

DRAFT Minutes of Meeting
BLBRA Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, March 21, 2024, 1:30 – 4:00 PM
Bonnie Brae Sr Citizens Club, 14 Toulouse St., St. Peter's



Our mission is to improve balance in the Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere by encouraging community capacity building, conservation efforts, and sustainable development.

Attendance:

DIRECTORS (Member at Large)		DIRECTORS (Ex Officio)	
Allison Mclsaac (Chair)	Y	Amanda Mombourquette (Richmond)	R
Liz Campbell	Y	Barbara Longva (Victoria)	Y
Tony Sylliboy	Y	Steve Parsons (CBRM)	N
Parker Donham (Treasurer)	R	Kirsty Lock (NSCC)	Y
Veronika Brzeski	Y	Stan Johnson (CEPI)	Y
Bethsheila Kent	R	Tyler Mattheis (CB Partnership)	N
Terri Shobbrook (Vice-chair)	Y	Bonnie MacIsaac (Inverness)	R
Breah Sampson-MacDonald	N		
Wendy MacKinnon	Y		
Kirsten Campbell	R		
Megan MacInnis (Secretary)	R		
Kathleen Aikens	Y		

A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board shall consist of 50% of the Executive Comm. plus 6 non-executive Board members. (Y= Present; R= Regrets sent; N= none)

Observers/Guests: Doug Foster (**Manager**), Ron Newcombe (**Trails Chair**), Dr. Lauren Somers (**Dalhousie**) and Pierre LaRochelle (**Chair Comm**)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Allison Mclsaac began the meeting by acknowledging that the Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere is located in Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq People. Board members and guests in attendance shared a quick round of introductions.

2. Speaker: Dr. Lauren Somers

Dr. Lauren Somers spoke on her research on the Hydrology project in the Christmas Brook watershed that she shared with her student Reid Dauphinee. Reid's thesis is focused on the Christmas Brook watershed and how the water moves through it and Julia Gillet's work will take Reids information and research to understand future environmental change. All the Hydrology research has been in partnership with EFWC and BLBRA. Lauren explains that groundwater is very important resource Nova Scotians as 50% of residents rely on it for their drinking water. Ground water is different to observe from surface water especially in regions with complex geology. Rugged topography, complex geology sites and cold regions makes the Bras d'Or Lake Biosphere

an interesting place to study water resources. Laurens research aim to develop hydrological understanding: where's the water coming from, going to, how much water is there, what is the water carrying with it, developing the understanding to support source water protection and ecosystem services that are provided by those landscapes. Laurens research includes the future vulnerability of the ground water: quantity and quality of the ground water source. The ground water depends on the recharge of the water making it underground; droughts, changing snow, pollution, and rain fall regimes all have the potential to impact how much ground water is available. The next 2 years the research will focus on the impacts on ground water source from climate change, characterize the spatial extent and age of the fault aquifer. The methods that are being used in the research are hydro chemical analysis and hydrological modelling using data information from water samples and precipitation (weather station).

3. **Call to Order:**

Chair, Allison Mclsaac, determined that there is quorum and called the meeting to order.

4. **Additions to the agenda:**

Allison Mclsaac mentions to the Board that the agenda has a small change where the New Business and Correspondence will be last to give committees time for their updates. Terry Shobbrook wanted to add discussion on the "our voices in government". Pierre LaRochelle wants to talk about the potential for an EXPO in the Baddeck area.

5. **Approval of the agenda**

Motion to approve the agenda with the additional topics made by Stan Johnson and seconded by Liz Campbell – motion passed.

6. **Approval of minutes – Minutes January 18, 2024**

Pierre LaRochelle motioned to approve the January 18, 2024, BoD meeting minutes, Liz Campbell seconded the motion – motion passed.

7. **Business arising from the Minutes**

Zoe Nicholas has compiled the action items from previous BoD meetings – Note: action items list can be found in the shared drive in the meeting folder. Allison contacted members to have a steering/ORB committee to have discussions on Explore the Bras d'Or, a two-week event, possibly longer, in the summer. Kathleen Aikens informed the BoD that she is in the process of creating a joint meeting and will send an invite to the Board. Doug Foster explains that he had some concerns over discussions about getting involved in the copper mine topic. Doug's concerns are that the mine is outside of the Biosphere and has some potential for political controversy. It was with Board agreement that they want to hear from both "Keep Coxheath Clean" and the representatives of the mine for 2 separate meetings (apart from BoD meetings) to hear from both groups. Stan Johnson informed the Board that Eric Hines will be presenting to the Senior Council on April 10, 2024, from 10am – 2pm at Crane Cove boardroom in Eskasoni and steering committee members are invited. Zoe Nicholas explained to the Board that she has contacted most of the BoD's to ask questions about BoD meeting scheduling to determine if any changes are needed for the new fiscal year scheduling.

8. **Committee Updates**

- i. Treasurer

- ii. Manager
- iii. Trails Committee
- iv. Communications Committee
- v. Community Engagement & Learning Committee
- vi. Membership Committee

i. Treasurer Update – Parker Donham

Parker Donham sends his regrets and the Chair Allison McIsaac spoke on the reports provided by Parker. Allison shared that the biggest charges (\$25,500) on the Operating statement for the month of February are payments to Dalhousie for the ECCC project which is paid in the 2nd and 4th quarter. The BLBRA expenses are \$26,281.94, revenue of \$34.95 and there will be money coming in from ECCC when the report is completed and that has a 10% hold back. Allison explains that EFWC just submitted an invoice for the salaries as they are cash flowed through EFWC. This is to help minimize the strain on the treasurer as there is a lot of invoices. We anticipate that by March 31st we will be reporting to ECCC with our final report and then receive the amendment for the next 2 years. Allison informed the BoD that committees can still submit their budget.

**Parker provided an Operating Statement and Draft budget, and both can be found on the BLBRA Shared Drive in the folder labeled "2024-03-21 March BoD Meeting".*

ii. Manager Report – Doug Foster

Doug Foster reiterated that the ECCC project extension has been approved for years 4 and 5. A workplan and budget has been submitted with small changes. The Federal government gave a date of February 24 for communication about the Climate Change project but there is still no word on it.

Doug states that there is a \$538 credit at Breton Print and the quote for 250 unlaminated maps is \$2019.40 with HST included and the laminated ones would be about \$1,000 more. The amount for the maps with the credit added will be \$1,481.40 allowing the BLBRA to continue selling them for \$15. The maps are printed with a new latex ink making them a better quality. Doug recommends paying for the 250 unlaminated maps using the 2023-2024 budget if it is allowable. Terri Shobbrook inquired if there is money in the budget to cover the cost of the maps. Allison replied that there is money in the communications budget and ECCC Admin costs. Pierre LaRochelle provides a digital view of 5 maps for comparison. Pierre discusses the map that was located at the Alexander Bell Museum and its exposure to around 5,000 visitors a year. Pierre states that he has contacted VMP Group and for \$250 plus tax they can touch up the museum-based map to add the BLBRA branding. To change the dark blue background to light blue would be about 3 hrs of work costing about \$350. Pierre points out that the museum map has less place names but includes the First Nation communities, National Parks, and main groups as its not meant to be a tourist or geography map. Pierre says that if we want to engage people, the museum map stands out and focuses on the Biosphere. The BLBRA owns the digital version of the museum map, and it can be modified to include the branding. Doug Foster explains that the original map was primarily a relief map. Kirsty explains that the map that was created to sell looks very similar to the original map and that the museum map looks different so people may be more inclined to buy another map (the museum

map) just because it is a different map. Ron Newcombe states the map has started with the Trails committee as a project to have them displayed at different public locations where people can draw in trails. When they displayed the maps, they learned that people enjoyed the map so much they didn't want to write on it and that's why they decided to sell the 24" x 30" maps. At the last Trails committee meeting it was decided that the map is not a trails map and should be taken over by the Board. Doug informs that the museum map is an orthorectified image and can be displayed at municipalities and other public buildings. Liz Campbell motions to approve the printing of 250 maps, a doodle survey will be done to determine which map we want, in the 2023-2024 budget, and if not then using the 2024-2025 budget – seconded by Kirsty Locke – Motion passed.

iii. Trails Committee – Ron Newcombe

Ron lets the Board know that the trail series is completed, and each event has all details planned out. Ron has contacted Pierre LaRochelle to market it and include branding. The Trails committee is asking for a \$500 budget for expenses related to the events and Biosphere branded "swag" to give out at events. The Trails committee thinks it may be appropriate to give an honorarium to the experts to assist on the trail series and if so then they may ask for more on their budget.

Doug contacted MacLeod Lorway Insurance and they explained that there isn't enough time to go over the insurance and they suggested to renew at what we have. Doug looked at the online application and it proved to be complicated with an 8-page form to fill in. Allison states that the insurance the BLBRA has is directors' liability insurance and the BLBRA will be looking into volunteer insurance. Doug informs the Board that the cost of the insurance is increasing considerably to \$587.50. Allison suggests we get the information in April and if we need to add any decisions it will be sent to the BoD through email for the May meeting.

iv. Communications Committee – Pierre LaRochelle

Pierre reminded the Board that newsletter items are needed and he will accept them until Monday. He has sent out an email with all the dates of important dates throughout the year. ACAP agreed to do quarterly submissions. Liz Campbell suggests reaching out to students, including high school students, for newsletter articles outlining their experience in the Biosphere.

v. Community Engagement and Learning Committee – Kirsty Locke

Kirsty informs the Board that the Teaching Kits is still an ongoing thing and they had to rescheduled facilitating at the school because of the snowfall. They are rescheduled to visit the school around April or May. Kathleen applied and was successful for funding from the East Coast Credit Union for \$5,000 for the Bras d'Or Watch in St. Peter's, monitoring kits, and teaching kits for schools that are not part of MK. The CE&L committee wants to get 8 monitoring kits for 8 locations around the Biosphere to take monthly readings. They want to get measurement such as temperatures, salinity, PH, turbidity, and nitrates from the 8 stations. Kirsty would like to introduce the kits right before the AGM to engage the membership with a fun and interactive workshop. The CE&L committee is considering expanding the Bras d'Or Watch to the months of May and June to have events at schools. Kathleen has taken the initiative in creating a meeting in April to discuss the Bras d'Or Watch. Kirsty said the committee is working on promotional

materials such as posting ACAPs Species of the Bras d'Or one per week to FB, Instagram and the website. They are also suggesting a Road Trip presentation as Eileen Crosby and Gordan Kerr has done in the past. Liz Campbell suggests that the meetings can be recorded then posted for people to see and share.

vi. Membership Committee – Kathleen Aikens

The annual renewal reminder emails will go out to the members on April 1st, emails will be sent from the Membership Chair. Kathleen will meet with Parker to determine what the preference will be in membership fees in the fiscal year. The Membership committee is working on promoting membership through online posts. The committee is talking about stewardship and membership recruitment as an initiative. As a participatory action initiative led by Veronika Brzeski to offer facilitation support for members of the Biosphere like where they can go next with their work and what they need to do. The membership committee will have another membership recruitment at the AGM and at the tentatively planned Biosphere EXPO. Kathleen will send out an invite to an ACAP event on April 21st in Port Hood. Kathleen proposes an action item to the Board for peer-to-peer recruitment. Board members can think of prospective members and have casual conversations if they think the person would be interested in the Biosphere.

9. Ex-Officio/Partner Updates

- i. CEPI
- ii. Richmond County
- iii. Victoria County
- iv. Inverness County
- v. CBRM
- vi. Cape Breton Partnership
- vii. NSCC
- viii. PHP

i. CEPI – Stan Johnson

There will be a senior council meeting on April 10 and Stan invites the BoD members. CEPI is looking at hiring a youth coordinator and they got the funding from Clean Nova Scotia. The Red Fish Tasked Team had a Mi'kmaw hunter guides course last fall. There is a project going on for Amuagedes pond and the environmental aspects surrounding it that will be funded by Oceans North. Stan has been working with Robert Bernard and Dustin Huston about Explore the Bras d'Or about funding. Oceans North will also be putting \$35K for the Explore the Bras d'Or coordinator position. Stan is the fill in Chair for Pitu'paq and will be doing a roadshow with the municipalities.

ii. Richmond County – Amanda Mombourquette

Sends Regrets

iii. Victoria County –

iv. Inverness County –

v. CBRM – Steve Parsons

vi. Cape Breton Partnership – Tyler Mattheis

vii. NSCC – Kirsty Locke

Kirsty lets the Board know that she is on the Sustainable Development committee at the NSCC Strait Area Campus. They had a Sustainable Goal Development week at the

beginning of March with a lunch and learn. One of the students that attended the lunch and learn may be interested in applying for the BLBRA summer intern position.

viii. PHP – Megan MacInnis

10. New Business & Correspondence Requiring Action

The Bras d'Or EXPO for Baddeck has a tentative schedule for May 27 and Pierre LaRochelle had sent support information to Barbara, Veronika, and Zoe of the St. Peters Expo. Pierre has submitted a budget for \$700 budget for the 1-day Biosphere Expo event in Baddeck from 9am – 4pm. Allison informed the Board that there is no longer quorum so a motion will be drafted with a first and seconder and sent to the BoD via email.

Allison asked Terri and the Board to table the discussion about “Our voices in the government” topic as it is important and limited time left.

11. Adjournment

Next meeting: May 16, 2024, 1:30pm – 4:00pm; We’koma’q Volunteer Fire Hall.

Minutes by Zoe Nicholas verified by Megan MacInnis. Please email any corrections, clarifications, or omissions to Megan MacInnis by email secretary@blbra.ca .