



**ATHABASCA WATERSHED COUNCIL
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Minutes of Meeting
May 28, 2011
Hinton Conference Centre
965 Switzer Drive, Hinton, AB
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

Meeting Objectives:

- For Decision; proposed amendments to the AWC-WPAC Board of Directors Terms of Reference:
 - **Proposed Amendment to Clause 4.3:** Membership on the Board of Directors of the Athabasca Watershed Council is open to Alberta residents only.
 - **Proposed Amendment to Clause 7.3:** Board members may speak to the media, the public, or other parties on behalf of the Athabasca Watershed Council, if they adhere to key media messages developed and approved by the Board of Directors.
- Election of seven (7) vacant positions on the Board of Directors:
 - Aboriginal Sector (2 positions);
 - "Other" Sector (1 position);
 - Non-Government Organization Sector (3 positions);
 - Government Sector (1 position).
- Selection of financial auditors for 2011-2012.
- To provide information to the membership regarding the progress of the Athabasca Watershed Council and outline projects planned for the upcoming 2011-2012 fiscal year.
- Invite new members to join the AWC-WPAC.

Recorder of Minutes: Brenda Taillefer, Executive Assistant, Athabasca Watershed Council

1. CALL TO ORDER OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: Executive Director Connie Simmons welcomed everyone to the second Annual General Meeting of the Athabasca Watershed Council (AWC-WPAC). The Executive Director provided a brief introduction relating to the Athabasca Watershed Council and the importance of the work outlined in its vision, mission and goals. All attendees, including the current Board of Directors of the AWC-WPAC, were asked to introduce themselves.

2. REVIEW AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA:

MOTION: Gerald Soroka made a motion to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Doug Badger. All in favour; motion carried.

3. REVIEW OF ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 29, 2010, ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:

MOTION: Motion by Donna Mendelsohn to approve the Minutes of the May 29, 2010, AGM.
Seconded by Wayne Brehaut.
All in favour; motion carried.

4. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The Executive Director introduced Lavone Olson the President of the Athabasca Watershed Council Board of Directors. Lavone Olson welcomed all in attendance, and thanked everyone for their passion and interest in the Athabasca Watershed. Her report included the following:

- An overview of Alberta's *Water for Life Strategy* and the role of watershed planning and advisory councils (WPACs) in ensuring the following outcomes:
 - Safe, secure drinking water supply;
 - Healthy aquatic ecosystems;
 - Reliable, quality water supplies for a sustainable economy.

- The Council's, Vision, Mission and Values, as well as a brief description and history of the Athabasca Watershed Council,
 - It is the tenth and second largest WPAC in the province.
 - The watershed extends well into Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories.
 - There are 94 rivers, 153 named creeks and 150 lakes, as well as one of the largest inland deltas in North America.
 - WPACs now cover over 90% of the landscape in the province.
 - The Board operates by consensus decision making with a maximum of sixteen members representing five different sectors:
 - **Aboriginal Sector** (total of three positions);
 - **Government Sector** (total of three positions);
 - **Industry Sector** (total of three positions);
 - **Non-Government Organization Sector** or "NGO" (total of three positions);
 - **"Other" Sector** (no specific affiliation – total of three positions);
 - **Past President** (total of one position).

- Presentation of the 2010-2011 Athabasca Watershed Council Annual Report to the Membership.

The Executive Director provided an overview of the six primary goals of the WPAC:

1. Ensure the Athabasca Watershed Council is an effective, efficient and sustainable Watershed Planning and Advisory Council.
2. Improve watershed knowledge and understanding within the Athabasca Watershed Council.
3. Champion increased awareness by providing information and education to all.
4. Encourage and work towards protection, conservation and enhancement of the ecological integrity of the watershed.
5. Facilitate development and implementation of integrated planning for the watershed.
6. Promote best practices to help achieve healthy aquatic ecosystems, safe and secure drinking water supplies and reliable quality water supplies for a sustainable economy.

The following highlights were provided relating to the creation and ongoing work of the Athabasca Watershed Council:

- In August 2009, the Athabasca Watershed Council received Society status.
- An Initiator's Group meeting was held in November 2009.
- Two years of core operational funding in the form of grants were received from Alberta Environment in February 2010, as well as partial funding for a third year of operation.
- The first Annual General Meeting of the Athabasca Watershed Council was held in Fort McMurray in May 2010.

- The State of the Watershed Phase 1 Report was completed in March of this year.
- The Athabasca Watershed Council has established an office in the Hinton Training Centre in the form of an In-Kind contribution from Alberta Sustainable Resource and Development; however, it is a very tiny office and the staff may have to look at expanding in the near future.
- The first year of operation involved a great deal of foundational work.
- Completed the final draft of the State of the Watershed Phase 1 Report, though it is not yet a public facing document. The document included the following:
 - A detailed review of existing data available to complete a State of the Watershed Report;
 - A comprehensive bibliography;
 - A recommended list of indicators to determine the State of the Watershed;
 - An introduction to the Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) component of the State of the Watershed Report.
 - An assessment of knowledge gaps;
 - A summarization of key threats and pressures;
 - A draft Terms of Reference for Phase 2 of the State of the Watershed Report.
- This past year, the Athabasca Watershed Council began building engagement by conducting both a Watershed Stewardship Group Forum and a Municipal Forum. Other support groups such as the Alberta Stewardship Network and Cows and Fish were involved as well.
- Attended Keepers of the Water gathering in northern Saskatchewan to understand some of the issues they are experiencing.
- Looking forward to open engagement and focus in the future with aboriginal communities.
- All eleven WPACs are currently looking at establishing a WPAC collaborative to bring awareness overall to the issues.
- Next, the WPAC will undertake the completion of the State of the Watershed Phase 2 Project, and further work towards the completion of the Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) component.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT/APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Executive Director introduced Paula Evans, the Treasurer of the Athabasca Watershed Council Board of Directors. Key points of the report were:

- The 2010-11 Fiscal Year was the first full year of operation for the AWC-WPAC.
- Administration initiated a financial record keeping system to track project expenditures and budgeted funds allocated in the annual Operational Plan and Budget.
- In February 2010, \$500,000 representing two years of core operational grant funding was received from Alberta Environment.
- Also in 2010, \$100,000 in project funding from the completion of the State of the Watershed Phase 1 Report was received from Alberta Environment.
- Administration prepared a Financial Statement for this fiscal year which was reviewed and approved by members Donna Mendelsohn (Watershed Steward – Central Athabasca Stewardship Society) and Juan Grande (Councillor, Town of Whitecourt).

MOTION: Motion by Bill Loutitt to accept the April 1, 2010 to March 31, 2011, Athabasca Watershed Council Financial Statement as presented.

Seconded by Brenda Lennie.

All in favour; motion carried.

6. SELECTION OF AUDITORS

The Treasurer called for two volunteers from the membership to review the Financial Statements for the 2012 AGM; both Donna Mendelsohn and Juan Grande volunteered. Also, as a responsibility to the grant reporting requirements of Alberta Environment, the AWC-WPAC requested that the membership support Administration's decision to hire the services of the Virginia Stafford Professional Corporation, C.G.A., for the completion of a Review and Engagement Report.

MOTION: Motion by Gerald Soroka to appoint Donna Mendelsohn and Juan Grande as volunteer financial auditors for the 2011-12 Annual General Meeting.

Seconded by Marsha Hayward.

All in favour; Motion carried.

MOTION: Motion by Gerald Nanninga to approve the hiring of the Virginia Stafford Professional Corporation, C.G.A, of Hinton, Alberta, to complete a Review and Engagement Report for the Athabasca Watershed Council.

Seconded by Ewald Quirant.

All in favour; Motion carried.

7. MOTIONS FOR RESOLUTION BY THE ATHABASCA WATERSHED COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Lavone Olson, President of the Athabasca Watershed Council, introduced the motions for resolution by the membership at the AGM.

Background on the first Motion:

- Board of Directors Meeting – May 28, 2011. Motion was passed that the Athabasca Board of Directors Membership will be limited to Alberta residents. General membership is open to everyone.
- Motion tabled at the Board of Directors Meeting, June 23, 2010, that amendment to the Terms of Reference of the Board of Directors require approval by the general membership, to be decided at the 2011 Annual General Meeting.

The President called for any discussion regarding the motion on the floor. Tom Weber, current Board member of the Athabasca Watershed Council advised the membership that over the course of the meetings conducted by the Initiator's Group, and by the Athabasca Watershed Council over the past year, it had become apparent that the general membership should be open to anyone. However, because the WPAC was formed and is funded by the Province of Alberta, it was important the governing body of the Council be made up of individuals who resided within the province.

Proposed Motion: Clause 4.3 of the Board of Directors Terms of Reference will be revised as follows: *"Membership on the Board of Directors of the Athabasca Watershed Council is open to Alberta residents only".*

MOTION: Motion by Tom Weber to accept the proposed motion as presented.

Seconded by Shawn Berry.

All in favour; Motion carried.

Background on the second Motion:

- Possible amendment to the Board of Directors Terms of Reference, Clause 7.3: “Individual Board members do not have any authority to speak for the AWC-WPAC when dealing with the media, the public, or other parties as per the Communications policy authorized by the Board of Directors”.

The President called for any discussion regarding the motion on the floor. Janice Pitman, current Board member of the Athabasca Watershed Council, advised the membership that throughout her time on the Board, it had become apparent that there is a great deal of media interested in the Athabasca Watershed Council. Developing key media messages would provide the means for individual Board members to safely communicate with their own local media. Any further information required by the media over and above the key media messages could either be obtained from the President of the AWC-WPAC or the Executive Director.

Proposed Motion: Clause 7.3 of the Board of Directors Terms of Reference will be revised as follows: *“Board members may speak to the media, the public, or other parties on behalf of the Athabasca Watershed Council, if they adhere to key media messages developed and approved by the Board of Directors”.*

MOTION: Motion by Janice Pitman to accept the proposed Motion as presented.

Motion seconded by Wayne Brehaut.

All in favour; motion carried.

8. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS PROCESS

The Executive Director introduced Doug Badger, Janice Pitman and Paula Evans, respectively the Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer of the Athabasca Watershed Council.

During today’s meeting there would be an election to fill seven (7) vacant positions on the Board of Directors:

- **Aboriginal Sector (2 positions);**
- **“Other” Sector (1 position);**
- **Non-Government Organization Sector (3 positions);**
- **Government Sector (1 position).**

The Nominations for the seven available positions on the Board of Directors of the Athabasca Watershed Council were read. Brief biographies of each candidate were also provided. Doug Badger inquired if there were any nominations from the floor. There was one nomination from the floor; Julie Burke.

Aboriginal Sector:

- **Nomination received for Melanie Daniels** – has a degree in Biology and has worked for the Metis Settlements General Council. Currently a private contractor.

- **Nomination received for Julie Burke** – Has been with the Keepers of the Athabasca for one year; was a volunteer for the Junior Forest Wardens for eight years; member of the Metis Nation of Alberta.
- **Nomination received for Lou Pawlowich** – Served as Councillor for I.D. 22 in the Peace River Area; Currently employed by the Metis Settlements General Council.

“Other” Sector:

- **Nomination received for David Rector** – Began his career with watershed protection; also involved with the NSWA. Currently employed by EPCOR.

Non-Government Organization Sector (NGO):

- **Nomination received for Tom Weber** – Has a passion for the rivers in the Fort McMurray area; Member of the Clearwater River Committee; has been a Board Member on the Athabasca Watershed Council since the Initiator’s Group.
- **Nomination received for Lorraine Johnston-MacKay** – Currently President of the Hinton Historical Tracks & Trails Society; Chair/Vice Chair Hinton Council for Arts and Culture; Co-Chair of the Athabasca River Valley Canoe Brigade and the Hinton and District Historical Foundation.
- **Nomination received for Paula Evans** – Currently serves as a Councillor for the Town of Athabasca; also current Treasurer of the Athabasca Watershed Council.

Government Sector (NGO):

- **Nomination received for Gerald Nanninga** – Councillor, County of Barrhead.

MOTION: Motion by Janice Linehan to close nominations.

Seconded by Richard Chabaylo.

All in favour; motion carried.

MOTION: Motion by Donna Mendelsohn to accept Gerald Nanninga by acclamation to fill the vacant government sector position on the Board of Directors of the Athabasca Watershed Council.

Seconded by Mike Cook.

All in favour; motion carried.

MOTION: Motion by Bill Loutitt to accept Lorraine Johnston-MacKay by acclamation to fill one of three vacant NGO sector positions on the Board of Directors of the Athabasca Watershed Council.

Seconded by Brenda Lennie.

All in favour; motion carried.

MOTION: Motion by Janice Linehan to accept Tom Weber by acclamation to fill one of three vacant NGO sector positions on the Board of Directors of the Athabasca Watershed Council.

Seconded by Richard Chabaylo.

All in favour; motion carried.

MOTION: Motion by Wayne Brehaut to accept Paula Evans by acclamation to fill one of three vacant NGO Sector positions on the Board of Directors of the Athabasca Watershed Council.

Seconded by Marsha Hayward.

All in favour; motion carried.

MOTION: Motion by Janice Linehan to accept David Rector by acclamation to fill the one vacant "Other" Sector position on the Board of Directors of the Athabasca Watershed Council.

Seconded by Paula Evans.

All in favour; motion carried.

With respect to the Aboriginal Sector seats, it was noted that there should be one member representing First Nations (currently Doug Badger), one member to represent the Metis Settlements General Council (only Lou Pawlowich had that affiliation, so he would fill one of the two vacant seats by acclamation), and finally one member to represent the Metis Nation of Alberta. Both Julie Burke and Melanie Daniels had that affiliation, therefore the membership would be asked to vote for one of the two to fill the remaining vacant seat for the Aboriginal Sector of the Athabasca Watershed Council.

MOTION: Motion by Shawn Berry to accept Lou Pawlowich by acclamation to fill one of two vacant Aboriginal Sector positions on the Board of Directors of the Athabasca Watershed Council.

Seconded by Marsha Hayward.

All in favour; motion carried.

A request was made for two individuals to act as election scrutinizers.

MOTION: Motion by Wayne Brehaut to appoint Janice Linehan and Richard Chabaylo as election scrutinizers for the AGM.

Seconded by Donna Mendelsohn.

All in favour; motion carried.

At 12:00 noon, everyone present broke for lunch, and members were asked to cast their ballots over the lunch hour. Polls were closed at 1:00 p.m. The Annual General meeting reconvened at 1:10 p.m.

The election scrutinizers collected the ballot box. The election results would be announced after the first guest speaker's presentation.

9. KEYNOTE ADDRESS: KEN SADDLEBACK, FIRST NATIONS ELDER AND TEACHER "*First Nations of the Athabasca and the Spirit of Water*".

The Executive Director introduced the guest speaker. Ken Saddleback was from the Hobbema Samson Cree Nation.

Ken Saddleback spoke from the heart and his own personal experience about the deep and profound meaning of who native people are, and that this was the basis for how he would reach out to others who want to maintain clear, pure water. He spoke of aboriginal creation stories, and that everything is based on Natural Law. We are all connected by water. In Native tradition, the women were considered the water keepers, and he reminded all women to remember their gift and stand up for both the water and the land, because whatever happens upstream will affect everyone downstream.

At the end of his presentation, Ken encouraged all to realize that it is everyone's responsibility to maintain pure, clear water as a legacy for our children.

The Executive Director thanked Mr. Saddleback for his presentation.

10. ELECTION OF THE BOARD

Paula Evans and Doug Badger, members of the Nominations Committee of the Athabasca Watershed Council announced that Julie Burke would be the new member of the Aboriginal Sector of the Athabasca Watershed Council.

MOTION: **Motion by Richard Chabaylo to accept Julie Burke by election to fill the vacant Aboriginal Sector position on the Board of Directors of the Athabasca Watershed Council.**

Seconded by Marsha Hayward.

All in favour; motion carried.

MOTION: **Motion by Sonny Flett to destroy all ballots from the election.**

Seconded by Ewald Quirant.

All in favour; motion carried.

Nominations from the floor for Board President would be conducted after the second guest speaker's presentation.

11. PRESENTATION: BIBLIOGRAPHY – ATHABASCA RIVER BASIN PROJECT – Dr. Robert Holmberg, Professor Emeritus, Athabasca University

Dr. Robert Holmberg presented a synopsis of a key project from Athabasca University – the Bibliography of the River Basin (BARB), an initiative of the newly formed Athabasca River Basin Research Institute (ARBRI). The BARB project currently holds 26,000 science references, with more being added over time. The project provided an invaluable reference for research and reporting on the Athabasca Watershed, and once completely developed, will be accessible and searchable online.

The Executive Director thanked Dr. Holmberg for his presentation.

12. NOMINATION OF THE BOARD PRESIDENT

A call for nominations for the position of President of the Board of Directors of the Athabasca Watershed Council was made.

MOTION: Motion by Janice Pitman to nominate Paula Evans for President of the Board of Directors of the Athabasca Watershed Council.

Seconded by Doug Badger.

All in favour; motion carried.

Paula Evans accepted the nomination.

A second call for nominations was made.

MOTION: Motion by Richard Chabaylo to nominate Doug Badger for President of the Board of Directors of the Athabasca Watershed Council.

Seconded by Donna Mendelsohn.

All in favour; motion carried.

A third and final call for nominations was made. There were no further nominations.

MOTION: Motion by Gerald Soroka to cease nominations for the position of Board President.

Seconded by Janice Linehan.

All in favour; motion carried.

Each candidate provided a brief autobiography. The membership was asked to cast their vote for Board President.

The scrutinizers tabulated the ballots; they announced that with the highest number of votes, Paula Evans would be the new Board President.

MOTION: Motion by Wayne Brehaut made a motion to accept Paula Evans as President of the Board of Directors of the Athabasca Watershed Council.

Seconded by Doug Badger.

All in favour; motion carried.

MOTION: Motion by Gerald Soroka to destroy all ballots from the election for President.

Seconded by Ewald Quirant.

All in favour; motion carried.

The new Board President, Paula Evans, made a brief acceptance speech.

13. CLOSING REMARKS

The Past President, Lavone Olson, congratulated Paula Evans, and thanked both Paula and Doug Badger for running for the position of President. She also thanked everyone for attending and supporting the Athabasca Watershed Council's Annual General Meeting. She remarked that it had been a pleasure to serve with the Board over the past few years; she welcomed the new faces, and expressed her sincere appreciation to the outgoing Board members, Bill Loutitt and Wayne Brehaut.

The next Annual General Meeting of the Athabasca Watershed Council would be Saturday, May 26, 2012, the location to be announced.

14. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Motion by Tom Weber to adjourn the 2nd Annual General Meeting of the Athabasca Watershed Council at 3:20 p.m.

Seconded by Sonny Flett.

All in favour, motion carried.