

Bras d' Or Lake Biosphere Reserve Association

Annual General Meeting September 25, 2020

Lions Club Hall St. Peter's

Meeting Minutes

Chair Bruce Hatcher calls the meeting to order at 6:34 welcomes all, 27 in person and 8 online, to the 9 th AGM of BLBRA on the unceded territory of Mi'kmaq. Chair declares a quorum.

Mike Kelloway M.P for the area was in attendance and since he has another commitment and must leave; the chair introduces him and asks him to address the meeting first.

The M.P speaks about the success of Board getting biosphere signage completed. He speaks of the success of the Climate Change conference hosted by BLBRA, the future plans & goals of BLBRA, He references the recent Throne Speech & how it intersects with the plans & goals of BLBRA going forward. He states his focus is on working with people and he emphasizes he is willing to work in collaboration with BLBRA.

1. **Approval of agenda:** The chair calls for the approval of the meeting agenda that was distributed. Moved by Fred White, seconded by Fonsie Farrell. Passed unanimously.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** The chair called for approval of the minutes of the June 2019 AGM. Moved by Theresa Mac Neil, seconded by Stan Johnson. Passed unanimously There was no business arising from the June 2019 AGM and it was noted that changes to the by-laws approved at that meeting had been sent to Nova Scotia Registry of Joint Stocks.
3. **Treasurer's report:** Treasurer Brian Mac Dougall reports that the BLBRA is in a solid financial position. He reported that the bank balance was \$ 64,042, revenue for the year was \$ 162,709 with the 2 major revenue items being the climate change conference and reimbursement for the signage project. Brian moved approval of the treasurer's report seconded by Maureen Cameron- Mac Millan. Approved unanimously.
4. **Nominations:** Jim Foulds chair thanks Theresa Mac Neil & Gordon Kerr for their work on the committee. He reports that 11 board members are continuing and 8 board members have completed their terms on the board. The 11 board members continuing their terms on the board are: Ivan Doncaster, Paul Mac Neil, John Mac Lennan, Gordon Kerr, Maureen Cameron- Mac Millan, Stan Johnson, Eliot Frosst, Fonsie Farrell, Elizabeth Mac Cormick, Rod Beresford, and Tracy George.

The 8 members who have reached or exceeded the tenured limits for directors or have decided not to reoffer are: Jim Foulds, Bruce Hatcher, Fred White, Jim Mac Donald, Tom Johnson, Don Crosby, Henry Muggah, Anna Marie Hatcher.

Jim then introduces the slate of names of 7 potential new board members that the committee has brought forward: Kirsty Lock, Annamarie Talbot, Rodney Chaisson, Allison Mac Isaac, Eileen Crosby, Pierre La Rochelle, Brian Mac Dougall. Jim then calls 3 times are there any other

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nominations from the floor for directors. Hearing none Jim moves and Gordon seconds the slate of 7 new directors nominated. Approved unanimously.

Chair asks Jim for the total number of directors, response current total is 18 with 20 being possible.

Theresa Mac Neil thanks the members who have volunteered to serve on the board and thanks Jim Foulds for his long service to the board since 2003.

5. Committee reports:

Signage: Gordon Kerr reports that the signage around the biosphere was completed in 2020 he shows photo's of the signs that have been installed. In total 12 signs have been installed. ACOA contributed \$ 70, 000 and the 4 municipalities contributed a total of \$ 20,000 to the project.

Trails: Candace Christiano reported that the long term vision was to have a trail that would encircle the whole lake. The short term goal was to construct a series of shorter trails. She shares that there is a toolkit on the BLBRA website that shows the best practices in trail development. Th committee is working with other trails groups that want to build & promote trails in the Biosphere.

Rails to Trails, the committee met with Jeff for possible use of Central Railway in trails development. There was discussion of a trails map that could be sold as a fundraiser. There has been consultation with Mi'kmaq chiefs to get their support. We have been registered with hike Nova Scotia.

Report Card: Liz Mac Cormick outlined that the report card, when developed, would be a way to report on the health of the Eco System in the Biosphere using data collected. She mentions that there are many of these in use around the world and shows an example of several. This is viewed as a longterm project of the Board. She asks how do we conceptualize and monitor the health of the Biosphere Eco System. Things such as water quality, land use, tourism, fisheries yield, species diversity, population demographics, are all metrics that could be used to present relevant information reflect diversity and used as a guide for communities within the Biosphere.

Communications: Pierre reported that the Biosphere Quarterly newsletter issue Sept. 4, 2020 had been distributed to 858 subscribers. Destination Cape Breton and Cape Breton Partnership have yet to confirm their possible participation as contributors to the newsletter.

Authors are needed for a monthly newspaper column related to Biosphere activities & news. volunteers are welcome.

Maureen has completed moving the BLBRA website hosting to Go Daddy.

BLBRA Facebook and Bras d'Or watch Facebook pages are being kept updated. Bras d'Or photo

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contest was promoted on Facebook, but there was very little uptake.

Great coordination & promotional material was prepared by Jen Cooper ACAP for use on I Naturalist for Bras d'Or watch Bio Blitz.

Discussion are planned at a future Communications committee meeting about how to utilize Instagram to promote BLBRA. Use of Twitter also needs discussion by the committee.

Periodic Review is ongoing and the committee is awaiting outcomes of the review process to identify possible future educational initiatives it should consider.

Chairs report: Bruce gave a brief overview of the Periodic review process that is well underway. Various working groups are preparing material that will be included in the report that must be presented to UNESCO in 2021.

Guest speaker:

Patricia Bradshaw Executive director Community Sector Council of Nova Scotia, guest speaker addressed the meeting via zoom. She emphasized the importance of the non profit sector in contributing to the health of the Nova Scotia economy. She said the non profit sector contributes 1.7 billion to the Nova Scotia economy and contributes a further 1.5 billion through labour provided by volunteers. She spoke about the need for collaboration & connections between non profit organizations across the Province. She suggested these grass roots organizations are the future of the economic prosperity of the Province, however the whole non profit sector is struggling with dealing with Covid 19. She suggested there are 3 strategic pillars for the success of the non profit sector. These are 1. Training and capacity building, 2. Activating networking across the sector, 3. Celebrating the non profit sector.

She stated her organization is willing to collaborate with BLBRA. In reply to a question about the amount of non profit that have paid staff, she said 65% of non profit have no paid staff, only volunteers. She closed her remarks by saying we should work to inspire communities and to develop strategic alliances.

The meeting was adjourned at 8.18 p.m.