

Pockwock Watershed Management Committee

Meeting Minutes



Pockwock Watershed Management Committee		
Date: October 3, 2024		Meeting Time: 10:00 am
Location: Virtual meeting via Teams		Adjourned Time: 11:00 am
Barry Geddes, Chair		
Member name and position:		Agency/Representation:
Attendees	Michael Allen (MA), Central Regional Coordinator, Parks and Protected Areas	Nova Scotia Environment and Climate Change (NSECC)
	Lindsay Anderson (LA), Acting Water Quality Manager	Halifax Water
	Barry Geddes (BG), (<i>Chair</i>) Watershed Manager	Halifax Water
	Rachel Gilbert (RG), Manager of Planning	Municipality of East Hants (EH)
	Wendy Krkosek, Acting Director, Environment, Health and Safety	Halifax Water
	Jolene Laverty (JL), Regional Biologist, Central Region	Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (DNRR)
	Anna McCarron (AM), (<i>Secretary</i>) Source Water Planner	Halifax Water
	Michael Perry (MP), (<i>Vice Chair</i>) Community Representative	Mount Uniacke
	Derrek Sample (DS), Watershed Resource Technician	Halifax Water
Regrets	Jeff Brown (JB), Forestry Technician	DNRR
	Greg Cummings (GC), Watershed Planner	NSECC
	Patrick Lynch (PL), Regional Forester, Central Region	DNRR
	Neil Morehouse (NM), Manager Protected Areas & Ecosystems	NSECC
	Heather Olivella (HO), Western Region Coordinator, Parks and Protected Areas	NSECC

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1. Attendance / Introductions

Meeting called to order by Chair, MP.

Discussion	Attendance/ Introductions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance noted above; quorum noted; regrets conveyed (noted above); and AM reminded the Committee that the meeting is being recorded via Teams for Minute-taking purposes. Once the minutes are approved, it is standard practice to delete the recordings.		
Decision			
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline

2. Review and Approval

October 3, 2024, Meeting Agenda

Discussion	Approved as presented.		
Decision	Approved as presented.		
Motion to approve February 29, 2024, Meeting Agenda		Moved by BG, seconded by AM. All in favour.	
February 29, 2024, DRAFT Meeting Minutes			
Discussion	Approved as presented.		
Decision	Approved as presented.		
Motion to approve February 29, 2024, Meeting Minutes		Moved by RG, seconded by AM. All in favour.	

3. Old Business

a. Pockwock Water Storage and Withdrawal Permit Application – Update

Discussion	The approval for the water storage and withdrawal permit is in place and in good standing. The next review and update for the permit is scheduled for 2027. Instrumentation is being installed downstream of the dam and is expected to be online by December.		
Decision	Information only. Standing agenda item.		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Update as necessary.		BG	Ongoing

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b. Resource Management Updates			
i. Forestry			
Discussion	There has been no forest management activity by the Crown this year. Halifax Water conducted minor road maintenance, including gravelling and replacing a culvert.		
Decision	Information only. Standing agenda item.		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Update as necessary.		BG/WK	Ongoing
ii. Water Quality and Lake Recovery Research			
a) Combining a & b – Geosmin update and Lake Recovery update:			
Discussion	<p>Geosmin Update: Geosmin levels in Pockwock Lake have been very low over the past year. There have been no detections above the limit since last September. Monitoring for geosmin continues as part of the regular water quality program.</p> <p>Lake Recovery Update: LA and WK reported that lake recovery has been stable, with some increases in organic matter due to climate events. The lake has returned to normal after last year's storm.</p> <p>MP instructed that the lake recovery and geosmin updates not be reported as separate subgroups and instead be included under the general water quality update. This suggestion was made to streamline the reporting process and avoid breaking down the information into too many subgroups.</p>		
Decision	Information only. Standing agenda item.		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Update as necessary.		LA/WK	Ongoing
c. forWater Research Network			
Discussion	David Foster's research is complete and will be presented at the upcoming research symposium on October 10th. The research, extended due to COVID-19, concluded in 2024. A new research project led by Waterloo is in the application process under the NFRF program, aiming to extend and expand the research.		
Decision	Update as necessary		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Update as necessary		BG	Ongoing
d. Lake Trout Study			

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Discussion	The lake trout study has been ongoing for the past two years. So far, no lake trout has been found. The study includes both rod and reel fishing and DNA sampling in specific basins to detect the presence of lake trout DNA. Another sampling session is planned for October 10th.		
Decision	Continue the lake trout study with further sampling planned for October 10th. Information only. Standing agenda item.		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Update as necessary.		BG	Ongoing
e. Water Supply Enhancement Project			
Discussion	The Water Supply Enhancement Project has received funding approval from the UARB (Utilities and Review Board) for design and early earthworks, including moving a cell tower. The Project is currently evaluating whether to proceed with a new treatment plant or to upgrade the existing one. The latter is a challenging option due to difficulties with bolting new components to the old facility. Additionally, a reservoir project at the treatment plant site is moving forward, independently, to help prevent boil water advisories and to facilitate proper maintenance.		
Decision	Update the Committee as needed		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
WK to continue evaluating the best path forward for the project, considering whether to build a new treatment plant or upgrade the existing one, and to proceed with the reservoir project independently. Will continue to provide updates as required.		WK	As required

4. New Business

a. Research Symposium

Discussion	The symposium is scheduled for October 10th, with approximately 45 attendees expected, including speakers and participants from various watershed advisory boards and municipal agencies. The event will feature presentations by Graham Gagnon and Ryan Swinamer on lake recovery, climate change impacts, and treatment challenges, focusing on the research program's evolution and current challenges. David Foster and Rob Jamieson will discuss land-based treatment research and its connection to water quality before it reaches the treatment plant.		
Decision:	LA will send out a reminder to attendees early next week to confirm final details and seat availability.		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
LA to send out a reminder to attendees		LA	As required

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5. Landowner Q & A

a. Crown

Discussion	Nothing to report beyond what was already reported above.		
Decision	Standing agenda item.		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Update as necessary		JL	As required

b. Pockwock Wilderness Area

Discussion	<p>Halifax Water's License-to-Operate within the newly approved Sackville River Wilderness Area.</p> <p>The integration of the Sackville River license into the Pockwock license. This update has been executed between Halifax Water and the Protected Areas Branch, which completes the necessary licensing updates.</p>		
Decision	Remove License to Operate within the Sackville River Wilderness Area from agenda.		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
License has been updated. Remove integration of the Sackville River license from Agenda		BG	BG

c. Mount Uniacke Community

Discussion	The main point mentioned was the ongoing construction of the business park, with no major issues reported. Additionally, there have been fewer calls about wells going dry, although some residents have noticed low water levels.		
Decision	Information only		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Update as necessary		MP	As needed

d. Municipality of East Hants

i. Mount Uniacke Business Park Development

Discussion	RG provided an update on the development of the business park, noting that all lots have been sold and that Atlas Structural Systems is developing a large parcel of land there (see b) below.		
Decision	Update as necessary		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline

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Inquire about any development applications for the private parcel being monitored for development adjacent to the Mount Uniacke business park and distribute the information to AM & BG to circulate to the rest of the committee.		RG	Next meeting
Continue to monitor water quality in the areas next to Lacey Lake to assess any impacts from development.		LA	Next Meeting
a) NSTPW Winter Maintenance Program			
Discussion	Department of Public Works (DPW) declined the request for them to present. Halifax Water to continue monitoring.		
Decision	Update as necessary.		
Action items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Follow up with DPW to set up a presentation on a winter maintenance program for the Mount Uniacke Area.		BG	Pending
RG to follow up on the winter maintenance practices in the watershed area, despite the initial decline from NSTPW to provide a presentation.		RG	Next meeting
b) Inquire about development applications adjacent to Business Park			
Discussion	<p>RG mentioned that all lots in the business park have been sold.</p> <p>Atlas Structural Systems is developing a large parcel of land within the park, specifically for building trusses.</p> <p>The committee will continue to monitor water quality in the area, particularly around Lacey Lake*, to assess any impacts from the development.</p> <p>No new development applications were specifically mentioned beyond the business park updates.</p> <p>* According to Nova Scotia's GEONames Explorer (https://nsgi.novascotia.ca/geonames/) Lacey Lake was formerly approved as Lacey Mill Lake 2 Nov. 1921. Changed to Lacey Lake 25 Sept. 1975.</p>		
Decision	Update as needed		
Action items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Update as necessary		RG	As needed

6. Education / Awareness

a. Pending Corporate Communications Strategy (on hold)

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Discussion	Source Water Protection Week: Recognized from October 1st to 5th, with activities such as school visits and a lunch and learn session to raise awareness about water protection. Community Engagement: Participation in events like the SWEPS (Shubenacadie Watershed Environmental Protection Society) Open House, where information about invasive species and watershed studies was shared. Internal Education: Halifax Water is conducting lunch and learn sessions for their operations group to improve internal awareness about source water protection. Future Plans: There are plans to expand the educational program to include external stakeholders, such as the Department of Natural Resources.		
Decision	Provide updates as needed		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Update when necessary.		BG	Ongoing
b. Tours of Watershed Area			
i. Helicopter Tour			
Discussion	<p>The helicopter tour was discussed as part of the plan to provide a comprehensive view of the watershed area to first responders and local emergency staff.</p> <p>Purpose: The tour aims to give participants a bird's-eye view of the watershed, to help in understanding the processes and impacts of various activities on water quality.</p> <p>Frequency: These tours have been conducted every three to four years, primarily for new staff and committee members.</p> <p>Format: The tour typically includes both helicopter flights and ground tours to provide a complete perspective.</p> <p>Coordination: JL advised that she has connections with helicopter pilots and will investigate the logistics for the next tour.</p> <p>The next steps involve identifying the key participants for the tour and planning the logistics well in advance.</p>		
Decision	Hold off on tours until summer 2025.		
ii. Educational Ground Tour of Harvest Areas – VIPs			
Discussion	<p>Ground tours were discussed as part of the comprehensive tour plan for the watershed area.</p> <p>Purpose: Ground tours complement the helicopter tours by providing a detailed view of specific sites and activities within the watershed.</p> <p>Frequency: These tours are conducted alongside helicopter tours every three to four years to give new staff and committee members a thorough understanding of the watershed.</p> <p>Logistics: The ground tours involve driving around the watershed area to observe and discuss various aspects of land management and water quality protection.</p>		

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	The next steps include planning the logistics and identifying key participants for the upcoming tours.		
Decision	Standing agenda item until complete, not before end of summer 2025.		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Plan a tour for the watershed area targeting a small group consisting of councillors, community leaders, first responders, East Hants directors and PWM Committee members.		BG/MP/RG/AM	Summer 2025

7. Election of Officers – Fall 2024

Chair: BG offered to be and was elected the new Chair for the next two years.

Vice Chair: MP expressed willingness to serve as Vice Chair, stepping in if needed, due to potential changes in their position and availability.

Secretary: It was noted that administrative support for minute-taking is generally provided by Halifax Water, and there was no specific election for a secretary.

The election process follows the terms of reference, and the new officers will serve for the next two years.

8. Next meeting – Thursday, February 27, 2025 @ 10 am, Virtually via Microsoft Teams and in-person at 2 Park Avenue.

9. Adjournment – 11:00am – motion moved by BG, seconded by BG

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Ashley Ward – Admin. Assist. /Barry Geddes – Secretary