



# *Muskoka*

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## WATERSHED COUNCIL

### Minutes

Friday, February 25, 2022

1:00 pm

Zoom Online Meeting

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#### Present

Peter Sale (Interim Chair)

Chris Cragg

Jess Lario

Kate Monk

Geoff Ross

Patricia Arney

Jo-Ann Goodwin

Pete LeMoine

David Parsons

Aaron Rusak

John Cooper

Neil Hutchinson

Daryle Moffatt

Michael Peppard

Kevin Trimble

#### MWC Staff

Samantha Hastings

Christy Doyle

Rebecca Willison

#### DMM Staff

Cassie Emms

Glenn Cunningham

#### Presenter

Javier Cappella

*Westwind Forest Stewardship Inc.*

#### Guests

Gord Henderson

Cathy Oakden

Ingrid Bahen

Andrew Fyfe

Ramien Sereshk (SMDHU)

David Bywater

#### Welcome

Interim Chair Peter Sale called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm with an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement.

#### Confirmation of Minutes

#### MOTION

Moved by Kevin Trimble, seconded Pete LeMoine

THAT the minutes of the Muskoka Watershed Council meeting dated January 28, 2022 be approved.

**CARRIED**

## **Presentation**

[Forest Management Planning of Muskoka's Crown Forests](#) – Javier Cappella, Westwind Forest Stewardship Inc.

Javier provided an overview of [Westwind Forest Stewardship Inc.](#) and the Forest Management Planning Process. He noted that forest management within the French-Severn Forest is currently being implemented under the 2019-2029 Forest Management Plan (FMP) and that the development of the next FMP will begin in a couple of years. The plan and amendments are available on the MNRF [Natural Resources Information Portal](#).

Forest Management Plans are a legal requirement under the Crown Forest Sustainability Act in Ontario to allow the following activities on Crown land forests: harvesting, road construction and maintenance, renewal activities such as planting and tending activities such as thinning. Without an approved plan, these activities cannot occur.

While a Forest Management Plan is written and certified by a Registered Professional Forester working for Westwind, the FMP is the product of an interdisciplinary planning team and is approved by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) Regional Director.

Following a question and answer period, Peter thanked Javier for his informative presentation.

## **Member Participation and MWC Projects 2022**

Interim Chair Peter Sale reviewed the number and breakdown of MWC members. There are currently 30 members, including eight municipal councillors, and Peter highlighted the benefits of having municipal councillors sit on MWC, including communications to and from municipal councils. The 22 community members are expected to participate in more than just attending meetings. Peter displayed a list of 10 major projects MWC is currently undertaking and noted that more volunteers are needed to assist with communications, as well as to establish a Finance Committee. The Report Card is scheduled to be updated in 2023 and this will be discussed at the next Working Group meeting. Love Your Lake and The Natural Edge programs could use the involvement of MWC members. Are there activities regarding climate change that MWC should be undertaking? Should we resurrect the Environmental Lecture Series? He noted that there are a couple of members that are involved in a number of projects, but there are many members that aren't involved in any projects.

Kevin Trimble noted that the minimum requirement to be on MWC is to attend the monthly meetings and participate in discussions. There are several members that haven't attended a meeting in some time.

## **Communications**

Interim Chair Peter Sale noted that we are quite active in communications, on social media, the website, through presentations, in newspapers, etc. However, MWC needs to be more organized in how it approaches our communications. Pete LeMoine noted that staff provide much of the communications. Pete has had discussions with a communications expert to get some ideas and he is looking for a couple of volunteers to join the Communications Committee. He also encouraged members to sign up for the awareness days initiative. Kate Monk noted that it takes a bit for new people to get up to speed on MWC and she has offered to participate in a process to determine the messaging, audience and strategies to make MWC communications more effective. Kate suggested

sitting down with other volunteers on the Communications Committee to make a plan on how to proceed. Kevin would like to see coordination with the Community Round Table (CRT). Peter, Pete, Kate, Rebecca, Kevin (& Cassie) will meet to discuss communications further.

### **MWC Governance**

Interim Chair Peter Sale reported that Karen Maxwell has resigned from MWC and he thanked her for her extensive work for MWC on a number of projects over the past several years. The Governance Committee has seven members and the By-laws are nearing completion and will be sent to a lawyer for review. The AGM is scheduled for April 22<sup>nd</sup> and the By-laws will be voted on at that meeting.

### **Project Updates**

- **Community Round Table** – Kevin Trimble reported that the CRT has approximately 40 members now. Discussions are going well with the Province to get funding to develop a Governance Case Study as well as for CRT engagement. About 25 sectors have been identified to sit on the CRT and targeted communications will be developed to recruit members from sectors that are not currently represented.
- **Doug Cross Stewardship Recognition Program** – Rebecca Willison reported that fifteen organizations signed up to receive Recognition Packages during the registration period in January. The packages were mailed out mid-February.
- **Algae Monitoring Program** – Peter Sale reported that the Algae Sub-committee will be meeting soon and that the program is expected to be rolled out for broad participation this summer. The plan is to operate the program on an annual subscription basis.
- **Muskoka Summit on the Environment** – The Organizing Committee will be meeting soon to determine whether the event will take place this year or not.

### **Partner Updates**

- **Lake of Bays Township** – Councillor Mike Peppard reported that the Township is planning to convene a community group in the spring to develop a community plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the municipality.
- **District of Muskoka** – Christy Doyle reported that the Community and Planning Services Committee met yesterday and heard about a number of items related to watersheds, including the Province's draft [Subwatershed Planning Guide](#), climate change, GIS, as well as the proposed governance structure for MWC, which was approved.
- **Seguin Township** – Councillor Daryle Moffatt reported that the Official Plan review still moving slowly and is taking longer than was anticipated. The Integrated Community Energy and Climate Action Plans (ICECAP) team met recently to discuss waste and transportation and they plan to hold a town hall meeting in the summer to get the broader public involved.

### **New Business**

None.

**Next MWC Meeting**

Friday, March 25<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 pm through Zoom. It will feature a presentation by Dr. Neil Hutchinson and Dr. Norman Yan on "Climate Change as a Stress Multiplier Governing Algal Blooms in Oligotrophic Lakes".

**Adjournment**

Peter Sale adjourned the meeting at 3:00 pm.