

**Minutes of Meeting Board of Directors**

**Date: August 1, 2024**

**Time: 6:30 p.m.**

**Location: Country Grocer Boardroom**



Chair: Cam McCauley

Recording Secretary: Dianne Flood

Board Members: Jean Atkinson, Judy Brayden, Dave DePape, Di Gunderson, Maureen Quested, Jacqueline Sterk, Jay White

CLRSS Members: Jim Deck, Bea Greenway

Other guests: None

Regrets: Roger Hunter, Christoph Steeger, Genevieve Singleton, Jill Thompson, Tom Rutherford, Ian Morrison, Kristine Sandhu

The volunteer hours were collected from all those members in attendance.

**Land Acknowledgement:** We acknowledge that this meeting takes place on the unceded territories of the Quw'utsun, Pauquachin, Ts'uubaa-asatx, Malahat, Halalt, Penelakut, Stz'uminus, Lyackson, Ditidaht, and Pacheedaht Peoples who have stewarded this land for time immemorial. We hope our work here today will make a positive contribution to our shared future in the Cowichan Valley.

**Fourfold Way:**

Respect each other by having just one speaker at a time.

Expect people to speak from the heart with passion.

Expect people to show up to solve problems.

Expect people to speak without blame.

**Introductions:** None necessary

**1.) Adoption of the meeting agenda as amended**

Moved: Maureen Quested

Seconded: Dave DePape

Carried

**2.) Acceptance of the minutes of the previous meeting, as amended**

Moved: Dianne Flood

Seconded: Jay White

Carried

**3.) Presentations from invited guests: None**

**4.) Acceptance of the Treasurer's Report –**

Motion: To accept the Treasurer's report as presented.

Moved: Maureen Quested  
Seconded: Dave DePape

Carried.

Discussion: The Salmon Fry Rescue funds are kept “separate” in accordance with the terms of the PSF grant. It may be advisable to make a report on those funds to the grant funder.

**Action item: Dave DePape agreed to prepare a draft report re the PSF grant, outlining how the grant funds have been utilized to date and present the draft to the Board for its consideration.**

Jim Deck queried whether the insurance obtained from the Stream Keepers covered all Society members when carrying out activities on behalf of the CLRSS.

**Action Item: Maureen Quested agreed to confirm that the insurance obtained from the Stream Keepers will cover all Society members when carrying out activities on behalf of the CLRSS.**

a. One time use of the Square – For Information Only: The Executive had agreed that Judy Brayden, who would be using the square to process Witnessing the Water sales at Cowichan Valley Arts Council event on July 27, could allow Witnessing the Water photographer Cim MacDonald, to use our Square at that event at a nominal cost to Cim. This accommodation is because Cim has given a great deal of time and energy to CLRSS over the last year and she agreed to help Judy with the CVAC Art Fair booth for the day. As it turned out, she did not need to use the Square.

## 5.) Committee reports

### a. Executive Committee – Judy Brayden and others

#### i. Membership Outreach Email Protocol

Motion: The Board adopt the Membership Outreach Email Protocol, developed by Mike Patrick and as attached to the Board meeting agenda, with the Executive to work on developing and to bring to the Board other possible avenues to connect with members to seek volunteers.

Moved: Judy Brayden

Seconded: Maureen Quested

Discussion: None

Carried

#### ii. Strategic Planning, August 23, 2024,

To be held at the home of Vice President, Cam McCauley, who outlined the proposed plan. The goal will be to clarify and re-affirm our current program areas and priorities and whether there are any new programs and/or priorities and to develop one-, three- and five-year plans and deliverables for each.

Judy Brayden clarified any discrepancies in the mission statement and vision between the binders, the website and the Societies Act registration by conferring with Ken Traynor and Leroy VanWieren.

Cam McCauley will send out a more detailed outline to all invitees prior to the session but the basic structure will generally be as follows:

- 9:30 Introductions and quick overview of the CLRSS Mission and Vision
- 10:00 Overview of current programs/priorities and whether any new programs/priorities to be added
- 10:30 Break into small groups – one for each program/priority – “café style” with participants moving from table to table, with a table lead to record the various thoughts, ideas, etc. with the goal of developing that program’s one, three and five year plans and deliverables.
- 11:30 Table lead will report back to the group on the comments and suggestions made
- 12:00 Lunch and informal discussion
- 1:00 Review the various suggested outcomes and develop consensus where possible
- 3:00 Conclude

**Action item: Cam McCauley will send out a more detailed outline, his address, and the notes from the 2023 Board Building/Planning Session to all invitees prior to the session.**

Motion: That the Board authorize Judy Brayden to order lunch for the participants at a cost of up to \$400.

Moved: Cam MacCauley

Seconded: Dianne Flood

Discussion: None

Carried

**Action Item: Judy Brayden will make arrangements for lunch.**

iii. **Process of committee communications** – minutes etc. Judy Brayden asked that committee chairs remember and follow the communication protocol agreed upon last year: *all committee minutes should be circulated to the appropriate committee for acceptance asap after the actual meeting; once accepted/amended by those members, the minutes are to be sent to the Board Secretary for inclusion in the next Board meeting package.* Judy also asked Committee chairs to please send copies of draft committee minutes directly to Judy and Cam, as FYI’s only. Rationale: The president and vice president are the public spokespersons for CLRSS and this helps them to be up-to-date on all committee activities and may help to identify volunteers.

**Action Item: Committee chairs are to send copies of draft committee minutes directly to Judy Brayden and Cam McCauley, as soon as the draft is available.**

iv. **Complaint from Honeymoon Bay resident about pollution and dumping issue** – Judy Brayden reported she used the agreed upon protocol and responded to the complainant to contact the RAPP line as per the protocol, but the result was less than satisfactory. Dave DePape advised that the legislative mandate is for the RAPP to return phone calls within 24 hours so if any call goes un-returned then it should be recorded and if that seems to be an on-going issue, it can be followed up with the responsible ministry.

#### **iv. Draft meeting calendar for the year**

Motion: that the draft calendar be accepted as attached and the Board and Executive Committee meeting dates be posted on the CLRSS website.

Moved: Judy Brayden

Seconded: Dave DePape

Discussion: None

Carried

**Action Item: Judy Brayden to contact Ken Traynor to update the website with the calendar of meetings.**

#### **vi. Website Refresh**

A website refresh is desirable to make the CLRSS website more “modern” and user-friendly and ensure it reflects the programs and priorities (as will be developed/agreed upon at the upcoming planning session). The Executive is recommending that we seek a member who will volunteer to research and obtain information about potential web designers and their quotes for a website refresh. This volunteer would report back to the Executive, who will then bring a recommendation back to the Board.

Discussion: There is a very wide range of websites and various ways this can be approached and there will need to be more thought about what we want the website to achieve.

**Action Item: To refer this item to after the Strategic Planning Session to see where Communications, including the website, might “land” in terms of committee responsibilities.**

#### **b. Invasive Species Committee – Jay White**

Discussion: The Committee got some very good materials from the BC Invasive Species Council website for the Water Festival. Other sources were also used and information sheets printed.

Permission to reprint was given by the sources.

Jean Atkinson also got some good fact sheets printed for the Riparian Committee

Not everyone on the Board has seen those materials.

**Action Item: Cam McCauley and Jean Atkinson will bring copies of the printed materials to the next Board meeting.**

Jay White also suggested that the Board might want to consider adopting some EDRR (early detection, rapid response measures) measures for aquatic invasive species. Dr. Patrick Hanington at the University of Alberta uses eDNA techniques to detect over 30 different invaders. These include:

Zebra + Quagga Mussels, Prussian Carp, Crayfish (Northern, Rusty Red Swamp, Marbled), Chinese Mystery Snail, New Zealand Mud Snail, Long-Toed Salamander, Goldfish, Whirling Disease, Bacterial Kidney Disease, Proliferative Kidney Disease, Total Cyanobacteria,

Microcystin E Anatoxin, and several other fish species (Lake Sturgeon, Arctic Grayling, Athabasca Rainbow Trout, Bull Trout, Brook Trout.

Many of these can be sampled for at the same time in a “panel”, for a large cost savings. Sampling to results can be done in less than 5 hours and cost less than \$200 per sample. More can be viewed at: <https://www.e-dna.ca/>. To do something on the cheap, just hanging substates around the lake and monitor for anything “sticking” to them (native mussels don’t stick to things).

## **5.) Business Arising or Referred from Previous Meetings**

**a. Purchase of a Zoom subscription** – Jay White advised that Zoom has a reduced rate for non-profits but whether that applies in Canada still has to be confirmed.

**Action Item: Cam McCauley, with Jay White’s assistance, will obtain a Zoom subscription for the CLRSS and its committees to use for meetings and presentations.**

**b. Purchase of a projector and screen** – Jay White – Done.

Jay reported he has purchased a projector and screen, but the screen hasn’t arrived yet. The cost of the projector was \$61.59 and the screen was \$97.43. (Total = \$159.02)

It was agreed Jay White will keep/store the projector and screen and bring them to the Board meetings. They will also be available to Board members to use for CLRSS outreach activities by contacting Jay.

**Action Item: Jay White will do a training session at the next Board meeting, once everything arrives.**

**c. Water Festival debrief plan** – Maureen Quested: The Committee debrief will be held in the next two weeks and she will report at the next Board meeting.

**Action Item: Maureen will report at the next Board meeting after the Committee debrief.**

**d. Petition to close Cowichan River to angling December 1 to April 1 and June 15 to October 1.**

Judy Brayden assumed the Chair for this item.

At an earlier meeting a motion was made for a petition to be circulated but a concern was expressed at the Executive Committee about the process followed at that time. To that end this matter was brought back to the Board to ensure a more fulsome discussion.

Judy and Di Gunderson had both spoken to Joe Saysell, who has lead this initiative. Given the time frame, Joe now wants a letter sent to the Minister prior to November 1, 2024, signed by the CLRSS board members, on CLRSS letterhead.

Cam McCauley raised questions around the December spawning season and which fish species would have spawned at that time and also at the other times referred to in the draft petition that would need to be protected. He was also concerned about anchoring at any time.

Dave DePape gave some information about the provincial government process about this and he understands that a new or revised regulation is in process.

Jean Atkinson thinks it would not hurt to send a letter. Bee Greenway thinks any letter to be sent needs to be very clearly based on fact. Dianne Flood, Jim Deck and Di Gunderson all think that given the current stress the fish in the river are under, we should try to do what we can to protect the fishery until it recovers.

Motion: That instead of a petition a letter to the Minister be drafted from the CLRSS, on CLRSS letterhead, that each Board member may sign.

Moved: Maureen Quested

Seconded: Jay White

Carried.

Abstained: Cam McCauley

**Action Item: Judy Brayden, with input from Dave DePape, will draft the letter and bring it to the Planning Session for signing by those Board members who are willing.**

## **6. New Business:**

**a. Water monitoring report** – At Judy Brayden’s request, Tom Rutherford, Cowichan Watershed Board provided a brief written rationale and explanation of the weekly Cowichan River water quality reports. These reports present and summarize the water quality data collected the preceding week.

In Tom’s absence, Dave DePape agreed to provide a brief overview of the water sampling project, what the weekly reports show, and the various monitoring activities being undertaken. Dave explained the significance of the values being observed for several critically important parameters for fish e.g. pH, water temperature and dissolved oxygen (which are graphed and described in more detail in the weekly reports) and highlighted a number of important observations from last weeks report; specifically:

- Sunny hot weather to July 26th continued to affect water quality;
- River flows remain at 7 cms which is OK but not great for fish;
- Large diurnal swings in pH reaching daytime values over 9.0 in the upper river and 8.5 in the lower river are very concerning and are stressing fish and reaching critical levels;
- Dissolved oxygen levels have increased in the upper river to over 14 ppm which could cause “gas bubble” disease in fish, similar to the bends in divers;
- Water temperatures have increased over the previous week, reaching 24o to 26 C on some days in upper river sites which is lethal to salmonids (trout and salmon) and could start to cause mortality; and
- No fish mortality was observed in a recent swim of the upper river but with diminishing water quality, some fish mortality could occur.

Dave reported the project includes not just sampling on Cowichan Lake and the Cowichan River but also extends to include Bear Lake and several tributaries of Cowichan Lake (eg. Shaw Creek, Robertson River, and Nixon Creek). Lots of organizations are involved as partners in the project and meet weekly to review the data collected: DFO, the Province, CVRD, Town of Lake Cowichan, Paper Excellence, CWB amongst others.

A number of monitoring programs are being undertaken simultaneously; some of the data being collected is being uploaded in real time from data sondes monitoring 24/7 at various locations in the Cowichan River while other data is being collected by “grab” sampling once a week (first sampling was on July 30) for the next four weeks (and again in the Fall for five weeks). Various parameters are being sampled including water temperature, dissolved oxygen, phosphorus, nitrogen, ammonia, pH, Specific conductivity, nutrients, metals, Chlorophyll A, e-coli., and others “Thresholds and triggers” have been identified for some of the very important parameters by a working group of subject matter experts so that action can be taken before “safe” levels are potentially exceeded.

It is hoped this real time information will identify where there may be problems and that will help the various involved organizations in making management decisions so the problems can be dealt with more expeditiously in the hopes of preventing another fish kill such as occurred last year. Given the various powers and responsibilities of the DFO, the Province and the CVRD, there are a number of actions and avenues that might be taken to address the problems. For example, closing the river fishery at certain times of the day, or completely, if the water temperatures or oxygen levels get so high that the fish are under too great a stress, even for catch and release.

Experts in this area have described the monitoring project is one of the best currently being undertaken anywhere.

Dave also offered to give a more in-depth, science-based review of the report to anyone who may be interested. Contact Dave directly if you are interested in that.

## **b. Future of River’s Day**

River’s Day is a biennial initiative of the Cowichan Stewardship Round Table and the Cowichan Tribes, celebrated on September 22, 2024 this year. Folks are invited onto the Cowichan Tribes land and, similar to our Water Festival, the focus is all about water. Jim Deck reported that Genevieve Singleton, who is responsible for planning the event, is having some challenges obtaining funding for the event. Jim asked the Board to consider the CLRSS making a grant.

Motion: To make a one-time only contribution of \$500 to Genevieve Singleton, as co-chair of the CSRT and chair of the River’s Days, to support the River’s Day event.

Moved: Maureen Quested

Seconded: Judy Brayden

Carried

## **7. Announcements:**

AUGUST 1, 2024 BOARD MINUTES – DRAFT until approved by the Board

- a. CLRSS Strategic Planning session - Save the Day: August 23, 2024, at the home of Vice President, Cam McCauley (further details to be distributed later)
- b. Quw'utsun Sta'lo' Skweyul (Heritage Cowichan River's Day) Sunday, September 22
- c. Project 84,000 Show at the CVAC Art Gallery (2687 James Street, Duncan) September 30 – October 19, 2024
- d. Newsletter deadline to Judy Brayden, August 3, 2024. This month will be all about the Water Festival. Please send Judy any articles you may wish to have included.

**8. Adjournment:**

Moved: Maureen Quested