



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

Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 19, 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 6:35 p.m.

2. Introductions and Record of Attendance

Attendance:

Present: Karen Coulas, Barbara Green, Andy Laird, Debbie MacDonald, Jeff Reeves, Gerry Rook, Evelyn St. Amour, Greg Stasyna, Amanda Walt and Michael Walt.

Regrets: Rick Adamson, Anna-Maria Blum, Rene Coulas, Yuanbo Gan, 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: Amanda
Timekeeper: Debbie

5. Adoption of Agenda

Gerry approved the agenda, Debbie seconded it.

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

Claus approved the minutes, Evelyn seconded.

7. Treasurer's Report- Debbie

See attached treasurer's reports for July and August 2024.

Debbie has processed our T3010 Registered Charity Information Return, which had to be done within six weeks of our AGM. She is still waiting for the rest of the bill for renting the Legion hall for the AGM. She made a \$100 down payment to reserve the hall. Debbie will email the Legion about what amount might be owing.

SBCNA Bingo

Karen and Laurie Patterson went to volunteer on September 8 but due to a mixup the volunteer date was changed to Sept. 15. Our next volunteer dates are October 6, Nov. 3 and Dec. 1, 2024 from 3:30 to 5:30. Claus volunteered to attend with Debbie on Dec. 1. Debbie is looking for volunteers to cover the other dates.

8. Directors' Reports

Agricultural Committee -Karen

MWC is still looking into approaching a farm in Laurentian Valley where cattle were reportedly pastured along a creek. Gerry Rook's brother knows about this situation. The farmers are renters so they may not be interested in partnering with MWC to install cattle fencing and an alternate watering system. Gerry may speak with his brother again and may go in and see if he can find out more. The location involves a steep slope down to the creek so it wouldn't be an easy spot to install fencing. Gerry is aware of another nearby farmer who might be interested in partnering on a cattle fencing project. If we could get the first farmer interested, his neighbour might also wish to get involved.

Science Committee – Karen (for Dave)

Water testing

Dave's Algonquin College students will present a second water testing workshop on Sat. Sept. 21 to train four more MWC volunteers. Two weeks ago, Karen and Evelyn met at Cobden Beach for the first workshop with students Ella, Emma and Pete. These students are all interested in volunteering for the longer term. Pete has a boat and offered to go out for a whole day once a month to do water testing. Algonquin College will meet with us in October for a workshop to go into more depth about water testing. Debbie asked if someone could enter the water testing data collected during the training session into the spreadsheet on our OneDrive so she doesn't have to do this. Karen said this should be possible. Amanda will coordinate with Debbie to find out what information to post about the water testing and how to put it in layman's terms. Amanda offered to help with graphing the water testing results to make the results simple to

understand. Amanda will try to attend the training or else Karen will send her the information.

Fish bundles

Algonquin College students have been collecting brush and making fish bundles. They will install them in Mink Lake the first first week of October. We have two boats to support this project. Dave will liaise with the boat owners to set this up.

Communications & Media - Amanda and Karen

Newsletter

Amanda shared her screen and gave a brief overview of the 2024 newsletter. She has posted the newsletter to the MWC website.

Inbox for info@muskratwatershedcouncil.com . . . general items needing updates
Amanda said some items require follow up. We need to identify who will follow up on each item. Maybe we could label or flag the items as they are dealt with. Karen said when she sees a question that needs an immediate response, she clicks it and responds - her reply will be attached to the question. She doesn't click on questions that she doesn't answer right away. Amanda suggested maybe we should delete questions once they've been answered because there is no filing system in the inbox.

Waterfront planting

Amanda asked if we have received any response from landowners interested waterfront planting? Karen said no, Dave didn't find anyone. So we will probably not be doing shoreline planting this year.

Cancelled memberships

Amanda asked if cancelled memberships are automatically updated? Is there anything that needs to be done from a payment standpoint? There were two people who cancelled their annual memberships. Karen said to just remove their names from our mailing list. Barb removed one name from her list. Amanda will send Barb the name of the second person who cancelled.

"Celebrating 10 Years" certificate

At the September 18 Whitewater Township meeting, Karen was presented with a "Celebrating 10 Years" certificate which read, "Muskrat Watershed Council: Congratulations to the volunteers whose hard work and dedication help find solutions to educate and protect the Muskrat watershed." It was sealed and signed by the mayor.

Fundraising Committee Update - Karen

No report - we are still looking for funds but first we need to find suitable projects to apply for funding.

9. Old Business

Billboards - Claus and open discussion

We discussed what rates to charge for ads on our new billboard, where the ads would go on the sign, how big the ads will be and what companies to approach as potential advertisers. Golden Lake charges \$175/year for ads on their billboard

and they have a waiting list. As an introductory offer for the first advertisers to come forward, MWC will charge \$100/year plus a \$50 fee for making each small ad sign. The cost will go up for subsequent advertisers. Two businesses have already shown interest in being put on a list for advertising spots. Karen, Andy and Gerry will reach out to more local businesses. The size of the signs is still to be determined. Businesses will need to provide MWC with a pdf file of their ad.

Beach Update - Michael

Beach improvements

Michael had a very productive meeting with the Township of Whitewater Region about the beach. The new manager will be making several improvements. The deck on one side of the beach house will be removed and will be replaced with a smaller concrete deck. There will be more sand for the children. There will be new tables and chairs. Remediation will be done on the shoreline wall. The township has given Michael permission to repair the showers, using a local plumber. The township approves of lakefront property owners installing aerators, but they will require people to get the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) to come out and do an assessment before any aerators are installed. MWC now has good contacts both at the township and at MNR.

Birds at the beach

To discourage Canada geese and seagulls at the beach, the township would be in favour of MWC placing swan decoys in the water to scare them off. Geese are terrified of swans. The swan decoys would be weighted and held down with aircraft cable so they would be difficult to steal. Mike would go to the beach area to move them regularly, so the other birds don't become used to them. Each swan decoy costs between \$300 and \$700, depending on the model. Coyote decoys along the shore might also help discourage birds at the beach. This would be a project for next year.

Beach Mats and Buoys

The date for removing the old beach mats and the buoys is Sat. Sept. 28 at 10 a.m. Michael and Amanda, Rene and Debbie will come. Other MWC volunteers are encouraged to come and help.

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 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. We will discuss this more at our next meeting.

10. Other/New Business

Motion for MWC to pay part of cost of meeting lunch - Karen

Karen attended the Renfrew County Stewardship Council meeting on Wed. Sept. 11th. Karen, also a local farmer, said the reason some farmers couldn't get their funding was because they didn't have their updated

environmental farm plan. Another farmer, Bob Dobson, suggested they should get together and have a workshop. Karen spoke to Jenn Dolman of Renfrew County Soil and Crop who suggested MWC, Renfrew County Stewardship Council and Soil and Crop hold a full-day workshop in February or March 2025 to discuss updating environmental farm plans. A catered lunch would be needed. Renfrew County Stewardship Council will contribute some money. Karen is hoping Soil and Crop will also contribute. MWC will also have to pay for part of this lunch. Karen moved that MWC contribute \$500 toward the cost of this lunch. Andy approved the motion. Jeff seconded. This event may be held at the Admaston/Bromley Community Centre. A discussion of caterers ensued.

New authorization phone number for info account - Amanda

Amanda has updated the authorization phone number in MWC's info account. Now when you are signing in the request code should go to Debbie which should make it easier to sign in, as Debbie is more available. Debbie will be the one authorizing access to the account, but she would appreciate a heads-up from anyone trying to access the account a few minutes ahead. Amanda will help Karen access the inbox of our Gmail account. They will meet Sept. 28 after the beach work.

11. Next Meeting

Thursday, October 17, 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: 7:50 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 - Aug & Sept 2024	
Meeting July 18th, 2024 - Scotia Account Balance		\$ 54,553.35	Business Chequing Account	
Income			Expenses	
Stripe Memberships	\$ 236.32		Scotia Monthly Fee	\$ (16.00)
Cheque Membership	\$ 20.00		Scotia e-transfer Fee	\$ (2.00)
			Baker-Tilly Compiled Financial Information Report	\$ (1,299.50)
			Staples - News Letter & Brochure Printing	\$ (428.64)
			Staples - Brochure Printing	\$ (47.28)
			CRA - Corporations Annual Return	\$ (12.00)
			2024 - AGM Snacks (Time Horton-\$47.76 + Traditional Tastes-\$101.05)	\$ (151.05)
Total Income	\$256.32		Total Expenses	\$ (1,956.47)
Current Amount in Scotia Account	\$ 52,853.20			
New Float \$150				
Meeting July 18th, 2024 - BMO Account Balance		\$ 12,977.10	SBCNA Charity Gaming Business Account	
Income			Expenses	
SBCNA Charity Bingo Deposit - July 2024	\$ 730.88			
SBCNA Charity Bingo Deposit - Aug 2024	\$ 820.72		Chq#27 - C. Trost Cobden Beach Sign Reimbursement	\$ (489.99)
SBCNA Charity Bingo Deposit - Sept 2024	\$ 942.72			
Total Income	\$ 2,494.32		Total Expenses	\$ (489.99)
Current Amount in BMO Account	\$ 14,981.43			