



MUSKRAT WATERSHED COUNCIL (MWC)
Meeting of the Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 17, 2024, 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. Welcome and Call to Order

The meeting of the Muskrat Watershed Council was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

2. Introductions and Record of Attendance

Attendance:

Present: Karen Coulas, Yuanbo Gan, Barbara Green, Debbie Macdonald, Jeff Reeves, Gerry Rook, Evelyn St. Amour, Claus Trost

Regrets: Rick Adamson, Anna-Maria Blum, Rene Coulas, Andy Laird, Greg Stasyna, Dave Thomassin, Amanda Walt, Michael Walt

Council Representative Regrets:

Chris Olmstead, Township of Whitewater Region

Connie Tabbert, Township of Whitewater Region

3. Meeting Rules - Karen

4. Meeting roles discussion- Karen

Note taker: Barb

Timekeeper:

5. Adoption of Agenda

Debbie approved the agenda, Evelyn seconded it.

6. Approval of minutes from September 19, 2024 meeting:

Claus approved the minutes, Jeff seconded.

7. Treasurer's Report- Debbie

See attached treasurer's report.

SBCNA Bingo

MWC's Bingo money should be deposited to our account on Friday, October 18. Our next Bingo volunteer date is November 3, 2024 from 3:30 to 5:30. Evelyn volunteered to attend with Debbie.

Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA)

Debbie completed the FOCA survey on behalf of MWC. Barb and Yuanbo will attend the FOCA fall seminar via Zoom on Saturday, November 9, and will report back to MWC.

8. Directors' Reports

Agricultural Committee - Karen

Workshop on updating environmental farm plans

A full-day workshop to help farmers update their environmental farm plans will go ahead in February or March. An updated environmental farm plan is needed if farmers wish to apply for grants. The workshop will be jointly hosted by MWC, Renfrew County Soil and Crop and the Renfrew County Stewardship Council.

Science Committee - Karen (for Dave)

Shoreline naturalization

MWC did not do any shoreline naturalization this year. If you know of any shoreline property owners who are interested in plantings, please let Dave and Karen know.

Projects

Dave was hoping for more projects in the watershed this year, but there are three: Mink Lake, a Biodiversity Study and a Remote Sensing project.

Mink Lake

On Friday October 11, Algonquin College students, Watersheds Canada, MWC and volunteers installed 20 fish bundles in Mink Lake. Watersheds Canada spearheaded this project, and four Algonquin College students helped facilitate it. Funding was provided by Bass Ontario Nation, Bass Pro Shops and Bass Fishing Hall of Fame to cover the cost of the equipment needed to make the bundles. Thanks to Watersheds Canada and volunteers Pete Stewart and Rick Adamson who provided boats. One boat will be returning with students to do follow-up water quality observations. Debbie has added the photos taken at the fish bundle installation to our MWC photo app on Google Drive.

Whitewater Township and Coulas Farm

Dave's Algonquin college students will be conducting drone flights over the Coulas farm and The Whitewater Township landfill to look for data that could be provided using remote sensing of the two properties. The students have asked MWC to cover the \$40 cost of their four drone licences. Payment can be made in cash, with a receipt. These students will also prepare training for the water quality testing equipment the watershed uses. They will attend MWC's November 21 meeting to deliver the training and get a general impression and feedback from the watershed before handing over the training package and handouts so we can continue to train our volunteers.

Blue-green algae

There was one report of blue-green algae (BGA) this summer, but once the ministry arrived on site, the bloom had dissipated, so they couldn't confirm if it was BGA. The image Dave saw does show an indication that there was a bloom. He did notice some algal activity in September, but nothing to the extent that we have seen in the past. We did have a wetter summer and several wind and rain events that helped dissipate the blooms.

Lake Turnover

Lake turnover has happened this week. We could continue water testing if we wished, but in the past we have avoided collecting data after the lake turnover.

Beach compliments

Dave heard some compliments about our sign at the beach.

Communications & Media - Amanda

No report

Fundraising Committee Update - Karen

We don't have a project so we haven't asked for funding. If you have ideas for projects, please tell Karen.

9. Old Business

MWC Video - Karen

We had arranged for a video to be made about MWC so we could take it around to different municipalities to make presentations asking for their support. We gave our information to a video maker at Cogego and asked for the video to be completed by October 2024, but it is still not done. We will ask for our file back so we can either make it ourselves or get this video made by someone else. Karen will ask Dave for the video information so we can go ahead and get the video made. A suggestion was made that we could offer a monetary incentive to the Cogego video maker if he could finish the video by Christmas, but no decision was taken to do this.

Billboard - Karen

So far, three local companies have shown interest in advertising on small signs around the edges of our watershed billboard at Cobden Beach. For now, the signs could be 16" x 16". In the future the size of the signs may be smaller, such as 12"

x 16”, if we need to shrink the size to fit all the signs in. Sun Sign Graphics needs a pdf file to make the signs (not a jpeg file). Karen will send the information to Claus who will get the first signs made. Karen will continue to canvass for more companies wishing to advertise on our billboard.

10. Other/New Business

Boaters’ fuel and Watersheds Canada support - Karen

Watersheds Canada asked for some financial support for their staff who worked on the Mink Lake fish bundle project (see Mink Lake above). After discussion, Claus moved that MWC reimburse the two volunteer boat drivers \$50 each for fuel costs and that MWC give \$100 to each of Watersheds Canada’s three staff, for a total of \$400. Gerry seconded the motion, which passed.

Possible property for cattle fencing - Gerry

Gerry had a visit with a property owner on Code Road to see if he was interested in installing cattle fencing along his creek, but he wasn’t interested. Because the creek cuts through his property he would have to put in a bridge or a culvert, across it. That creek area has high banks on both sides. It would take a big culvert. It’s not a little project. The property owner was resistant and asked if he had to install the fencing and Gerry explained it was completely voluntary and MWC would pay part of the cost and help install it. Gerry will wait a bit and try to talk to this landowner again to explain more about what MWC does, and try to educate him about our projects. However this farmer may still not be interested in cattle fencing.

Ottawa Riverkeeper map of the watershed - Jeff

The Ottawa Riverkeeper recently published a map of the Ottawa River watershed. It didn’t include the Muskrat watershed. Should we react?

Watersheds Canada Lake Links Workshop

This workshop will take place on Oct. 26, 2024, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Elgin Lions Community Hall in Elgin ON. Lake Links is a collaborative, one-day workshop held every October that highlights ways we can sustain our lakes and rivers, networking, and seeing what’s new. The Lake Links Planning Committee has representatives from Cataraqui Conservation, Friends of the Tay Watershed, Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, Watersheds Canada, and White Lake Property Owners Association. Karen will attend this workshop. If you are also interested in attending, please contact Karen.

11. Next Meeting

Thursday, November 21, 2024, 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)

12. Adjournment: 7:31 p.m.

Minutes recorded and submitted by:

Barbara Green, Secretary, Muskrat Watershed Council

Approved by:

Karen Coulas, Chair, Muskrat Watershed Council

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO RENEW YOUR MWC MEMBERSHIP FOR 2024!

COST IS \$20 PER MEMBERSHIP

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

treasurer@muskratwatershedcouncil.com

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

MUSKRAT WATERSHED COUNCIL	&	TREASURER'S REPORT - Aug & Sept 2024	
Meeting Sept 26th, 2024 - Scotia Account Balance	\$ 52,853.20	Business Chequing Account	
Income		Expenses	
e-tran Donation	\$ 20.00	Scotia Monthly Fee	\$ (8.00)
CRA-GST Rebate	\$ 2,143.14	Scotia e-transfer Fee	\$ (2.00)
		2025-Cade Insurance Renewal	\$ (1,359.72)
		Cobden Legion-MWC AGM Room Rental-final payment	\$ (126.00)
		2024-Wix Domain Renewal-Reimbursed D. Macdonald	\$ (117.40)
Total Income	\$2,163.14	Total Expenses	\$ (1,613.12)
Current Amount in Scotia Account	\$ 53,403.22		
New Float \$150			
Meeting Sept 26th, 2024 - BMO Account Balance	\$ 14,981.43	SBCNA Charity Gaming Business Account	
Income	-	Expenses	
SBCNA Charity Bingo Deposit -			
Total Income	\$ -	Total Expenses	\$ -
Current Amount in BMO Account	\$ 14,981.43		