



Minutes

Friday, February 16, 2018

1:00 pm

Pine Room – District Municipality of Muskoka
70 Pine Street, Bracebridge

Present

Kevin Trimble (Chair)
Lou Guerriero
Caroline Konarzewski
Peter Sale (left @ 2 pm)

Patricia Arney
Jack Hepworth
Pete LeMoine
Don Smith (@ 2 pm)

George Crawford
Mara Kerry
Michael Peppard

Staff

Christy Doyle
Samantha Hastings

Rebecca Willison

Cassie Weston

Speakers

Julia Sutton
(Eastern Georgian Bay Stewardship Council)

Community

Nick Popovich (left @ 2 pm) Judi Brouse (@ 2 pm)

Welcome

Kevin Trimble called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm. Kevin highlighted the 'Going Batty' talk held at the Muskoka Discovery Centre by the Muskoka Bat Collective the previous evening. He then called on four MWC members to introduce themselves: Jack Hepworth, Patricia Arney, Michael Peppard and Pete LeMoine. Each of these members received an MWC lapel pin.

Kevin discussed some of the items being considered by the Executive Committee, including incorporation and the development of a two-tier system of MWC membership.

Confirmation of Minutes

MOTION by Jack Hepworth, seconded by Pete LeMoine

THAT the minutes of the Muskoka Watershed Council meeting dated January 19, 2018 be approved.

CARRIED

Correspondence

- None

Presentation

[Fish Habitat Assessments and Restoration in Eastern Georgian Bay](#) – Julia Sutton, Eastern Georgian Bay Stewardship Council

The [Eastern Georgian Bay Stewardship Council](#) (EGBSC) has been carrying out a 32-month project to assess if there is sufficient accessible fish habitat (spawning, nursery, rearing, foraging) to support Walleye, Lake Sturgeon and Sucker species in tributaries of Eastern Georgian Bay. Habitat surveys were carried out in eight tributaries up to the first major fish migration barrier. The assessments evaluated the location, amount and quality of habitat available to the target fish species. Surveys also looked at whether there were habitat limitations from human or natural stressors and identified any potential restoration opportunities. Julia also highlighted two restoration projects that were undertaken to help improve fish access to spawning habitat.

Kevin thanked Julia for her excellent presentation.

Updates & New Business

- **Fish Management Zone 15** – Peter Sale provided an update on the MNRF advisory council he sits on to review fish management in Fisheries Management Zone 15. The advisory council has been meeting throughout the winter and will continue to meet into 2019 to discuss each aspect of the fish regulations i.e. bait management, walleye, bass. Currently there is not much to report back on, however there may be changes to the regulations to report on soon.
- **MWC Working Group** – Pete LeMoine reported that the next meeting is on February 22nd and will focus on the Report Card.
 - **Ideas and priorities** – Peter Sale plans to schedule a meeting of the Algae Sub-committee in late March with the goal to look at how algae are monitored in other areas. The Working Group is considering the development of a watershed hydrology project with input from Robert Metcalfe from Trent University.
 - **Communications** – Michael Peppard reported that MWC can submit a monthly article to Metroland Media and will have a spread this summer in their papers on the Report Card. The new radio host at Hunter's Bay Radio is interested in having an environmental section occasionally that MWC can contribute to.
- **Muskoka Official Plan Review** – A draft of MWC's comments on the second draft of the Muskoka Official Plan was distributed prior to the meeting. Kevin Trimble provided an overview of the process to develop the comments.

MOTION by Pete LeMoine, seconded by Patricia Arney

THAT the letter re: *Muskoka Watershed Council Review of the Second Draft of the Muskoka Official Plan* dated February 2018 be approved and submitted to The District Municipality of Muskoka on behalf of Muskoka Watershed Council in its capacity as the District of Muskoka's Planning Advisory Committee.

CARRIED

- **2018 Muskoka Watershed Report Card**

Lou Guerriero and Cassie Weston provided a progress update on the development of the 2018 Muskoka Watershed Report Card, including a review of all indicators (benthic, calcium, phosphorus, fragmentation, climate, and fish habitat) which collectively illustrate both health and threats of our shared watershed, bring continuity with some past Report Card indicators while introducing a few new ones, and are founded on scientific data when possible. Other important environmental considerations, such as Species at Risk, may be 'reported' in a narrative, rather than measured as an indicator given the data deficiencies in Muskoka. The Report Card is an important outreach tool and the online Story Map will be key to engaging citizens across the watershed. Lou reviewed the history of the development of the past and current Report Cards and the calcium video developed as content for the 2018 Report Card Story Map was shown.

- **Muskoka Summit on the Environment**

Judi Brouse introduced the 2018 MSE topic of restoring our relationship with the natural world and highlighted the speakers. She discussed the efforts to get high school students involved. MWC has recently taken over financial administration of the Summit. The MSE Organizing Committee would like MWC members to help promote the event to their communities, organizations and friends. With the topic this year, it is a chance to reach a wider audience than we normally do. There will be several articles in the newspaper and an interview on the radio this spring.

- **DMM Update** – Several projects are underway.

- Christy reported on the progress of a proposal put forward to establish a climate change coordinator position. It will be up for a final deliberation next week, following positive discussions with both the District Planning and Economic Development Committee and also the Committee of the Whole.
- Christy also noted that DMM is seeking to allocate \$30,000 in the budget for the Muskoka Discovery Centre Watershed Exhibit, for which MWC and DMM are providing content and some staff support.
- The District's Water Quality monitoring program will continue again this year and interviews are underway for the related summer student positions.
- The Planning section, together with the Environmental and Watershed Programs section, is managing a University of Waterloo student project on valuing natural assets and MWC is likely to be interested in the project results.

- **Earth Day** – MWC, led by Michael Peppard and Rebecca Krawczyk, will be hosting a Walk and Talk on Species at Risk for Earth Day at Marsh's Falls on Saturday, April 21st.

Next MWC Meeting

Friday, March 23rd at 1:00 pm in the Council Chambers at the District of Muskoka administration building in Bracebridge. The meeting will feature a presentation by the Muskoka Discovery Centre on the development of a watershed exhibit (supported by Muskoka Watershed Council).

Adjournment

Kevin Trimble adjourned the meeting at 2:50 pm.