



**REGIONAL WATERSHEDS ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
September 12, 2019**

PRESENT: Linda Campbell, Chair
Emma Bocking, Vice Chair
Rose Featherstone
Tony Blouin
John Carter
Jim Abraham
Laura McCallum
Carol Cameron
Melissa Lee

REGRETS: Andrew Sullivan
Ceo Gaudet

STAFF: Cameron Deacoff, HRM Water Resource Specialist, Energy & Environment
Sharon Chase, Legislative Support, Office of the Municipal Clerk

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to the Committee are available online at Halifax.ca

The meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m. and the Committee adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. at HEMDCC Meeting Space, Main Floor Alderney Gate, 60 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth.

Round table introductions were done, welcoming new members.

2. COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS – NONE

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED by Laura McCallum, seconded by Rose Featherstone

THAT the minutes of July 11, 2019 be approved as circulated.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

Additions:

- 11.1 Impact of Hurricane Dorian on Water Quality
- 11.2 Condition of Public Garden Pond
- 11.3 Lake Major Water Level Issues

MOVED by Rose Featherstone, seconded by Laura McCallum

THAT the agenda be approved as amended.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

The Board inquired about the status of the Request for Proposal for the Water Quality Monitoring Program and whether they might have a copy. Deacoff understood that this would be against HRM's procurement policy but will follow up to see what can be shared and at what point in the process.

6. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE

7. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

8. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS – NONE

9. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE

10. REPORTS/DISCUSSIONS

10.1 STAFF – NONE

10.2 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

10.2.1 Campaign re: Pet Waste and Lakes

The following was before the Board:

- Picking up after your pet information located on HRM's Energy and Environment web page.

Cameron Deacoff, HRM Water Resource Specialist, provided an update of the current campaign highlighting: staff pop-ups at community events, online pledge uptake and local business support. This pilot project will be evaluated for its effectiveness in reaching the target audience. There has been some discussion about the opportunity to move this waste to the compost stream. The Board suggested that there might be an opportunity to work with Halifax Regional Centre for Education to get this message to students who are pet owners and household influencers. Lake Banook and Lake Micmac were identified for this pilot program with receptacles strategically placed. It was noted that more receptacles were needed throughout the parks in HRM. It would be important to determine if this program contributes to a decrease in this waste's impact on water quality, with the volume of waste in cans a valuable measurement tool. It was acknowledged that canine waste is only one marker or potential cause. Netting is in place beneath the bridge connecting the two lakes to deter pigeons and monitoring of storm and waste water is ongoing by Halifax Water.

10.2.2 Update on Algae Bloom in HRM Lakes

The following was before the Board:

- Information handout on Blue-Green Algae

Deacoff reviewed the process and timing of the algae testing from initial reporting to the removal of the risk advisory. The Board encouraged staff to share this process with the public as an education piece which would help answer questions and address concerns. Presently this is a responsive process. As a risk management tool, it would be useful to use PSA's to focus on how to prevent blooms and by using a prediction tool (which is used in some states) provide advance notification to the public. This may be a consideration as the Water Quality Monitoring Program is developed. Deacoff confirmed that citizen safety at municipal beaches is HRM's role where the Province takes responsibility for the regulatory role. Staff liase with the many stakeholders and agencies looking at this issue and have attended conferences on this topic as well.

The Board noted that there were some amenity upgrades being done at Penhorn Lake and Graham's Grove. Questions were asked about construction standards and considerations around the use of permeable surfaces instead of paved parking lots which may pose runoff concerns. Staff noted that these are set out in the Red Book Civil Engineering Standards. The Board would be interested in having staff available to discuss this further at a future meeting.

10.2.3 Barry's Run – Implications for Lake Charles and Other Downstream Sites

The following was before the Board:

- Barry's Run Risk Advisory located on HRM's Energy and Environment web page.

The Chair shared a brief history of goldmining in the area. Tailings from this industry are a source of arsenic and an ongoing concern impacting the watershed. HRM has issued a Risk Advisory regarding Barry's Run. An environmental assessment has been completed as a part of the Port Wallace Secondary Planning process and staff is preparing a report which will be going to Regional Council.

11. ADDED ITEMS

11.1 Impact of Hurricane Dorian on Water Quality

The Board had a brief discussion about how climate change makes watersheds more vulnerable to runoff of contaminants and sediments and the need to be able to manage these impacts. Having post impact studies/data is valuable. It was suggested that other agencies such as Halifax Water and the NS Department of Natural Resources may have data that would be useful.

11.2 Condition of Public Garden Pond

The Board were interested in getting some background and a status update on the present condition of Griffin Pond, in particular how fowl have affected the water quality. Work was done in 2018 with a combination of dredging and filtration improvements. The Board would like to invite someone from Parks and Recreation's horticulture division to make a presentation.

11.3 Lake Major Water Level Issues

The Board discussed the recent water conservation PSA issued by Halifax Water regarding Lake Major. It was suggested that having a current graphic available to citizens showing precipitation and water levels of various lakes, would serve to inform the public at any point in time and not just when water levels are a concern. Deacoff confirmed that Lake Major, Bennery and Pockwock Lakes are the major water supply sources. The Board would like clarification on the best manner to share suggestions and ideas with Halifax Water.

The Board had a general discussion about the importance of complete and current data on wetlands and watersheds to assist in decision making; land use decisions and future planning and development being of particular concern.

With so many current and relevant water issues, the Chair encouraged members to bring topics to their attention in advance of the meeting for consideration on the agenda. This provides staff with the opportunity to bring information to members at the meeting which will contribute to a fulsome discussion. Reviewing the Board's Terms of Reference assists in focusing the discussions within the scope of its' mandate. A supplementary report requested by the Environment Sustainability Standing Committee on RWAB's role and scope has not yet come back to the Committee. Reviewing the role and scope, and summarizing work done to date will prove useful in providing a clear vision for the Board's future work.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – October 10, 2019 at 5:00 p.m., HEMDCC Meeting Space, Main Floor Alderney Gate, 60 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth.

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Sharon Chase
Legislative Support