

POCKWOCK WATERSHED MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



September 10, 2020 – 10 a.m.
Virtual Skype for Business Meeting
Minutes

Attendance:

Michael Allen, Watershed Planner.....Nova Scotia Environment (NSE)
Jeff Brown (JeB), Forestry TechnicianDepartment of Lands and Forestry (DLF)
Jillanna Brown (JiB), P. Eng., Regional Engineer.....Nova Scotia Environment (NSE)
Barry Geddes (BG), (*Vice Chair*) Watershed ManagerHalifax Water
Rachel Gilbert (RG), Manager of Planning ServicesEast Hants Municipality (EH)
Andrew Houlihan (AH), Supervisor, J.D. Kline Water Supply Plant.....Halifax Water
Tim O’Brien (TO), (*Chair*) Regional Forester.....Department of Lands and Forestry (DLF)
Michael Perry (MP), Community Representative.....Mount Uniacke
Sally Steele (SS), Protected Areas Coordinator, Western Region.....Nova Scotia Environment (NSE)

Regrets:

Anna McCarron (AM), (*Secretary*) Source Water PlannerHalifax Water
Reid Campbell (RC), P. Eng., Director of Water ServicesHalifax Water

Guests:

Tricia Isnor (TI), Regulatory Services, Halifax Water.....Halifax Water
Graham Scott (GS) Economic and Business Development Officer.....East Hants Municipality (EH)

1. Attendance/Introductions:

- Introductions were made.
- Regrets were conveyed (listed above):
 - i.* Quorum noted.
- BG virtually displayed the following:
 - i.* September 10, 2020 Meeting Agenda;
 - ii.* DRAFT March 5, 2020 Meeting Minutes;
 - iii.* Pockwock Watershed Areas and Harvest Plan Blocks map – *Appendix A* – for reference during discussions;
- TI virtually displayed her presentation on the Water Storage and Withdrawal Permit Application

b. Review and Approval:

- i.* September 10, 2021 Meeting Agenda:

Agenda approved as tabled – Moved by TO, seconded by MP.

Pockwock Watershed Management Committee (PWMC) Meeting Called to Order by Chair (TO)

- ii.* March 5, 2020 Meeting Minutes:

Minutes not approved due to oversight.

- Change wording in Action Item under 4.a

<p>2. Old Business:</p> <p>a. Special Constable Status (SCS)/Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOU is signed and at Halifax Water’s head office, BG just needs to be sworn in; • the last step is to conduct swearing-in with Halifax Water’s legal council. 	<u>Action</u>
<p>Action: BG will show signed SCS MOU for Halifax Water at the next meeting.</p> <p>b. <u>Pockwock Wilderness Area</u> Signage Update (BG):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more wilderness area signage is needed (from March 5, 2020 Minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ not discussed at this meeting. 	Pending
<p><u>BG to send TO (DLF) a protocol for contractors and others to access the watershed area through locked gates (see Item 4.0.i) below.</u></p>	<u>Complete</u>
<p>c. Mount Uniacke Signage:</p> <p>i. Bell Park:</p> <p>a) Interpretive signage throughout Bell Park</p>	
<p>Action: After watershed signage has been installed, approach Bell Park Association (Jim Foster) about interpretive signage in the Park.</p>	Pending
<p><u>Prior to the meeting, AM provided the following information to reference in her absence to TO and BG regarding the Pockwock Protected Water Area (PWA) (Item c.ii below) and Regulatory (Item c. iii below) sign installation progress:</u></p>	
<p>ii. Pockwock Watershed Protected Water Area (PWA) Signs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastern Fence was awarded the contract to install three (3) PWA signs (see <i>Appendix B</i>) near/on Highway 101; • AM visited the sign location sites with the contractor August 17; • BG brushed the site where the broken sign lies (one of the three), to allow easier access to erect the sign at that location; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the other two sign locations (one at the East Hants Business Park and one off Exit 3) are more easily accessible and did not require brushing; • before signs can be installed, a Traffic Control Plan (TCP) must be submitted to NSTIR for approval; • TCP and locates by contractor are pending before signs may be erected; and • AM last spoke to contractor on the sign installation status September 3. <p>iii. Regulatory Signage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are two regulatory signs (see <i>Appendix C</i>) to be installed by Halifax Water: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ one replaces an existing sign just inside the gate at Exit 3; and ○ another is a new sign on the trail to St. Margaret’s Bay. 	
<p>Action: Continue working on signage for Pockwock watershed area.</p>	In progress

BG displayed a picture of the harvested area where there was 50% removal, targeting balsam fir and dead and dying spruce.

Action

- trails were created through the woods for the forwarder operator to go through to pick out the desired trees as he went through;
- the trails are systematically placed – spaced out 15-20 m; and
- the logging road looks a little wider than normal; the roots of the trees at the side of the road were compromised, so the trees were cut to avoid having them fall over, as was demonstrated in an area that had not yet been cut, showing the trees leaning.

ii. Water Quality:

a) Geosmin_update (BG):

- Geosmin levels were not as strong as last year but are still there; and
- Geosmin hasn't gotten worse since then but we are keeping an eye on it.

b) Lake Recovery Research:

- Noticed an algae bloom about 3 weeks ago, called an anabaena¹, which caused a problem 3 years ago;
- we suspect the recent cold nights and warm water caused the algae to surface, but then it disappeared again; and
- our water quality instrumentation provides us with the capability to find the algae in the water supply and to deal with it before it reaches the water supply plant.

e. **for Water Research Network:**

- this network studies relationships between water quality and forests;
- the block that JeB talked about is the one they are currently studying;
- there was a bit of an issue with Dalhousie not being permitted to collect samples or to be able to visit the lab facilities due to Covid-19;
- this was resolved by collecting samples safely and sending them out to third party labs to acquire the results, which is quite a bit more expensive;
- things are starting to get back to normal; and
- continuing to gather data.

f. **Tour of watershed area:**

- An on-the-ground tour would show some of the harvested areas;

Q: Is there any interest to do that in the coming weeks? Our contractors will be out of there in the next couple of weeks. (TO)

¹ Wikipedia: (a genus of filamentous cyanobacteria that exist as plankton. They are known for nitrogen-fixing abilities, and they form symbiotic relationships with certain plants, such as the mosquito fern.).
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anabaena>

Discussion: It would be good to show the committee how the harvest work is being done, how the bridge was built and how we keep the water protected. Could set it up for a couple of people. MP and RG are interested. TO can get vehicles. Date preferred is September 24. Meet at the Mount Uniacke Irving at 9:30.

Action: Circulate an invitation to the Committee for a tour of the harvest, research and bridge building activity conducted in the Pockwock watershed area. Meet at the Mount Uniacke Irving Centre on September 24, at 9:30 a.m.

g. Water Storage and Withdrawal Permit Application

TI conducted a brief presentation on the progress of the permit application background research:

- Wetland assessment work has been completed including the following:
 - GIS data review of Pockwock Lake;
 - identifying provincially mapped wetlands and other wetlands through review of aerial imagery, finding upwards of 80 different wetlands;
 - with BG's help, there is more boat travel, to complete habitat assessments and to establish sizes of the wetlands over two days;
- hydrology work has involved installing three hydrometric stations – one on each of the two branches of the outlet channel from Pockwock to Little Pockwock lakes, and one on main branch of the outlet channel from Pockwock to Little Pockwock lakes;
 - three visits were conducted to install the hydrometric stations, to collect flow measurements and to download data; and
 - two more visits this fall will occur to conduct data downloads from the hydrometric flow stations and to collect flow measurements;
 - Halifax Water will also provide its vast amount of existing lake data;
 - from all the hydrology information data they will develop their understanding of what is occurring from a water supply standpoint;
- Aquatics assessments have been completed as follows:
 - to collect data about the fish community and for stream, riparian and lake habitats, including four (4) transects of the lake by boat;
 - so far discovered that the fish community includes American eel, common shiner, yellow perch, and banded killifish;
 - visited nine Pockwock Lake tributaries to collect stream habitat data;
 - collected photos and observations of riparian habitat;
 - did some echo sounding to collect lake habitat data at the transects;

TI projected an echogram picture displaying two-dimensional linear distance vs. depth (approximately 20 m):

- the stamp area displaying the bottom surface is about 1 ft square;
- trying to learn where the shoreline would have been originally;
- depth sonar and bottom echo sounding were from 3-26 m;
- the deepest part of the lake is 46 m;

Action

BG/AM

<p>Action: Halifax Water will meet with the Protected Areas Branch of NSE to discuss the impacts regarding the portion of the SRPA inside the Pockwock PWA.</p> <p>b. Pockwock Wind Turbine Leak</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the Pockwock wind turbines leaked oil in mid-February 2020, as described in the March 5, 2020 Minutes; • as a result of that leak, more protocols have been put into place; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ a clean-up company is on standby in the event of an emergency; ○ need someone able to get 120 metres in the air very quickly, which we now have; ○ previously, turbines were checked every 2 years, now it's every six months; • the turbine that leaked was operating at the alert level which meant it had not yet reached the trigger point that would have set the alarm off; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the trigger point is 25 L, which the leak level did not quite reach; • all the other turbines were checked for the same problems; • the leak was caused by a piece of the turbine that hadn't been tightened up properly, which came off and fell into the pump. 	<p><u>Action Ongoing</u></p>
<p><u>Provide a debrief about the oil leak at next meeting.</u></p>	<p><u>Complete</u></p>
<p>4. Landowner Q & A:</p> <p>a. Mount Uniacke Community (MP):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A couple of representatives from citizen's groups asked why Halifax Water signs were in East Hants; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ they did not understand the relationship between HRM and Halifax Water (separate entities); ○ MP explained to them that Halifax Water is a resident of East Hants and is not trying to dictate anything in the community; ○ education is all that is required to alleviate concerns about the relationship Halifax Water has with East Hants. 	
<p><u>If there is concern about the new watershed signage, MP will let us know.</u></p>	<p><u>Complete</u></p>
<p>b. Crown Land (TO/DM)</p> <p><i>i.</i> Lock box on the gate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Westfor told the former contractor they could put in a lock box to alleviate their concerns about getting out if they were locked in; • since then the contractor left, so there was no need to put in a lock box since the new contractor has keys to the gate already, so it was left as is; • BG confirmed this scenario with JeB and TO; • East Uniacke Fire Department has keys and has been directed to cut the gate if they can't get in; 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BG confirmed (through surveillance camera at the gate) that the lock was cut by the RCMP as part of a search and rescue event. <p>Action: Remove this item from the Agenda.</p> <p>c. East Hants Municipality (RG)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This item was merged with the Municipal Planning Update item below. <p>5. Municipal Planning Update</p> <p>a. Development within natural watershed/Business Park Expansion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RG introduced GS, who is attending this meeting to provide insights, issues and challenges EHM is having with the watershed regulations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ We own and operate the Uniacke Business Park, part of which is in the <i>PWA</i>. ○ About 2 years ago, EHM began receiving concerns from landowners wanting to put up buildings and lease spaces but were challenged by the <i>PWA</i> regulations and the building types they could build or lease; ○ there is a lot of interest in automotive and warehousing businesses; ○ any kind of warehousing use that involves some type of storage of hydrocarbons, for example, were getting rejected from development officers saying there is no allowance for hydrocarbon use businesses; ○ this concerns EHM as they continue to develop the business park, which includes an additional 40 acres of road work and construction; ○ Phase one, which is outside the watershed area, is complete; ○ Phase two is within the Pockwock Overlay Zone; ○ we want solutions such as best practices to balance the needs and requirements of the watershed and the needs of the business park development; ○ we need to discuss the overlay zone, which currently doesn't leave room for development; ○ RG added: other planners were contacted to find out if there are regulations (bylaws) in other municipal watersheds; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ working with EHM's economic and business development team to make sure that the regulations don't pose a risk to the watershed but still meet the bylaws; <p>Q: Are there best practice suggestions, especially within other watersheds? (RG)</p> <p>A: Send an email to MA with the ask and he will respond. (MA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • these are our own regulations (bylaws); • we need discussions with Halifax Water about any concerns around the type of regulations that we are looking at developing; • should we also have a discussion with the PWMC? • BG suggested looking at the Bennery Lake watershed area HRM bylaws; Halifax Water has asked those potential developers to send us their proposals for our review, review one by one; 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Action</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">AM</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the EHM business park is very similar – maybe there could be an engineered catchment area for hydrocarbons, for example; ● it is a matter of making the bylaws compatible with the PWA regulations; <p><i>BG asked JIB to contribute her thoughts.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● JiB added: anything that is in the Activities Designation Regulations would be approved through NSE if it is watercourse-related. And if it is municipal industrial or dangerous goods, that would be approved through our department, depending on where it is located; ● typically, anything that is within the PWA or the watershed of a municipal source would get a hard view and typically we are going to discourage and probably not approve such activity in those areas; ● GS added: we are developing 40 plus acres, about half of which fall in the PWA; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the types of development currently permitted is pretty limiting; and ○ we are here to determine what the restrictions are, if any. 	<p><u>Action</u></p>
<p>Action: EHM to meet with Halifax Water about (sulphide bearing slate and salting limit) regulations in Business Park.</p>	<p>Deferred</p>
<p>6. Education and Awareness Update</p> <p>a. Information Package for Watershed Area Developers</p> <p><i>Q: Is there a councillor newsletter that we are able to submit information to?(BG)</i> A: Before Covid, I planned to hold community events so I could be available for the community members to ask questions that I would be answer. (MP) A: Education packages were sent to lakeshore residents a couple of years ago; the package was not a newsletter, nor was the material about the Pockwock watershed; it was an education piece of best practices development around lakeshores. (RG)</p> <p><i>Q: Could this be something we could partner with you? (BG)</i> A: We could develop something in relation to watersheds. We have our own watershed in addition to the Pockwock watershed. We could talk further with AM about a general awareness piece about watershed protection. (RG) A: NSE requires water utilities to conduct public awareness. We use our website for such purposes, so we could post something on that in the short term. (BG) A: If there are any upcoming notifications that directly affect any part of EHM, please forward them to the EHM communications officer to publish on their social media, since EHM residents may not follow Halifax Water’s social media.(MP) A: That information would also be funneled through the PWM Committee, reaching EHM through RG and MP. (BG)</p> <p>Action: Create and distribute a Newsletter from the PWMC, only as needed.</p>	<p>AM/all</p>
<p>7. Election of Officers – October 2022</p> <p>8. Next Meeting – March 4, 2021</p> <p>9. Meeting adjourned – 11.22 a.m.</p> <p><i>Respectfully submitted by AM</i></p>	

Appendix A: Map of Landownership and Pockwock Wilderness Area

Pockwock Lake Watershed Protected Water Area

Emergency Spills: **Call 911**



(902) 420-9287

PROTECTED WATER AREA

REGULATED* ACTIVITIES

- No unauthorized fires
- No fishing
- No swimming (including pets)
- No unauthorized boating
- No dumping or disposal
- No unauthorized tree cutting

**Pockwock Lake Watershed Protected Water Area Regulations*

NO UNAUTHORIZED VEHICLES

- Cars and Trucks
- Snowmobiles
- All-terrain (Off-highway) Vehicles
- Trail Bikes

Note: Leave at least a 4 inch space for two stickers that will be placed here.

For More Information Call (902) 420-9287

Pockwock Lake

