

1. Welcome and Introductions

Vice -chair Terri Shobbrook began the meeting by welcoming everyone to her neighbourhood. Board members shared a quick round of introductions.

2. Attendance and Quorum

DIRECTORS (Member at Large)		DIRECTORS (Ex Officio)	
Allison McIsaac (Chair)	R	Amanda Mombourquette (Richmond)	N
Terri Shobbrook (Vice-chair)	Y	Bonnie MacIsaac (Inverness)	N
Adele Hunt (Treasurer)	Y	Donna Matheson-Lefort (Victoria)	Y
Megan MacInnis (Secretary)	Y	Kirsty Lock (NSCC)	Y
Anik Martin	N	Stan Johnson (CEPI)	R
Breah Sampson-MacDonald	N	Steve Parsons (CBRM)	N
Jay Denny	R	Tyler Cole (Cape Breton Partnership)	Y
Kathleen Aikens	Y		
Liz Campbell	N		
Parker Donham	N		
Rod Thompson	N		
Tony Sylliboy	Y		
Vacant			
A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board shall consist of: 50% of the Executive Comm. (2) and 6 non-executive Board members. Y= Present; R= Regrets sent; N= none			

NO QUORUM declared. 3 executive but only 5 non-executive members. It was decided to carry on with the meeting recognizing that motions would be tabled until the next meeting or possibly handled by online voting. Terri Shobbrook, Vice-chair, chaired the meeting.

ACTION ITEM: The Board will consider amending the by-laws to deal with online voting on motions after a meeting if a quorum is not achieved, or in general between meetings.

Observers: Colette Mesher (BLBRA Project Manager), Pierre LaRochelle (Administrative Assistant)
Guests: None

3. Additions to and Approval of the Agenda:

Discussion supported continuing with a general discussion of the items on the agenda.

MOTION to approve the agenda.

TABLED

4. Review and Approval of the minutes:

Terri briefly reviewed the May 15, 2025, minutes and the related action items.

MOTION to approve the May 15 minutes.

TABLED

5. Business Arising from the Minutes:

The action items were not explicitly reviewed.

i. **AGM/ Welcome new Board members:** Terri acknowledged the success of the June AGM and tabled the welcome of all new board members as they were unable to attend this meeting and sent their regrets.

ii. **Explore the Bras d'Or:**

Pierre offered that the previously 2-week long event had been successfully stretched out over the summer and into the fall with both the website and the Facebook page updated under the coordination of CEPI's Stan and Ron and contracted resource Denis.

iii. **2024-2025 Impact Statement:**

Collette related that the new 2024-25 Impact statement started by Zoe and completed by Pierre and Colette could be found in the meeting folder and was ready to release. It identifies the hard work and efforts over the last year by the association and its committees to achieve our goals as identified in the 2022 Strategic Plan.

6. Treasurer Report: Adele Hunt

Adele reviewed the detailed report as placed in the meeting folder with some clarifications.

MOTION to approve the acceptance of the treasurer's report.

TABLED

7. Committee/Project updates:

i. **Community Engagement And Learning committee (CEAL) Report**

Kirsty provided a comprehensive review of the committee's report acknowledging the funding stream of the East Coast Credit Union, the collaboration with the CLEAN intern, Adryan Jones and all the volunteers during the summer events including the Bras d'Or Watch days.

Kirsty emphasized the importance of having a facilitator such as Veronika to fulfill the aspirations of the association to provide outreach and education to the residents, and particularly, the youth, that reside in and around the region. If funding could be found and responsibility was part of a fulltime position job description, organizational memory, as demonstrated, would provide improved efficiency, enhanced innovation and knowledge sharing.

ii. **Trails committee Report**

There was no update provided at this time.

iii. **Communications committee Report**

Pierre highlighted the efforts to promote the aims of the biosphere by having information tents at the major events including a new canopy tent provided by CEPI for Explore the Bras d'Or and a new canopy tent identifying the Biosphere, our UNESCO relationship and our new action-oriented branding inviting all to Explore, Enjoy and Nurture this special place. All committee chairs and board members were invited to deploy these canopy tents and promotional flags during their own activities.

Pierre spoke to the kick off meeting with Mike Carpenter working on the [Destination Canada - Atlantic Canda UNUNESCO Tourism Corridor](#) experience development, our invited guest Amy Beaton, Manager of Destination Development at Destination Cape Breton, Colette and himself to provide a quick grounding for Mike in what the region and island have to offer to like minded citizens of the world.

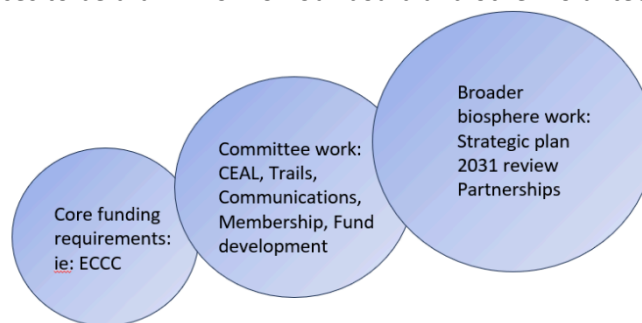
Raised during discussion, Pierre reviewed the use of @blbra.ca email address to provide organizational access to the Google Workspace and amass organizational legacy information as board members, staff and committee chairs change over time. It was also encouraged that while emailing on behalf of the BLBRA, members include a signature block. A recommended standard is being finalized by Colette.

ACTION ITEM: PIERRE – will work with those board members requiring help with logging into the Google Workspace.

iv. **Project Manager/ECCC Update**

a. **BLBRA**

Colette presented the graphic below to remind us that in addition to the well funded ECCC project undertaking, there are significant BLBRA initiatives underway and to be planned for, requiring resources to be drawn from on our board and other volunteers or new funding.



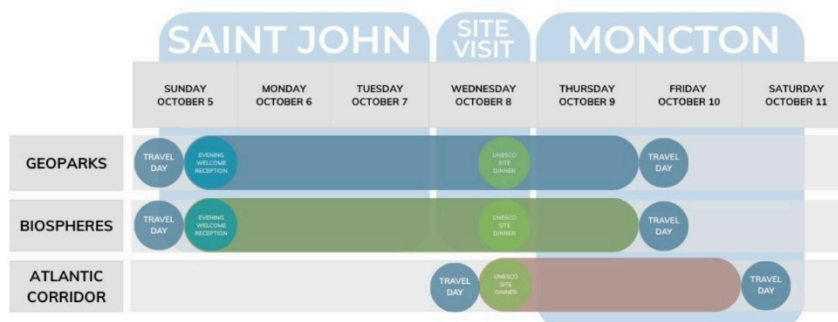
b. **ECCC:**

The current project funding comes to an end March 31, 2026. Colette reviewed the four major deliverables for the ECCC project – Organization and Communicating, Research, Documentation and Knowledge Transfer. Many of the deliverables have been completed per the schedule including major reports from Dalhousie. There is still more to be done including additional data gathering and input to the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database (CPCAD), climate impact projections, governance, Mi'kmaq translation and land management, monitoring and stewardship planning recommendations. Colette will collaborate with staff, board members and our partners at Dalhousie, EXP, EFWC, CEPI, CBU, New Dawn, various communities and CBRA to complete the report.

Colette also reviewed a draft proposal from Fred Baechler for the preparation of a summary report on how the ECCC learnings can be applied to areas within Cape Breton with similar hydrogeological/hydrological conditions that would benefit from this accrued knowledge, identify relevant research in similar highland watersheds that could be added to the Christmas Brook data set and lastly have discussions with other relevant interested parties.

c. **The 2025 National Gathering for the Canadian Biosphere Regions Association (CBRA)**

Colette and Stan will be at the National gathering for the Biospheres segment of the event and Terri and Pierre will attend the Atlantic Corridor portion.



v. **Fund Raising and Membership**

d. **Fund Raising**

Colette led the discussion that with the ECCC funding currently planned to end March 2026, and an extension no guarantee, that alternative funding sources are being pursued to cover gaps to support staff and studies in the long term. Colette did meet with Tim Halman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change, for a trail walking discussion to discuss the Biosphere and funding issues and recognized a need to provide more information. Kathleen offered that much of the province's environment related funding comes through [CLEAN Foundation](#) initiatives. Pierre noted that in some previous years short presentations were made to each of the municipalities at one of their regular council meetings to encourage support and funding. Fund raising efforts are ongoing.

Discussions then continued regarding the BLBRA's dependency on volunteer and ex-officio board members and other volunteers. Board members are expected to attend a minimum of 50% of the board meetings and often counted on participation in events and on committees as able. This helps alleviate additional expenses when setting up events such as Expos and the Bras d'Or Watch among others. It was generally agreed that core funding for operational staff was needed to best maintain current and past knowledge for informed decision-making and innovation related to existing and contemplated new initiatives.

Discussion was also started regarding the end of terms for Allison, and Kirsty, dictated by the bylaws, they having served on the board for 6 consecutive years, as well as Kathleen stepping down from the board at the end of the fiscal year. Their contributions were well recognized and heads up was given that replacements and filling of the current vacant seat (total 4 volumemberat-large r and 1 ex-officio) should be given a high priority.

ACTION ITEM: COLETTE – will ask **ALLISON** to prepare notes or comments on the key responsibilities of the position job description. NOTE: The current Chairperson job description can be found in the Meeting Folder file - [BLBRA Board Manual updated 2023](#), page 11.

ACTION ITEM: COMMUNICATIONS CMTE. – To follow up on suggestions to have presence or handouts at various events such as KitchenFest and Celtic Colours will be pursued by the Communications Cmte.

e. **Membership:**

Kathleen stated she will continue to maintain the membership rolls for Lifetime (104) and Annual members (34). She will not however lead the activities around promoting and increasing memberships and suggested an ambassador or champion is needed to carry on with that effort. She noted the most recent input from Eileen Crosby *suggesting “any future membership campaign will depend upon the “establishment of a well-structured community and partnership engagement strategy.” (Minute taker's addition).*

8. Ex-Officio/Partner Updates

- i. CEPI* Explore the Bras d'Or and State of the Bras d'Or Report: Updates unavailable
- ii. Richmond County* - Update unavailable
- iii. Victoria County* – Donna reflected on collaboration and the numerous committees she is on and how many of the objectives are supportive of or complement each other. She intends to bring her teaching, science and environmental interest to bear in her ex-officio position.
- iv. Inverness County* - Update unavailable
- v. CBRM* – Update unavailable
- vi. Cape Breton Partnership* - Tyler had nothing additional to report.
- vii. NSCC* – Kirsty had nothing additional to report.
- viii. PHP* - Update unavailable

9. Canadian Biosphere Region Association (CBRA) Update

As noted above by Colette, the 2025 National Gathering for the Canadian Biosphere Regions Association (CBRA) being held October 5 -11, 2025 will be attended by Terri, Stan and staff.

10. New Business & Correspondence Requiring Action

None identified.

11. Adjournment - Next meeting:

The next BoD meeting will be November 20, 2025, 1:30 - 4:00 PM, Highland Village Iona.

Minutes prepared by Pierre LaRochelle and verified by Megan MacInnis. Please email any corrections, clarifications, or omissions to Megan MacInnis by email secretary@blbra.ca .