



Bennery Lake Watershed Management Committee

Meeting Minutes

Bennery Lake Watershed Management Committee			
Date: March 20, 2024		Meeting Time: 10:00 a.m.	Adjourned: 11:37 a.m.
Location: Virtual via Microsoft Teams and in-person at Park Ave.			
Member name and position:		Agency/Representation	
Attendees	Mike Allen (MA), Watershed Planner (virtual)	NS Environment and Climate Change (NSECC)	
	Trevor Creaser (TC) (<i>Chair</i>), Planning & Development (virtual)	Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM)	
	Barry Geddes (BG), (<i>Vice Chair</i>), Watershed Manager	Halifax Water	
	Jaden Lawen (JL), Representative	Bennery Lake Watershed Private Landowner	
	Anna McCarron (Anna), (<i>Secretary</i>), Source Water Planner	Halifax Water	
	Alana Murray (Alana), Manager Water Supply Plants	Halifax Water	
Regrets	Greg Cummings, Watershed Planner (virtual)	NSECC	
	Jean-Charles Finnigan (JC), P. Eng., Environmental Engineer (virtual)	NSECC	
	Heather Olivella (HO), Protected Areas Coordinator	NSECC (Central Region)	
	Paul Parusel (PP), Representative	General Public – District 2	
	Ria Steenweg (Ria), alternate for Paul Parusel (PP)	General Public – District 2	

1. Attendance / Introductions	
Meeting called to order by Chair, Trevor Creaser:	
Notes	Attendance/Introductions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See attendance above. • Jaden Lawen (JL) was introduced as the new Private Landowner representative; and • Quorum noted.

2. Review and Approval

a. March 20, 2024, Meeting Agenda

Discussion	Accepted as presented.
Decision	Accepted as presented.

b. October 25, 2023, Meeting Minutes

Discussion	Approved as presented.
Decision	Remove from agenda.

c. October 26, 2022, Meeting minutes

Discussion	These minutes were circulated for approval as they were not previously approved due to lack of quorum. Approved as presented.
Decision	Remove from agenda.

3. Old Business:

a. Shubenacadie Lakes Floodplain Study Presentation (Discussion):

Discussion	<p><i>(October 25, 2023)</i> BG reported that HRM appointed Helen Langille as the new project lead for the Shubenacadie Floodplain study. Helen informed Halifax Water in late August that the study was reopened. HRM is in the process of developing an action plan. The first order of business is to develop an interactive mapping tool similar to the one for the Sackville Rivers floodplain (Sackville Floodplains Halifax).</p> <p><i>(March 20, 2024)</i> TC advised that the results of the Floodplain Study should be posted online in the not-too-distant future. BG advised he has nothing to add from HRM.</p>	
Decision	Wait for the report to be released. Keep on the agenda.	

Action Items:	Person Responsible	Deadline
1. Send Floodplain Study Report to members for consideration once it becomes available.	Anna	Pending
2. Review the Study Report to determine whether it warrants a presentation to the Committee.	All	Pending

b. Water Quality Updates;

Discussion	Alana reported that water quality has improved since the floods of July 2023.
Decision	Information only. Keep on Agenda

Action Items:	Person Responsible	Deadline
Keep on agenda.	Halifax Water	Next meeting

c. Covenants and Deeds:

Discussion	See March 10, 2022, minutes for presentation, <u>Review of Properties for PWA Regulations</u> , presented by Madison Forward, Dalhousie University Intern student. See October 26, 2022, for background information. <i>(March 20, 2024)</i> MA advised that NSECC is waiting for the outcome of the <i>Lake Major Watershed PWA Regulations</i> before any updates may be shared where deeds and covenants stand.		
Decision	Action items stand. Waiting for outcome of NSECC discussions with Provincial Registry.		
Action Items:		Person Responsible	Deadline
1. Register the <i>BLWPWA</i> designation and regulations on all applicable PIDS as a covenant, consistently.		HW	Pending
2. Investigate whether a <i>PWA</i> designation is supposed to be carried forward as a covenant once parcels are sold or subdivided, as standard practice across the province, and whether the omissions in this regard in the <i>BLWPWA</i> are unique.		MA	Pending
3. Halifax Water and NSECC to discuss with their respective legal advisors about the process and how to handle it best.		MA/BG	Ongoing
d. Membership status:			
<i>i. Terms of Reference changes:</i>			
Discussion	BG advised that another addition was required to the Terms of Reference instead of creating a Code of Conduct Statement, which would have required a signature by all members at each meeting. The following is to be added to the Terms of Reference, as advised by Halifax Water’s legal counsel, as follows: <i>“6. Committee members acknowledge and agree to uphold and protect the confidentiality of information received through the Committee and to limit the disclosure of non-confidential information to such individuals as are necessary to assist the Committee in effectively carrying out its mandate.”</i>		
Decision	BG moved to approve the latest addition to the Terms of Reference as described above; Alana seconded. All were in favour.		
Action Items:		Person Responsible	Deadline
Remove from agenda.			
<i>ii. Private Landowner Representative vacant position:</i>			
Discussion	As per October 25, 2023, action item, Halifax Water was to post and fill the vacant position of Private Landowner representative to the Committee. JL replied to the posting and was chosen as the successful candidate. JL accepted the position. The Committee welcomed JL to the Committee.		
Decision	Remove from the Agenda.		
Action Items:		Person Responsible	Deadline

1. Make changes to ToR to reflect new method to recruit for private landowner.	HW	Complete (remove)
2. Seek new membership based on outcome of ToR changes	HW	Complete (remove)
e. Case 22009 – Aerotech Business Park Rezoning:		
Discussion	<p>The Committee discussed the HRM presentation provided by Anne Totten’s (AT) at the October 25, 2023 meeting. Notable discussion points are below:</p> <p><u>Proposed changes to Land-use Bylaws (LUB):</u></p> <p>From a private land/developer perspective, JL raised concerns that the changes to the Shubie Lakes (Dist. 14/17) bylaw zone proposed within the <i>Bennery Lake Watershed Protected Water Area</i>, from AE-4 to PWS, would prohibit any industrial land use activity, which is currently permitted under the current AE-4 bylaw zone. Further the PWS zone would restrict development to single unit residential dwellings which would not be allowed due to the <i>Airport Noise Contour Overlay zone</i>. This would severely restrict any development within these lands.</p> <p>The Committee advised JL to contact Anne Totten, lead planner on the Aerotech rezoning file, with concerns regarding changes to the bylaw zone as they relate to the impact on private land development.</p> <p>The Committee reiterated its concern about reducing the minimum lot size within the PWA and its request to retain the 80,000 ft² (7432 m²) minimum lot size for the PWS zone, to protect the water supply, taking into consideration the various scenarios on each lot, including backyard suites, which would increase the sewage load per lot.</p> <p>In any event, any designation and/or bylaw changes within the Aerotech Business Park will be decided by Council.</p>	
Decision	JL to contact Anne Totten, lead planner on the Aerotech rezoning file, with all concerns regarding changes to the bylaw zoning.	
Action Items:		
	Person Responsible	Deadline
1. Follow up with Halifax Water operations and approvals to make them aware of the proposed bylaw zone changes and the potential impact they will have on Halifax Water infrastructure.	Alana	Ongoing
2. Draft wording for the LUB to include wetland setbacks in the Aerotech PWS zone and send to Committee for review.	AT	Ongoing
3. Retain the 80,000 sq. ft. minimum lot size for the PWS zone.	AT	Ongoing
4. Send a copy of approved Bennery Lake Watershed Management Committee Oct. 25, 2023 meeting minutes to HRM verify that consultation with the Bennery Lake Watershed Management Committee occurred.	BG	Send now (complete) – remove from agenda

4. New Business			
a. 2023 Source Water Protection Report – Bennery Lake Excerpt:			
Discussion	BG referred to the Report, which was circulated in hard copy, asking members to review the Report and send him comments by Friday, March 22 to leave time to include any comments or corrections before submitting the report to NSECC by the required deadline, which is the end of March.		
Decision	The members agreed to do this task. Remove from agenda.		
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline	
1. Review the Report and send back comments to BG.	All	March 22, 2024	
2. Remove item from Agenda.	Anna	Next meeting	

5. Municipal Planning Update			
a. Notification of new builds			
Discussion	TC reported that no permits were issued since the last meeting.		
Decision	Standing agenda item.		
Action items:	Person Responsible	Deadline	
Keep on Agenda	BG	Next meeting	
b. Oakfield Estates Subdivision			
Discussion	TC advised that the Oakfield Estates Subdivision public hearing was held in November 2023 with the Utility and Review Board. Normally a decision is made within 90 days of the hearing. There should be a ruling in early 2024.		
Decision	TC advised that hearing decisions and dates are posted online on the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board website at https://nsuarb.novascotia.ca/ . Decision is pending.		
Action items:	Person Responsible	Deadline	
Follow-up with HRM legal counsel for an update.	TC	Next meeting	

6. Landowner Q&A			
a. Community representative			
Discussion	Nothing to report.		
Decision	Standing agenda item.		
Action items:	Person Responsible	Deadline	
b. Watershed Private Landowner			

Discussion	JL reported that a 2-acre lot on Sky Blvd. is for sale. JL advised viewing the lot for sale on ViewPoint .		
Decision	BG will investigate.		
Action Items:		Person Responsible	Deadline
1. Fill vacant position.		HW	Complete (remove)
2. Investigate the 2-acre lot for sale on Sky Blvd.		BG	Next meeting
c. Nature Reserve			
Discussion	HO was not able to attend. Defer to next meeting.		
Decision	Standing agenda item.		
Action Items:		Person Responsible	Deadline
Keep on agenda.		AnM	Next meeting
d. Halifax Water:			
Discussion	<p><i>(October 25, 2023)</i> Alana advised that the Bennery Lake WSP settling pond is scheduled for routine maintenance this fall (2023). The pond is where backwash water from the treatment process is released, to allow particles to settle out before being released back into the environment. It is normal practice to clean the ponds every 10-years. Cleaning involves dredging the pond using a small floating barge. The material is then dewatered using a centrifuge machine and trucked off-site to an approved facility.</p> <p><i>(March 20, 2024)</i> Alana advised that the settling pond maintenance was completed last fall (November 2023). Since the cleaning the spikes in water quality parameters have begun to stabilize and return to baseline conditions. Water samples will continue to be monitored and the expectations is that the ponds will fully stabilize over the next few months.</p> <p>Anna shared the settling pond location on Google Earth©.</p>		
Decision	Standing agenda item		
Action Items:		Person Responsible	Deadline
Keep on Agenda		AnM	Next meeting

7. Education Updates

a. Template of education and awareness:

Discussion	The education and awareness status has not changed since the last meeting such that Halifax Water Corporate Communication is currently restructuring its communication strategy. Developing a source water protection education strategy is pending Corporate Communication's strategy.		
Decision	Leave on agenda		
Action Items:		Person Responsible	Deadline

1. Create a Q&A one-pager for the area that is seasonally appropriate. PP to send a list of content when prompted by BG/AnM.	AM/PP	Pending (On hold)
2. Create and submit an ad in the local newspaper to increase awareness of PWA recreational restrictions.	BG/AM	Next Meeting (On hold)

8. Election of Officers – Fall 2023

Discussion	Next election of officers is in the Fall of 2025.
Decision	Standing agenda item.

9. Next Meeting: 10:00am-12:00pm; Thurs., Oct. 17, 2024 (hybrid; in-person at 2 Park Avenue).

10. Adjournment: Anna moved to adjourn at 11:37am.

Respectfully Submitted by: Anna McCarron, Secretary, Bennery Lake Watershed Management Committee and Barry Geddes Vice Chair, Bennery Lake Watershed Management Committee.