

Minutes of Meeting DRAFT
BLBRA Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, May 11, 2023, 1:30 – 4:00 PM
We'koma'q Fire Hall, 15 Reservation Road, We'koma'q First Nation, 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 Mclsaac (Chair)	Y	Amanda Mombourquette (Richmond)	R
Doug Foster (Manager)	Y	Barbara Longva (Victoria)	Y
Eileen Crosby (Past Chair)	Y	Kirsty Lock (NSCC)	Y
Liz Campbell	R	Stan Johnson (CEPI)	Y
Veronika Breski	Y	Tyler Mattheis (CB Partnership)	R
Rodney Chaisson (Treasurer)	Y		
Kathleen Aikens (Acap)	Y		
Pierre LaRochelle	Y		
Terri Shobbrook (Vice Chair)	Y		
Kirsten Campbell	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: Rod Newcomb (Trail Committee), Brea Sampson-MacDonald (CBPP) Parker Donham, Bethsheila Kent

Call to Order:

At 1:30 pm 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. Regrets noted

Additions to the agenda: Add discussion on Explore the Bras d'Or

1. Approval of the agenda:

Motion to approve made by Eileen, seconded Veronika. **Motion passed unanimously.**

2. Approval of previous minutes:

Motion to approve minutes for March 23rd, 2023 made by Terri, seconded Veronika. All in favor.

Motion passed unanimously.

3. Business arising from minutes:

All action items from previous minutes either completed or ongoing. Budgets for individual committees submitted to Rodney. BLBRA Partners are being reached out to for the upcoming brand launch. Packages for the partners to be done in preparation for the brand launch.

4. New Business:

- i. **Annual General Meeting (AGM):** Terri to head the organization of the event. The venue: the Bell Museum in Baddeck. Terri suggested Dan Christmas as a potential guest speaker. Other suggestions for speakers were Mike MacSween suggested by Pierre, and Terry Smith from Destination Cape Breton, suggested by Rodney. Kirsty attended a meeting about sustainable development goals at NSCC put on by Engage NS. Someone from that organization would make a good guest speaker for the AGM as their principles apply those of the BLBRA. Catherine Hart is the contact person for Engage NS.

Action Item – Kirsty to send Terri contact info for Engage NS

Action Item – Eileen to send Joan Peterson info to Terri for food and refreshments.

Action item: Pierre to send out bulletin to about AGM within 30 days of event to notify members

Action item: Terri and Doug to nail down location by Monday.

- ii. **Atlantic Biosphere Regional Gathering Update:**

The intent of this event was to get all biospheres across the Maritimes together. Held in Kejimikujik National Park over two days of sessions held for the Fundy Biosphere, Southwest Nova Biosphere and the BLBRA. Approximately 20 people per biosphere attended. Doug, Terri, Stan, Barbra, Kathleen, and 3 additional Mi'kmaw representatives attended on behalf of the BLBRA. Some points of interest highlighted by this event were the upcoming conference on Two-Eyed Seeing, ways to support other biospheres being exposed to other Biospheres and what they look like/ do. Continuing those conversations is important so we can work together to achieve common goals. Another gathering to be added in this fiscal year. Potential to hold it during the Two eyed seeing conference in Nov 12-14 tentatively in Membertou.

5. Reports

- i. **Manager (Doug)**

A hybrid position for an Administrative Assistant has been created for a 1 year contract. The interview committee consisted of Terri, Allison, Doug, and Pierre. The job posting received 14 applicants, two applicants dropped out because they got other offers. A unanimous decision was

reached to offer the position to Zoe Rivera Nicholas from Potlotek. Zoe holds a business administration degree. Doug will prepare a letter of offer and intends to have her hired by Monday

An update on the mapping and GIS work, Pierre spoke to Scotia Logic, his former employer, to work with Doug on the mapping of the Biosphere. Multiple possibilities for ways to use this data compiled using GIS. It's a great way to integrate data from geocaching etc. into a mapping format.

Hydrological research update by Allison. The work is currently being completed by 6 Dalhousie summer interns from Eskasoni.

The equipment for a weather station in Boisdale Hills was purchased under ECCC. The community asked to change the name of the weather station to the Mi'kmaw name for the location.

ii. Treasurer's Report: Rodney

The complete report can be found on the shared Google Drive in the May 11th 2023 meeting folder. The new administration hire will take over a portion of this workload

The Board's expenses and travel are primarily being covered by ECCC funding. A negative balance is being shown in the report because of QuickBooks error the account is not actually in overdraft.

Pierre expressed the potential for the road signage to be seen as a capital asset. They cost approx. 100,000\$ and might need to be replaced, or maintained. They would have a 4% depreciation over 20 yrs

Action item: Eileen to look up costs for signage

Motion to accept budget made by Eileen, seconded by Pierre, all in favor **motion passed unanimously.**

iii. Trail Committee: Ron

The Trail Committee finished exercises to make sure goals and plans of the committee align with the strategic plan of the BLBRA.

Explore the Bras d'Or to happen for 3rd year. Activities being planned include; a golf tournament, biking, and a trip to Kidston island. The event will take place over the last week in July and the first week of Aug. Some things to keep in mind for the Explore the Bras d'Or events would be; a trail walk with experts, and a workshop for communities looking to offer trails in their area.

A package is being put together to support community groups for signage for local trails including resources on how to generate signs, templates, colors, logos, sizes, locations, etc. Would put all recommendations in a tool kit for local groups.

The Trail Committee will have a table for the launch event. There are still some of the original maps of the Biosphere to sell.

As for a budget the Trail Committee recommends approximately 500\$.

Action Item: Ron to work with Kirsty to help get signage for Geocaching/ Adventure Labs established at the chosen locations.

iv. Communication Committee: Pierre

The planned brand launch event scheduled for St Peters is in the final stages of planning. Lots of vendors and tables to be present. Pierre has requested more Board participation. Currently sandwich boards are being generated to advertise the event and direct the public to the Lions Hall where the event will take place. Additionally, decals are to be made up and Pierre to go around and give them to local businesses prior to the event. A Video/PowerPoint will be finalized by Pierre/Eileen to show during the event.

The new administrative person will take over newsletters and website. The new website design is nearing completion. The new format will be mobile friendly. The drop-down menus will be more streamline. The intent is to have the new site launched before the brand event. Only a few more updates to be made.

The proposed budget for the Communication Committee is 3000\$ for operational costs from the BLRBA. Any remaining funds will be acquired through grants. Although the majority of costs for the committee are covered by ECCC. The approximate cost of the brand launch event 600\$ for hall/food

Action item: Pierre is looking for contributions to the newsletter.

Action item: Pierre to have decals made up and to distribute them to local businesses prior to event

Action item: Parker to work with Pierre to make up a letter to send out to newspapers.

Motion to approve for budget 600\$+tax, 750\$ for launch event made by Pierre, seconded by Barbara. **Motion passed unanimously.**

v. Community Engagement and Learning Committee (CEAL): Kirsty

Kirsty to reach out to local schools to see how they're using the teaching kits that were made available by the committee to see how they're being utilized as they're expensive to create. Lots of projects nearing completion including QR codes to add to existing signage at the Nicholson Trail, flip books, and Citizen Science Adventure Labs.

Citizen Science Adventure Labs is a new branch of Geocaching, a more information based side of the app. Proposed locations for Adventure labs around the Biosphere include; Goat Island, Kidston Island, St Peters, and Irish cove. The plan is to have one in battery park and have 5 sites featuring forest related info. This station will hopefully be completed for Explore the Bras d'Or. Citizen Science to have a booth at the launch event.

Explore the Bras d'Or events to take place in Eskasoni date to be determined, on Kidston Island (possibly July 22) and in St Peter's on August 5.

vi. Membership Committee: Kathleen

Emails were sent out to the membership regarding membership renewals for the year at the new rate of 20\$. Kathleen will help to support the new administration assistant to take over membership registration and renewals. Rodney, upon receiving membership fees to send the information along to Kathleen. Stan asked if lifetime memberships can be carried over but doing away with them.

Action Item: Pierre/ Doug to look into back end of website renewals/registrations so the information can automatically be sent to Kathleen

Action item: Rodney to send membership to Kathleen to keep updated. Notify Doug as well.

Action item: check bylaws for transferable membership

vii. Tourism Committee: CEPI setting up tourism task force no need for committee anymore.

viii. Fundraising Committee: A new fundraising committee is to be formed to support the Association

ix. Nomination Committee: Eileen

Eileen discussed adding new members and went over a brief bio for each new candidate for the Board. Candidates were then voted on.

Motion to accept slate of individuals including Breah Sampson MacDonald, for candidates to be presented at AGM made by Eileen, seconded Terri. **Motion passed unanimously.**

6. Ex-officio/ Partner Updates

i. CEPI: Stan

The Senior council meeting to be held June 1st in Eskasoni. Work on the Barachois project continues. The Oyster bioherms continue to be studied and will be used as a pilot project for other anomalies around the Lake. Oceans North fund to Mi'kmaw fishing guides course followed by a fishing tournament. There is potential to have this event coincide with Explore the Bras d'Or. As discussed before the Two-Eyed Seeing Conference is set to take place in November.

ii. Victoria County: Barbara

The county is in the process of holding its budget meetings this month. The county is also working on local bylaw improvements. Currently the Eastern district planning is working with the county on zoning as currently the only zoned part of Victoria County is Baddeck. Public consultation is ongoing regarding these changes. Representatives from the Ecology Action Center has been in to discuss with council regarding building codes and energy efficiency.

Adjournment - Motion to adjourn by Alison at approximately 4:23 pm

Next Board Meeting- AGM, June 15, 2023; Bell Museum, Baddeck; 7:30pm-9:30pm

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