

PEI Watershed Alliance Board Meeting
January 4th, 2023
4- 6 pm via Zoom

Board Members in Attendance: Juliana Granzoti- Late, Andrew Lush, Sherry Pelkey, Kris Hunter, Dale Mclsaac

Staff Members in Attendance: Heather Laiskonis, Nathan LaCroix, Rebecca Ramos, Charlotte Large

1) Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 4:03 PM.

2) Approval of Agenda

- Motioned by Andrew Lush and seconded by Kris Hunter.
- **Passed unanimously**

3) Approval of Minutes from December 7th, 2022

- Motioned by Sherry Pelkey and seconded by Kris Hunter
- Passed unanimously

Business arising from the minutes

4) Discussion items:

a) Signing authority taxes

- Heather met with the alliance's accountant, who recommended that a resolution be made to remove the old board members from the CRA account and have Dale, Andrew, and herself added.
- Andrew brought up the question of whether the signatories were just for reports or for online account access.
- Dale mentioned that the signatories were for both because they are one and the same.
- Kris brought up the point that for the CRA, any board member has the authority or can talk on behalf of the organization; it is a different context than signing authority. There would not need to be a resolution to remove the old board members, but an updated list needs to be sent to the CRA with current members. A resolution is required to add any other designated authorities.
- Send an updated list of board members to CRA.
- Kris resolved that all board members, Heather, Dale Mclsaac and Andrew Lush names, be sent to the CRA to represent the alliance with CRA matters.
- Resolution made by Kris Hunter and seconded by Sherry Pelkey
- Passed unanimously

b) HR and Media Policy for approval

- See folder for policy.
- Motion to approve the policy as amended and media policy as presented by Andrew Lush and seconded by Sherry Pelkey
- Passed unanimously

c) Health Insurance Benefits for Alliance Staff

- Dale mentioned that when contracts were offered to the current staff of the alliance that there were several offers in terms of health insurance benefits because the alliance offers packages to the watershed groups; however, Heather was the only PEIWA employee whose health insurance benefits is paid in full (100%) by the Alliance. The other full-time staff members were not offered a full or fifty-fifty payment for their health benefits which was an oversight.
- Kris Hunter mentioned that the Alliance board needs to rectify this to treat all staff fairly. There should be two tiers: Those that are long-term in nature (a contract over a year) should get the full 100% paid, and those who are hired for more than 3- 4 months can opt into the fifty-fifty co-pay.
- Heather mentioned that the health benefits package with Manulife is mandatory, meaning employees must take insurance through Manulife unless various stipulations are met. The three-month waiting period is arbitrary and costs nothing if it is waived.
- Motion to offer full-time employees fifty-fifty payment on their health insurance benefits.
- Motioned by Dale McIsaac and seconded by Kris Hunter
- Passed unanimously

d) Moving staff to permanent positions, hiring Sarah full-time. (in camera)

- Moved to a camera session.

e) Provincial Disaster Financial Assistance Program-Need input from the groups and more

- Heather spoke with ACOA, who seemed very hopeful that the alliance is eligible for the funding; however, the Alliance must go through the disaster relief fund through the Red Cross. In speaking with representatives from the Red Cross and ACOA, they would prefer that the Alliance fill out one application on behalf of all the watershed groups.
- Heather and Dale will meet Brad Potter on the 17th of January to get an idea of how much they should ask for. Mary suggests that they ask for anything from \$300,000 - \$500,000. This funding would be for two chainsaw workers per watershed group for two months.
- There is also a possibility of adding drone footage to the funding. Heather to talk with Brad Potter and Julie-Lynn from the province to find out what the province is doing for aerial satellite imagery post and pre-Fiona, so there is no redundancy in work.

f) Continuation of Riparian Project

- Charlotte: Since December 2022, a decision was made to move away from the previous developers hired, and Simon had given the Alliance all his reports.
- Charlotte questioned whether the alliance would want to continue with the project and keep building on it or wrap it up completely by the end of the year and focus on the more administrative-heavy project coming up. Does this project still fit in where the alliance is going, and whether it is still a benefit to groups?
- Heather mentioned that the alliance needs more capacity to process the data
- Andrew suggests since groups are looking forward to this app replacing paper riparian assessment that, in the longer term, the alliance should build the capacity to handle it

due to groups giving their feedback and wanting to tweak the app; hence it is something one of the alliance staff should be up to speed on.

- Charlotte and Heather meet with watershed group representatives invested in the app and bring recommendations to the board to the next meeting or prior via email based on the conversations.
- Heather to send out a meeting invite with Sherry, Andrew, and Charlotte to discuss where the app is and where it should go.
- Kris Hunter raised the concern that he is worried about the stress it may put on the staff due to many things on the go and many issues spreading the alliance staff thin.

g) Meet with Consultant on Friday, January 13th-mid to late afternoon?

h) Questionnaire for consultant

- A questionnaire was sent out to Dale, which needs to be approved and then sent out to the board to help guide the consultant for when they do meet.
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i) Messaging from PEIWA about working in the riparian zone-

Recommendation 9

For immediate priority areas, Government adopts the *Interim Guidelines for Mechanical Harvesting in Fiona-damaged Buffers*, with added consideration given to allowing mechanical equipment within the buffer if the ground is frozen solid or can otherwise support it. Going forward, additional consultation with the watershed community will be needed.

- Kris Hunter mentioned that the recommendation raised a lot of red flags. Although the province is in dire circumstances, he doesn't like losing, creating wedges and setting precedents about opening harvesting with mechanical beams in the buffer zones. He believes the alliance should make a strong statement that this is something the Alliance does not encourage.
- Heather and Dale will work on communications to send to the task force, which will then be sent to the board for approval and then sent to the task force chair.

5) Financial Update

- See folder for full update

6) Project Manager/ED Update

- See folder for full update

7) Equipment Manager Update

- See folder for full update

8) Review Forward Agenda

9) Other

The meeting was adjourned at 5:37

In preparation for the meeting with the consultant from Volume 18 on January 13th, 2022, at 1:00 pm, please fill out this questionnaire by January 11th.