



## Minutes

Friday, September 25, 2020

1:00 pm

Zoom Online Meeting

---

### Present

|                         |                |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Geoff Ross (Chair)      | Patricia Arney | Chris Cragg          |
| Paul Dinner (@ 1:50 pm) | Allen Edwards  | Caroline Konarzewski |
| Pete LeMoine            | Karen Maxwell  | Daryle Moffatt       |
| Michael Peppard         | Peter Sale     | Kevin Trimble        |
| Christina Wieder        |                |                      |

### Staff

|                   |                  |                   |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Christy Doyle     | Rebecca Willison | Samantha Hastings |
| Rochelle Jeffries |                  |                   |

### Guests

|                 |                |                 |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Alison Brownlee | Kristen Callow | Michelle Fraser |
| Susan Mazan     | Andy Metelka   |                 |

### Welcome

Geoff Ross called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm by welcoming everyone to the first meeting of the fall.

### Confirmation of Minutes

Caroline Konarzewski requested that the minutes be amended to clarify Mike Peppard's comments regarding the Township of Lake of Bays' Community Planning Permit.

### MOTION

THAT the minutes of the Muskoka Watershed Council meeting dated May 29, 2020 be approved.

**CARRIED (by consent)**

### Correspondence

- Letter to the Township of Muskoka Lakes re: TML's Official Plan Review
- Letter to the Muskoka Steamships & Discovery Centre re: MSDC's Sustainability Exhibit
- Letter to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks re: Suspension of Environmental Monitoring Programs and Laboratory Services

### Presentation

[MWC Algae Monitoring Program: Year one Pilot Project Results](#) – Dr. Peter Sale, MWC Algae Subcommittee Chair

Dr. Sale gave a brief overview of the Algae Monitoring Program including results from Year 1 of the Pilot Project (2019). Learn more about the program on the MWC website at <https://www.muskokawatershed.org/programs/algae-monitoring-program/>.

Following a question and answer period, Geoff thanked Peter for his presentation and for chairing the Algae Sub-committee.

## **Project Updates**

- Integrated Watershed Management (IWM)/Muskoka Watershed Advisory Group (MWAG) – *Kevin Trimble & Patricia Arney*

Kevin Trimble reported that MWAG finalized and submitted their report in June and that the Ontario government is reformatting the report in preparation for releasing it to the public. The Muskoka Lakes Association (MLA) [sent a letter](#) to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) asking for the report to be released. The MECP Minister has extended the term of the MWAG members for an additional two years. It was noted that the chair of MWAG, Mardi Witzel, gave a presentation at the MLA Annual General Meeting this summer and that was very informative. MWC will be releasing an article series about IWM to support its position that water management in Muskoka should take place in context of IWM and not just an update to the Muskoka River Water Management Plan (MRWMP).

- MWC Communications – *Pete LeMoine*

Pete noted that a couple of articles about the Algae Monitoring program are being developed to help communicate around the release of the report and related story map. Pete reported that six articles have been published on MuskokaRegion.com since the spring. He has been talking to Don Smith at Unique Muskoka magazine about publishing longer articles. A series of articles about IWM is being developed and volunteers are encouraged to contribute to writing them. Bet Smith is developing an article about soil management and how it impacts our watershed.

- MWC Strategic Plan – *Karen Maxwell*

Karen reported that the three surveys will be distributed this fall to gather input for MWC's SWOT analysis. Karen noted that the release of the surveys will be discussed at the Working Group meeting next week.

- MWC Website Redesign – *Karen Maxwell*

Karen reported that MWC has been working with Reeder Web Design over the summer to redesign and update the MWC website. Accessibility still needs to be tested but it is anticipated that it will be completed within the next couple of weeks.

- Muskoka Summit on the Environment – *Peter Sale*

Peter reminded the Council that the event has been rescheduled for Friday, October 1, 2021. He noted that the MSE Organizing Committee will need to meet and discuss the feasibility of holding it in 2021.

- Official Plan (OP) Reviews – *Geoff Ross*  
Geoff reported that MWC has a two-pronged approach: 1) to submit comments on the proposed OP for Muskoka Lakes and Seguin, and 2) to develop a generic document outlining what MWC would like to see in all OPs. Christy, Karen, Kevin, Patricia and Geoff are involved with the OP reviews, and additional volunteers are welcome.
- Programming – *Christy Doyle*  
Christy noted that The Natural Edge program has been popular this year. MWC and the District of Muskoka are participating in the development of the Muskoka Steamships & Discovery Centre's exhibit about Sustainability. She reported that the shared services agreement between DMM and MECP (DESC) set to be renewed and noted that the DESC lab is slowly reopening to analyze samples. MWC members have been active giving virtual presentations over the summer, and Christy indicated that she would like to develop further opportunities. She noted some upcoming workshops and meetings that MWC members and staff plan to attend, including [Lake Links](#), the [GBF water levels symposium](#), and the [2020 Lake Huron-Georgian Bay Summit](#). The Federal government is seeking consultation about a national water agency and MWC will submit comments.

#### **Partner Updates**

- Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit – Christina Wieder reported that the Health Unit continues to have a partnership with MECP to monitor and report Blue-green algae advisories. This year, there have been 27 investigations and 11 confirmed blooms across Simcoe-Muskoka). She noted that the website ([https://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/SafeWater/bluegreenalgae\\_copy1.aspx](https://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/SafeWater/bluegreenalgae_copy1.aspx)) is updated regularly.
- Seguin Township – Daryle Moffatt reported that Seguin continues to participate in the Integrated Community Energy and Climate Action Plans (ICECAP) initiative, spearheaded by the Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve.
- District of Muskoka – Allen Edwards reported that at the Community and Planning Services Committee meeting staff were directed to investigate private communal wastewater treatment in order to reduce the number of units in the Minett proposal.

#### **Next MWC Meeting**

**Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> at 1:00 pm through Zoom.** Featuring a presentation from the Invasive Species Centre where they will introduce the organization and share information on the economic impacts of invasive species especially with regard to green/grey infrastructure assets, the value of investments in prevention, recent initiatives and useful tools that are available to Muskoka area communities and municipal representatives to help combat invasive species in the region.

#### **Adjournment**

Geoff Ross adjourned the meeting at 2:40 pm.