

Minutes of Meeting
BLBRA Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, May 16, 2024, 1:30 – 4:00 PM
We’koma’q Volunteer Fire Department, We’koma’q First Nation



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	N	Barbara Longva (Victoria)	Y
Tony Sylliboy	R	Steve Parsons (CBRM)	N
Parker Donham (Treasurer)	Y	Kirsty Lock (NSCC)	R
Veronika Brzeski	Y	Stan Johnson (CEPI)	R
Bethsheila Kent	N	Tyler Mattheis (CB Partnership)	R
Terri Shobbrook (Vice-chair)	Y	Bonnie MacIsaac (Inverness)	R
Breah Sampson-MacDonald	N		
Wendy MacKinnon	N		
Megan MacInnis (Secretary)	Y		
Kathleen Aikens	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: Doug Foster (Manager), Ron Newcombe (Trails Chair), Zoe Nicholas (Administrative Assistant), Geoff Clarke (Port Hawkesbury Paper), Brianna (PHP summer intern) Pierre LaRochelle (Communication Chair) and Keagan Parris (BLBRA Summer Intern).

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: Geoff Clarke, PHP

Geoff Clarke works at PHP as their Sustainability and Business Development Director. He does a lot of engagement and outreach for PHP and is involved in the PHP windfarm in Guysborough County. Geoff has done sustainable forestry management across Canada and is an RBF for 25 years. Geoff began his presentation with a background history of Port Hawkesbury Paper and the work they are and have completed throughout the years. PHP is the only paper mill in operation in Nova Scotia. PHP produces super calendar paper (thin glossy paper) that goes in magazines and supplies 225 printing plants over 500 magazine titles. PHP focuses on 4 key areas for long term

success and prosperity, and they are: environmental, social, cultural and economical. Geoff states that PHP has a very extensive water treatment center, and the water goes through several cycles before being returned to the environment and passes all the standards. PHP is working on their 7-generation plan (144 years) in sustainable forestry management. They planted 185 million seedlings to date as part of their goals to protect, serve and manage the forest as stewards of the land. Geoff discussed the amount of forest land there is in Cape Breton and land ownership and how much percentage of soft and hard wood within the area. 47% of PHP land base for harvesting is deemed protected areas some of which were recommended for protection by PHP. Their net managed forest areas are 35% protected, 55% light touched and 10% targeted for high production. PHP uses many high levels of process to determine sustainable harvest levels.

3. **Call to Order:**

Chair, Allison Mclsaac, noted that quorum was not established. Allison suggests the attending Board have discussions, summarize the discussion and send around an online vote if it needs to be taken care of before September.

4. **Additions to the agenda:**

5. **Approval of the agenda**

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

7. **Business Arising from the Minutes**

8. **Committee Updates**

- i. Treasurer – Parker Donham
- ii. Manager – Doug Foster
- iii. Membership Committee – Kathleen Aikens
- iv. Trails Committee – Ron Newcombe
- v. Communications Committee – Pierre LaRochelle
- vi. Community Engagement and Learning Committee – Kirsty Lock

i. **Treasurer Update – Parker Donham**

Parker presents a motion about the Association's financial accounts.

Resolved: that the Association authorizes the Treasurer, supported by the Manager, to move the Associations financial accounts from TD Canada Trust to the Sydney Credit Union.

The motion is moved by Parker Donham and seconded by Terri Shobbrook.

Parker has contacted Sydney Credit Union and they stated that they would need a resolution by the Board recorded in the minutes. The reasoning for the suggested change in bank is the troubles Doug and Parker have had with TD and their policies and lack of contact with the Branch Manager who is busy with many branches (only available a day or two a week). The Branch manager is not very responsive to questions and concerns and there are too many rules surrounding all aspects of banking. It was decided to take a survey with online reporting for votes. Parker reports that he is having issues with the online membership using Stripe. The cost of membership is \$20.00 and we received

\$19.26. Parker cannot access the Stripe account and it has 2 factor identification and the second factor is Rodney's old cell phone. Parker has contacted Rodney, and he is going to work on changing the information over to Parker.

ii. Manager Report – Doug Foster

iii. Membership Committee – Kathleen Aikens (Doug reported)

Kathleen Aikens sent her regrets and Doug will be reporting. There are proposed changes (documents in the May 16, 2024, folder of the Shared Drive) for the membership fees in the bylaw. It is proposed to change the wording to reflect that there is only one membership fee and that's \$20. The family, organization and business membership costs are no longer available. It is also being proposed to remove the fiscal year from the membership in the by-law. Discussions occurred about attendance of Board members and Ex-Officios and who needs to be available for quorum. Allison stated that maybe a message should be sent around reminding Board members that they need to attend minimum half the board meetings a year. It was asked what the BLBRA is looking for in directors and they are looking for expertise in different areas regarding environmental, education and tourism as examples.

iv. Trails Committee – Ron Newcombe

Ron explains that there are 5 scheduled hikes for the Walk the Watershed initiative. The first hike is on May 25, and it was asked for the budget to purchase swag and an honorarium for the guides. Allison reminded the board that since there is no quorum we can not vote on the budget.

v. Communications Committee – Pierre LaRochelle

vi. Community Engagement and Learning Committee – Kirsty Lock

Sends regrets

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

Sends regrets

ii. Richmond County – Amanda Mombourquette

Sends regrets

iii. Victoria County – Barbara Longva

iv. Inverness County – Bonnie MacIsaac

Sends regrets

v. CBRM – Steve Parsons

vi. Cape Breton Partnership – Tyler Mattheis

- Sends regrets
- vii. **NSCC – Kirsty Locke**
Sends regrets
- viii. **PHP – Megan MacInnis**

10. New Business & Correspondence Requiring Action

Veronika Brzeski is going to speak about the EXPO that will be happening in Baddeck at the Inverary Inn on June 9th from 11:30am to 2:30pm. There will be information booths, artisans and activities. There will be something for everyone of all ages. All the committees in the BLBRA will have a table along with partners of the Biosphere and local organizations will be in attendance. The EXPO will have roughly 10 tables available for artisans and 12-14 tables available for the committees and partnership. Pierre and Zoe will advertise the EXPO event on the BLBRA FB page and website. Follow ups of the EXPO will be through email going forward. Pierre asked if there were maps to sell at the EXPO and Zoe responded that there are 20 maps in the office, and they can be available for sale.

Terri Shobbrook informs that the AGM is scheduled for June 13th at the Highland Village in Iona. There is no guest speaker yet and Kathleen and Doug may have someone to speak on the Coastal Protection Act. Terri stated that only herself and Parker will be speaking at the AGM. A message needs to be sent out to the membership about the AGM.

Allison speaks on Explore the Bras d'Or informing everyone that Denis is not available this year, but he is willing to train someone for the position. In the past, Oceans North has funded the position for the EtBD coordinator position, and Destination Cape Breton has provided funding for advertisement. Ron informed the Board that the steering committee is planning on extending EtBD to year-round. If the coordinator position is extended all year, then CEPI and BLBRA can both use the person to help with overlapping projects. A job description will be put out for the EtBD coordinator position.

Action Item: Pierre and Zoe to advertise the EXPO event to the website and FB.

Action Item:

11. Adjournment

Next meeting: TBD

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