

Minutes of Meeting DRAFT
BLBRA Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, March 23, 2023, 1:30 – 4:00 PM
Bonnie Brae Sr Citizens Club, 12 Toulouse St, Saint Peters, NS



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 McIsaac (Chair)	Y	Amanda Mombourquette (Richmond)	Y
Doug Foster (Manager)	Y	Barbara Longva (Victoria)	R
Chris King	N		
Eileen Crosby (Past Chair)	Y	Kirsty Lock (NSCC)	Y
Liz Campbell	Y	Stan Johnson (CEPI)	Y
Veronika Breski	Y	Tyler Mattheis (CB Partnership)	Y
Rodney Chaisson (Treasurer)	Y		
Kathleen Aikens (Acap)	Y		
Pierre LaRochelle	Y		
Terri Shobbrook (Vice Chair)	Y		
Kirsten Campbell	R		

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: Tracy Boutilier (Vibe)

Call to Order:

At 1:30 pm Chair Allison McIsaac 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. Regrets noted

Additions to the agenda:

1. Approval of the agenda:

Motion to approve the agenda made by Terri, seconded Veronika. **Motion passed unanimously.**

2. Approval of previous minutes:

Motion to approve minutes for both Nov 17 and Jan 12 made by Kathleen, seconded Liz. All in favor. **Motion passed unanimously.**

3. Business arising from minutes:

All action items from previous minutes either completed or ongoing.

4. New Business:

- i. **Project Budgets:** Rodney requested getting back to having a budget assigned to each committee. Communication committee to review budget in the coming weeks. to cover the website and branding mostly covered by ECCC.

Action Item - Have proposed budgets from all committees for the next meeting on May 11th 2023.

Action Item - Rodney to prepare complete budget including committee reports for next meeting.

Action Item - Eileen to send out digital copy of Brian's (Former Treasurer) budget prior to Rodney to show previous formatting for compiling committee budgets.

- ii. **Vibe Marketing Update: Tracy Boutilier (Vibe)**

The power point presentation shown by Tracy can be viewed in the March 23rd meeting folder on the BLBRA google drive.

The launch event for the new branding of the Biosphere is proposed for May 13th noon to 3pm. Suggested location at the St Peter's Lions Club.

Some ideas for the launch party included having booths at event put on by local businesses/ organization that support the BLBRA or commercial vendors from the surrounding areas. Entertainment/light refreshments to be provided. There will be lots of branded materials with kiosks and interactive stations for people to engage. Branded materials will also be given away. Industry follow up; decals to be distributed to Biosphere operators/ attractions post event to display in windows.

A post launch event membership drive will be held. Doug suggested requiring membership from organizations using branding to guarantee participation and that our values align with the organizations using it, although may be hard to track.

The new branding is already on ski chair lift at Ben Eoin.

Action Item: Board commitment to get in touch with partners to share information, invite people to launch event, etc. A small committee to be formed to orchestrate event. Terri, Kathleen, Tyler, and Liz happy to help getting the word out. Potential to get summer students to help with event.

Action Item: Send out a promotion kit with decals/digital logos to add to online materials and email contents.

Action Item- Do mini launch events with students all summer at different events around festivals, exhibitions etc. in local communities. Come up with lists of events through destination Cape Breton. Amanda (Richmond) can track that down. See if Cindy Watts can help through DCBA Pierre will ask her.

Action Item: Allison to get a list of local newspapers for Pierre to promote the launch event.

iii. Amazing Places: Terri

The goal of this project is to identify and protect areas of significance for visitors to enjoy. As well as to get residents and tourists out exploring The Biosphere. Terri, Chris, Liz, and the summer student are spear heading this initiative with help from Pierre in the background.

They plan to create a brochure highlighting amazing places as well as creating a webpage. It was noted that there is an open tab at Breton Print with roughly 5000 credits. Only some has been used the committee can utilise these credits when printing brochures.

It was suggested that using photo submissions would need to include a copywriting form so we have permission to use photos that will be features.

Action Item: A Facebook page has been launched. Pierre to get link to add to newsletter and link to website.

Action Item: The committee will create packages for local tourist businesses. Including amazing places, places to stay, things to do etc. to be made available.

iv. Citizen Science: Kirsty (NSCC)

Citizen Science is working on creating a group of geocache locations to have citizens preform various levels of science at specific locations. Through this there is potential to tie in with Amazing Places and share some locations. The locations could so be add to amazing places brochure. The Geocaching website supports collection info submitted via the app so the data can be easily view and interpreted.

At some of these locations there will be small signage for people to interact with that will have info on the site and a slot to add a phone if available to ensure photos are being taking from the same locations to i.e., compare shoreline erosion etc.

A way to engage more people might be to have a virtual passport or challenge to encourage people to complete all locations.

v. Board Activities/Event Surveys: Kirsty (NSCC)

A webinar was held by the BLBRA with the Natural Resources and Environmental Technologies (NRET) students from NSCC Port Hawkesbury and Truro Campuses. The BLBRA should have some kind of follow up survey after events like these to see how effective the delivery of these talks are. Different formats discussed for delivery of such surveys are raising hands, paper copies, QR code etc. The feedback info required for 10-year review for renewal of Biosphere designation.

Action Item: Make a template for year end committee reports to add time spent working with committees/events and objectives achieved etc. New administration employee to create the sheet once hired.

Action Item: Remind committees and members to add in kind participation to a spreadsheet at beginning of meetings to track progress for periodic review and strategic plan progress. As a way to celebrate branding and see if we are on track.

vi. Job Description: Alison

The full job posting has been added the meeting folder on the BLBRA google drive for the group to view.

The budget for the administrative position is 37,000-42,000 per annum. The position will be mainly for admin support but if its determined to be a larger role in the Organization we can look to the budget for higher compensation.

The position is currently set to a one year contract due to ECCC funding going to March 2024 but the ECCC project has the potential to be extended for an additional two years. There will be a 6-month probationary period for the new hire as following the Eskasoni Fish and Wildlife onboarding procedure.

There will be lots of change to happen in the next year therefore this would be an evolving position subject to change.

Action Item: Add slight IT component to the job posting for website and membership aspect of work. Doug to make adjustments if necessary and send out for review then have the job posted to various hiring platforms as well as the BLBRA website and Facebook page.

vii. Board and Executive nominations/changes to bylaws:

The Board needs to ensure there's some form of a process in place to have executive established when members finish their terms. Only members that have previous Board experience should be on the executive.

Going forward the Board should recruit members with position already in mind for that person. Directors are approved at Annual General Meeting (AGM) then the following day have a zoom call to elect officers. The Chair must have a minimum of a year of service on Board to be considered for the position.

There should be a method in place to verify membership at AGM to know who can vote and to have a quorum. Formerly the Organization used to have white voting cards at meetings to determine who was able to vote on issues this practice may be reinstated. At the AGM there should be a station to collect membership fees with a receipt provided. This should also be an option at all upcoming BLBRA events.

Action Item: Have a nominating committee with slate of board members ahead of AGM. Propose changes to bylaws to change having officers elected after the AGM. It should be done during the last board meeting before AGM then bring forward to the general members

Motion for nominating committee to bring forward slate of officers with directors to next board meeting for AGM. Motion made by Rodney seconded by Tyler. All in favor. **Motion passed unanimously.**

5. Reports

i. Membership Committee: Kathleen (ACAP)

The Membership Committees proposal and meeting notes can be viewed in the March 2023 meeting folder on the BLBRA google drive.

Kathleen elected as chair of the committee. The committee discussed the potential to add tiered membership (not this year though there would need to be more time to get organized). It will be continued as paid membership maintain status quo.

What should annual memberships be payable? Either 20-40\$, current rate is at 10\$ the Board was asked what do they think is reasonable. Board suggests 20\$ to be more affordable potentially increasing by 5 dollar increments over a few years. In the future there should be an option to have people donate free memberships for those who may not be able to pay the membership fee themselves yet still wish to be a member.

Lifetime membership will be phased out going forward. This will help Doug be able to present an accurate number of members at the AGM. There will now be a set date for expiry of membership one day a year and not random dates depended on when members signed up.

Action item: Increase membership fee to 20\$ annually. Pierre to add piece in newsletter about membership before AGM. Sign up to be changed on website.

Motion - Continuing at paid membership for individuals at 20\$ annually. Family memberships and lifetime memberships will be phased out and memberships will follow fiscal year. Kathleen second Veronika, all in favor, **motion passed unanimously**.

ii. **Treasurers Report: Rodney**

A partial report has been completed by Rodney and will be finalized pending budgets to be sent in from committees. The report can be viewed in the March 2023 meeting folder on the BLBRA google drive.

Motion to approve travel expenses for Board members not being compensated by employers for mileage. Rodney, seconded by Amanda, all in favor **motion passed unanimously**.

Motion to accept financial report. Rodney, seconded by Amanda, all in favor **motion passed unanimously**.

All other agenda items tabled until next meeting.

Adjournment - Motion to adjourn by Alison at approximately 4:14 pm

Next Board Meeting- May 11, 2023; Whycocomagh Fire Hall; 1:30 – 4:00

Minutes by Megan. Please email any corrections, clarifications, or omissions to me via secretary@blbra.ca