

**Muskoka Watershed Council
Community Round Table – Integrated Watershed Management (IWM)
Minutes**

Date: January 10, 2022

Location: Zoom

Attendees:

Kevin Trimble (Chair)	Frank Belerique	Geoff Ross
Cameron von Bratt	Kevin Laframboise	Peter Sale
Patricia Arney	Malcolm Bates	Caleb Timmermann
Deborah Martin-Downs	Aaron Rusak	Mike Peppard
Chris Cragg	John Cooper	Jo-Anne Goodwin (4:35)

District of Muskoka Staff:

Glenn Cunnington, Project Manager, Water Strategy

Cassie Emms, Program Communications Specialist

1. Welcome, Opening Remarks

Kevin Trimble, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Everyone introduced themselves, including their sector representation.

2. Review and approval of minutes from December 6, 2021 meeting, review of action items

Kevin summarized the status of the action items from the previous meeting. Minutes of the December 6, 2021 meeting were approved.

3. District project update and imminent consultation needs

Glenn Cunnington announced that the five remaining technical projects led by the District of Muskoka are released for bid. The other seven projects have been awarded and are in progress. Glenn provided an update on the timing of when CRT input will be required on these projects.

In late April/early May, components of some of these projects will require early CRT input and public consultation. For example, the consultant for the Watershed Health Indicators project team will present to the CRT and will likely lead a discussion about what ecological, societal, and economic metrics are important to their sector concerning the health of the Muskoka River Watershed. The Water Quality Indicator project consultant will lead a similar discussion.

By late Summer/early Fall, the project consultants will present the final results to

the CRT. The purpose of these presentations is to inform the CRT about the results of the projects. These presentations will be important for the CRT's synthesis and next steps report.

Deborah Martin-Downs asked Glenn for the terms of references or project scope for the awarded projects. Glenn will send them upon request.

Action: District staff to circulate project information via Engage Muskoka.

- 4. Follow-up and responses to announcements including:**
 - a. Membership requirements**
 - b. Inclusion of interested respondents in future meetings**
 - c. The need for personal one-one contacts for respondents**

a) Membership Requirements

Kevin summarized three main goals of the CRT: IWM education to the public; a long-range mission of a synthesis and recommendations report on the future of integrated watershed management including a governance study; and a primary mission of providing the District of Muskoka input on the 12 technical projects. Kevin explained the membership and structure of the CRT needs to be confirmed to meet these goals,

Kevin outlined the steps required for the CRT and reviewed the steps already completed. Kevin explained that the CRT previously agreed that the size and structure of the CRT would be a broad-based group with a smaller core team so that decisions are made efficiently and that reports get written timely. The next step is to finalize a sector list.

Kevin presented a conceptual model with sector 'bubbles' and asked for input on additional sectors and thoughts on structure.

Malcolm Bates asked if a sector leader could be rotated. Kevin Laframboise suggested having a second sector representative in line for coverage. Debora Martin-Downs suggested adding the forest sector, an Algonquin Park representative, and geographic representation of sectors. Kevin Laframboise further agreed to have subwatershed representation within the relevant sectors. Patricia Arney added that we might need to target specific sectors for specific projects.

Peter Sale suggested adding the rural non-waterfront community and/or agriculture sector to the list. In addition, we should map the CRT members, to ensure geographical representation. Kevin agreed and suggested adding the recreation (snowmobile association, angling group, ski resorts, etc.). Cameron

von Bratt volunteered to help with mapping.

ACTION: Kevin will update and circulate the conceptual membership model (sector wheel) for people to comment.

Additional CRT structure comments included:

- Many members will represent more than one sector;
- The membership model does not include a small core group, which might be needed if specific documents or decisions have to be drafted for CRT approval; and
- CRT will benefit from access to mapping tools which, it is hoped will come from the District.

The membership model was approved by CRT membership.

b) Inclusion of interested respondents in future meetings

Geoff, Peter, and Kevin will have discussions with the recent respondents.

c) The need for personal one-one contacts for respondents

Kevin explained that December's media release and article had good uptake, with over 20 expressions of interest.

ACTION: Kevin, Geoff and Peter will develop a script and follow up with the media release respondents with a phone call.

Patricia noted that while talking to the people who expressed interest, it is important to explain that they will be responsible for communicating IWM, technical project updates, and CRT updates to their sector.

Kevin explained that the next steps are to continue to reach out to the community to fill sector and geographic gaps.

5. Review of actions needed to prepare and provide needed consultation input

This item was discussed in item 4.

6. Governance Study Update

Kevin explained that the Province is interested in having a governance study done, and welcomed everyone to review the rationale of the governance study from the MWAG report and provide comments to help scope the project.

7. CRT Expert Advisor Update

Kevin shared that he and Geoff are working with the District of Muskoka to finalize an agreement with Muskoka Watershed Council to manage a contract with an external advisor to assist with an engagement strategy and develop a communications plan. Kevin will update the group as discussions progress.

8. Communications

Kevin reiterated that during the last meeting, it was agreed to pause communications until the expert advisor is hired. However, Cassie Emms is available for communication needs as required in the meantime.

Patricia suggested that the engagement strategy or communications plan should focus on IWM awareness and education for the general public rather than CRT recruitment. Patricia further added that with Cassie's help, we can start this without the expert advisor. Kevin suggested that for the next meeting, we discuss what specific communications we need. This could include webinars, presentations, and delegate to area municipal councils.

Deborah suggested having a clear diagram about how the CRT fits with MWAG, the District of Muskoka, and Muskoka Watershed Council. This will help clarify who is doing what work. In addition, Deborah shared her experience educating IWM to the public, and, because it's technical in nature, it's important to make educational material consumer-friendly. Deborah also shared that the CRT should consider scheduling more webinars as the District project results come in.

ACTION – Kevin to develop a graphic showing CRT evolution and relationship of various agencies and organizations to the CRT

ACTION – CRT to discuss further outreach and presentations at next meeting

9. Adjournment and Next Steps

Everyone agreed to meet during the first week of February.

Geoff suggested that Kevin could email documents to the CRT for comment if input is required between meetings. Cassie welcomed people to email the CRT@muskokawatershed.org email at any time for questions or comments between meetings.

ACTION: Kevin to summarize an IWM case study from another area and highlight how it relates to the Muskoka River Watershed.