

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

21 February 2020, 1:30-4:30 p.m.

Little Bras d'Or Seniors Club, 66 Main Street, Little Bras d'Or

Submitted by: Maureen Cameron-MacMillan (interim secretary)

Present: Bruce Hatcher (Chair), Annamarie Hatcher, Maureen Cameron-MacMillan, Ivan Doncaster, Jim Foulds, Don Crosby, Jim MacDonald, Brian MacDougall, Eliot Frosst, Tracy George, Stan Johnson, Fonce Farrell

Observers: Pierre LaRochelle, Madeleine Harvey

Regrets: Rod Beresford, Tom Johnson, Gordon Kerr, Fred White

1. **Call to order:** 1:35 pm. Chair welcomed the group, and relayed regrets from Board Members unable to attend. Submission from former board member Glennis Munro was gratefully acknowledged.
2. **Welcome from local host:** Host unavailable due to MLA duties; welcomed us in absentia.
3. **Motion to approve agenda** by Jim MacDonald and seconded by Ivan Doncaster passed unanimously.
 - a. Update by Jim MacDonald on the memorial structure for Lynn Baechler being constructed by NSCC students under direction of Waddie Long. The board gratefully acknowledged the contributions of materials and labour by NSCC faculty and students. Motion to provide up to \$2000 to complete the structure was withdrawn; instead, the board requests an itemized budget from Mr. Long to complete and install the structure. Jim MacDonald will pass this request to the appropriate person and report to the Board.
4. **Motion to approve minutes of 17 January Board of Directors meeting** by Annamarie Hatcher, seconded by Jim MacDonald, passed unanimously.
5. **Business arising from minutes:**
 - a. Schedule of board meetings: The venues have been confirmed up to the June AGM. It was agreed by those present that the May meeting will begin at 13:00 because the hall must be vacated no later than 16:30.
 - b. Presentation on the "Report Card" by Liz McCormick was pre-circulated. Liz was not present at this meeting, so further discussion was deferred.
 - c. Signage celebration is planned for the spring, when Gordon Kerr will be present and weather more suitable for an outdoor event. Contact with the new MPs will be made via the CBRA letter circulated by Bruce. Meanwhile, Parker Donham is writing a newspaper article with input from Teresa MacNeil.
 - d. CBRA Translation contract: Eliot Frosst has had no response from CBRA since December and will follow up to find out the status of this contract.
 - e. Committee Budgets: To be further discussed in the individual committee updates (items 9a to 9e). Treasurer clarified that a budget is a living document, and the

form is intended to show the work plan and identified costs, which will be subject to change. Discussion over the responsibilities of the Board vs. the Committees took place, particularly in regards to external funding; the Treasurer clarified that while the board (as a legal entity) is ultimately responsible for oversight of the funds, it is the committee's duty to maintain transparency and detailed recording of expenditures. The Treasurer keeps track of actual spending vs. budgets, and once the budget is approved, budgeted expenses need not be run by the treasurer. The board and observers discussed examples (within the BLBRA and other similar organizations) where projects have become financially independent of the board, and even brought funds back to the organization.

- f. Options for Fundraising ("case for giving"): Deferred for future discussion.

6. Treasurer's report

- a. **Financial Statement:** Brian MacDougall (Treasurer) moved to adopt the circulated Financial Statement for January 2020; motion seconded by Don Crosby. Motion passed unanimously.
 - b. **Motion by Brian MacDougall** to adopt a new Expenditure Authorization form, seconded by Don Crosby. Discussion followed around the level of detail required in the budget, as well as the maximum discretionary amount. A maximum of \$200 was agreed upon for the time being, and the motion passed unanimously.
7. **CEPI Report:** Tracy George provided an update on CEPI Youth activities. Results are expected soon from the microplastics workshop held November, and a 2nd workshop is planned for Waycobah this winter when the lake freezes. As well, two Youth Climate Change Adaptation forums planned for this year. The Board expressed their support for these activities.
8. **CBRA/ UNESCO MaB Report:** CBRA is seeking funding from the federal government for a 3 year term, and have asked BRs to write to their local MPs in support of this initiative. Chair has pre-circulated a letter from our BR that will be personalized and sent to our two local MPs. The Chair reminded the Board about a free webinar series being presented by CBRA, and encouraged members to participate.
- a. **Indigenous Circle update:** Deferred because Tom Johnson is absent; the Chair agreed to seek a written update from Tom for the next meeting if he is unable to attend.

9. Committee & Project /Activity Reports, updates and decisions

- a. **Bras d'Or Watch:** Annamarie Hatcher reported that work is proceeding on Bras d'Or Watch kits and field guides; the first field guide has been submitted to the graphic designer in preparation for printing. Decision on the TD FEF application submitted on Jan 14th to support Bras d'Or Watch field day 2020 is expected in April. A budget was provided to the Treasurer; if the Bras d'Or Watch TD FEF application is unsuccessful, the budget will be amended accordingly.

- b. **Communications Committee:** New chair Pierre LaRoche reported that according to stats from the Mailchimp service, the BLBRA Newsletter has been opened by ~33% of subscribers, well above average for non-profits, which is an indicator of good public engagement. He stressed the need for content for future newsletters (250-300 words per submission); the next is planned for the spring equinox. As well, Annamarie Hatcher is seeking authors for newspaper features, as she plans to step down in June; topics could be on sustainable business or on people of the BLBR. A budget was prepared based on past expenditures; some of it estimated and will need to be refined.

Annamarie stressed the importance of the Communications Committee and encouraged all committees to submit reports to the Committee to keep them up to date on activities/initiatives within the BLBR. The idea of creating Facebook "events" for Board meetings was favourably received by those in attendance.

- c. **Membership:** Eliot Frosst provided an example of revised membership cards for individuals and businesses. The intention is that annual individual and family members will be emailed the cards to print (unless they request a mailed copy), while lifetime members and businesses will receive professionally printed/mailed cards. The idea of membership entitling cardholders to discounts at participating businesses was discussed; however, the past and current treasurers pointed out that in order to offer charitable receipts for membership fees, there must be no benefit accrued. For this reason, the Board agreed that the discounts should be removed. Eliot agreed to revise the cards accordingly, and will consult with the communications committee for guidance on formatting of the BLBR logo. The Treasurer requested information on anticipated revenue from membership dues.
- d. **Museum Committee:** The MOU with Parks Canada for the ABG NHS expires soon. Madeleine Harvey stated that PC is willing to renew it for a 2-year term; in the long term, the space requirements of the ABG NHS could potentially change, but they expressed willingness to continue work with us. Madeleine also reported that the ABG NHS currently boasts the only Biosphere display of any PC facility—: "a feather in both our caps!"

Committee chair Eliot Frosst pre-circulated an overview of the needs of the BLBR exhibit at the ABG NHS, listed in terms of priority. There was some discussion about the language requirements for our banners & boards; Annamarie expressed that it is important to include the indigenous language in addition to English and French. Tracy and Stan expressed agreement with this sentiment, and Madeleine pointed out that visitors have actually asked for more indigenous stories on site, so this would be welcomed. Eliot reminded the board there would be cost implications associated with this, as well as a need to edit the text in order to make room for all of the languages in the limited space available. It was decided that Mi'kmaq and Gaelic translations would be a worthy addition to the space.

There was some discussion around other issues with the exhibit, such as the need to 'merge' the individual videos so that they would play in sequence (instead of one video playing on loop), need to decide on an image to mount as a decal on the

available window space, and potential uses for the kids' table, such as a scope with some interesting items for kids to look at.

- e. **Periodic Review Committee:** A draft budget was prepared by the committee chair, Bruce Hatcher. The budget assumes a Canada Student Jobs grant will be obtained for this project.
- f. **Report Card Committee:** Budget submitted by Liz MacCormack *in absentia* for printing of draft report card to be presented at the AGM.
- g. **Signage Committee:** Nothing to report; activities of the committee are complete (no budget needed).
- h. **Trail Committee:** Maureen reported that the committee anticipates no further funds will be required this fiscal year, as the existing budget earmarked for the committee is expected to cover printing costs for trail maps and the toolkit booklet.

10. Correspondence:

- a. Letter to Provincial Transportation Minister: Maureen Cameron-MacMillan reported that the letter regarding the rail line status, prepared by Candace Christiano of the Trail Committee, has not yet been sent.
- b. Letter to CB MPs from BLBR on behalf of CBRA: Letter was well received by the group, with minor spelling correction. Annamarie noted that based on prior meetings, the MPs seem unfamiliar with the BLBR, so she would like the names and affiliations of Board members included with the letters.

11. New Business:

- a. Strategic Planning for 2021. A proposal was obtained from Common Good Solutions (CGS), a Halifax-based company with ties to Cape Breton that recently completed a strategic planning exercise for ACAP. The cost of the proposal is approximately \$16,000. Discussion followed on whether our strategic plan needs to be reviewed; as the last plan was developed in 2012/2013, it was agreed by those present that we are due for an updated strategic plan. Annamarie Hatcher participated in the ACAP strategic planning session and was impressed with CGS. Chair will discuss funding for this undertaking with ACOA, who funded our previous strategic planning session.

12. Adjournment at 16:55, moved by Don Crosby