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**MUSKRAT WATERSHED COUNCIL (MWC)**

Meeting of the Board of Directors

**Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, April 20, 2023, 6:30 p.m.**

**In person: Basement of the Whitewater Township Building, 44 Main Street, Cobden ON**

**Online through Google Meet**

meet.google.com/ezd-qitc-btk

**+1 587-978-1050 (PIN 460326449)**

1. **Call to Order and Record of Attendance**

The meeting of the Muskrat Watershed Council was called to order at 6:32 p.m.

**Attendance:**

**Present:**  Karen Coulas, Rene Coulas, Debbie Macdonald, Barbara Green, Dave Thomassin, Amanda Walt, Michael Walt, Evelyn St. Amour, Jeff Reeves, Gerry Rook, Andy Laird, Alex Benzie

**Regrets:**  Anna-Maria Blum, Emily Woodcox

 Greg Stasyna

**Council Representative Present:**

Claus Trost, Laurentian Valley Township

Chris Olmstead, Township of Whitewater Region

1. **Adoption of Agenda**

Claus approved the agenda, Rene seconded it.

**Approval of minutes from March 16, 2023 meeting:**

Gerry approved the minutes, Debbie seconded.

1. **Treasurer’s Report- Debbie**

See attached treasurer’s report.

SBCNA Bingo

Debbie has to submit a report to SBCNA estimating the expenses MWC will incur between June and December 2023. She needs this information by the beginning of May. Claus said it is enough to state our expenses will cover environmental projects, without providing further details.

SBCNA Bingo has a new charity awareness engagement program which allows participating charities like MWC to earn extra revenue if they reference SBCNA on social media and in other publicity. Charities may earn this extra revenue up to six times per year.

Our next volunteer dates are May 4 and June 11, 2023, from 3:30 to 5:30. Barb volunteered to attend with Debbie on June 11.

1. **Directors’ Reports**

**Agricultural Committee – Karen & Rene**

Renfrew County One Voice

Karen and Rene attended another meeting with RC One Voice, a group looking to put together a county-wide stewardship council. They will attend another meeting on May 9, 2023 to set up a steering committee for the group. Please let Karen and Rene know any names you would like to put forward to sit on this committee.

**Science Committee – Dave**

Meeting with Township Planner

Dave and Karen met with Alex Benzie, Planner and Economic Development Officer for the Township of Whitewater Region, and had a good discussion. Dave extended thanks to township staff on behalf of MWC.

Cobden Beach

Pumps and mats:

Replacement parts for pump maintenance are being installed in order to keep the beach open and swimmable. Michael would like to swap the compressors and put the diffuser lines in before we install the new mats. He will get the boxes this weekend and will contact Rene in a couple of weeks. The old mats can be removed at the end of June. Volunteers will be needed to help with this job.

Buoys and Signs

Anna-Maria has ordered the buoys and marker buoy for the beach. She also picked up six signs from The Federation of Cottagers’ Associations (FOCA)in Peterborough last weekend. Each sign measures 12 by 18 inches.

Canada Summer Jobs

Dave called MP Cheryl Gallant’s office several times to check on the status of our application for this grant. No grants have been awarded yet. The federal public service strike may further delay processing our grant application. Without this grant we can’t hire summer students to do the inventory of invasive species and other wildlife that we had hoped to do this summer. Even if we do receive the grant, it wouldn’t come through until June. By then it might be difficult to find interested students as many college students will already have found summer jobs.

Youth Job Connect (YJC)

Dave called Employment Ontario about this youth training program which serves youth aged 15 to 29 who experience multiple and/or complex barriers to employment by providing more intensive supports beyond traditional job search and placement opportunities.YJC involves a two-month summer placement for students, which we might look into. A discussion ensued about who would supervise these high school students, how they would travel from site to site, what the budget would be and what the program might cost MWC. Dave moved that we go ahead with the invasive species study this summer only if we receive a grant from the federal government’s Canada Summer Jobs program or from the Ontario government’s Youth Job Connect program. Andy approved the motion, Claus seconded and the motion was passed.

**Communications & Media - Amanda**

Whitewater Region website updated

 MWC is now listed on the top of the community partners page with our logo.

Interview with Farmers Daughter Honey

Amanda has placed the article about this local business that donated to MWC on Facebook and Twitter

Water levels post

Amanda posted some information about the Ottawa River rising on social media sites.

MWC pamphlets ready to be printed

Amanda will send an electronic version of the pamphlets to Debbie who will print off enough copies for the Eco Fair in May.

National Volunteer Week: April 16-22 (1 of 2 posts this week)

Amanda thanked all the volunteers who give their time and effort to MWC. She will put out a post tonight for Volunteer Week.

Volunteer of the Year Article about Dave Thomassin

 The article is written and Amanda will send it to Karen and Dave for approval before posting it.

**Fundraising - Karen**

No update

1. **Old Business - Karen**

Township Presentation

Our presentation was originally scheduled for April 19, then April 25. But then we got bumped and Karen hasn’t heard back yet when we will be rescheduled. Karen will contact Carmen at the township office to find out. Karen and Dave will present. Other MWC volunteers are welcome to attend.

Hand Plantings

The mechanical planters will be coming on May 8. The professional hand planters will work on Tues. April 25, Wed. April 26 and possibly Thurs. April 27, probably starting about about 9 am. We need volunteers to carry in sawdust to be placed around the plants. Debbie volunteered to help. Karen will send out an email asking for more volunteers. Please email Karen if you can help.

One Voice - please see Agricultural Committee report above

Checks on Past Plantings

Karen asked if anyone is interested in helping check on past plantings to see how the plants are doing. Debbie volunteered. Karen will send out an email to see if more people are able to help with this.

1. **Other/New Business**

Eco Fair May 12 and 13, 2023

The Eco Fair organizers asked what MWC can contribute to the event. Karen suggested we contribute a $50 basket as a door prize. We all approved. Karen will gather local items for the basket.

1. **Next Meeting**

Thursday**,** May 18, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

**In person: Basement of the Whitewater Township Building, 44 Main Street, Cobden**

**Online: Through Google Meet**

meet.google.com/ezd-qitc-btk

**+1 587-978-1050 (PIN 460326449)**

1. Adjournment: 8:06 p.m.

**Minutes recorded and submitted by:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Barbara Green, Secretary, Muskrat Watershed Council

**Approved by:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Karen Coulas, Chair, Muskrat Watershed Council

DON’T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR MWC MEMBERSHIP FOR 2023!

COST IS $20 PER MEMBERSHIP

IT’S EASY TO RENEW - JUST SEND AN E-TRANSFER TO:

 muskratwatershedcouncil@gmail.com

(Please put your name and email address in the message box so we can email your tax receipt.

