


<b>DRAFT BOARD MEETING MINUTES</b>	<b>Mon. Feb 22 2021 9:30-11:30 am Online / Phone Zoom Link (see invitation)</b>	
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**Meeting Chair:** CWB Co-Chair Aaron Stone

**Attending:** Co-Chair Chief William Seymour, David Anderson, David Slade, Tim Kulchyski, Kristine Sandhu, Alison Nicholson, Lori Iannidinardo, Linda Higgins, Debra Toporowski (after 10am), David Froese, Tom Rutherford, Heather Pritchard, Jill Thompson.

**Guest Speakers:** Deborah Curran, Environmental Law Clinic, UVic; Darryl Tunnecliffe Cowichan Tribes Environment Department; Thea Rodgers, BC Conservation Fund.

**Audience members:** Dave Preikshot, Rick Bryan, Sierra Stacey, Hannah Auer, Barry Hetschko, Ken Traynor, Edmond Duggan, Carol Milo, Cole Smith, Sonia Furstenau, Alice Le Bihan, Oliver Brandes

**9:00-9:30am – Open conversation/visiting.**

1	Welcome.	Co-Chair Aaron Stone recognized that the meeting is taking place on Coast Salish territories and welcomed the participants.	Information
2	Agenda Review	Alison requested the addition of a discussion of watershed restoration through acquisition.  David S. moved to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by David A. Approved.	Agenda approved as amended.
3	Appointment of new DFO representative to the Board.  Recognition of Dale Desrochers, outgoing representative.	Aaron welcomed Linda Higgins, DFO South Coast Area Director, as a nominee for the Board from the Federal Government. Alison moved to accept the nomination of Linda as a new CWB member. Seconded by Tim. Approved.	Linda Higgins was appointed to the Cowichan Watershed Board as a Federal Gov't nominee.

4	Announcements and Correspondence	<p>Tom reviewed the correspondence received (see <a href="#">Agenda package</a>)</p> <p>There was a discussion about the request from the Koksilah Watershed Working Group that CWB add its name to a letter to Mosaic requesting improved community consultation.</p> <p>Discussion/Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- interested to discuss the role of the CWB here given that 80% of the watershed is forest land;</li> <li>- no harm and potential benefit to asking for a pause, considering that other members of the community (e.g. farmers) have had to take a pause on irrigation in recent years. Not unreasonable to ask.</li> <li>- suggestion that we send our own letter in our words instead</li> <li>- there is a distinction between asking for consultation and asking for a stop or change. To date we have tended to avoid getting into specific forestry or land uses. Disagreement with requesting to pause a licensed activity without much knowledge of the site level situation.</li> <li>– CWB is well aware of issues in Koksilah; looking for opportunity to discuss the specific plans.</li> <li>- Decision that Tom will draft a letter for signature by CoChairs to that effect.</li> <li>- Passed by consensus.</li> </ul>	<p>Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Tom will provide a letter of support to the Cowichan Land Trust for their proposal.</li> <li>- Tom will draft a letter for CoChairs to Mosaic to request a presentation to the Board.</li> </ul>
5	Public Input	Hannah Auer and Sierra Stacey brought forward a project proposal they are	Information

		<p>working on in Fish Gut Alley and welcomed involvement. The group is currently seeking permission from Cowichan Tribes to do the work, and looking for support to move forward, eventually including in funding applications. Co-Chair Stone thanked Hannah and Sierra for their presentation. See proposal in the agenda package for details and contact information.</p>	
6.	<p>Presentations - Weir Licensing Research and Process</p> <p>a) Research summary of Environmental Law Clinic options study for CWB.</p>	<p>Deborah Curran spoke to the Board about the broad lessons from the Environmental Law Center (ELC) study that was conducted for the Board in the fall semester. She emphasized that this is not legal advice and provided brief summaries of the results to the CWB’s questions based on the report by the ELC students. The report is very detailed and CWB staff will review and share with the Board later. Deborah also expressed her thanks to law students Brittany Berge and Alice Le Bihan from the ELC who put in over 100 hours each and Jill for supervision of project. See below and slidedeck for details.</p> <p>Deborah also provided her “non-lawyer” perspective on these questions, advising that the law should flow from what the group decides on that rather than leading the conversation. Laws and policies can be changed or created to meet the need. The first question to answer is how the partners want to govern water for the next</p>	<p>Information and Discussion</p>

		<p>100 years. If we lead with “who can be the license holder” we won’t get to that 100-year solution. Deb added that the space for creativity in how to approach this situation is much broader than 5 years ago, with more Government to Government options.</p> <p>Deborah suggested:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Exploring options and negotiating who will do what can’t be a public discussion. This process would benefit from a small group of individuals, who have authority to be advocates within their organizations, meeting on a regular basis to build trust and figure out the process together over time.</li> <li>2) Develop a decision matrix, filling in the answers one by one through questions going back to the home organizations of this group.</li> <li>3) The flows management entity, whatever it ends up being, should contain the totality of the solution, as opposed to trying to add it on to anyone’s plate.</li> </ol> <p>Aaron expressed support for the matrix idea, and room for creativity to take place.</p>	
	<p>b) Climate Resilience project</p>	<p>Darryl Tunnecliffe provided an update including approach to identifying licensee. (Disaster Mitigation Fund). Darryl shared his project plan including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Will hire a program coordinator and program manager.</li> </ul>	<p>Information and Discussion</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Bulk of budget is the weir.</li> <li>● Exploring designating CVRD to take on mid river section.</li> </ul>	
	<p>c) Discussion Re CWB role in weir licensing work and motion to support.</p>	<p>Tom sought guidance from the Board on the CWB role at this juncture. He added that the partners have been thinking about this for a long time but perhaps we have been thinking too narrowly. The question should be who / what our community wants to be responsible for ensuring environmental flows in the river for the next 100 years?</p> <p>Tom clarified that he has the support of the Board to take 2 actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) If invited, support and engage in this process as lead by Cowichan Tribes.</li> <li>2) Assist the co-chairs to seek support from BC ministers to work with Cowichan Tribes in this process.</li> </ol> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Both the FLNRO and MIRR Ministers are new. Minister Heyman has history with the file.</li> <li>- Difficult to get three minister in the room at the same time.</li> <li>- Decision that Co-chairs and staff will work together to draft a letter and clarify the focus of the meeting with the partners.</li> <li>- Include MIRR, FLNRO, MoE and cc Parliamentary Secretary Donnelly, Minister of State Cullen.</li> </ul>	<p>Action - staff to work with CoChairs and partners to draft a letter to the Minister as per details at left.</p>

7	<p>Presentation - BCCF- UV Filter (Sunscreen) sampling program in the Cowichan River.</p>	<p>See presentation by Thea Rodgers. Discussion</p>	<p>Information</p>
8	<p>Updates from Executive Director/Program coordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft 2020 Annual Report and 2021 Business Plan</li> <li>- Grant/Project updates</li> <li>- CVRD Strategic Partnership</li> </ul>	<p>Tom/Jill presented drafts of the Annual Report and Business Plan. Edits and formatting will be completed next week and then these will be presented to the CVRD Board and Cowichan Tribes Councils.</p> <p>-A letter to CVRD requesting strategic partnership was distributed by email.</p> <p>Tom provided a grant update (apologies for all the acronyms! See presentation for full names):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- BCSRIF – work won't start this fiscal year. Lots of work to do to finalize agreement but on target otherwise.</li> <li>- CESI – approved; agreement is waiting to sign – need to upgrade our insurance. Strong team assembled – Cheri, Heather and Jill, and potential contracts with Khowutzun Forestry and Salish Eye.</li> <li>- HWI – Koksilah WSP – submitted, process underway \</li> <li>- Climate action grant – still pending.</li> <li>- FLNRO - Comms contract for Koksilah communications framework underway.</li> </ul>	<p>Board members are to provide any feedback to Jill by Friday on Annual Report and Biz plan.</p>

		<p>David S. thanked staff for hard work and expressed concern over potential for burnout.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Other – watershed conservation through acquisition (additional item)</p>	<p>Alison brought forward a discussion about watershed conservation through acquisition. She learned on Friday that the Blackley farm on the estuary is for sale by Western Forest Products, including key pieces of property that have ecological significance. She requested a discussion about whether the Board could be identifying types of properties that would be good to work towards purchasing, in partnership, for restoration and conservation.</p> <p>Aaron - Nature Trust of BC has interest in the property and engaged in conversation and expressed uncertainty about the CWB advocating to CVRD.</p> <p>David S - supports conservation of properties; CWB should be involved in processes and make recommendations but there is limited amount of money. How would priorities be set? (e.g. Shaw Creek and Koksilah Ancient forest also come to mind.) Wish there was enough money to do it all. Concerned about advocating for one when another might be more deserving of our advocacy.</p> <p>Aaron - recommended a letter that CWB supports the property is of ecological</p>	

		<p>health without prescription mechanism to accomplish that.</p> <p>David A – hesitant to get involved in land purchase. Specialized role which we are not equipped to do. Support but not weighing one against another. Could be a drain on resources.</p> <p>2 properties \$899,000 roughly 50 acres +</p> <p>Motion: Aaron to follow up with staff to craft a brief letter to go to various agencies expressing general support for acquisition of this property outlining the ecological priorities that this land would support. Send to Ducks Unlimited, Nature Canada, CVRD.</p> <p>Chief Seymour added that Cowichan Tribes does have an interest in property in estuary within treaty process. There is an agreement with government regarding “willing seller - willing buyer.”</p> <p>Decision: Aaron will follow up with staff at CVRD to make sure that info is passed to Cowichan Tribes on the opportunity.</p>	
10	<p>Adjourn</p> <p>. Next meeting</p> <p>March 29 9:30am</p>	<p>Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:10pm.</p> <p>Guests were invited to join in for open conversation.</p>	Decision

**Open conversation/visiting after meeting until noon.**



Meeting materials will be uploaded to:

<https://cowichanwatershedboard.ca/meetings/>

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