**Meeting Minutes**

**March 2, 2020 – 6:30 pm**

**Nova Scotia Natural Resource Education Centre, Middle Musquodoboit**

# Attendance:

Mike Allen (DM), Watershed Planner….………………………...........Nova Scotia Environment

Andrew Faulkner (AF), Principle Planner & Dev. Officer………..Halifax Regional Municipality

Barry Geddes (BG), Watershed Manager (*Chair*)……………………..…………...Halifax Water

Anna McCarron (AM), Source Water Planner *Secretary*)…….…………...………Halifax Water

Matthew McFetridge (MM), District Forest Technician…NS Department of Lands and Forestry

Hugh Parker (HP), Representative………...…Musquodoboit River Watershed Society (MRWS)

Mark Sutherland (MS), Representative………………………………..........…Agriculture Sector

# Regrets:

Kerry-Anne Taylor (KT), Representative.……….....................................Community Landowner

Dave Taylor (DT), Representative………………………………......….Forestry/Woodlot Owner

# Absent:

Rob Kay (RK), Representative.......…………….....Middle Musquodoboit Community/Customer

|  |
| --- |
|  |

## Attendance / Introductions:

* AM distributed:
1. March 2, 2020 Draft Agenda;
2. November 6, 2019 Draft Meeting Minutes;
3. Middle Musquodoboit Watershed Newsletter; and
4. Middle Musquodoboit 2019 Source Water Protection Plan excerpt

*Middle Musquodoboit Watershed Advisory Committee Meeting Called to Order by Chair (BG)*

* Regrets conveyed (see above); and
* Quorum noted.

## Approvals of:

### March 2, 2020 Meeting Agenda

* Agenda was approved as circulated.

### November 6, 2019 Meeting Minutes

* AF moved to accept the Minutes as presented; seconded by MM; all in favour.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Old Business: Education and Awareness/Community Outreach Strategies:Signage (AM update):* Two signs remain:

Lindsay Lake:* Located at dry hydrant at 8432 Moose River Road; and

Upper Musquodoboit;8825 Hwy. 224, just west of Caribou Road;NS Department of Lands and Forestry approved a new site location on Crown Lands. thanks to MM for helping to secure this location.* Traffic control is required for both signs because the contractor will be working on the road shoulder during installation;
* facilitating traffic control logistics is causing delays.

**Action: Continue to work on installing the last of the Middle Musquodoboit Watershed Area signs in the watershed area.**Newsletter/Outreach Opportunities:* A Newsletter to alert people to the watershed area and a profile of HP was created and circulated as follows:
	+ the Halifax County Exhibition; and
	+ to Halifax Water customers via customers’ bills through Halifax Water Customer Service and targeted for the next billing cycle;
* previously we discussed doing another watershed workshop like the one conducted in 2011 to increase awareness of the watershed:

**Q**: *Do we want to explore further outreach activities now or wait?(AM)***A**: The Committee agreed it was a good idea to do the workshop, but as AF recommended, we should wait to determine what the community is interested in, based on the recent exhibition booth and newsletter circulation.**A**: The [Annual Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture Minister’s Conference](https://www.perennia.ca/agriconference/) might be a good outreach opportunity. March 2020 is the first year of the Conference – too late for this year. Next year’s event might be a good place to bring awareness to the agriculture industry about the water utility and some of the initiatives Halifax Water and its agriculture partners have embarked on; (BG)**A**: Agree it is a great opportunity to speak to broad agricultural audiences, especially about sustainable agriculture. (MS)**Action: Halifax Water to write a letter asking the Department of Agriculture whether there is an interest in Halifax Water presenting at future Minister’s Conferences regarding water quality protection efforts with respect to agriculture.**Logo Use* Halifax Water recently went through a rebranding exercise which included placement of logos and slogans on our advisory/management board/committee documents;
* after this rebranding exercise, it became apparent that Halifax Water-branded correspondence confused recipients as to where the message was coming from; it appeared that it was coming from Halifax Water and not the specified advisory/management board/ committee;
* because the advisory/management boards/committees are independent, and to avoid confusion in the future, any communications will only have the appropriate board/committee logo and not Halifax Water branding.

Halifax Exhibition Booth outcomes:The public requires more knowledge on Best Management Practices (BMP) and activities and regulations regarding the following:1. Sod farming:

**Q**: *What were the concerns related to sod farming?* (MS)**A**: N’Rich use on the farms. (AM)**Q:** Is N’Rich used on the sod farms? (BG)**A**: Not sure, but I think N’Rich is no longer used on sod farms. (MS)* Erosion and sedimentation (E&S) was also asked about at the booth with respect to sod farming. Not sure about the Middle Musquodoboit sod farming practices; it does not seem to present a problem for Halifax Water’s Water Supply Plant, but we have shut down water supply plants in other watersheds due to E&S from nearby sod farms as well as other factors.

**Action: Invite the sod farming community to talk about their industry at one of our meetings.****Action: BG will find out where sod farming sits regarding Agricultural BMPs.**1. Will Halifax Water be placing further restrictions in the watershed?
	1. Need to explain to public what *water supply area regulations* are currently in place.
2. Municipal water supply bylaws:
	1. Need to explain to public what *HRM bylaws* are in place with respect to the water supply.
* HP felt that volunteers need more training on how to use the “Fish Tank” (watershed model) so they can better explain to the public the message it is trying to convey.
* Recommend writing another newsletter to answer the main questions (above) from the exhibition.

**Action: Halifax Water to publish another newsletter, based on the questions from the Halifax Exhibition Booth discussed above.**Livestock Access to Watercourse – Water Quality BaselineNSSA NSLC Adopt-a-Stream (AaS) Project Update (HP)* The 2020 [AaS project for the Musquodoboit River](http://www.adoptastream.ca/news/nature-legacy-fund-projects) will include a multi-year [Southern Upland](https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especes/profiles-profils/atlanticsalmon-SU-saumonatlantique-eng.html)s for Aquatic Species at Risk project, conducted through the Musquodoboit River Watershed Society (MRWS) to include restoration of Lindsay Brook, a tributary of the Musquodoboit River;
* AaS is working on the Lindsay Brook project remediation plan with assistance from HP and MS, proposed to begin this summer;
	+ an AaS technician is projected to come and take measurements;
	+ MS is receptive to participating in this restoration project to help reduce the loss of his recently acquired land through soil erosion into Lindsay Brook;
	+ the erosion was caused by past farming practices from a previous owner who allowed livestock to access the Brook at the Higginsville Road Bridge. The new landowner will not be allowing livestock to access the Brook;
* Halifax Water is interested in and able to provide in-kind (e.g., water quality data) and financial support for this project;
	+ to access Halifax Water support, a written request is required, outlining the project support desired including demonstrating how it will improve water quality upstream of the intake;
	+ this project is a means to build stronger local community and agriculture industry partnerships;
* BG updated MA on an existing partnership on another piece of property, downstream of this project;
	+ Halifax Water has a land-lease agreement to help improve the water quality coming off land around the MMWSP intake, which involves compensating the landowner in exchange for leasing an area set back from the intake;
	+ the renewable agreement was renewed last year for another 5 years;
* such projects are important to demonstrate how collaborations can meet each others’ goals through understanding and communication;
* The Committee would like to have a presentation once the AaS project is completed.

**Q**: *Does the Committee need to acknowledge its support of the project?* (BG)**A**: HP will see if that is necessary. **Action: Halifax Water will contribute time and resources to the AaS project.****Action: Write to Halifax Water requesting funding for the AaS project.****Action: Committee to send a letter of support to AaS for the Lindsay Brook Project for completion this year expressing urgency and support.****Action: Committee to invite this AaS project community group lead (Musquodoboit River Watershed Society) to present on the project once completed.** * Another stream restoration project desire is to restore Ditch Brook, however it is on hold because it is an intermittent stream; HP will investigate further as a potential future project.

Tour of Water Supply Plant* Best time for plant operators is on a Tuesday at 3pm.
* April is best time for members.

**Action: AM to set up MM WSP tour via Doodle Poll sometime in April.**Outcome from NS Department of Agriculture Presentation by Michael KittilsenFunding opportunities for Halifax Water? MK will investigate whether a utility (Halifax Water) would be eligible for funding.* In an email to AM dated January 30, 2020 MK responded that only farms are eligible for EFP funding, so utilities are not eligible.

Education of farmers regarding funding opportunities and priorities.Determine what avenues are there for farmers to know of funding opportunities and how they are prioritized with respect to the environment.* It is up to the farmer to investigate what is in the program for each year, which changes each year. Depends on the severity/location/size of the project;
* application reviewers are usually aware of whether applicants are in a *Protected Water Area* (*PWA*) or not;
* There is no reason why the Department of Agriculture shouldn’t have access to the *PWA* maps, other government agencies do;
* GIS mapping information is available to those who want it from NSE;
* EFP funding is more geared toward environmental protection than it was 15-20 years ago due to awareness and events like Walkerton;

**Q**: *Does it matter if the EFP is within a municipal Protected Water Supply (PWA)? Would awareness of a public water supply that may be in an applicable farm raise the level of priority in the eyes of the EFP reviewers?* (BG)**A**: There is nothing to identify whether they are inside a *PWA* or any other potable water supply area on the application. Most, if not all farmers already know if they are inside a water supply watershed. (MS)**Q**: *Has MS has ever been denied or lost funding to another project outside of the watershed.*? (BG)**A**: I have received EFP funding for every project I applied for. It is up to the farmer to investigate the programs available for that year, which is sent out to every farmer.* MA offered to send the Department of Agriculture mapping informa-tion for them to add to their mapping to improve watershed awareness.

**Action: MA to offer the DoA mapping info to improve watershed awareness.**Clarify EFP auditing process and if there is one.Contact DoA (or ask MS) to clarify whether EFPs or their projects are audited.* a farmer can’t access funding without an EFP; it’s a pre-requisite;
* site visits are completed prior to payment to make sure they are acting on their EFP. (MA)

Atlantic Gold Activities at Moose River*HP updated the Committee on Atlantic Gold’s activities:** Atlantic Gold has 4 gold mine locations in the eastern part of the province that are either in operation or are proposed as follows:
	+ Touquoy Mine which began operating in 2018 in Moose River Gold Mines;
	+ a proposed 240 ha open pit gold mine in Cochrane Hill area near Melrose, N.S., scheduled to begin operations in May 2021; and
	+ two proposed mines in Beaver Dam and at Fifteen Mile Stream, which are still under a federal environmental review;

***Q****: Are these new sites or part of Atlantic Gold’s Eastern NS overall plan? (MS)***A**: It’s the overall plan of production. (HP)* The Moose River Road was paved to improve transportation, to reduce dust; and to improve erosion and sedimentation runoff from the road;
* One of the biggest concerns regarding potential contamination in the event of an accident is at Elmsvale bridge;
* Water quality samples have been collected monthly in the Musquodoboit River at Elmsvale bridge since 2008, before the Moose River Gold Mine began operations;
* Cyanide was of concern, so Halifax Water met with the mining company regarding potential impacts; they met the BMP requirements;
* Putting another sign that includes who to contact in the event of an emergency could be installed at the Elmsvale Bridge to alert mine traffic that the Musquodoboit River is a drinking water supply.

**Action: Halifax Water to investigate installing a watershed sign at the Elmsvale Bridge to make Mine traffic aware that the Musquodoboit River is a drinking water supply and who to contact in the event of an emergency.**New BusinessSource Water Protection Plan 2019 Report – Middle Musq. Excerpt*BG brought members’ attention to the SWPP 2019 Annual Report – Middle Musquodoboit.(MM) excerpt as follows:* * General accomplishments are on page 1-10;
* Middle Musquodoboit-specific accomplishments:
	+ Many Education and Awareness activities including:
		- presentation to MM Fire Department;
		- DoA and N’Rich program presentations to Committee and N’Rich field trip;
		- Exhibition Booth, newsletter creation and signs posted;
	+ 2 stream restoration improvements, Lindsay and Ditch brooks;
	+ Customer representative placement was filled on Committee;
	+ zone of influence landownership agreement is in place;
* Committee asked to review the report and provide any comments before the end of March to ensure reporting requirements are met.

**Action: Advisory Committee members to review the Source Water Protection Annual Report and provide comments to BG by mid-March.**Landowner Questions: * No updates.

Municipal Updates: * One application within the watershed:
	+ a one-story addition within the watershed area;
	+ from a development perspective everything is in order.

Next Meeting:* pre-AaS project meeting proposed for May, pending funding;
* regular Meeting TBD via Doodle poll

Adjournment:* 9:00 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by BG/AM.* | **Action****AM****BG/AM****Action****AM/BG****BG****Action****AM****BG****HP****Action****MMWAC****MMWAC****AM**CompleteComplete**Action****MA**Complete**Action****AM****All** |