



Minutes

Friday, October 19, 2018

1:00 pm

Pine Room – District Municipality of Muskoka
70 Pine Street, Bracebridge, Ontario P1L 1N3

Present

Kevin Trimble (Chair)
Will Barbour
John Cooper
Lou Guerriero
Neil Hutchinson
Debbie Vernon

Patricia Arney
Javier Cappella
Chris Cragg
Jack Hepworth
Randy Jorgensen
Christina Wieder

Rob Attfield
Margaret Casey
Paul Dinner
Piret Hurrell (@2:10 pm)
Peter Sale

MWC & DMM Staff

Christy Doyle
Jamie Delaney

Rebecca Willison
Christiane Masters

Kevin Boyle

Speakers

Dr. Norman Yan
Friends of the Muskoka Watershed

Robin Valleau
Doctoral Student, Queen's University

Community

Mike Pope
Andrew Paterson

Keith Somers
Sandra Franks

Nick Popovich
Toni Green

Welcome

Kevin Trimble called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm. He called on various MWC members to introduce themselves and they each received a MWC lapel pin.

Confirmation of Minutes

MOTION by Peter Sale, seconded by Jack Hepworth

THAT the minutes of the Muskoka Watershed Council meeting dated September 21, 2018 be approved.

CARRIED

Correspondence

MWC sent a letter to the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks regarding the announcement of \$5 million funding for the Muskoka Watershed.

Presentation

[Responding to the threat of road salt in Muskoka](#) - Dr. Norman Yan, Friends of the Muskoka Watershed and Robin Valleau, PhD candidate, Biology Department, Queen's University

Norman provided an overview of the issues with road salt and high chloride levels, noting that the threshold for Muskoka should be lower than for southern Ontario as adverse effects are seen at much

lower concentrations than previously thought. Robin highlighted her research into chloride levels in the Muskoka River Watershed. Chloride levels in precipitation have fallen ~40% over the past 40 years, which is reflected in the chloride concentrations in the undeveloped Dorset A Lakes. Norm proposed a threshold in Muskoka lakes of 10 mg/L, which many lakes currently exceed. He would like to see Muskoka become a [Smart About Salt](#) community.

Following a question and answer period, Kevin thanked Norm and Robin for their presentation. Kevin provided a brief introduction to the MWC's role in the new District Road Salt Working Group.

Algae Initiative Update

Peter Sale reported that the Sub-committee will be meeting in November to discuss a proposal drafted by Peter on how to proceed with an algae monitoring program. The project goal is to develop and then pilot a method to sample algae that citizen scientists can use to identify algae and abundances. The program proposes to use fluorometers on a regular basis throughout the year to develop a database of algae trends that can tell us what's there, how it varies from lake to lake and how it's changing from year to year. The project will also aim to educate the public on algae.

MWC Working Group Initiatives

- **Hydrology** - Kevin Trimble provided a brief update on the activities of the Working Group, including the development of the watershed hydrology project. A project outline has been drafted and will be refined by a select group of people before bringing the proposal back to the Working Group where a sub-committee will be struck.
- **Communications** - Christy Doyle reported that there is a need for more people to get involved with the Communications Committee, including organizing the 2019 Muskoka Stewardship Conference (with a theme yet to be determined).
- **Climate Change** - The Working Group also heard from Kevin Boyle, the District of Muskoka's new Climate Change Initiative Coordinator, who is currently looking for input on identifying and assessing risks and vulnerabilities to climate change in Muskoka and setting priorities to address them.

The next meeting is Thursday, October 25th from 2-4 pm in the Birch Room at the District of Muskoka administration building offices.

Updates & New Business

- **Muskoka River X** – Christy Doyle reported that the organizers of the [Muskoka River X](#) donated \$1,500 to MWC following their successful 2018 events.
- **DMM Community & Planning Services** – Christy Doyle reported that the floodplain mapping project is expected to conclude in 2019 and is currently on target. DMM will be hosting a national municipal innovation conference next year at Deerhurst Resort, which may be an opportunity to highlight various MWC projects.
- **DMM Engineering and Public Works** – Jamie Delaney reported that select invasive species have been mapped across Muskoka (Phragmites, Giant Hogweed and Japanese Hogweed), which will enable better control during removal activities and development activities to prevent their further spread. DMM recently completed assessments of 24 old landfill sites for potential sources of contamination and remediation possibilities.
- **Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit** – Christina Wieder reported that there were seven confirmed blue-green algae events this year, four of which were in Muskoka, mostly in areas not typically prone to algae blooms. SMDHU is working closely with MECP and they are working on updating their communications strategy around blue-green algae as well as getting occurrences mapped.

SMDHU will do a visual confirmation of blue-green algae blooms but testing of blooms is carried out by MECP.

- **Westwind Stewardship** – Javier Cappella invited MWC members to attend the open houses on October 26th in Utterson and October 27th in Parry Sound for the [French-Severn Forest 2019-2029 Forest Management Plan](#).
- **Provincial Updates** – Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks' Andrew Paterson notified MWC that there may be a science day at Dorset Environmental Science Centre next spring.

Next MWC Meeting

Friday, November 23, 2018 beginning at 1:00 pm in the Council Chambers at the District of Muskoka administration building, located at 70 Pine Street in Bracebridge. The meeting will feature the Georgian Bay Biosphere's recently released 2018 State of the Bay report.

Adjournment

Kevin Trimble adjourned the meeting at 3:00 pm.