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**MUSKRAT WATERSHED COUNCIL (MWC)**

Meeting of the Board of Directors

**Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday, March 16, 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:**  Anna-Maria Blum, Karen Coulas, Rene Coulas, Barbara Green, Andy Laird, Debbie MacDonald, Gerry Rook, Evelyn St. Amour, Greg Stasyna, Dave Thomassin, Emily Woodcox

**Regrets:**  Andrea Bishop, Jeff Reeves,

Amanda Walt, Michael Walt

**Council Representative Present:**

Claus Trost, Laurentian Valley Township

**Council Representative Regrets:**

Chris Olmstead, Township of Whitewater Region

Mike Moore, Township of Whitewater Region

**Guest Speaker:**

Anna-Maria Blum introduced Jennifer Lamoureux, Aquatic and Fish Habitat Biologist and Manager of Aquatic Monitoring Programs with the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA). Jennifer made a presentation about three wetland areas restored by RVCA. To view her presentation, please use this link. You will need Dropbox on your computer to view it.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/9vpl5s6ao1rbnss/StillwaterWetlandRestoration_RVCA_2023.pdf?dl=0>

1. **Adoption of Agenda**

Debbie approved the agenda, Evelyn seconded it.

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

Rene approved the minutes, Dave seconded.

1. **Treasurer’s Report- Debbie**

See attached treasurer’s report.

SBCNA Bingo

Our next volunteer date is March 19, 2023, from 3:30 to 5:30. Evelyn volunteered to attend with Debbie. Laurie Patterson volunteered to attend with Debbie in April. The organizers of SBCNA Bingo have emphasized several rules:

* Volunteers may not use the Bingo machines for an hour before or after their shift.
* Volunteers may not play any of the games while wearing their charity uniform.
* Volunteers must put in a full two-hour shift. If the Bingo ends early the volunteer must finish their shift by helping to clean the machines.

Federation of Ontario Cottagers’ Association (FOCA)

Debbie attended an all-day FOCA meeting on March 4, 2023 at which information was shared on the following topics:

* Fire prevention

FOCA has pamphlets on fire prevention.

* e-tick.ca

The website and app e-tick.ca can be downloaded and used to identify ticks. It’s a public platform for image-based identification and population monitoring of ticks in Canada.

* 30 x 30

Target 3, also known as “30x30,” calls for 30 percent of the world’s terrestrial, inland water, and coastal and marine areas, to be in effective protection and management by 2030. This target came out of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) meeting in Montreal, which culminated in the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. It includes 23 targets aimed at reversing habitat and species loss, including the reduction of environmentally harmful subsidies, committing to quantifiable funding targets, and protecting 30% of the planet by 2030.

* Boat signs

Anna-Maria will obtain 10 invasive species/wash your boat signs from FOCA (please see image below). They may be free and by picking them up we will avoid shipping fees. If there is a cost, Anna-Maria will send receipts to Debbie.

1. **Directors’ Reports**

**Agricultural Committee – Karen & Rene**

Planting and replanting

Watersheds Canada has been back in touch with MWC about mechanical planting, which will possibly take place in late April. Replanting on properties that previously received plants will also be done, probably in April. We will use professional planters for replanting. We may also do some planting on our own in the fall at a location on Pumphouse Lake, where the landowner is in agreement. We may send some MWC volunteers out to previously-planted sites this spring to check if the plantings have taken well. Karen will make a list of past plantings. We will discuss this at our April meeting. Anna-Maria and her sister will check the area they planted before. She can take photos.

**Science Committee – Dave**

Invasive Species

Dave spoke to Jody Nicholas from Algonquin College on March 14. Students Emily Woodcox and Ashley Conrad may be involved in designing this project. Dave will try to meet with these students before MWC’s April meeting.

Turtle Fencing

As part of her high school volunteer requirement, Samantha Walt, daughter of MWC volunteers Amanda and Michael Walt, researched grants MWC might apply for. She found four possibilities:

Echo foundation

Ontario Community Environment Fund

Ontario Wildlife Foundation

Patagonia

Dave went through all of them. Some give money to sustain a group. This might be good if we have operational costs in the future. Patagonia is not for us. They only give donations in locations where they have a store. Also, they are international and we are not. But they do have a media grant which might be interesting for us in the future. The Ontario Wildlife Foundation grant sounds like it might work for restoring the Cobden Marsh. Dave thinks we should look into this - the deadline to apply is May 31. Ivan Burton, Chief Administration Officer for the Township of Whitewater Region, said the new planner, Alex Benzie, would be the lead on this. Dave will ask Algonquin College for support. Debbie will ask the Ottawa Valley Active Transportation Alliance for a letter of support. Much of the work is already done. We will need to talk to the Civitan Club and the township. We have already requested two part-time summer positions through Canada Summer Jobs, which would run May 1 - Aug. 31 for about 30 hours a week. Anna-Maria knows someone who might apply for one of these positions.

Spring Flooding

They are predicting spring flooding this year due to high snow accumulation. There is not much ice on Muskrat Lake.

**Communications & Media - Amanda**

No update

**Fundraising Committee - Karen**

Karen noticed that Honda has an environmental grant that we could look into.

1. **Old Business - Karen**

Billboards

Karen will get a quote from the person she contacted about making the billboards. He said he could give us some good design ideas so we may not require graphic design services. The billboard may have an aluminum backing. We were advised not to use stickers for the paid ads. The billboard will be similar to the one at Golden Lake. Once Karen hears back she will let us know the details.

RC One Voice

Renfrew County One Voice, a group looking to put together a county-wide stewardship council, met on Tuesday, March 14. Rene, Karen, Dave and Debbie represented MWC at this meeting, which involved a discussion of how to set up a stewardship council, and who should be involved.

Buoys - Dave and Anna-Maria

Anna-Maria will send Barb the information she gathered about pricing for two different choices of buoys to delineate the swimming area at Cobden Beach. Barb will send this information to the MWC group after tonight’s meeting with a note asking them to choose which option they prefer. Once we hear back from everyone we can go ahead and order the buoys and rope.

1. **Other/New Business**

Grant Connect - Dave

We agreed at our last meeting to pay the fee to be a member of Grant Connect. It seems like a hub of various grants that may interest MWC, as well as grants for farmers and lake associations. Dave will set it up for our executive to have access to Grant Connect to search for useful grants that may help us.

Committee to look at bylaws concerning replanting of trees and shrubs that are removed during construction of a new build - Karen

We will wait on forming a committee to look at these bylaws for now. Claus said the planners from Pembroke and Renfrew County will be meeting to discuss what to do now that Ford’s recent legislation removed some of the protections for waterfront builds. It’s in discussion at the county level with all the planners. It used to be that a a 30-metre setback from the water was required but officials would often find out too late about a build that didn’t follow this rule, after the structure was built. Enforcement is a problem. Claus will keep us up to date on the results of the planners’ meeting. July is Claus’ last month with Laurentian Valley Township but he will continue to represent Laurentian Valley with MWC.

Revising MWC’s bylaws:

Dave, Evelyn and Karen have formed a committee to revise MWC’s bylaws. Karen will also ask Julie Truelove to join the committee, as she was involved in writing the original bylaws.

Presentation to Township of Whitewater Region

On Wed. April 19 at 4:45 MWC will present to the new council about our projects. Debbie, Evelyn and Karen will attend.

Next Meeting

April 20, 2023, 8:30 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: 8:30 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.

