



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

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 18, 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 6:40 p.m.

2. Introductions and Record of Attendance

Attendance:

Present: Karen Coulas, Rene Coulas, Yuanbo Gan, Barbara Green, Andy Laird, Debbie Macdonald, Jeff Reeves, Gerry Rook, Evelyn St. Amour, Greg Stasyna, Claus Trost, Amanda Walt, Michael Walt

Regrets: Rick Adamson, Alex Benzie, Anna-Maria Blum, Mckenzie Mitchell, Laurie Patterson, Elliott Stevens, Dave Thomassin

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:

Timekeeper:

5. Adoption of Agenda

Rene approved the agenda, Claus seconded it.

6. **Approval of minutes from January 18, 2024 meeting:**

Debbie approved the minutes, Evelyn seconded.

7. **Treasurer's Report- Debbie**

See attached treasurer's report.

SBCNA Bingo

Our next volunteer dates are:

Sunday, August 11

Amanda & Debbie

Sunday, September 8

Karen & Laurie

All shifts are from 3:30 - 5:30 p.m.

8. **Directors' Reports**

Agricultural Committee - Rene/Karen

Rene said there was a problem with one of the cattle watering systems MWC installed but it has now been looked after. Karen received a report about cattle in the water in the Township of Laurentian Valley. Rene drove by the sites which involve two farms. He hopes to meet with the farmers between now and mid-fall. If the farmers are interested, MWC could perhaps do two projects next spring, installing cattle fencing and maybe also watering systems.

Science Committee – Dave/Karen

No report

Communications & Media - Amanda

Newsletter Progress

Amanda will not be able to attend the AGM but she is working on the MWC newsletter with Barb and will have it finished in time. She's still waiting on planting information from Dave and the funding information for the Coors planting project from Watersheds Canada. She needs to finish the newsletter by August 5 to allow time for publishing and printing. She needs to confirm the number of copies required. It was suggested that 100 copies should be printed to provide enough to give out at the AGM and also at community events. Amanda and Debbie will set up a Staples business account. Debbie volunteered to pick up the newsletters once they are printed.

Fundraising Committee Update - Karen

No report

9. **Old Business**

Beach Update - Michael

Aeration compressors

Michael has been maintaining the aeration compressors at Cobden beach and they are working well. They are performing 10 times better than the compressors we had before. Water clarity is dramatically improved. The

weed bed is formed down near the treatment plant but even there the water clarity is amazing. While Michael was working on maintaining the aerators, kayakers came by and said how clear the water is. Michael's own aeration system near his cottage has been going 24 hours a day since early May and now there is no milfoil and he can see right down to the bottom of the lake. His neighbours have noticed this big improvement in water clarity and many paddle boarders, kayakers and fishermen going by have asked Michael about his aeration compressors. Michael would like to gather testimonials from people like this to share with cottagers. He feels there is a lot of interest in this topic so it could be a topic for a presentation at the AGM, although he is not able to attend this year. Debbie mentioned that people need to know they require approvals to install aeration systems. Michael will look into who to contact at the township for approval. Michael will be happy to answer technical questions from the public about the aeration system. People with questions can be directed to contact the MWC email info@muksratwatershedcouncil.com and their questions will be forwarded to Michael. Karen will get Michael some MWC business cards with the MWC email address on them that he can hand out when asked about the system at Cobden beach. Rene cautioned it is a good idea to tell members of the public who ask specific questions that we will discuss their question at one of our MWC meetings and get back to them. Members of the public are of course always invited to attend MWC meetings and ask more questions.

Debbie provided some statistics using test results from the Horiba and Turner water testing equipment MWC purchased last year. These results show the level of dissolved oxygen in Muskrat Lake has improved near where the aerators are installed. She tested water off the dock and on the boat launch at Cobden Beach on three occasions. Oxygen levels were as follows:

May 23, 2023 193.4
June 20, 2024 273
July 18, 2024 311

Showers

Michael is going to repair the shower system at Cobden Beach as it is not working well. The decking surrounding it is also in bad shape. We need to work with the township for this.

Bird Deterrents

We need to get some decoys to deter Canada geese at the beach. Michael did research and found where we could buy swan decoys as deterrents. Small coyote decoys implanted along the shoreline may also be effective.

Beach mats

Our beach mats are in rough shape - this will be the last year for them. Rene and Andy are doing some tests on using burlap for when we get new

mats. Michael has an idea for how to wash and lay the new mats at the same time.

Beach sign - Claus

On July 2 the sign went up. Claus talked to Andrew, the Charity Association Rep., who is looking for a decal to include on the sign to show their financial support for the sign project. Now we have space around the edges of the sign to rent for advertising decals. We will have to look at pricing for this advertising. Debbie suggested putting an announcement on our web and Facebook pages to announce this advertising opportunity. Amanda will post this. Rene suggested posting it to get some names of potential advertisers and we can determine the rest of the details later. Claus has received the final invoice for lumber needed to build the sign. The cost was \$489.99. Gerry moved to reimburse Claus for this expense. Evelyn seconded and the motion was passed.

Water sampling - Karen

So far Debbie and Karen have been sampling in four spots: Jeffrey Lake, Muskrat Lake, Mink Lake and Lake Dore. We hope to involve more volunteer testers who will need proper training. The training will take place at Cobden Beach on Saturday, September 7, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. Amanda will advertise this training on social media and we can also ask for volunteers at the AGM. Greg is willing to help out with testing. People interested in doing water sampling should respond to chair@muskratwatershedcouncil.com or coulasdairy@hotmail.com

AGM - Karen

Snacks/cake/beverages? Set up? Speakers

Food and drinks:

Karen has a large water dispenser for drinking water. No bottled water. We will also serve coffee and butter tarts and cookies from the Mennonites.

Speakers:

Alex Benzie from the township will speak about what people can and cannot do on their waterfront. Yuanbo, Mike and Rene will work together to make a presentation about water testing, although Mike will not be able to attend the AGM.

10. Other/New Business

Project Planning - Karen

If you have an idea for a project, please do some research and put together a report describing how the project would be done, what would be needed and your vision of the project and bring this to one of our MWC meetings. We need to have a project in mind before applying for grant money. It takes a long time to get funding for projects. We need to think a year ahead and start putting the wheels in motion for future projects. So far, the projects we have may include the two properties for cattle fencing/watering systems mentioned above under Agricultural Committee and a planting project Dave may have involving four or five properties and about 50 plants. Karen would like to do a project on endangered species or local species and involve students from Cobden PS and Opeongo HS. Michael suggested doing a project on lake sturgeon, which are an endangered species in Muskrat Lake. A 100-pound sturgeon was caught in front of Michael's cottage

recently. Evelyn said her family commercial fished sturgeon for 25 years. The largest one caught weighed 165 pounds without the insides or the head. They also sold caviar from the sturgeon. Sturgeon go back about 1,000 years and were heavily used by aboriginals. Perhaps Evelyn could do a presentation on this topic to the schools? Michael will put the photo of the 100-pound sturgeon caught recently on our One Drive in case we do a project on this.

11. Next Meeting

AGM August 17, 2024 10 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
Cobden Legion Hall, 43 Main Street, Cobden ON
In person meeting only

12. Adjournment: 7:33 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 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 - July 2024	
Meeting June 20th, 2024 - Scotia Account Balance		\$ 54,757.23	Business Chequing Account	
Income			Expenses	
Stripe Membership	\$ 19.12		Scotia Monthly Fee	\$ (8.00)
			Scotia e-transfer Fee	\$ (2.00)
			A. Laird - Pontoon Boat Loan - Buoy & Beach Matts Installation	\$ (100.00)
			A. Laird - Reimbursement-Beach Sign Installation items	\$ (13.00)
			Cobden Legion deposit for AGM rental	\$ (100.00)
Total Income	\$19.12		Total Expenses	\$ (223.00)
Current Amount in Scotia Account	\$ 54,553.35			
New Float \$150				
Meeting June 20th, 2024 - BMO Account Balance		\$ 13,615.55	SBCNA Charity Gaming Business Account	
Income		-	Expenses	
SBCNA Charity Bingo Deposit -			Chq# 26 - C. Trost - Cobden Beach Sign	\$ (638.45)
Total Income	\$ -		Total Expenses	\$ (638.45)
Current Amount in BMO Account	\$ 12,977.10			