

BLBRA Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, November 21, 2024, 1:30 – 4:00 PM
Location: Ross Ferry Volunteer Firehall, Ross Ferry



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)	N
Liz Campbell	N	Steve Parsons (CBRM)	N
Tony Sylliboy	N	Kirsty Lock (NSCC)	Y
Parker Donham	Y	Stan Johnson (CEPI)	Y
Veronika Brzeski	Y	Tyler Mattheis (CB Partnership)	N
Adele Hunt	N	Bonnie MacIsaac (Inverness)	R
Terri Shobbrook (Vice-chair)	Y		
Breah Sampson-MacDonald	Y		
Megan MacInnis (Secretary)	Y		
Kathleen Aikens	Y		
Rod Thompson	Y		
Pierre LaRoche	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: Ron Newcombe (Trails Chair), Zoe Nicholas (Administrative Assistant), Jay Denny & Anik Martin – UINR, Billy Taylor (UNIR).

1. Welcome and Introductions

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. Board members and guests in attendance shared a quick round of introductions.

2. Additions to and approval of the agenda:

No additions to the agenda and motion to approve made by Veronika Brzeski and second by Kathleen Aikens – Motion passed.

3. Review and approval of the minutes:

Motion to approve the agenda made by Megan MacInnis, second by Kathleen Aikens – Motion passed.

4. Business arising from the minutes:

Keep Coxheath Clean and the Copper Mine both were interested in having a presentation. Neither were contacted in time for BoD presentation. Both groups will be contacted again for a follow up.

5. Financial update: Billy Taylor

Income Statement April - September, 2024			Income Statement April 2023 - March 2024	
INCOME	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL	INCOME	TOTAL
Revenue Deferred from Last Fiscal		34,712.41	Revenue Deferred from Last Fiscal	14,535.14
Donations		5.00	Canadian Biosphere Reserve Association	3,333.00
Enviro & Climate Change Canada	ECCC	231,570.00	Destination Cape Breton	3,000.00
Explore the Bras d'Or	Destination Cape Breton	1,500.00	Donations	8,000.00
Map & Product Sales	In person sales	864.30	Environment & Climate Change Canada	231,570.00
Memberships	Website sales	386.64	Grants - TD Foundation	3,983.00
Teaching Kits Revenue	East Coast Credit Union	7,800.00	HST Rebate	2,004.37
Total Income		276,838.35	Interest earned	122.61
GROSS REVUNE		276,838.35	Map & Product Sales	1,330.39
			Memberships	680.00
			Total Income	268,558.51
EXPENSES			GROSS REVENUE	268,558.51
Bras d'Or Watch	Strait Area Reporter Ltd	150.00		
ECCC Project	Details to follow	86,688.71	EXPENSES	
Explore the Bras d'Or Project	Denis Thibeault	2,677.77	ECCC Project	231,570.00
Insurance	Directors & Officers Liability Ins	842.00	Explore the Bras d'Or Project	1,250.00
Maps & Products	B&T Lewis Custom Gifts	847.00	Teaching Kits Project	1,026.10
General and admin expenses	Music for Baddeck Expo	250.00	Total Expenses	233,846.10
Teaching Kits Project	Teaching Kit Supplies	2,457.98		
Total Expenses		93,913.46		
SURPLUS		182,924.89	SURPLUS	34,712.41

Balance Sheet As of September 30, 2024	
Assets	Total
Current Assets	
Cash and Cash Equivalent	
1025 TD Canada Trust Community Plan Plus	346,352.95
1026 TD Business Investor Account	5,138.54
Undeposited Funds - Cash Can	-315.00
Total Cash and Cash Equivalent	\$ 351,176.49
Accounts Receivable (A/R)	110,521.00
Total Accounts Receivable (A/R)	\$ 110,521.00
Total Assets	\$ 461,697.49
Liabilities and Equity	
Accounts Payable (A/P)	\$ 225,308.56
Credit Card	1,892.17
GST/HST Payable	-1,747.70
Total Liabilities	\$ 225,453.03
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	53,319.57
Profit for the year	182,924.89
Total Equity	\$ 236,244.46
Total Liabilities and Equity	\$461,697.49

Billy provided the Income Statement for 2023-2024 fiscal year, a year to date for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, and a year-to-date balance sheet. Billy has also provided a break down of the financial information (*document can be viewed in the 2024-2025 November BoD Meeting Folder on the Shared Drive*). Billy gave a break down of the finances and to date the BLBRA has spent 37% of the budget and is on track to spend the full amount by the end of the fiscal year. As money comes into the BLBRA Zoe will record it into the cash can account. Billy said the next balance sheet he completes he will have more notes. Motion to approve the financial update made by Terri Shobbrook and seconded by Parker Donham – motion passed.

Allison asked the BoDs in attendance if any of them would like to take on the role of the treasurer and described the role. Allison also explained that there is a Finance Committee which will also

support the treasurer. Allison will reach out to the BoD's not in attendance if they are interested in the treasurer role.

6. Mi'kmaw Climate Change project update: Jay Denny & Anik Martin

Jay and Anik, both with UINR, are working with Mi'kmaw communities gathering information about climate change and concerns within the community. They plan on having outreach presentations which in each community about climate change adaptation and impacts. They are also working on climate change and monitoring.

7. Committee/Project updates:

i. Community Engagement and Learning Committee

ii. Trails

iii. Communications

iv. ECCC Update - Signs

v. Project Manager Hiring Committee

i) Community Engagement and Learning Committee – Kirsty Lock

Teaching kits – All the TD funds were not spent so more items were purchased to use up the rest of the funds - the final report was submitted

Water testing kits – the committee is looking for different people around the Bras d'Or interested in gathering the data in their location and reporting it. Each kit cost about \$450 so they would like to find a dedicated amount of people to use the kits.

Proposal – Kirsty put a proposal into the East Coast Credit Union, the proposal is seeking a part time worker for the CEAL Committee to have it going all year round.

ii) Trails – Ron Newcombe

There were 5 walk the trail series this past summer. The first and last walk were successful (Spring and Fall walk), 2 of the walks were cancelled and 1 was not attended very well. The Trails Committee will continue to connect with trail groups including talks with Trail Nova Scotia. Teresa McNeil (with Johnstown Trail group) asked if the BLBRA will issue receipts on their behalf, so they can apply for funding. Kathleen suggested a proper MOU be signed with the Johnstown group as a kind of partnership if the BLBRA agrees.

iii) Communication Committee – Pierre LaRochelle

Pierre attended 2 sessions one being a summit in Membertou hosted by Destination Cape Breton. A booth was set up at Membertou and Pierre made connections with the World Tourism Institute.

Kathleen informs the group that Destination Cape Breton is doing a stakeholder engagement study on sustainable tourism, and they are looking for people to interview – Pierre and Terri both submitted their names.

iv) ECCC Update - Signs

Report for the signs is not fully completed – holding over for the next BoD meeting in January 2025.

v) Project Manager Hiring Committee – Kathleen Aikens

The Hiring committee consisted of Kathleen, Terri, Rod and Zoe. The posting went out in October and closed on November 1st with a total of 26 applications. There was a total of 4 interviewees, and each were assessed through a grading matrix. There was a top candidate, and the hiring committee is on the next steps of reference check.

8. 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**

Stan is in the middle of their “roadshow” at municipalities and First Nations. They will be having their Senior Council meeting on January 15. There will be a Steering committee a week after.
 - ii. Richmond County – Amanda Mombourquette**

Sends regrets
 - iii. Victoria County –**
 - iv. Inverness County – Bonnie MacIsaac**

Sends regrets
 - v. CBRM – Steve Parsons**
 - vi. Cape Breton Partnership – Tyler Mattheis**
 - vii. NSCC – Kirsty Locke**

No updates
 - viii. PHP –**

Megan will reach out to PHP about a representative.

9. Canadian Biosphere Region Association (CBRA) Update

Stan and Allison attended the National Gathering in Waterton, Alberta where they got to visit a First Nation Reserve and commented on their experience. Atlantic Biosphere Regional Gathering will be held by Fundy in April or May 2025. Fundy will also be hosting the National Gathering meeting in the Fall. Allison will contact Kate to put in our interest in attending and possible help in planning.

10. New Business & Correspondence Requiring Action – Donations

- a) Land donation** – Someone contacted the BLBRA in donating a piece of land to the Biosphere. There is about 69 acres and is land lock with no road access – only through the neighbors and the Bras d’Or Lake. There were some discussions about taxes and other costs that would be associated with the acquisition of the land.

- b) **Grover Blaire Estate donation** – Teresa submitted a proposal about a data hub but was not accepted by the estate managers. There is a possible \$5,000 available and Teresa will look into it again.

11. Adjournment - Next meeting:

Next meeting will be on January 16, 2025, at the East Bay Volunteer Fire Department, East Bay Highway from 1:30pm - 4:00pm.

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