

SAMUEL WILMOT NATURE AREA MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING OF MARCH 9TH, 2021, 7:00 P.M.

VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Present: Brian Reid (Chair), Kate Potter (Vice-Chair), Ken Mercer (Staff), Leo Blindenbach, Meaghan Vandenbrink, Carrie-Anne Atkins, Tom Hossie, Patrick Bothwell, Maggie Luczak

Regrets: Jocelyn Whalen, Rod McArthur

Absent: Corinna Traill

Agenda: two items were added to the agenda

- 1)** Spring Cleanup Week
- 2)** "New " Terms of Reference for Committee

Motion: moved by Leo Blindenbach, seconded by Kate Potter, that the agenda, as revised, be approved. CARRIED.

Approval of Minutes: moved by Leo Blindenbach, seconded by Meaghan Vandenbrink, that the minutes of the meeting of February 9th, 2021, be approved. CARRIED.

Status Reports/Updates:

Probus Hikes – Brian reported that an activity group associated with the Probus Club of Clarington has scheduled two walks at SWNA this season. This information was shared to illustrate the kind of usage that is being made of the Nature Area. Other members reported that overall use has been noticeably higher during the past year.

Duffin's Creek Wetlands March – Brian reported that he had participated (as an individual, not a representative of the Committee) in this march held in Pickering on Saturday March 6th to protest the pending construction of a warehouse complex on designated wetlands. He noted that over 300 persons participated and that public support for the protest, as indicated by the volume of supportive honking from passing vehicles, was very high.

Contact with Canadian Wildlife Federation:

Brian reported that Leo had been contacted by a representative from the CWF about our wildflower garden project after seeing an article about the project online. Leo referred the individual to Brian who had a lengthy discussion by telephone. CWH has begun a new Right-of-Way Habitat Restoration Project with a particular focus on using various rights-of-way as sites for habitat restoration, primarily for monarch butterflies. CWF has partnered with Hydro One and others to pursue this initiative. We were invited to share our experiences etc. with program managers at the group's annual workshop on Best Practices on April 6th. Brian has agreed to do a brief presentation to the group at that time and noted that we are certainly gaining a lot of positive coverage of our efforts at habitat restoration over the past few years.

Spring Cleanup Week:

Leo asked if the municipality was planning on holding its annual cleanup this spring. In recent years, the residents of the Port of Newcastle and Bond Head, and our Committee, have worked together with the municipality on this effort. Leo suggested Saturday April 17th, part of Earth Week, as the preferred date. Ken Mercer advised that no formal cleanup is planned this year but that the municipality could probably provide bags and gloves. Pickup of collected litter etc would have to wait until the Monday following since staff are not on duty on weekends. After considerable discussion, and understanding that covid has imposed certain limitations, it was agreed that the event would be held as suggested as long as the appropriate public health protocols were followed. This would mean limiting teams to individuals or family groupings, appropriately spaced and timed. Leo and Ken agreed to work together on this event. Brian offered to coordinate things at the SWNA site.

Terms of Reference for Committee:

This document had been sent out the day of our meeting so not all members had had time to review it in detail. Most members had not seen any previous version of the document. After some discussion, it was determined that it was actually identical to the previous version. Although the document implied a somewhat more formal structure than has been our practice, it was agreed that there are no specific changes required on our part. Brian noted that it would have been preferable to have had the opportunity to provide input to the document.

Planning Chart of 2021/22:

At our last meeting, Kate had volunteered to map out our various projects and initiatives and to tie them to some common themes based on previous/ongoing efforts around habitat restoration, monarch tagging, use of I Naturalist etc with an emphasis on providing learning and engagement opportunities for the public.. Kate walked the committee through the chart and considerable discussion took place around specific projects etc. referred to therein (notes below) She noted that the document is a work in progress and will be adjusted as we move

through the year ahead. Brian thanked Kate for her work in putting all of this together in an organized manner.

Interactive Signage Project – Healthy Communities Initiative:

Discussion took place concerning how to proceed with our interactive signage project and whether or not to apply to the HCI program for funding assistance. A new intake has been announced with an application deadline of early June, 2021. It was decided to proceed with a less elaborate QR code approach as a way of assessing usage and interest and to apply for funding even though costs should be relatively modest. Brian advised that committee member Jocelyn Whalen, who had been our lead on this initiative, had notified him shortly before the meeting that she would be resigning from the committee due to other commitments. Tom, Patrick, Maggie and Kate are prepared to continue working on the project. Ken Mercer was asked to connect Brian with the appropriate staff member/department. Brian has also approached Councillor Traill about this and about what may be required in terms of permissions from the municipality.

Dr. Sheila Colla presentation: this presentation on native bees by York University professor Dr. Colla was originally intended to be a live event but has been deferred due to covid. The committee will consider inviting Dr. Colla to do this presentation virtually. Some discussion with the appropriate municipal staff /department may be required. Brian will investigate this and will contact Dr. Colla again. Target time-frame is late April.

Ceremony re Pollinator Garden: it was suggested that we might wish to consider holding some type of celebratory ceremony in early to mid-summer. This will be discussed further at future meetings.

Spring Planting – scheduled for May 29:

Brian will connect with the supplier and funding source. It is understood that the planting may not be a “community event” as it has been in the past because of covid limitations.

Other Business: with the pending resignation of member Jocelyn Whalen, the committee will be in need of another member. Brian will speak to the Clerk’s office about this.

Next Meeting: Tuesday April 13th at 7:00 p.m.

Adjournment: moved by Patrick Bothwell, seconded by Carrie-Anne Atkins, that the meeting be adjourned. CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.