

MAGNETAWAN RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF MEETING Magnetawan Friendship Centre June 12, 2011

ATTENDED BY:

Kevin Arbour - Poverty Bay Ratepayers
Don Comrie - Wah-Wash-Kesh Conservation Ass.
Doug Millman - Director-At-Large
Larry Samis - Whitestone Conservation Ass.
Terry Stanley - Whitestone Conservation Ass.
Stan Walker - Kearney
Chris Armstrong – Municipality of Whitestone
Ed Bennett – Lake Wah-Wash-Kesh Conservation Assn
Clint Brooks – Ahmic Lake Cottagers Assn
Don Carter – Whitestone Conservation Assn
Don Comrie – Lake Wah-Wash-Kesh Conservation Assn
Logan Naftel – Cecebe Waterways Assn
Kathy Pike – Lake Bernard Property Owners Assn
Arnie and Nancy Pundsack – Three Mile Lake

Meeting called to order at 10:00 by President Clint Brooks. Thank you to everyone for coming.

AGENDA

Clint reviewed the Agenda for the meeting and asked if anyone had any new business to add to the agenda.

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the August 29, 2010 meeting had been distributed to all members prior to the meeting. Clint asked for a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Chris Armstrong moved and Terry Stanley seconded the motion. Carried

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Treasurer Logan Naftel distributed the financial statements for the year ended December 31, 2010. Terry Stanley moved the report be accepted as presented. Larry Samis seconded. Carried.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT:

Secretary Logan Naftel discussed the MRWA Membership List as at June 10th, 2011.

Of the 35 Associations and Municipalities that were invoiced for 2011 membership fees, 8 had paid to date. One additional membership was paid at the meeting. An additional mail out of invoices will take place in August. Paid membership for 2009 and 2010 was 16 each year.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Clint gave a slide presentation the focus of which was the past and the future of the MRWA. The overall goal of the MRWA was restated to be water quality in the watershed. Clint outlined the history of the MRWA. Clint contacted 23 lake associations prior to starting the association for their opinion and support for such an organization. Reaction was positive.

The original idea was to exchange ideas, establish some common ground, promote lake stewardship, promote and educate people, measuring water quality to establish a base of facts and start a single strong lobbying body. A priority survey conducted online in 2010, had over 100 responses from across the watershed. The respondents were asked to prioritize six main issues. The results in order of priority were: water quality; algae growth; invasive species; septic systems; shoreline preservation and water levels.

Clint referred to a presentation at the August 2010 meeting on phosphate free products and asked the question, "Should the question of phosphate use be a "cause" for the MRWA to action"? A question was asked at the August meeting, "Is household use of phosphates a big problem or is commercial use of phosphate the main problem"? Clint stated that .5% by weight is the amount of phosphate in detergents in Canada. In U.S. statewide bans on phosphorus in dishwasher detergents have been passed in sixteen states.

This led the American Cleaning Institute, the trade group representing most detergent manufacturers, to adopt a voluntary ban during the summer of 2010. This may spread to Canada.

On the subject of septic tank inspections Clint suggested that in order for this to be effective Municipalities would have to pass a bylaw to have mandatory inspection, however funds for the program would have to come from Federal or Provincial Governments as local governments do not have the finances to fund the program.

Clint reviewed the status of the University of Waterloo (UofW) research centre in Huntsville. The centre came about because of G8 funding for the

building; however the University is not off the ground yet with the program. To date only one administrative employee is on site and the hope is that by 2013 a research program might become a reality at the earliest.

Clint posed the question, “Why or why not continue the MRWA?”

Clint asked, “If there are no pressing problems, and all seems to be going well, what can the MRWA do?”

“Are lake associations already spread too thin in manpower to support the MRWA?”

“Are there too many like organizations out there?” “Do we need another one?”

Clint reviewed the list of other organizations in the Parry Sound area which appear to have similar goals, at least from looking at their web sites. Many however have spent a lot of money initially on their fancy web sites but nothing much has been done recently to maintain the web sites and many of their links do not work.

Clint then asked the members present for their opinions and comments on how they felt about the MRWA, what was the value added for members and if the members saw an ongoing need for the MRWA, what was the need?

Arnie Pundsack of 3 Mile Lake said that in his opinion there was a definite need for the MRWA. He felt that one thing the MRWA could do was to be a co-coordinating body for all the water quality test results that are being produced by the various associations. Arnie suggested that the fish hatchery model in Magnetawan should be expanded to include all lakes in the watershed. Arnie said that for the past 2 years their lake has been using a YSI water quality testing meter similar to the one used on Whitestone, Ahmic and recently on Cecebe.

Kevin Arbour of Poverty Bay suggested that the MRWA should investigate the number of quarries springing up along the watershed with the idea that the water quality will suffer from so many similar operations going on in the region. Kevin also suggested putting together a brochure for hand out at Canada Day celebrations in municipalities along the watershed.

Chris Armstrong said that he felt that there was a definite need for the MRWA. Chris said that we should not expect much interest to be shown in our organization by the Parry Sound area associations as they have their own interests at heart and were not interested in our goals. Chris suggested that the MRWA use fall fairs throughout the region for educational purposes.

Chris also suggested giving an annual award of excellence for someone who has a great environmental program at their home or place of business. Chris suggested we approach FEDNOR for funding of a 1 year placement program for a university or college student to work on water quality testing. FEDNOR covers up to 80% and the balance could potentially be shared by local municipalities. Office space for such an individual may be available in a local municipal office. The information gathered by the MRWA now can be of great use by the UofW later when they get organized.

Kathy Pike of Lake Bernard said she would welcome the sharing of information between lakes and that the MRWA would be an ideal coordinator of such a program.

Ed Bennett of Wah-Wash-Kesh suggested the MRWA fundamental goal of good clean clear water was a sound one. He said that we should at least determine if any of the existing organizations are operating in our area to ensure that we aren't going at cross purposes or seeking funding from the same sources for the same programs. Duplicate energy would thus be eliminated. Ed did suggest that Parry sound area based organizations are not likely to know about the MRWA or be interested in what we are doing.

A discussion followed on how water quality testing could be co-coordinated by the MRWA using the YSI devices. The YSI meter measures water temperature; dissolved oxygen; conductivity and PH levels.

Stan Walker from Kearney supported the Fednor idea and said that a Fednor study in his area was completed 5 years ago and the results showed that everything at that time was OK.

Chris suggested we contact other Universities to see if our data would be of use by a student doing a masters thesis on water quality. Chris suggested we prepare a presentation for Municipalities to have the balance of the cost of a FEDNOR sponsored student shared. Chris said that we should consider February a time line goal for having our presentation ready. That is the time of the Good Road Convention and an opportunity to put together a delegation of local municipality council members to meet with MNR or other Provincial ministries to present data to make a point for funding on a project in the area. Chris said that we should copy the Community Economic Development Committee in Whitestone with all correspondence from the MRWA.

Terry Stanley said that we should press Municipalities in the watershed to become MRWA members and to send a delegate to our meetings .

Don Comrie said he very much believed in the need for the MRWA. He said we have good bylaws, have made a good solid beginning and now need a project to focus on.

It was decided that a YSI based program of water quality testing in a number of lakes and a sharing of instruments already available should be set up. Clint said that he would put a plan together and send it out by email to all members and that a meeting then be held to discuss the plan.

PROPOSED BY LAW CHANGES

The recommended changes to the membership bylaw had been sent out to all members prior to the meeting. The need for a change in the membership makeup was explained by Clint. There is a need to include interested individuals as members. The change recommended would still protect the associations and municipalities' interests.

Terry Stanley made a motion to accept the changes in the membership bylaw as presented. Larry Samis seconded the motion. Carried.

ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

Chris Armstrong moved that the three directors standing for re-election be re-appointed for a further term. Don Comrie seconded the motion. Carried

NEXT MEETING

To be at the call of the President.

ADJOURNMENT

Terry Stanley moved the meeting be adjourned at 12 Noon. Larry Samis seconded. Carried