

Cowichan Watershed Board Meeting

DRAFT Minutes

Mon. March 26 2018

9:15-11:30 am

Location: CVRD Board Room



Co-Chair: Chief Seymour

Participants: Ian Morrison, CoChair Jon Lefebure, David Anderson, Laura Brown, David Slade, Tim Kulchyski, Ross Forrest, Klaus Kuhn. Staff Tom Rutherford, Jill Thompson (minutes)

Regrets: Debra Toporowski, Lori Iannidinardo,

Guests: Brian Houle (Catalyst), Lydia Hwitsum (Cowichan Tribes) Technical Advisory and Working Group members; other guests. (Open to the public)

1.	Welcome	Co-chair	Information
2.	Approval of Agenda	Moved by Ross; 2 nd by Jon. Carried.	Carried
3.	Approval of Minutes of Feb. 26. Business arising from Minutes.	Moved by Ross; 2 nd by Klaus Discussion –Klaus inquired about process to address accountability concerns raised at last meeting re “accountability to public”. Uncomfortable with that because public has no control over CWB. Tom response – will take that into account when drafting this section; Draft Governance Manual language will come back to CWB for approval in April	Carried
4.	Correspondence and announcements*	See Agenda for correspondence items. Tom reviewed correspondence and added a letter of thanks for Greenshores tuition funding for Christine Brophy’s training. Discussion - Laura noted that the lake levels correspondence should include reference to the role of DFO in controlling water flow regarding salmonid risk. Should clarify that other regulatory agencies have a say too. - Klaus expressed concern that CWB isn’t doing enough about lake levels. He is hearing complaints in Youbou that the lake is lower than ever at this time of year and nobody is doing anything about it. - Jon advised that directors should handle it the same as when the roads need improving by clarifying who has the authority (FLNRO and DFO) - Klaus urged that CWB should be putting pressure on - Tom clarified that people were working on it behind the scenes. Cowichan Tribes, CWB, Catalyst met to discuss the factors and consider the right path forward. Suggested that this conversation supports the need for the Board to play a larger role in water governance.	Information

		<p>- Laura suggested that better communication is needed. It may be that lots is being done but the decision is to leave the weir open for other reasons (e.g. salmon health). CWB could help more with the information exchange and communication.</p> <p>- Tom suggested the discussion be deferred - Brian Houle's presentation on lake levels is #6 on agenda.</p> <p>- Ian agreed that we should inform the community that while it seemed the lake was very low, there was active communication among the decision makers about what to do. Communicate about what's happening behind the scenes.</p>	
5.	Koksilah updates - Chinook Video;	<p>Tim showed underwater chinook video taken by volunteers doing a swim this winter. Some very dark Chinook indicate that they have been in the system for a while - likely early-run Chinook. Count from video was >100 in these pools. This was taken shortly after our Didson counter which had much lower numbers because it had to be moved before the best window for counting. Lends support to higher chinook count in Cowichan. Nice healthy looking fish.</p> <p>Tom added that early run fish up at Burnt Bridge was extraordinary. Significant low flows but nice cold water in Koksilah. Could see a healthy population in Koksilah.</p> <p>Laura agreed that ground-truthing of Didson results is always helpful.</p> <p>Tim - really really nice to have some good news and huychqu to the swimmers who took the video.</p>	Information
6.	Weir Management Update	<p>Brian Houle gave an update. See presentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lake has stopped dropping – that's a good thing. - Weir is now on control. Controlling at 25 cms as of March 23 – was at about 26 before that. At this moment, we're not benefitting – inflowing is about 25, outflow is about 25. - Don't know what precipitation we're going to get this spring but it's a bad start. Good snow situation - We had an equally bad spring in 2015. We got approval to go on control early then but didn't need it. Often the rains come but we don't know. - When request was made to go on control, the response was pretty prompt. - Seeking a professional assessment from KWL based on last year's data whether we can hold on 25-15-7. Is the bank account good enough? - 25 until end of April, 15 until June 15, 7cms until fall rains come and we go off control <p>- Tim emphasized that ultimately we need a higher weir and</p>	Information

		<p>what we do in the meantime is up to us and we're doing that. He thanked Klaus for bringing up early spring storage and reflected that things have changed significantly. Spring flows are a bigger issue than we first thought. "Thank you for being here and continuing the discussion."</p>	
7.	Update – Cowichan Water Use Planning (WUP) Process	<p>Tom gave an update and presentation on Cowichan River WUP. Expressed that the climate data (from UVic Pacific Impact Climate Consortium) is shocking and some of the outcomes are surprising, and leading to difficult decisions. The big difference is that we're not using the great data set we have from the past because we can't plan for the past. The future is very different. For example, flows a scenario of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased the weir height by about 1 m • going on control as early as Feb. 15 plan <p>would not deliver adequate storage to provide current E-flows of 25cms to May 1, 15cms to June 15 and 7cms maintenance summer flows in dry years in 2050.</p> <p>Recommending</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maximize positive storage as much as possible • manage with flexibility in season • Could consider utilizing negative storage no more than 6" drawdown (2 weeks of 7cms) although some risk with this strategy <p>Would like to schedule ½ hour at April meeting for full discussion. In the interim meetings planned with Cowichan Tribes technical staff, agency staff, lake front property owners and consultants.</p> <p>A discussion followed and Board members were asked to think it over more before next month's meeting to support Tom as he goes forward to represent the Board in final meetings, which they hope will end it a consensus agreement.</p>	<p>Information</p> <p>Jill to circulate Tom's presentation by email for Board members to review and consider before next month's meeting.</p>
8.	CWB Governance Improvements arising from Watershed Co-Governance Conversation Workshops	Tom Rutherford - brief overview of process	Information
	a) Cowichan Recognition Statement & Principle of	Presentation by Lydia Hwitsum. Lydia gave a welcome to the room and acknowledged the work of all those around the table over the past decade to improve the understanding and management of the Cowichan watershed. Two points to discuss today:	Carried

	Nutsamaat	<p>1. Incorporating a Statement that represent who we are as Cowichan people coming into this partnership. We are proposing this statement goes in the Governance Manual. It reflects the collaboration, the partnership, and who we are. It establishes the fact that we can bring our authority forward to partner without giving up our rights.</p> <p>2. Adding the Principal – Nutsamaat kws yaay’us tst: we come together as a whole to work together to be stronger as partners (see presentation from workshop 2). [Nutsamaat] comes from our elders as an ancient principle. It’s not about giving up your power to partner with others. The parts are distinguishable as they come together to work for wellbeing for whole watershed. It’s a reflection of how we’ve already been working together.</p> <p>Tom – there are many watershed governance models in BC but there is no model in BC that demonstrates a strong partnership between a local gov’t and a First Nation like we do and this piece has been missing in the Governance Manual.</p> <p>Chief Seymour gave two examples from Cowichan experience of Nutsamaat. In one case, Cowichan worked with 5 other communities to a goal; gov’t turned around and offered another nation forestry land in Cowichan territory. We tried to solve it and we’re supposed to be using Nutsamaat principal and it didn’t work there. In another example, Cowichan was ready to sign a letter of support for money but it would have gone against the other nations. Everyone has to agree with what the company is doing and they didn’t, so out of Nutsamaat, Cowichan turned down the money. How well it works is about the respect we have for each other.</p> <p>Motion to include both the Cowichan Statement and Nutsamaat in the Governance Manual made by David Slade. 2nd by Co-Chair Lefebure. No opposition. Carried.</p>	
	b) Tweaking our consensus model – proposed final product.	Jill Thompson presented a new version of the consensus model, reflecting input from the last meetings. More improvements were requested. Jill to bring back another version next month.	Next Agenda
10	Other. Next meeting – April 30	Co-chair	Information
11	Adjourn	Co-chair	

