A Fish Management Plan and Communication Plan should be added as appendices, but this will take more work.
 - Discussion of Atlantic Salmon on PEI and the provincial program to provide salmon stock to various rivers and watershed groups. George asked where does Winter River stand in viability for salmon? Sarah explained that Darryl Guignion’s 2009 report “A conservation strategy for Atlantic Salmon in PEI” has classifications of the rivers according to population viability. Classified from 1 – 5, with Category 1 having lots of salmon to Category 5 being long term lack of salmon. WR is category 5. Sarah will share this report with George.
 - Sarah is still reviewing this in the fish management plan. Should there be an investigation of the habitat re: potential survival of salmon. Should salmon be reintroduced to the Winter River? What are our goals for fisheries in the watershed?

8. Winter River Snowshoeing Event - George

- Discussion regarding the expected weather forecast, trail conditions, and liability if someone got injured. Watershed Alliance Liability Insurance Policy would cover accidental falls.
- It was decided that the event would be postponed until March 2.
- John spoke of the damage that recently occurred to the cabin due to vandalism.

9. Long term plans for WRTBWA office

We can consider buying or building an office location for a very long-term plan. For example, the tax assessed value for the property next to ours is \$22,700 and it has a building on it.

10. Tracadie Bay mussel harvester’s concerns

- Sarah and John met with Frank MacKinnon, a local mussel grower, and Peter Warris, employee of the Aquaculture Alliance, on the ice at Tracadie Bay. They took pictures of the buoys frozen in place in the bay ice at a couple of the leases.
- Cathy mentioned the conditions of the lease agreement that each operator has with DFO regarding this type of thing. Apparently, there is little to no enforcement by DFO of the lease rules.
- John shared a document titled “Annual Report under the Aquaculture Activities Regulations for Shellfish Operations” which growers were required to sign
- George mentioned that to be licenced to operate within the bay you must follow the P.E.I. Aquaculture Leasing Policy (available from the DFO website).
- There is a gentleman’s agreement to use 500 lines/acre in leases, but they may be up to 1,000 lines/acre in some leases. There is about 2,000 acres of leased area.
- There are also lead sinkers being used on the buoy lines, is this allowed?
- It was discussed that we should share our findings with Minister Brown.
- George suggested that we write a letter to the Minister, covering the following topics:
 - Management of buoys over winter - a picture of buoys in ice
 - Indicate that lead is being used as weights for the buoys.
 - Have him aware of the issue of density of mussel lines

11. Watershed Extraction Data - George

Sarah recently received the 2018 water extraction data from the city of Charlottetown and did some analyses with this data, such as current and forecasted extraction as a percentage maximum allowed by current provincial policies (which City doesn’t currently follow due to a grandfather clause). Suggested all board members review this data.

12. Next Meeting

Meeting adjourned 8:58 Next meeting: March 20, 2019

Signature – George Coade, Chair of WRTBWA

Date

Signature – Esther Currie, Secretary of WRTBWA

Date