



**REGIONAL WATERSHEDS ADVISORY BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES
June 10, 2021**

PRESENT: Emma Bocking, Chair
Tony Blouin, Vice Chair
David Foster
Youji Cheng
Andrew Medeiros
Céo Gaudet

REGRETS: Jim Abraham
John Carter
Farhang Fotovat
Robert Jarvis

STAFF: Shannon Miedema, Manager of Energy and Environment, P&D
Emma Wattie, Environmental Performance Officer, P&D
Leah Perrin, Principal Planner, Regional Planning, P&D
Haruka Aoyama, Legislative Assistant, Office of the Municipal Clerk
Sharon Chase, Legislative Support, Office of the Municipal Clerk

These minutes are considered draft and will require approval by the Regional Watershed Advisory Board at a future meeting.

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 5:02 p.m., the Board adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. and gave a land acknowledgement.

The Chair would like to re-introduce Community Announcements from Board Members as a regular item on the Board's agenda.

The Chair encouraged Board members to visit the Mi'kmaw Place Names Digital Atlas.
<http://mikmawplacenames.ca/>

The Chair noted that there is an active investigation into current water quality issues at Grand Lake and the Shubenacadie water system. The Board would like to discuss this in more depth at a future meeting.

Céo Gaudet has been working with Canoe Kayak NS to create a listing of accessible launch sites.

Youji Cheng shared that Drastic Plastic, a 100% recycled ocean plastic manufacturer, is working on a pilot project in Barrington and may come to Halifax next.

Andrew Medeiros noted that Carbon 14 analysis has been done at Chocolate Lake and it will be able to help describe the last 3000 years of the lake.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 13, 2021

MOVED by Youji Cheng, seconded by David Foster

THAT the minutes of May 13, 2021 be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Additions:

- 10.1 Contamination at Lake Charles

As set out in Section 10 (1) and (2) of the Administrative Order One, all members of Regional Council must consent to consider or decide on an additional matter.

The Clerk noted that consent of all members of Regional Watersheds Advisory Board had been received to add this item.

Deletions: None

MOVED by Céo Gaudet, seconded by Tony Blouin

THAT the agenda be approved as amended.

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- NONE

7. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

7.1 Correspondence

Correspondence has been received from Shalom Mandaville, dated June 10, 2021; and has been distributed to members.

7.2 Petition- None

7.3 Presentations- None

8. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE

9. REPORTS/DISCUSSION

9.1 STAFF

9.1.1 Regional Plan Review: Themes & Directions Report Presentation

Leah Perrin, Principal Planner Regional Planning provided a presentation on Regional Plan Review Themes & Directions Report, a copy of which is on file.

Perrin closed by sharing key contact information and encouraged additional feedback through Shape Your City web page. Feedback received from Boards and Committees will become part of the public record and be included in the engagement program.

Board members provided their feedback, highlighting areas and suggesting additional information that could inform the plan review:

- There is an opportunity to more clearly define what terms such as storm water management mean and flesh out these concepts
- How does prevention get addressed to ensure we are pro-active?
- Could there be a companion document which outlines some best practices and strategies with tangible solutions
- What is the tool kit and what are other jurisdictions doing?

Perrin noted that the Regional Plan creates policy which supports the work on specific initiatives. Land Use Planning and Site Design are a few tools from the plan that can be used.

- Policy Statement 8.8 and the Lake Water Management Plan is of particular interest
- Phosphorus loading limits are important. Standard phosphorus models are available and could be used
- There are also national guidelines that could be adopted by HRM
- Stormwater Management and Urban Forest Planning are two areas that work together and where shared strategies can be included for both
- Some urban planning trends highlight “green architecture”, the examples they often mention are not reflective of what HRM are working towards
- How does this policy framework fit with what other jurisdictions are doing such as the Federal Government and the Port Authority; and how can efforts be coordinated?
- How will the initiatives and impacts of the Regional Plan be measured?

Perrin agreed that key partnerships with other levels of government and community groups are important. Key Performance Indicators are included in the Regional Plan and will be updated as a part of this review.

- Should the by-law regarding riparian buffers be reviewed, revised and standardized across HRM?
- Is there an opportunity to increase the buffer for larger watercourses?

- Road drainage and culverts need to be a part of the stormwater management plan and factor into flood risk and reduction of inputs
- Segregation of stormwater from sewage system should be included

Perrin noted that the Red Book review may address these issues and that Halifax Water are on the Steering Committee for the Regional Plan Review. Perrin will check with Halifax Water regarding the regulations around stormwater and sewage.

- Could the Environmental Conservation Zone applied to wetlands in Eastern Passage be applied throughout the region?
- Can open space and natural resource designations be used to protect other areas?

Perrin clarified that the Regional Plan outlines policy but is not a regulatory tool. These issues are implemented through zoning and by-laws which place limitations for development. Extensive mapping would be required to expand on conservation zones. In the interim, land suitability assessments can happen and would be focused on areas as they are developed.

- How will the Green Network Ecology Map be used as mentioned in Policy Statement 8.1?
- It is important to distinguish between natural infrastructure and built green infrastructure
- There should be an emphasis on flood risk mapping, as it ties to the goal to protect natural assets
- It is great to see a creative approach to protecting wetlands by the municipality.

The Chair reminded members that they can provide additional feedback directly to the contacts provided. The Board can also work on a written submission at the July meeting. Members may want to attend some of the other meetings scheduled in the engagement period.

9.2 COMMITTEE MEMBERS- NONE

10. ADDED ITEMS

10.1 Contamination at Lake Charles

Céo Gaudet noted that there have been some recent articles published concerning arsenic in the sediment of Lake Charles. This led Gaudet to research some other articles and learn about the history of this issue. It was noted that the Province and Municipality are taking this very seriously. It was felt that the Board would want to follow this issue and what specifically is being done. An increase in arsenic levels and its impact on aquatic life needs to be monitored. Lake Charles is the headwater for the Shubenacadie system and potential migration of this contamination would be a concern. Dr Linda Campbell, former Chair of this Board, has done lots of work studying the impact of the mining and the need for remediation. Media has helped to raise awareness of the issue. The Province is planning a public engagement period regarding their closure proposal. Shannon Miedema offered to get further details on this and could suggest a presentation to this Board. The Board discussed how development in the area would result in increased phosphorus loading which depletes the oxygen. A healthy natural, oxygenated system can sequester arsenic, but it becomes dangerous if the system becomes anoxic. Climate impacts would also contribute to a change in the system. The Board would like to keep this issue front of mind and monitor the situation.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – July 8, 2021

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

Sharon Chase
Legislative Support