

Muskrat Watershed Council



MUSKRAT WATERSHED COUNCIL (MWC)

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes

Online through Google Meets

May 21, 2020, 6:30 P.M.

1. Call to Order and Record of Attendance

The meeting of the Muskrat Watershed Council was called to order at 6:35 pm

Attendance:

Present: Karen Coulas, Rene Coulas, Erin Dolan, David Thomassin, Megan Rae, Barbara Green, Jeff Reeves, Debbie MacDonald, Steve Saunders, Gerry Rook

Regrets: Evelyn St. Amour, Vince Gervais, Karl Lauten, Marie Janick Robitaille, Andrea Bishop, Andy Laird

Council Representatives Regrets: Claus Trost, Township of Laurentian Valley Township

Council Representative Regrets: Dave Mackay, Township of Whitewater Region,

2. Adoption of Agenda

Barb approved the agenda, Debbie seconded it.

Approval of previous minutes:

Jeff approved the minutes first, Dave seconded them.

3. Treasurer's Report

- See attached document
- Dean Sinclair update: Normally we give them our AGM date. We need to consider what we will do so we can tell Dean Sinclair when we need our accounting information. We are going to plan

to have the meeting online, on August 20th. Next meeting, we will pass a motion stating that online AGM's are allowed.

- We have no news from the bingo hall, at this point everything is still closed.

4. Director's Reports:

Agricultural Committee Update – Karen and Rene Coulas

- Looking for farmers to participate in the soil project will happen after crop season is done.
- Susan and Pat O'Neill would like to participate in the shoreline planting project.
- Watersheds Canada has accepted that this fall all trees will likely be planted by paid tree markers because we cannot currently use volunteers.
- Megan is looking into properties where we can plant. Megan and Karen are going to look into talking to the Faught family.

Science Committee Update – David Thomassin

- Broad status update: Projects are status quo from the last meeting.
- Report from Victor Castro: Megan will be condensing this report, so that everyone can easily and quickly access the information.

Communications & Media

- Upcoming blog post: May's blog post centering around the History of Muskrat Lake has been read by nearly 200 people. June's post will be on ticks. Megan will include basic information on what to look for, what to do if you see them, and how to prevent being bitten. July's post will be related to the document we just received by Victor Castro. Megan will condense the document and make it more understandable for everyone.
- New Social Media ideas:
 - o Muskrat Lake Potential Cottage Owner FAQ: Members of the public frequently ask questions about water quality and the lake.
 - o Ticks: Posting simple infographics that people can view and gain information
 - o Annual contest: Instead of a photo, we could ask residents to submit a quick 10 second video of them enjoying the lake and the watershed. We can compile the videos at the end, to have a nice video to share.
- Idea suggestion for Trillium Grow Grant
 - o As described on the Ontario Trillium Foundation's (OTF) website, Grow Grants support the delivery of evidence-based community projects. They are usually 2 to 3 years in length and funding can range from \$50,000 to \$250,000 per year. As mentioned in previous meetings Watersheds Canada used the same funding stream to launch their Natural Edge Program in the Muskrat Watershed in 2018. Funds from the Ontario Trillium Foundation's Grow Grant are meant to support local community projects that are evidence-based and drive at achieving greater impact in their community. The Grow

Investment Stream focuses on three types of projects, which enable OTF to see positive change in communities

- These types of projects Include: 1) Launch, Replicate, or Adapt a program 2)Scale up a program currently being delivered, thus impacting more people 3)Improve the quality of the program currently being delivered to increase impact
- Megan would like to focus on grant #3. At this time, we cannot upscale the program run by Watersheds Canada. We struggle to have enough volunteers. Some of the sites are not appropriate for volunteers. Megan would like to continue with the idea of agricultural streambank buffers but also include aspects of soil sampling and cattle fencing/out of stream watering options into the program. Streambank buffers, soil sampling and cattle fencing are all very interconnected when discussing the impact these BMP's have on local water quality. Also, by expanding the services offered within the program, we will create even more interest from farmers to participate. When measuring the impact of such a project we would focus less on water quality as these results are often hard to interpret and take longer than the program's delivery to formulate a concrete answer. Instead I suggest we focus more on increasing impact with farmer's perspectives and providing education opportunities for them, such as more seminars and workshops. Final program impact would measure how a farmer's practices may or may not have changed since participating in projects within the program. This could be done through something as simple as surveys.
- PSA with YourTV Ottawa Valley: Last week Dave and Megan sat down with Tiana from YourTv Ottawa Valley to perform voice over recording of a future PSA from the Muskrat Watershed about what are easy tips and tricks to maintaining your shoreline remains healthy. Dave would have liked to do a 'donate now' campaign. Dave will record himself for another PSA and ask for donations.
- Annual Newsletter: This is usually the time of year that Megan begins to write articles for/designing the annual MWC Newsletter. Given the current situation surrounding COVID-19 and the delay in projects, Megan would like to know if we prefer that we leave the annual newsletter to 2021? Karen and Dave commented that they would like to do the newsletter and send it out in the fall, so that people know what is going on with the council. Barb volunteered to help write articles. Megan will write up what we have done so far, and then hopefully by the end of the summer we will have more to report. As a council, we will brainstorm what we can write about. Karen will give Barb information on the Inter Lake meeting we hosted, and she will write up an article, around 500 words. Another idea to include is a spotlight on a volunteer of the year.
- Microcystin Sampling Update: Due to current self-distancing rules surrounding COVID-19, Julie Sylvestre and Megan have decided to delay the initial site visits with landowners till the middle/end of June. Sampling will begin the month of July. In the meantime, we have sent out a project information booklet to this year's participants, a copy of said document was included with this month's meeting documents.
- **Action: Dave will send the loon box information to Megan.**

Fundraising Committee Update - Karen

- Karen was contacted by Alicia Carruthers on Aylen Lake (and surrounding areas). They are wondering about servicing septic systems on their lake, for cottages that are only accessed by water. Karen told them to contact their township. If they are new builds, perhaps they can find eco-friendly ways to build. She will also mention Rideau Lakes would be a good contact, as they have more boat in cottages.
- Karen will send an email out to farmers and ask them to volunteer the MWC for the Bayers grant. We won last year, but we may as well try again.

5. Old Business – Updates

- FOCA- They are good with putting the meeting off to next summer, face to face. That is what we will do.
- Current project feasibility:
 - o The Loon project will need to be put on hold for next year, as we can't do outreach right now.
 - o Zeolite will be partly on hold until next year, with parts happening this year. We are planning on getting it in the water. We will have an update in the next few weeks.
 - o Mats at the beach: We have the mats, but right now we are waiting for a copy of the land use permit. We cannot access the permit, until the MNRF is able to get back into their office and access their documents. We do not want to apply for a new permit, if our current one is valid.

6. Other/New Business

- No new business

7. Next Meeting:

June 18, 2020

NOTE: WE WILL BE MEETING IN THE DOWNSTAIRS HALL WITH ENTRANCE AND PARKING THROUGH THE BACK (or online if needed).

8. Adjournment: 7:51PM

Minutes recorded and submitted by: _____
Erin Dolan, Secretary, Muskrat Watershed Council

Approved by: _____
Karen Coulas, Chair, Muskrat Watershed Council

Meeting April 16, 2020 - Scotia Account Balance

\$ 27,944.47

Business Chequing Account

Income

Expenses

Weddsbegone Supplies	\$ (5,646.61)
Scotia monthly fee	\$ (8.00)
Scotia view image fee	\$ (1.50)

Total Income

\$ -

Total Expenses

\$ (5,656.11)

Current Amount in Scotia Account

\$ 22,288.36

(Note: Float \$240.60)

March 19th, 2020 - BMO Account Balance

\$ 4,535.49

SBCNA Charity Gaming Business Account

Income

SBCNA Charity Bingo Deposit - April 2020

\$ 743.23

Expenses

Cheq # 3 - Zeolite Project Supplies (Reimbursement)	\$ (610.20)
Maintenance Fee	\$ (2.50)

Total Income

\$ 743.23

Total Expenses

\$ (612.70)

Current Amount in BMO Account

\$ 4,666.02