

Minutes of Meeting
BLBRA Board of Directors Public Meeting
Thursday, September 16, 2021, 1:30 – 4:00 PM
Whycocomagh Firehall



We envision the Bras d'Or Lake as a special place where communities are joined together in thoughtful promotion of environmental assets and responsible economic development.

Attendance:

DIRECTORS (Member at Large)		DIRECTORS (Ex Officio)	
Allison McIsaac		Amanda Mombourquette (Richmond)	
Brian MacDougall (Treasurer)	Y	Barbara Longva (Victoria)	
Chris King	Y	John MacLennan (Inverness)	
Eileen Crosby (Chair)		Kirsty Lock (NSCC)	Y
Liz Campbell	Y	Stan Johnson (CEPI)	
Foncie Farrell	Y	Steve Parsons (CBRM)	
Pierre LaRochelle (Secretary)	Y	Tyler Mattheis (CB Partnership)	Y
Rodney Chaisson	Y		
Rosella Born (Vice-chair Delegate)	Y		
Tracy Marshall (Youth Coordinator)			

A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board shall consist of 50% of the Executive Committee plus 2 non-executive Board members. (Y= Present; R= Regrets sent)

Observers/Guests: Kathleen Aikens (ACAP), Denis Thibeault CEPI), Erica Holgate (CB Partnership), Matthew Cook (Parks Canada), Candace Christiano, Gordon Kerr

1. Call to Order:

At 1:36pm Chair Eileen Crosby who began the meeting by acknowledging that all sites designated by UNESCO in Canada as Biosphere Reserves are located on Indigenous lands. The Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People.

2. Additions to the agenda:

Chris requested to be added to the agenda.

3. Approval of the agenda:

Motion to approve by Tyler; seconded by Rodney. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Approval of minutes from the June 17, 2021 meeting:

Motion by Pierre; seconded by Foncie. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Election of Executive:

Foncie led the group through the nomination and voting process.

a) Foncie asked three times for nomination(s) for Chair. Pierre nominated Eileen. Accepted by Eileen. No additional nominations made.

Motion by Rod for confirmation of Eileen as Chair. Seconded by Chris. Motion passed unanimously.

b) Foncie asked three times for nomination(s) for Vice-chair. Pierre nominated Rosella. Accepted by Rosella. No additional nominations made.

Motion by Rod for confirmation of Rosella as Vice-chair. Seconded by Chris. Motion passed unanimously.

c) Foncie asked three times for nomination(s) for Treasurer. Pierre nominated Brian. Accepted by Brian. No additional nominations made.

Motion by Chris for confirmation of Brian as Treasurer. Seconded by Liz. Motion passed unanimously.

d) Foncie asked three times for nomination(s) for Secretary. Pierre self-nominated. No additional nominations made.

Motion by Liz for confirmation of Pierre as Secretary. Seconded by Kirsty. Motion passed unanimously.

Eileen welcomed Rosella, Chris and Liz, the three new board members voted in at the September 9, 2021 AGM.

6. Business arising from last meeting (not dealt with elsewhere):

i. Summary of Explore the Bras d'Or

Denis Thibeault, Event Coordinator for Explore the Bras d'Or, delivered a review of the first [Explore the Bras d'Or](#) project, a BLBRA/CEPI initiative that includes Ocean North, First Nations communities and Cape Breton counties. Many partners in the project – not all listed on the [Our Partners](#) page. Some 10 new events were created with [34 events](#) promoted online and through social media. ACAP took on some new events; only 3 events were cancelled - either due to weather or capacity to deliver an additional event. Mixing of cultures at Skye River Park and storytelling; Iona Hike Walk & Talk mentioned as good examples. The project and events benefited from 'Promotional Champions' getting the word out. The launching of the website made the initiative 'real'.

The project was 6 months long with a budget of \$35k with \$5K provided by DCBA. The infrastructure such as the website is now in place to make the next iteration a bit less costly. Operational costs could benefit from county and corporate funding, monetizing items like the very successful Explore the Bras d'Or Pale Ale produced by Big Spruce Brewing specifically for the occasion. Need to review the searching out of events – possibly by theme and geocoding in addition to dates.

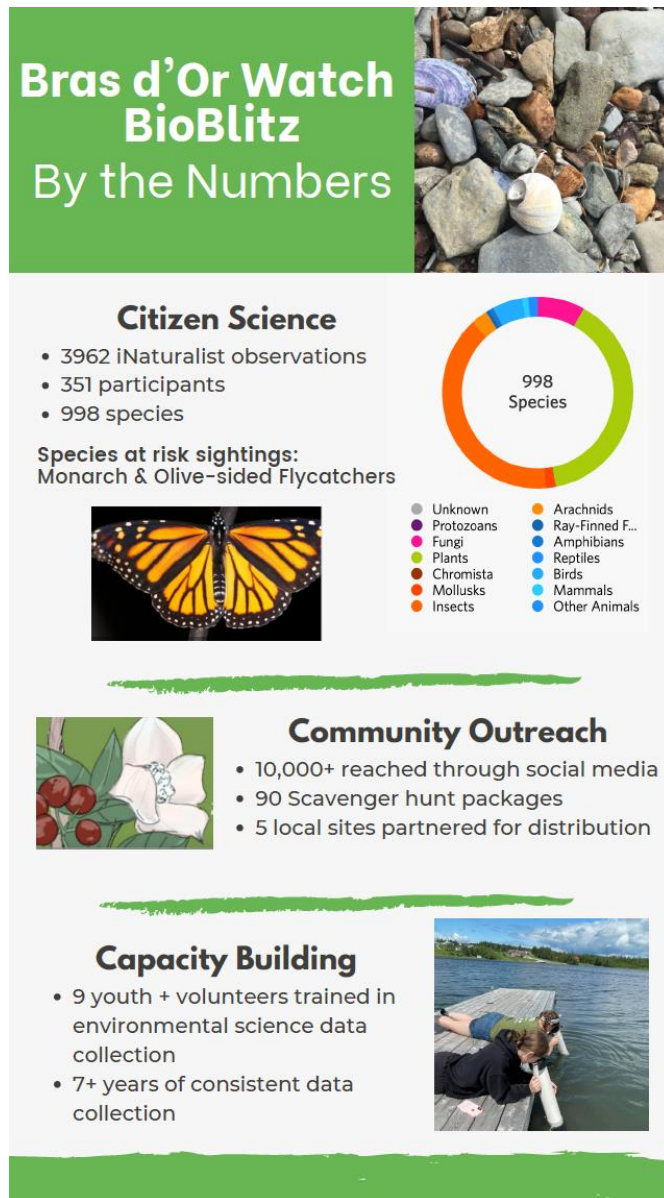
Action: ALL are encouraged to submit suggestions through the BLBRA of existing or new events that can be created/promoted.

ii. ACAP Report for Bras d'Or Watch + Explore the Bras d'Or Bio blitz + Family Science Scavenger Hunt

Kathleen Aikens, Executive Director, Atlantic Coastal Action Program (ACAP), spoke of their Bras d'Or Watch and Explore the Bras d'Or activities including citizen science activities such as iNaturalist BioBlitz and a family-oriented scavenger hunt. UINR information was incorporated and kits distributed to several areas. These activities were carried out over the two week Explore the Bras d'Or window of events.

For the seventh year ACAP collected season specific data from the set of regular sites, 4 this year.

The iNaturalist project had participants contributing photos that can be used by folks like CBU to determine species at risk. The new Scavenger Hunt was a positive outdoor experience during COVID-19, often a family event. No extra kits were returned. Could be expanded into more areas. Summer students were used for the initiatives however a coordinator is required. Perhaps shared with other BLBRA initiatives.



Action: Kathleen will send Liz a copy of the scavenger hunt material.

iii. Strategic Planning sessions:

Eileen reminded everyone about the in person meeting scheduled for Tuesday, Oct 5 at Wagmatcook Culture & Heritage Centre from 9 - 4 pm. Lunch and coffee to be served. Facilitation by AEC. Followed by 2 – 3-hour online sessions 3rd and 4th week of October. A shared folder will be created to provide pre-session studying materials including the 2021 Periodic Review submission.

Action: DIRECTORS to complete the online survey emailed by AEC, complete the online poll to establish two meeting dates and review the shared meeting folder.

iv. Water Tower Research & Monitoring project:

Eileen reported that as a follow-up to Fred Baechler request to fund a “Water Tower” project a [PowerPoint presentation on Wetlands and mountain hydrology narrated by Dr. Lauren Somers](#) was shared with the Directors. Dr. Lauren Somers called into the meeting to further discuss the proposal to secure funding for resources (graduate students, new/shared equipment, field expenses, sample analysis) to carry out a multiyear project to measure and model hydrological and carbon field data to better understand how the system works and project future climate and land-use impacts. The biosphere is a gem for all residents. Good areas in the biosphere to study. Middle River Water Project is a good example. Looking at ability to support eel, trout, salmon; ground water and stream flow; hydrology and high seas. If funding is secured for a particular goal, a project could start based on the school terms – September, January or May of any given year.

Action: DIRECTORS to consider funding options.

v. Lynn Baechler Memorial:

Kirsty reviewed that the chosen a location for the memorial picnic shelter at Irish Cove had been planted and replanted with softwood and hardwood with support of Lands & Forestry, Port Hawkesbury Paper and NSCC. 450 softwood and 200 hardwood saplings donated by PHP. Competing grasses removed. NSCC building the structure this fall. Some permitting will be required.

Action: Eileen - Plaque wording to be finalized.

Action: Kirsty – Coordinating permits and placement.

7. **Treasurer’s Report** – Not available.

8. **CEPI updates** – Not available..

9. CBRA/CCUNESCO - (ECCC contribution Agreement Funding)

Eileen explained that the goal of the funding to protect at least 17% of the land area has already been achieved and the BLBRA consideration to protect the Eskasoni water supply is now effectively mute with Port Hawkesbury Paper setting aside the area from operations. Funding request initiative dropped.

10. Committee Reports - Chair Updates/Comments: None

11. New Business

vi. Presentation by CB Partnerships – CBRM Forward

Tyler Mattheis, BLBRA Director and the Partnership’s Economic Development Officer – Cape Breton Regional Municipality, presented a [PowerPoint presentation for BLBRA on the Collaborative Community Planning project underway in the CBRM](#) and soon to be rolled out to all counties so that an island wide planning perspective can be developed and the four municipalities kept in synch. The presentation identified the project team, the key objectives (develop an Economic Development Strategy, Growth Management Strategy, Municipal Planning Strategy and Enabling By-laws), methodologies, timelines and suggested next steps for the BLBRA.

Eileen is on the Citizen’s Advisory Working Group.

An overview of the CBRM initiative is [HERE](#).

Directors are encouraged to contribute to the second round of public engagement for CBRM

Forward [HERE](#)

<https://engage.mysocialpinpoint.ca/cbrm/round2engagement/>

Action: Eileen – Determine next steps.

vii. Committee restructuring needed – Post Strategic Planning

Eileen offered that on completion the strategic planning session the Board of Directors will need to meet and review the committee structures to support the deliverables.

Action: Eileen – Put committee structure review on future agenda(s).

viii. Chris’s review of Circular Economy was tabled until next meeting.

12. Correspondence - None

13. Adjournment - Motion to adjourn by Foncie. **Approximately 4:00 pm**

Please email any clarifications or omissions to: Pierre LaRochelle, pierreprfamily@gmail.com
BLBRA Secretary
Resident of the [Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere Reserve](#)