



## Minutes

Friday, September 24, 2021

1:00 pm

Zoom Online Meeting

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### Present

Geoff Ross (Chair)  
Jo-Anne Goodwin  
Jess Lario  
Kate Monk  
Helen Thompson

Patricia Arney  
Kathleen Hedley  
Pete LeMoine  
David Parsons  
Kevin Trimble

John Cooper  
Caroline Konarzewski  
Karen Maxwell  
Michael Peppard

### Staff

Christy Doyle  
Cassie Emms

Rebecca Willison

Glenn Cunnington

### Guests

Rupert Kindersley  
Andy Metelka  
Esther Giesbrecht

Craig Mann  
Lili Davis-Burchat

Joan Vander Doelen  
Aisha Chiandet

### Welcome

Geoff Ross called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm. He opened the meeting with a Land Acknowledgement Statement. He noted that each MWC meeting will open with a land acknowledgement and he invited other MWC members wishing to make a land acknowledgement, in a form meaningful to them, at future meetings. The District of Muskoka has released guidance material on land acknowledgements for reference.

### Confirmation of Minutes

### MOTION

THAT the minutes of the Muskoka Watershed Council meeting dated May 28, 2021 be approved.

**CARRIED (by consent)**

### Correspondence

A letter was sent to MP Scott Aitchison regarding funding priorities for the Muskoka-Parry Sound area. A response has not yet been received.

## Introductions

A list of MWC members is available online at <http://www.muskokawatershed.org/about-us/council-committees/muskoka-watershed-council/>. All members in attendance briefly introduced themselves. Geoff noted that there are six new members joining MWC and he welcomed them to the Council. Staff also provided introductions.

## Presentation

[Making Waves: Integrated Watershed Management Initiatives Update](#) – Dr. Glenn Cunningham, Project Manager (IWM), District of Muskoka

Glenn provided an update on the District of Muskoka's IWM initiatives funded by the Province of Ontario to help reduce the impacts of flooding and address the health of the Muskoka River Watershed. He reviewed several of the projects currently underway, and noted that an Engage Muskoka page has been developed to keep the public informed on the process (<https://www.engagemuskoka.ca/integrated-watershed-management-home-page>).

Following a question and answer period, Geoff thanked Glenn for the update.

## Project Updates

- **Community Round Table** – Kevin Trimble noted that the CRT is a very important central element to the initiation of IWM. Case studies from across North America and Europe indicate that the most successful IWM processes are driven by a strong collaboration including all relevant government bodies, the community and stakeholders. Kevin reported that the CRT has officially met four times since June and that it will remain a committee of MWC while being broadly inclusive. There are currently 15-20 participants that regularly attend the meetings, and a call for expressions of interest in participating on the CRT will be going out to all municipalities and sectors of the watershed community this fall.

It's anticipated that the core products that will be produced by the CRT are a synthesis report of all of the projects, recommendations for the next steps to develop an IWM program, the development of a watershed plan, and an exploration of various governance models to determine the best one for the Muskoka River Watershed. A mission statement, goals and objectives have been developed, and Kevin noted that an inclusive CRT is likely to become quite large. To keep such a group manageable and productive it may be necessary to form a sub-committee or working group within the CRT to take the lead on making decisions and writing reports.

- **MWC Strategic Plan & Governance** – Karen Maxwell provided a brief overview of the Strategic Plan Review process, which has been ongoing for the past couple of years. The results of the review will be discussed at the Working Group meeting on September 30<sup>th</sup>. The MWC governance model is being reviewed in light of becoming incorporated. It is anticipated that new by-laws will be brought forward for approval at the AGM.
- **Official Plan Responses** – Karen Maxwell reported that the latest draft of the official plan policies will be discussed in detail at the Working Group meeting on September 30<sup>th</sup>. The document provides a series of recommended policy directions for guidance to municipal and regional

government Official Plans. It is hoped that municipalities will take these policies into consideration during their Official Plan reviews.

- **Algae Monitoring Program** – Rebecca Willison reported that sampling and analysis is ongoing on the five lakes participating in the program. Two of the lakes also experienced algal blooms this summer and were able to pilot the new ad-hoc bloom sampling protocol. A meeting will be held with the sampling volunteers later this fall to receive their input on the sampling methods and equipment and the protocol will be adjusted accordingly. The Algae Sub-committee will also meet over the winter to discuss next steps for the program.
- **Muskoka Summit on the Environment** – The Summit has been rescheduled to September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in the hopes of it being an in-person event. The topic, Creating Climate-Resilient Communities, will remain the same.
- **MWC Communications** – Pete LeMoine noted that volunteers are welcome to submit articles on topics related to watershed health for publication in local papers. Cassie Emms reported that IWM communication pieces are being developed through two streams. The District of Muskoka, as part of the “Making Waves” project, is releasing information about the 12 IWM projects now underway, and information about what IWM is, the process for developing an IWM plan, as well as the merits of having an IWM plan for the future are being developed for release by MWC through the Community Round Table.

#### **Partner Updates**

- **Township of Lake of Bays** – Mike Peppard reported that the Township plans to begin a review of their official plan next year.
- **District of Muskoka** – Christy Doyle announced that DMM received funding through the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Municipalities for Climate Innovation Program (MCIP) to facilitate climate change resilience training for municipalities and is also working closely with five Area Municipalities in Muskoka to develop climate change action plans (Georgian Bay developed a plan with Sustainable Severn Sound). She reported that the GIS division is working on including wildfire data on the [Muskoka GeoHub](#).
- **Explorers' Edge** – Kate Monk promoted an upcoming event they are hosting on October 20, 2021 on '[The Business Case for Sustainability](#)' with GreenStep Sustainable Tourism. She noted the potential connection to the 2022 Muskoka Summit on the Environment.

#### **New Business**

None.

#### **Next MWC Meeting**

Friday, October 29<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm through Zoom. It will feature a presentation on microplastics in Muskoka-Haliburton headwater lake catchments by Brittany Welsh, a PhD student at Trent University.

#### **Adjournment**

Geoff Ross adjourned the meeting at 2:55 pm.