

Medway Community Forest Cooperative Board of Directors Meeting
February 16, 2023, 7pm
Virtual Meeting

Attendees:

Fritz Meyer (FM)
Don Kimball (DK)
Katie McLean (KM)
Will Martin (WM)
Mike Lancaster (ML)
Mary Jane Rodger (MR)
Matt Miller (MM)
Jennika Hunsinger (JH)
Donna Crossland (DC)
Abby Lewis (AL)

Agenda:

Approval of the agenda
Approval of the minutes of the December meeting
Financial update
AGM Discussion
Negotiations update
Campground Update
Executive Director process update
HWA update

Approval of February 16, 2023, Meeting agenda AL, DC seconded. **APPROVED**

Approval of December 15, 2022, Meeting Minutes

MOTION to approve December 15, 2022, Board meeting minutes. AL, DC seconded.
APPROVED.

Financial Update

- December 2022 income totalled \$62 143.83, with \$16 328.83 from the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) trail grant and Department of Environment hemlock woolly adelgid treatment program grant (\$45 815.00).
- Worker's Compensation Board charges are now included in the staff wages, totalling \$13 829.98 in December 2022. December expenses totalled \$26 728.19.

- Planning to separate HWA contribution agreement income out from MCFC Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (DNRR) grants in the future.

MOTION to approve December Financial Report. FM, AL seconded. **APPROVED**

Negotiations Update

- This committee has met again twice in the latest round of negotiation efforts.
- MR has been named co-chair of the proceedings.
- Expansion of the licence area is off the table currently, although it was made clear that a renewed licence agreement must include this.
- Discussion of an increased overhead allowance based on harvesting activity is underway.
- MCFC Management Plan must be updated; this should be updated around the same time as an updated licence agreement is signed and released. DC to assist in updating natural disturbance regime section, KM to update species at risk and SMP sections, section needed on operational procedures, others to follow. This was a great opportunity to engage the stakeholders and community and can be used in this way again.
- Target for an annual community investment has been set at approximately \$100 000, to be negotiated and efforts will be made to prove the mission of the MCFC goes beyond self-sufficiency of the business and extends to the provision of community benefit.

Campground Update

- JH reviewed the campground plans and tasks coming up to opening day in spring/summer 2023, a small group visited the trails, worked on the sites, and fell danger trees, in fall 2022. More work will be undertaken in winter/spring 2023.
- JH is looking to purchase fire boxes for campsites from a local source for \$175 each. DK suggests shopping around, or just purchasing the grates to lower start up costs.
- Target launch date is tentatively May long weekend, MCFC summer student is expected to help with this work.
- Next steps include having George Uhlman inspect the site for further machine work to aid drainage along the trail and site preparations. Materials will be kindly donated by Freeman's Lumber for outhouses and boardwalks are expected to go to Tilia Builders for construction. The backwoods trail will need help with delivery of materials to the more remote wet sections. A firewood shed will be needed as well.

AGM Planning

- AGM should be hosted in May to return to the old MCFC schedule, May 13th, 2023, and in-person event to engage the community.

-Nomination Committee will be struck in hopes of filling gaps within the board.

Executive Director Process Update

-Based on the internal evaluation of the MCFC structure, the Board has determined the need for an Executive Director hire in early 2024. The detailed job description is circulating among the staff and Board executive.

-Funding is still uncertain, will depend upon the outcome of the recent NSWWT grant application, eligible body status of the NSWWT, and MCFC Negotiations, as well as the detailed budget of the hemlock treatment initiative. Understanding the contributions of these three initiatives together will ensure the sustainability of this position. MR cautions this could become an exhaustive workload with the hemlock treatment initiative. That project will need to be fully staffed to ensure success.

-We are planning to launch the new hiring process soon, with this process beginning in the new fiscal year.

HWA Project Update

-DC is currently on a contract with MCFC to define roles and responsibilities within this project, developing Strike Team training modules and volunteer training days. DNRR is writing safe work practices for the backpack spraying, so DC may only have to develop one for the tree injections.

- A graphic designer was found for the treatment decision key developed last year, this has been used among HWA practitioners and will be professionally designed.

-Tree-marking procedures will be reviewed with colleagues from USA to help speed that process during treatment preparation.

-MM developing this project budget, deliverables, and expectations for the contribution agreement with the Nova Scotia Department of Environment, along with KM, JH, and input of others.

MOTION to Adjourn; WM 8:41pm

Medway Community Forest Cooperative Board of Directors Meeting
March 16, 2023, 7pm
Virtual Meeting

Attendees:

Don Kimball (DK)
Katie McLean (KM)
Mike Lancaster (ML)
Mary Jane Rodger (MR)
Matt Miller (MM)
Jennika Hunsinger (JH)
Donna Crossland (DC)
Steve Ward (SW)
Ryan McIntyre (RM)
Abby Lewis (AL)
George Townsend (GT)

Agenda:

Approval of the agenda
Approval of the minutes of the February 16th, 2023 meeting
Financial update and 2022 Year-End Review
HWA Contribution Agreement
ED Process Update
Land Trust Update(s)
Negotiations update
Campground Update

Approval of March 16, 2023, Meeting agenda DC, AL seconded. **APPROVED**

Approval of February 16, 2022, Meeting Minutes

MOTION to approve February 16, 2023, Board meeting minutes. AL, DC seconded. **APPROVED.**

Financial Update

- Received HWA funding in 2022, which has led into a larger contribution agreement for 2023 and subsequent years.
- \$23 379.27 from the HWA consulting contract will be carried forward to 2023.
- Last quarter's stumpage is not yet reflected in this update. When this line is updated, this financial update will be posted on Basecamp for Directors' approval later.

HWA Contribution Agreement

- MCFC staff and board members have developed a workplan and agreement for a five-year contribution agreement with the Department of Environment. This fund is tied to carbon emission avoidance in protected areas, old growth stands, and private lands, and the NSWWT will be tied into this.
- This project will contribute 20% to the Executive Director's role in subsequent years once hiring has taken place.
- Will be hiring strike team members locally after posting advertisements for two weeks.

MOTION to proceed with an MCFC Board of Directors vote on the signing of the agreement to provide hemlock woolly adelgid treatment service to sites identified by the Nova Scotia Department of Environment through 2027. GT, DK seconded. **APPROVED.**

DC recused herself from this vote and discussion as she has been significantly involved with the development of this proposal, agreement, and workplan.

- In the budget as presented, wages for the coordinator role should be increased to be higher than \$30/hour and it is expected that by 2025 a new Coordinator have been developed to take on the coordinator role.
- Strike Team Member wages to be increased so these start at \$25 per hour, with increases to the other positions as well.
- Wages are under salaries and should be under the contractor lines. Budget allocation can be flexible within annual allowances and without introducing additional budget categories.

MOTION to proceed with the signing of the agreement with the Nova Scotia Department of Environment for \$1.6 million over four years. **APPROVED**

Executive Director Hiring Process

- Formal competition will proceed soon. The job advertisement has been worded with salary posted as \$70 000, with the budget for a salary of up to \$80 000, should selected candidate have skills commensurate with that salary.
- Role will span the MCFC, NSWWT, and the new HWA treatment program.
- Closing date likely to be set in early April 2023, or when a suitable candidate is identified.

Nova Scotia Working Woodlands Land Trust Update

- Walton's Trust proposal was successful! Over \$700 000 over four years for the Land Trust to be launched, pending inclusion into the Nova Scotia Conservation Easements Act. Contacts are looking favourable, letters of support have been issued by a diversity of partner organisations, woodlot members, and advocates. Leverage has been added through the HWA treatment program.

- Additionally, the NSWWT was granted \$100 000 over 2 years for OECMs (Other Effective Conservation Measures) on private land through a program jointly funded through the provincial and federal Departments of Environment and Climate Change.
- These funds will support the Executive Director position and several other staff members to facilitate full launch of the Land Trust.
- Approval through the Nova Scotia Habitat Conservation Fund for \$18 500 to carry out outreach and biodiversity assessments in partnership with the Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute.
- Draft carbon agreement has been returned by environmental lawyer Jamie Simpson.

Negotiations Update

- Updates to the Forest Stewardship Plan are upcoming, including a strategic wood supply analysis through the Nova Scotia Community College Voucher Program, operations five-year operating plans, to be shared with the public.
- Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) needs an increase, as well as the Overhead Allowance increase currently under discussion with the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables representatives.
- MM to follow up with more details of the negotiations when they become available.

Campground Update

- Proposing to push back the official launch of the campground by one year, with site prep of the nicest sites to be targeted for first year. This is reasonable given all the other developments underway.

MOTION to Adjourn; AL 8:39 pm

Medway Community Forest Cooperative Board of Directors Meeting
April 20, 2023, 7pm
Virtual Meeting

Attendees:

Katie McLean (KM)
Mike Lancaster (ML)
Mary Jane Rodger (MR)
Matt Miller (MM)
Jennika Hunsinger (JH)
Donna Crossland (DC)
Will Martin (WM)
Jillian Weldon-Genge (JWG)
Abby Lewis (AL)

Agenda:

Approval of the agenda
Approval of the minutes, March meeting
Financial report
ED hiring process
HWA project update
MCFC work plan
Management plan update
Lease agreement update(s)
AGM planning
Staffing update

Approval of April 20, 2023, Meeting agenda WM, DC seconded. **APPROVED**

Approval of March 16, 2022, Meeting Minutes

MOTION to approve March 20, 2023, Board meeting minutes. ML, AL seconded. **APPROVED.**

Financial Update

-Limited update available tonight:

- MCFC operating budget still in draft form, will be completed by next meeting.
- Full funding of \$133 000 from the NS Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (DNRR) was deposited in April 2022.

ED hiring process

-Applicant information is available on the BaseCamp site, Directors are asked to review all and prepare a list for interview priority.

-It is agreed that we extend the competition until more suitable candidates are located, while work toward an interview with our top candidate as we proceed.

-Discussion around new channels to recruit high calibre candidates to the position, including paying more for advertisements.

-KM agreed to carry out short screening call with top candidates.

HWA Project Update

-HWA project moving into the Caledonia bank building on Monday with furniture and supplies. Some upgrades will be needed to ensure safe storage of pesticides and equipment.

-DC and MM have been conducting interviews for the team, expecting to offer positions very soon.

-Two trucks have been purchased for the project. Expecting to start on May 1st, 2023, with three days of strike team safety training.

-There are requests for demonstrations of pesticide mixing and equipment calibrations, and the Hemlock Heroes volunteer initiative must be rolled out including training of volunteers.

-Thank you to DC and MM for their massive efforts to get the funding coordinated, equipment purchased, and preparations made for the coming operational season.

MCFC Workplan

-Workplan for the year was presented, can be found posted on BaseCamp

Management Plan Update

-MCFC Management Plan needs to be updated. MR recused herself from this conversation, has offered to complete this work. She may be eligible for a stipend of \$5000 for this extraordinary contribution to the work of MCFC. This approach will ensure the work is completed in a timely manner and authored by one of those most familiar with the licence area.

-JWG added that she will be updating the Strategic Management Plan for the Mersey Woodlands for Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) certification, conversation and coordination will need to happen with MCFC.

MOTION to approve a board member stipend of \$5000 to support the update the MCFC Management Plan as per the NSDNRR Forest Stewardship Plan template. ML, WM. **APPROVED**

Lease Agreement Updates

-The HWA project will move into the Caledonia bank building, renting from Georgie Uhlman. A lease agreement exists and the space is appropriate for the needs of the project. The rent will be \$600 per month including utilities and liability insurance.

- The Hub agreement has changed on a 6-month trial basis, with the MCFC taking over the main part of the Hub space and the small office for \$650 per month. The Hub will move into the board room.

-JH will connect DC and MM to the Hub manager to look into cleaning services for the Bank building.

AGM Planning

-Change of date requested

-Directors and staff requested to strike a Nominations Committee: AL, KM, MM. Considering youth/under 25 years old, community members eligible for the economic and Mi'kmaq seats, as well as members in older age classes, will be sought.

Staffing Update

MCFC/NSWWT summer staff interviews were conducted last week- one was outstanding, contract is undergoing edits by KM and will be offered as soon as possible.

Adjourned 8:44pm

Medway Community Forest Cooperative Board of Directors Meeting
May 25, 2023, 7pm
Virtual Meeting

Attendees:

Katie McLean (KM)
Mike Lancaster (ML)
Fritz Meyer (FM)
Mary Jane Rodger (MR)
Matt Miller (MM)
Ryan McIntyre (RM)
Don Kimball (DK)
Abby Lewis (AL)

Agenda:

Approval of the agenda
Approval of the minutes from April 20, 2023, Board meeting
Financial report & review of Year-end Statement
Work vehicle discussion
New Freeman's Agreement (motion required)
AGM update
ED Process Update
Management plan update
HWA project update
Recreation Discussion

Approval of May 25, 2023, Meeting agenda AL, MR seconded. **APPROVED**

Approval of April 20, 2022, Meeting Minutes

MOTION to approve April 20, 2023, Board meeting minutes. ML, AL seconded. **APPROVED.**

Call for Board members with a conflict of interest

None heard.

Financial Report & Review of Year-End Statement

- End of year statements have been prepared, income: \$415 761.75 total, with \$26 000 from 32 tonnes harvest last year.

MOTION to approve financial report and year-end statement FM, ML seconded. **APPROVED**

- The draft budget for 2023 will be further refined before a motion for approval is called.
- Actuals were presented up to April 2023, as we continue to change over to QuickBooks some categories may need to be further refined for maximum transparency.

MOTION to approve the financial report as presented FM, MJ. **APPROVED**

Truck Discussion

The truck needs the MVI this month, Route 8 Auto Services inspected and found approximately \$3500 worth of work needing to be completed to meet road safety requirements. DK recommends that we seek a second opinion. Other discussion included selling the vehicle for parts and looking for a second-hand truck to replace it. Suggested that we decide on a budget to start looking at options.

MOTION that staff to work toward purchase of a newer, road-worthy truck, by private sale, through a second-hand dealership, or by lease, the budget for this purchase to be determined by executive but less than \$20 000. MR, AL seconded. **APPROVED**

New Freeman's Agreement

MM met with Freeman's Lumber staff recently to negotiate a new agreement for the MCFC. This year's agreement will be nearly identical to last year's with slightly different prices reflecting revised Crown stumpage rates- stumpage on red pine and hemlock sawlogs were nearly halved, meaning the MCFC will sustain a loss on the margin resulting from those products. With our estimated volumes at the rates proposed we would expect a gross revenue of \$40 151. MR recommended revisiting this offer from Freeman's as the MCFC margins have decreased significantly with this proposed agreement. MM will go back to the negotiation table and bring this discussion back to the Board. The full agreement will be shared on BaseCamp when finalized.

AGM Update

This Saturday, May 27th, the MCFC AGM will be hosted at the Maitland Bridge Community Hall, meeting at 9am to set up with the official start at 10am. The business meeting will take place from 1-1:30pm, with a follow up tour of the Stave Lakes Campground afterward.

ED Process Update

Interviews have been hosted, none of the candidates seem to be the right fit. This is a position we do not want to compromise on. If any directors have ideas for talented individuals, please bring them forward.

To fill the need for administrative support at a high level, it has been proposed that we seek a consultant to fill this need in the interim. Past Board member Peter Jones has been named as a possible option; others will be sought.

Suggestions include advertising through universities, alumni associations, and professional associations.

Management Plan Update

MR has been working on the MCFC Management Plan update. Formatting will be changed to match the new NS Department of Natural Resources and Renewables Forest Stewardship Plan guidelines, within reason as this still needs to meet needs of the Mersey Woodlands SFI certification. MR will split mapping needs with MM and will continue to work on this.

HWA Project Update

Strike team is hired and working well together honing skills lately in backpack spraying and injections. Office is set up in Georgie's bank building, wash station and pesticide storage are working well. Have encountered equipment malfunctioning issues. Nearly complete at the Four Mile Stillwater trail. Two training sessions for Hemlock Heroes volunteer applicators will happen in June. A demonstration day is expected to happen in June as well. Treatments within the Medway Lakes Protected Area will happen next. The next applications will run more smoothly once the NS Department of Environment have a Program Coordinator and GIS staff in place.

Recreation Scenarios

The MCFC license agreement has language around Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs), next we can tackle recreation opportunities. We will soon be running a campground, what are further opportunities to tender cabin/yurt/guiding routes or other ecotourism opportunities? We need to generate scenarios for use within the license area.

Ideas mentioned include: mountain bike/multi-use trails, cabin network for multiple uses, ATV access, hunting-specific uses, access to the water at the campground (in the original campground plan we weren't permitted to install a dock to provide access). How do we develop this into a licensable package? This might be a question that can be posed at the AGM.

MOTION to donate \$250 to the Steve Mockford Fund for Student Resources through the Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute. MR, KM seconded. **APPROVED**

Adjourned 9pm

Medway Community Forest Cooperative Board of Directors Meeting
June 22, 2023, 7pm
Virtual Meeting

Attendees:

Katie McLean (KM)
Fritz Meyer (FM)
Mary Jane Rodger (MR)
Matt Miller (MM)
Jennika Hunsinger (JH)
Peter Neily (PN)
Steven Ward (SW)
Don Kimball (DK)
Jillian Weldon-Genge (JG)
Elizabeth Mack (EM)
Abby Lewis (AL)

Agenda:

Approval of the minutes of May 25, 2023
Additions to the Agenda
Approval of the Agenda
Declaration of Conflict of Interest
Election of Officers
Staffing Update
Financial Report
HWA Project Update
Operations Update
Outreach Update
Research Update

Approval of June 22, 2023, Meeting agenda MR, AL seconded. **APPROVED.**

Approval of May 25, 2022, Meeting Minutes

MOTION to approve May 25, 2023, Board meeting minutes. AL, SW seconded. **APPROVED.**

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None heard.

Election of Officers

All officers from the previous term are willing to maintain their positions, however, there is room for additional support from new Board members if anyone so desires. The offer was made to recruit other Board members to the Executive team, particularly to the role of Vice-Chair.

MOTION to re-elect the three members of the Executive to the positions of Chair (Katie McLean), Secretary (Abby Lewis), and Treasurer (Fritz Meyer). DK, MR seconded. No additional discussion. **APPROVED.**

MOTION to defer the election of Vice-Chair until more Board members are present, especially as ML was nominated to the role but not present at this meeting, in consideration of DC's willingness to maintain her position in the role of Vice-Chair. AL, MR seconded. **APPROVED.**

Staffing Announcement

After three years as fulltime staff member of the MCFC and the NSWWT, JH has resigned effective August 4th, 2023. MR will prepare the Land Trust Manager job advertisement for circulation as soon as possible.

Executive Director update: Peter Jones is willing to help but has limited time, we will follow up with him to determine the specific needs Peter can contribute to filling at the MCFC. The job advertisement is still active for the ED role and had been posted widely, though few applications received have been appropriate. Three interviews have been carried out and several people have been approached individually. Additional support for MCFC outreach and support will be developed and job advertisements posted.

MOTION to hire Peter Jones on a contractual basis to help with the MCFC for 4-5 hours per week prior to filling the vacant Executive Director position. MR, DC seconded. **APPROVED.**

Financial Report

MM presented financial report with actuals through May 2023. Payroll expenses totalled \$26 958.70, administrative, and general costs totalled \$7 592.76. Total assets of the MCFC amount to \$525 607.13 including vehicles, small equipment, signage, cash and cash equivalent.

MOTION to approve financial report as presented. AL, DC seconded. **APPROVED**

HWA Project Update

DC presented on the HWA project work underway- introduced the project funded by the Nova Scotia Department of Environment (DoE) and the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (DNRR), trialled treatments last year, summarized the landscape level approach to effective treatment allocation, to inform new members of the Board. A list of sites for treatment this year is underway by an MCFC three-member strike team. Strike team members are pesticide applicators and fully equipped to treat trees. The Hemlock Heroes' trained volunteer team has been launched, with two training opportunities to join in the region. A self-

signup Ticket Tailor system is being used to allow volunteers to sign themselves up for three different types of daily activities. Recent discussions at Asitu'lisk and at the Rogers' family farm nearby, there is great demand for this service and training and MCFC is leading the way.

A July 15th, 2023, event planned at Wentzell's Lake Park to offer HWA outreach to the public there, this will be an opportunity to elevate the role of the Nova Scotia Working Woodlands Trust (NSWWT) as a partner in this project.

Interested board members can check the MCFC website for updates on where the team will be treating trees in upcoming weeks, all are welcome to join.

Operations Update

MCFC signed a renewed harvest agreement with Freeman's Lumber this week. Lumber prices have fallen recently so these prices could not be negotiated any higher. Species at Risk (SAR) bird researchers are working on upcoming proposed blocks currently, most have a SAR or two so the beneficial management practices (BMP) project will continue. A bridge on the west branch road in the Medway block of the MCFC license area will be permanently fixed. Sherilynn from Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn (KMKNO) has visited MCFC recently to see the harvest planning process.

Campground update: signs are being installed by Digby Signs. Tilia Builders have built and installed outhouses on the site. When holes can be established some work will be carried out on several of the campsites.

Management Plan Update: MR has worked on the text of the updated plan and has begun the mapping.

Outreach Update

EM has completed one outreach event per month in recent months, and new signage should be installed at the campground this week. The Nature Notebooking event with Kalen Roblee in June had 7 participants. A Pollinator House Building event is coming up in July and the Forest Market Fair needs a target organisation to fundraise for on August 27th, 2023.

Sue Gas' Dalhousie class will visit the MCFC once again toward the end of August, Peter Neily will be there to help facilitate the class Forest Ecosystem Classification experience (MM). Stakeholder tour in August or September (MM). The North Queens Board of Trade requested donation to their Canada Day event, value to be small and discussed by email.

The Howl Experience- a youth community service program has reached out to discuss opportunities to help on a building project in August 2023 (JH).

Research Update

Crop tree release is a silviculture technique done on private land often but less often on Crown land, MM has formalized an approach to a crop tree release study with the Northern

Hardwoods Research Institute; Gaetan Pelletier will support some research and possibly trials in the MCFC, more information to come as silviculture work moves forward in the fall.

Research Committee

Reaffirming this committee of AL, MR, DC, PN, FM, others are welcome to be involved.

Dr. Cindy Staicer and AL have been moving ARUs around the MCFC. Expanding Gap Group Shelterwood (EGGS) block point count surveys were conducted with a large team of 9 surveyors on June 15th, 2023, will be revisited to focus on locating chimney swift roost sites in a couple of weeks.

JH is exploring the NSCC Forest Innovation Voucher Program to build on the Biodiversity Study she initiated in 2019 for a future student and study direction. Additional partnerships around this work are possible and the Research Committee can be called upon to assist.

Adjourned 8:57pm

Medway Community Forest Cooperative Board of Directors Meeting
October 19, 2023, 6:30pm
Virtual Meeting

Attendees:

Katie McLean (KM)
Mary Jane Rodger (MR)
Matt Miller (MM)
Will Martin (WM)
Heba Jarrar (HJ)
Peter Neily (PN)
Abby Lewis (AL)
Mike Lancaster (ML)

Agenda:

Approval of the minutes of June 22, 2023
Additions to the Agenda
Approval of the Agenda
Declaration of Conflict of Interest
Staffing Update
Financial Report
Operations Update
HWA Project Update
Strategic Networking
Outreach Update

Approval of October 19, 2023, Meeting agenda AL, WM seconded. **APPROVED.**

Approval of June 22, 2022, Meeting Minutes

MOTION to approve June 22, 2023, Board meeting minutes. AL, PN seconded. **APPROVED.**

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None heard.

Staffing Updates

MR has been back at the organisation as Executive Director for one month. Additionally, Mhari Lamarque has started in the role of NSWWT Land Trust Manager and has hit the ground running with minimal guidance. MM has agreed to reassume the position of Operations Manager at the MCFC, where he will continue to support negotiations and day-to-day operations. Two members of the HWA Strike Team resigned approximately 2 months ago, while

a fulltime coordinator, Jessica Ihlen, was hired. A couple of new staff are still on contract for the short term; two more full time staff are starting in December. Donna Crossland is stepping back from the Coordinator role but has been working in small capacity until 2024 to iron out Standard Operating Procedures, videos, and other tasks. We could offer a full-time position for HWA Strike Team and administrative/outreach responsibilities with any of MCFC organisations, there is funding and work available. The NSWWT will have a Stewardship Coordinator starting full time in January 2024, pending eligible body status approval. Incentives to retain season staff were discussed.

Financial Report

Financial report presented by MR. No income from timber sales over the summer, aligned with the singing season. October actuals are not finalized but a small amount of revenue came from an outstanding silviculture claim. Regular wages and other expenses were incurred over the summer. Rent is higher than previous years due to the need for two offices, along with expenses related to small tools and equipment.

MR working on operating budget for the year. The HWA project still has significant money to spend down. It was decided not to approve financial report as presented, pending further work. We expect to need another NSDNRR grant for MCFC this year. MR will provide further information on funding and forecasting next board meeting.

Operations Update

Three goals for the season; immediate approvals for two harvest sites which will be up for comment in next two weeks. Requirement for archeological approval is holding up the Expanding Gap Group Shelterwood (EGGS) block work. The Mi'kmaq Forestry Initiative (MFI) is beginning a research project involving the MCFC soon. A new silviculture contractor will be carrying out Pre-Commercial Thinning (PCTs) and crop tree release treatments on MCFC in November. The next annual operating plan is in the works.

Campground update- it is proving a challenge to find a place to dig a hole for the accessible campsite outhouse. The HOWL Experience brought around 20 volunteers to clear brush this fall.

HWA Project Update

93 ha treated, 68 ha marked and ready to be treated. Productivity has been down due to the loss of two strike team members. Reassessing compensation and benefits offered to next year's strike team members from \$23.50 to around \$25. Consideration of switching to a piecework rate is worthwhile to increase productivity during peak treatment times of the year.

Negotiations Update and Agreement

Draft of the license agreement was shared with the Board of Directors and is to remain confidential.

This agreement involves a ten-year term with automatic renewal at five years if both parties remain satisfied with the arrangement. This is still limiting to the longer-term opportunities MCFC can pursue which has been discussed in negotiations. Notably, inclusion of non timber forest products (NTFPs) in this agreement is aligned with a change in language of the *Forests Act* and is welcome, and carbon agreement-enabling language is included. Mineral resources rights are still not within the scope of MCFC rights. Access to a larger license area will not happen, the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (DNRR) has indicated there will continue to be support to make MCFC financially viable within the existing license area. Should lands be withdrawn from the license area, MCFC would require compensation with additional lands elsewhere.

The clause requiring MCFC to cut a certain percentage (50%) of designated Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) over 5 years is challenging and could require us to cut wood at a loss. Discussion around development of an MCFC-specific timber allocation model and the use of non-timber indicators. MR to investigate those indicators previously used in MCFC planning processes for ideas.

MCFC holds exclusive rights to forestry activities on the license area but requires prior approval for operations. Trade agreement language related to stumpage is pending. MCFC must keep DNRR informed of third-party agreements around timber products. Brooklyn Power Fibre Assurance- has never been brought into force and is part of all license agreements in Western NS.

As mentioned, NTFPs are included under this agreement and will be identified in the Stewardship Plan, including an outline of best practices for harvest and management. Written approval will be needed from DNRR to access NTFPs, this will help develop commercial agreements with people to access NTFPs on the license area. DNRR will want to track harvest volumes, harvest sites and the revenue coming from those products. Similar language exists for the outdoor recreation activities section.

MCFC is entitled to unencumbered, nonexclusive rights to roads on the lands. Certain roads will be maintained by DNRR, as needed. MCFC pays for roads that end at a harvest block, DNRR pays for the others or plans with WestFor and recreationalists when maintenance is required.

The clause related to Mi'kmaq Use of the area is standard language. Having this in writing is most welcome. Third Party Use clause is standard, this applies to firewood production on the MCFC license area.

Protocol Document is mentioned- the Management Committee will meet regularly to discuss. Long term Forest Stewardship Plan guidance should be followed as outlined.

Stumpage Rates- this clause will have rates emailed to MCFC staff as needed. As part of the stumpage structure, there be acknowledgment of overhead allowance. This will be discussed

further in the negotiations with DNRR representatives. As standard for the MCFC, silviculture funding may come from the province according to approved Silviculture Plan.

MCFC insurance policy will need to be increased to \$5 million rather than the \$2 million policy MCFC has previously held.

Strategic Networking Discussion

MR interested to become more politically active to serve both organizations- considering the Committee on Environment and Sustainable Prosperity, nomination for membership is open now. MR is open to ideas furthering MCFC- government engagement.

Adjourned 8:37 pm

Medway Community Forest Cooperative Board of Directors Meeting
December 20, 2023, 3:15 pm
In-Person Meeting at the NQ Business Hub

Attendees:

Fritz Meyer (FM)
Mary Jane Rodger (MR)
Melissa Labrador (M Labrador)
Matt Miller (MM)
Will Martin (WM)
Heba Jarrar (HJ)
Donna Crossland (DC)
Abby Lewis (AL)
Mike Lancaster (M Lancaster)
Don Kimball (DK)

Agenda:

Approval of the minutes of October 19, 2023
Additions to the Agenda
Approval of the Agenda
Declaration of Conflict of Interest
Financial Report
Staff Update
Negotiations Update

Approval of October 19, 2023, Meeting agenda

Approval of October 19, 2022, Meeting Minutes

MOTION to approve October 19, 2023, Board meeting minutes to be taken at the next meeting

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None heard.

Financial Report

Income: a Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC) payment for MCFC staff time on the tree-marking tour and organisation, the MCFC truck was sold (\$650), merchandise sales. Income from softwood (\$36 000) and roadside firewood sales (\$13 000).

Expenses: Staff and HWA crew wages, media consulting for five+ videos as part of HWA training materials that will be available on YouTube, re-payment to NSWWT for salaries. Payroll expenses to date (\$250 000).

MR submitted request for operational funding from the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (DNRR) in November.

MOTION to approve financial report until end November made by M Lancaster, DK seconded.
APPROVED.

Staff Update

MJ:

- Has developed staff policy handbook and circulated to staff for review. Core staff are enrolled in Health Spending Account plans and life insurance plans.
- Work with Westwood Lab at Dalhousie University on the Ecological Forestry Research Initiative (EFRI) will result in a MSc. student who will fulfill some summer student duties in 2024. Another student will be sought to help manage the MCFC campground.
- Summer student (2) funding will be sought from Canada Summer Jobs in early January 2024. NSWWT has received eligible body status, therefore the Walton's funding arrangement can proceed and a strong candidate to fill the NSWWT Stewardship Coordinator position has been identified.
- Discussion around staff housing, including Georgie's bank building with upstairs apartment.

MM:

- HWA update- crew came through November strong with good production. Silviculture contractor currently on site, day rate arrangement is under discussion for next year with discussion around production rate instead.
- Silviculture contractor Brown Bear Forestry is on site for precommercial thinning, they'll also complete crop tree releases in 2024.
- NSCC Voucher funding was approved for MCFC management plan update and spatial model with Remsoft and for desktop archeological assessment.
- AOP was approved and will be posted to BaseCamp. Harvesting has been a challenge regarding archeological assessments from KMKNO. The EGGS block and several others are expected to be approved by mid- January and ready for operations at the end of Jan.
- Campground- outhouses have been installed.

Negotiations Update

Negotiations committee to integrate suitable principles into termination clause in the new license agreement. The Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (DNRR) may be open to a statement indicative of a 30% Annual Allowable Cut over 4 years to allow time for

evaluation. The loss of institutional memory should be considered during this exercise, clear language must be used in case DNRR staff assigned to this negotiation changes.

Adjourned 4:18 pm HJ