



**REGIONAL WATERSHEDS ADVISORY BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES
December 10, 2020**

PRESENT: Emma Bocking, Acting Chair
Tony Blouin
John Carter
Jim Abraham
Ceo Gaudet

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Pam Lovelace
Councillor Paul Russell

REGRETS: Samantha Lutes
Andrew Sullivan
Doug Van Hemessen
Carol Cameron
Rose Featherstone

STAFF: Shannon Miedema, Manager of Energy and Environment, P&D
Sharon Chase, Legislative Support, Office of the Municipal Clerk

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

The agenda, reports, supporting documents, and information items circulated are online at halifax.ca.

The meeting was called to order at 5:04 p.m. The Committee adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 12, 2020

The Board asked that the minutes be more specific and reflect what changes have been proposed and voted on. The number of monitoring events changes from 10 to 3 annually when there is no activity.

MOVED by Ceo Gaudet, seconded by John Carter

THAT the minutes of November 12, 2020 be approved as amended.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

MOVED by John Carter, seconded by Jim Abraham

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES- NONE

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS- NONE

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

7.1 Correspondence

The Legislative Assistant noted that correspondence was received from Jane MacKay, dated November 17, 2020 and November 23, 2020. This correspondence was circulated to the Board.

The Board discussed several strategies for addressing the concern of debris around the lake, in particular Styrofoam: public education, paying for the clean-up and volunteer initiatives. A spring shoreline clean-up day could be organized like the Great Canadian Clean-up. Shannon Miedema noted that parks and other municipal property are maintained by HRM and that citizens should be encouraged to call 311 to report their concerns.

The Board asked that the Clerk's Office send a response to Jane MacKay thanking her for her correspondence and noting that the Board values their insight and hearing from citizens.

7.2 Petitions- None

7.3 Presentations- None

8. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE

9. REPORTS

9.1 STAFF

9.1.1 Proposed 2021 Regional Watersheds Advisory Board Meeting Schedule

The following was before the Regional Watersheds Advisory Board:

- A staff recommendation report dated November 26, 2020

MOVED by Jim Abraham, seconded by John Carter

THAT Regional Watersheds Advisory Board approve the proposed 2021 Meeting Schedule as outlined in attachment A of this report.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9.2 COMMITTEE

9.2.1 Water Quality Monitoring in HRM Lakes – Discussion

Emma Bocking opened the discussion asking Shannon Miedema to give a brief review of the status of the proposed water quality monitoring program. Miedema provided an overview with some key dates and meetings. The Environment and Sustainability Standing Committee (ESSC) were presented with an information report at their meeting on December 7th, members asked that this item be brought forward for a full discussion at their next meeting in January. Staff are also finalizing a report on the proposed new program which will be presented at the February Meeting of ESSC, looking for their endorsement and recommendation to Regional Council.

The Board discussed how they could assist and contribute to the development of this program. Andrew Sullivan was not present at the meeting but had asked the Chair to share some information they felt would be relevant to the discussion. The Atlantic Data Stream provides a lot of good water quality data on their website along with mapping. Members noted that they wanted an opportunity to review the Aecom Report and make recommendations on the design of the Water Quality Monitoring Program. The Clerk's Office was going to confirm whether that report could be brought to the Board for review ahead of it being presented as a part of the report to ESSC. Miedema noted that the report was still being finalized and reviewed internally. Once Council has approved a program, the Board would be asked to advise in its implementation.

Members asked about the level of consultation with the public and key stakeholders that had taken place in the development of Aecom's recommendations. The Board also asked how subject matter experts; volunteer, government and academic, can be engaged in the project's development. Tony Blouin shared that he had been involved in HRM's original program and would be happy to review it with the Board, noting that they had a background set of 70 lakes and 5-6 years of data. Transparency of data, having it published and how it is communicated to the public is important where trends and standard targets are highlighted. An effective management tool has clear decision points which are triggered when standards are exceeded. Miedema re-iterated that the report will be asking for a high-level recommendation and with that endorsement staff will have an opportunity to consult with the Board on the details of the program and its execution. The goal is to begin work in the spring.

The Board provided some suggestions for consideration and further discussion: investing in equipment; using the legacy data from the previous program; ensuring data follows Canadian Open Data Standards, using a machine readable format ; having a location for historic data and beach data; including a mechanism for follow-up with stakeholders; continuing outreach, consultation and collaboration, including the involvement of citizen scientists.

Miedema confirmed that the Water Quality Monitoring Program will align with the Green Network Plan and the Regional Plan Review.

10. ADDED ITEMS – NONE

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – January 14, 2021

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Sharon Chase
Legislative Support