


<b>DRAFT BOARD MEETING MINUTES</b>	<b>Mon. May 31 2021 9:30-11:30 am Online / Phone Zoom Link (see invitation)</b>	 Cowichan Watershed Board
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**Meeting Chair:** CWB Co-Chair Aaron Stone

**Participants:** Acting Chief Cindy Daniels, David Anderson, David Slade, Debra Toporowski, Tim Kulchyski, Linda Higgins, Alison Nicholson, Lori Iannidinardo, Shannon Waters, Tom Rutherford, Jill Thompson(minutes). Regrets received from David Froese and Kristine Sandhu.

**Guest Presenters:** Brenda Kuecks, James Kueks, Dan Graham and Tracy Parrow (Providence Farm); Paul Chapman (Nanaimo Area Land Trust) and Kim Stevens (Water Sustainability BC), Watershed Moments conference organizers.

**Audience members:** advisors, working group members, volunteers, interested public.  
9:00-9:30am – Open conversation/visiting.

Meeting materials are available at: <https://cowichanwatershedboard.ca/meetings/>

1.	Welcome	CoChair Aaron Stone opened the meeting with a recognition of the discovery of lost indigenous children in a mass grave at the residential school in Kamloops, and the acknowledgement that this grief and loss is here in our community as well. An open discussion followed for Board members to share their thoughts and reflections.	
2.	Agenda Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defer targets update due to Heather Pritchard being absent due to illness.</li> <li>• Watershed Moments discussion was moved forward in agenda.</li> <li>• Motion to adopt agenda by David S.; seconded by Lori; carries.</li> </ul>	Agenda adopted with noted adjustments.
3.	Review minutes of the April meeting	April minutes unavailable.	Deferred.
4.	Announcements/ Correspondence	Tom reviewed the announcements and correspondence as per agenda package.	Information

5.	Public Input	No requests to present were received.	
6.	Presentation: Target Review		Deferred
7.	Presentation: Watershed Moments conference proposed for Cowichan Region.	Paul Chapman and Kim Stevens introduced the Watershed Moments conference, and plans to hold the next one in Cowichan Region, seeking input on how to do this in a mutually beneficial way for local people and particularly indigenous nations. They invited the CWB to help build the conference. See discussion notes below.	Debra will act as liaison between Tumuwah committee and CWB and this conference.  Tom will continue to meet with the organizers on behalf of CWB as things move forward.
8.	Presentation: Providence Farm strategic plan. Request for guidance.	Brenda Kuecks introduced the delegation from Providence Farm. See discussion notes below.	See below.
9.	Staff Updates	Staff Updates. See presentation. -Tom and Leroy visited landowners at the lake whose property floods every year to help them understand the causes of that, and the facts around the weir. Available to do more of that.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Suggestion that the Board follow up on Joe Saysell's letter as citizen science.</li> <li>- CWB did send a letter to the Minister about this issue in a previous year as prompted by Joe.</li> <li>- Agenda item next month to discuss how to support this. Intelligent and cheap way to improve fish survival. David A – referenced Joe Saysell's letter. What happens with that? Citizen science.</li> </ul>	Add discussion of spring sports fishery in upper river to next month's agenda.

10.	Lower Cowichan River Clean up	<p>Tom sought a decision from the Board whether to host a Lower River Cleanup this year. It was cancelled last year due to CoVid19.</p> <p>Decision to stick with August – in a year when so much is changing its nice to keep consistency.</p> <p>Request for discussion at a future meeting about the community aspect of our job. How do we bring forward respect and love, and evolve as situations change in the community?</p>	<p>Action- organize River Cleanup in August.</p> <p>Add discussion to a future agenda about how CWB evolves the community aspect of our work.</p>
11.	Other		
12.	Adjourn.	Adjourned. Next meeting Monday June 28th (in person if possible!)	Adjourned 12:05

Open conversation/visiting followed after the meeting.

### **Watershed Moments conference proposed for Cowichan Region.**

Presentation notes:

- goal is safe space for conversation
- strive to push the boundaries of our comfort zone with people who share common values.
- would like to invite CWB to help build the conference. We are here to build relationships.
- Sharing stories of watershed collaboration. “Interweaving”

Discussion:

- agreement that its “more important to get it right than get it done.”
- CWB will defer to Cowichan Tribes for leadership on how to come to the territory in the right way. Support initiatives broadly.
- Request for clarity on timeline and role of CWB:
  - no timeline – want to get it right. We want to understand what the stories are. The timing is up to the people who want to share these stories.
- Darryl has invited Michael Blackstock to speak to the Tumulh committee
- Debra agreed to act as a liaison from the committee to the CWB.
- CWB role will fall out of that discussion.
- Tom sought the support of the Board to continue meeting with the committee. Agreed.

### **Providence Farm strategic plan.**

- Requesting guidance from CWB.

- Brenda thanked Aaron for his opening at the meeting and acknowledged the lost children, and the broken path that resulted.
- See presentation file.

### Discussion

- Does the strategic plan envision a change in the number of people you will have present and living on the Providence Farm land?
  - o Always looking for ways to grow the therapeutic program in a responsible way.
  - o Next step is to focus on what to do with the lands. How to do the best stewardship we can on the land – both forest lands and farm lands.
- Suggestions to seek advice from eco-forestry consultant/biologist/forester Heather Pritchard RE ways to promote and secure carbon. ( Also partner wildlife biologist Chris.)
- Consider organic farmer Foster Richardson RE enhancing carbon sequestration on agricultural lands.
  - o Brenda will connect with David Slade and follow up with Foster.
- Shannon requested a copy of the plan.
- Suggestion that Providence Farm integrate the CWB targets in their planning.
- Clarification that residential plans are off the table for now. Hope to go forward later on a smaller scale and in partnership with others including Cowichan Tribes.
- Clarity sought on the current relationship with Cowichan Tribes
  - o relationships are by topic. E.g. rapprochement to bring elders to the property. Acknowledgement that past effort did not go well. Renewed interest to figure that out.
  - o important to have Cowichan Tribes there to figure out how to do the forest planning well. They lack the knowledge on the Board. Guidance welcome.
- Suggestion to start with an ecological inventory of what you have, in context of the targets.
- Lori offered to be a resource and was involved in the past via Cowichan Community Kitchens
- Tom offered to spend time with the Board going through the targets and the rationale.
- Tim named the stream that runs through Providence Farm in hul'q'umi'num. Shxuxuyela. He spoke about how Cowichan people have struggled with the health and well-being of that stream and connectivity to estuary. It has a lot of Cowichan history and use. Tim acknowledged the struggle with the Koksilah fundraiser, and the legacy of the former school.
- The bottom end of this creek was the Brennan claim. Cowichan can't get that land back but they were offered value. Whole section was reserve.
- Suggestion that the farm contact Diane Hinkley at Cowichan Tribes, who will know the history.
- Brenda requested the spelling of the creek (Shxuxuyela) and asked Tim whether he believes a healing journey with the farm is possible.
  - o Tim answered from a personal perspective.
  - o Debra acknowledged the pain felt by elders. She spoke of the tendency for non-indigenous people to ask for documents to prove who we are. She noted the line in the slide deck

“acquired this land in 1864” touched a wound. Happy to hear the residential housing has been removed. It would be heartwarming for elders to hear that made a difference.

- Brenda acknowledged that the history needs to be built back up as part of a shared path forward.
- Aaron thanked the delegation for attending and coming forward in a way that shows good intention and recommended that a good approach in his experience is to come first to understand and trust, and let the path forward unfold from that.

### **River Clean up**

Tom sought a decision from the Board whether to host a Lower River Cleanup this year. It was cancelled last year due to CoVid19.

There will also be a Heritage River Celebration in September organized by the Stewardship Roundtable.

Cowichan Lake and River Stewards normally organize the upper river/ lake cleanup. They are considering a different approach this year.

Ken Traynor said that the nature of the work has changed. Reaching out to tubing company to encourage them to continue to take responsibility. Youth engagement at Lake Cowichan Secondary showing leadership at the school. Both lean to September being better there. Paddling community does work in the canyon. Cowichan River Parks. Reaching farther along the river. Refining the plan.

### Discussion:

- Aaron and Shannon confirmed that by July 1, things will be back to close to how they were previously. No group limit either indoor or outdoor with a CoVid plan in place. We expect we will have cases in the community as it shifts into an endemic.
- Shannon offered to review the event plan with us.
- Discussion about different dates concluded that August is the best month. Lower River is safer than in September. Large number of people will have 2nd dose unlike July. July is also busy for Cowichan Tribes because they take a break in August. Combining with Heritage River Day is too busy.
- Send a team down to clean up before River Cleanup
- Decision to stick with August – in a year when so much is changing its nice to keep consistency.
- Request for discussion at a future meeting about the community aspect of our job. How do we bring forward respect and love, and evolve as situations change in the community?