

# Middle Musquodoboit Watershed Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes



## Middle Musquodoboit Watershed Advisory Committee

Date: Thursday, March 28, 2024

Location: Virtual via Microsoft Teams and In-person at Musquodoboit Valley Bicentennial Theatre

Meeting Time:  
6:45 pm

Adjourned:  
8:25 pm

Member name and position		Agency/Representation
Attendees	Mike Allen (MA), Watershed Planner (Virtual)	Halifax Water
	Barry Geddes (BG), Watershed Manager (Vice president - <i>Acting Chair</i> )	NS Environment and Climate Change (NSECC)
	Jerrold Graham (GG), Northern Pulp Forest Operations Supervisor	Forest Sector Representative
	Anna McCarron (Anna), Source Water Planner ( <i>Secretary</i> )	Halifax Water
	Matthew McFetridge (MM), District Forest Technician (Virtual)	NS Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (DNRR)
	Hugh Parker (HP), Community Group Representative	Musquodoboit River Watershed Society (MRWS)
	Alan Streach (AS), Musquodoboit Valley Quality Sod	Middle Musquodoboit Private Landowner Representative
	Mark Sutherland (MS), Dairy Farmer	Agriculture Sector Representative
Regrets	Greg Cummings, Watershed Planner	NSECC
	Andrew Faulkner (AF), Principal Planner/Development Officer	Halifax Regional Municipality (HRM) Representative
	Alana Murray (Alana), Manager Water Supply Plants	Halifax Water
	Kerry-Anne Taylor (KT)	Customer Representative

### 1. Attendance / Introductions

*Meeting called to order by Vice Chair, BG.*

Notes	<p>Attendance/Introductions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See attendance above.</li> <li>• Welcomed Jerrold Graham as the new Forestry Sector Representative and Alan Streach as the new Private Landowner Representative.</li> <li>• Quorum noted.</li> <li>• The Committee was reminded that the meeting is recorded via Teams for note-taking purposes. Once Minutes/Notes are approved, recordings are destroyed.</li> </ul>
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2. Review and Approval			
a. March 28 <sup>th</sup> , 2024, Meeting Agenda			
Discussion	Accepted as presented.		
Motion to approve the agenda moved by MS;	seconded by HP;	Motion approved	
b. November 16 <sup>th</sup> , 2024, Meeting Minutes			
Discussion	Approved as presented.		
Motion to approve the Minutes moved by MS;	seconded by HP;	Motion approved	
3. Old Business			
a. Education and Awareness/Community Outreach Strategies			
i. Signage update (Sign 8)			
Discussion	<p>(November 16, 2023) KT reported that the Elmsvale Bridge sign was vandalized and is missing a number from the Halifax Water contact number.</p> <p>(March 28, 2024) BG mentioned that the vandalized sign at Elmsvale Bridge has yet to be replaced.</p>		
Decision	Sign to be replaced.		
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline	
To be replaced	BG	ASAP	
ii. Presentation to <a href="#">Federation of Agriculture</a> membership			
Discussion	<p>Background: The Committee is considering presenting at the next Federation of Agriculture (FA) AGM to promote educational awareness about Halifax Water’s Source Water Protection program and watershed protection for the Middle Musquodoboit watershed area.</p> <p>BG reported that the FA was contacted. Halifax Water’s request to attend this year’s AGM was declined because the agenda was full. The FA wants to meet to discuss the benefit of a Halifax Water presentation at a future AGM.</p> <p>(March 28, 2024) In the context of scheduling a meeting to discuss collaboration, BG mentioned that the meeting had not occurred yet. BG has the names provided and plans to go forward with those for future discussions.</p>		
Decision:	Ongoing		
Action Item	Person Responsible	Deadline	
BG to schedule a meeting with the Federation of Agriculture	BG	Next Meeting	
iii. Newsletter/Outreach:			
Discussion	(November 16, 2023) BG reported that Halifax Water Corporate Communications is developing a communication strategy, which will include source water protection communication and education. The publication of the next newsletter is on hold until Halifax Water’s communication strategy has been developed.		

	<p><i>(March 28, 2024)</i> Publication of another is currently on hold due to ongoing communication strategy developments within Halifax Water. The team is considering integrating the newsletter content into a broader Halifax Water public newsletter to efficiently disseminate information across all watersheds.</p> <p><b>Education and Awareness Initiatives:</b> Ongoing and future initiatives aimed at enhancing education and awareness about source water protection in the Musquodoboit area were highlighted, including plans for public newsletters, outreach programs, and leveraging social media platforms to disseminate information.</p> <p><b>Collaboration with Schools:</b> There was mention of a school program in the watershed area that engages students in environmental education activities, such as raising and releasing fish into the river. This initiative is part of broader efforts to foster environmental stewardship within younger generations.</p> <p><b>Community Engagement:</b> The members underscored the importance of engaging the local community, including landowners and stakeholders, in educational activities. This includes workshops and presentations aimed at sharing knowledge about best practices that protect water quality and the watershed's natural resources.</p> <p><b>Source Water Protection Week:</b> BG shared plans with the committee to ramp up participation in Source Water Protection Week. This initiative aims to enhance environmental education and awareness within the community.</p>	
Decision	The next newsletter publication is on hold. BG to follow-up with Communications.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
1. BG to follow up with Atlantic Canada Lumberjack Association regarding Halifax Water’s participation in their competition event in Middle Musquodoboit during Source Water Protection Week. BG awaiting approval from Corporate Communications (CC) before proceeding.	BG	Next meeting
2. BG to follow-up with CC regarding the Newsletter which is currently on hold.	BG	Next meeting
b. Musquodoboit River Watershed Society (MRWS) future projects		
Discussion	<p><b>Background:</b> HP reported that Nova Scotia Public Works (PW) (formerly Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal) was working with the Nova Scotia Salmon Association’s Adopt-a-Stream program to complete the in-stream work on a project above the intake. The project involved installing deflectors and digger logs, using hand tools along a portion of Benvie Brook, from Hwy 224 to the Musquodoboit River.</p> <p>HP advised that the MRWS will revisit the task list to prioritize what to do next.</p> <p>BG to confirm whether Halifax Water has any funding for any MRWS projects upstream of the intake.</p> <p>BG advised that Halifax Water has no funding available for any wetland compensation projects. All funding has been allocated for this year. However, Halifax Water is interested in funding future projects within the Halifax Water watershed area when funds are available.</p>	

	<p><i>(March 28, 2024)</i> Regarding compensation projects, HP confirmed that there were a number of projects already on the go by PW. HP mentioned that there were a couple of potential projects below the Middle Musquodoboit Higginsville bridge, where the intake is located. BG confirmed that in order for projects to qualify for Halifax Water funding they need to fall inside the Middle Musquodoboit River watershed – above the intake. No additional projects were identified at this time.</p> <p>Halifax Water remains interested in funding future projects within the Halifax Water watershed area when funds are available.</p>		
Decision	No opportunities for Halifax water to support MRWS projects at this time. Move this to parking lot.		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
1. Identify and prioritize project timing and develop associated costs for funding purposes. Move to parking lot		HP/MRWS	Pending future opportunities inside watershed
c. NSECC to provide watershed map data to DoA as awareness tool for farm community (MA)			
Discussion	<p>At a previous meeting, MA advised that he needs authorization from Halifax Water to release municipal watersheds and PWA files to the Department of Agriculture (DoA) for GIS mapping data. At this meeting BG advised that a Data Sharing License Agreement (DSL) with DoA is required prior to providing data to them. A DSL will be discussed with the FA, if they are interested in watershed boundary data, when Halifax Water meets with them.</p> <p><i>(March 28, 2024)</i> The discussion about providing a watershed map to the DoA and FA was mentioned, indicating a plan to share data directly with them as part of a project.</p> <p>Move to parking lot until meeting with FA/DoA.</p>		
Decision	Leave on agenda pending outcome of meeting with the FA.		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Pending outcome of meeting with FA, create a DSLA. Move to parking lot.		MA/BG	Next meeting
d. Eastern Habitat Joint Venture Program to protect riparian areas:			
Discussion	<p><i>(November 6, 2023)</i> MA reported that he contacted the names provided by Tim O’Brien. One person was interested in the program. MA passed the program information to this person and has not received any responses. MA noted that this action item has been on the agenda for a while, and they are not sure if these programs are still funded under the new government.</p> <p>MA not available for this meeting to provide any update.</p> <p><i>(March 28, 2024)</i> MA reported that the Nova Scotia program is not listed on their website, indicating a lack of specific information or updates about the program's activities in Nova Scotia. MA also noted that the program used to be federally funded but experienced changes in funding and operation. The conversation suggested uncertainty about the current status of the program and its activities in Nova Scotia.</p>		
Decision	Leave on agenda until MA hears back from EHJV – move to parking lot.		

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Follow up with the EHJV contact again to determine if the EHJV program is still active. Move to parking lot.	MA	Next meeting
<b>e. Terms of Reference</b>		
<b>i. Forestry and large landowner sector membership</b>		
Discussion	<p><i>(March 28, 2024)</i> BG advised at the outset of the meeting that the vacant positions were filled. Jerrold Graham was introduced as the forestry sector representative and Alan Stretch was introduced as the private landowner representative.</p> <p>Changes to the Terms of Reference (ToR) were briefly discussed in reference to the approved changes at the November 6, 2023 meeting; i.e., the addition of a confidentiality section to the ToR. This section states that information discussed in the meeting is confidential unless otherwise stated, and it's meant to ensure that sensitive information is handled appropriately. Committee members were provided a finalized copy of the ToR.</p>	
Decision	<p>Vacancies filled. Remove from agenda</p>	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Remove from agenda	BG/Anna	Next meeting
<b>f. Source Water Protection Plan update:</b>		
Discussion	<p><i>(March 28, 2024)</i> Anna discussed the work completed on the Source Water Protection Plan, focusing on the section that identifies the risks associated with various activities within the watershed, such as forestry, agriculture, and potential industrial impacts like tire recycling. Anna also explained that the SWPP also covers mapping out the watershed, assessing land cover, ownership, and potential risk activities to prioritize areas for mitigation efforts.</p> <p>BG emphasized the complexity of the watershed and the detailed approach being taken by Anna to update the plan.</p>	
Decision	<p>Update as needed.</p>	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Update as needed.	BG/Anna	Ongoing
<b>g. Charlie Parent – White Paper:</b>		
Discussion	<p><b>Background:</b> Charlie Parent, a Dalhousie University student of the Aquatic Systems Professional and Industrial training for the Restoration Economy (ASPIRE) program drafted a White Paper for Halifax Water about farming practices with respect to nitrate levels near the Middle Musquodoboit water supply intake. Once the White Paper is reviewed and approved for circulation, it will be posted on the Halifax Water website as a tool to support source water protection efforts within a watershed that supports agriculture activities.</p> <p>At this meeting, the Committee was updated on the White Paper status; i.e., it is being reviewed by Halifax Water Senior Management. Once Senior Management and the landowner have reviewed the Paper, the Committee will be able to review it.</p>	

	<i>(March 28, 2024)</i> For the benefit of the new committee members, BG provided background to the White Paper (see above). BG updated the members that the paper is under review with the landowner. Once approved, the plan is to publish it to the American Water Works Association journal.		
Decision:	Paper is with landowner for review, then committee		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Waiting for landowner to review		BG	Next meeting

#### 4. New Business:

##### a. 2023 Source Water Protection Report:

Discussion	BG provided an overview of the Source Water Protection Report, a yearly submission that summarizes updates and accomplishments in source water protection, including water quality data and the effectiveness of landowner agreements in managing nitrate levels. Remove from agenda		
Decision	Provided for information purposes.		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Remove from agenda		BG	Next meeting

#### 5. Member Q & A:

Discussion	No questions or comments were generated for this item.		
Decision	Standing Item		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Standing Item			

#### 6. Municipal Updates:

Discussion	<p><i>(March 28, 2024)</i> AF was not available to share any updates related to development within the watershed.</p> <p>BG shared that HW recently provided comment to HRM for a development permit to build a domestic garage near the Middle Musquodoboit bulk water station. The permit was considered low risk with minimal comments by Halifax Water which included reflecting on the development’s proximity to the bulk station in the Middle Musquodoboit watershed, and Halifax Water’s emergency contact information in the event of an emergency spill or release.</p>		
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#### 7. Election of Officers –Fall 2024

#### 8. Next Meeting: Thursday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 6:30 at Musquodoboit Valley Bicentennial Theatre and Cultural Centre and virtually via Microsoft Teams.

**9. Adjournment of meeting at 8:15 pm.**

*Minutes Recorded and respectfully submitted by:*

*Barry Geddes, Watershed Manager, Halifax Water and Vice Chair of the MMWA Committee.*

DRAFT