


<p>DRAFT BOARD MEETING MINUTES</p>	<p>Mon. April 29, 2024 9:00am-12:00pm Si'em Lelum Gymnasium 5574 River Road, Duncan</p>	
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Meeting Chair: Chief Daniels **Participants:** Christopher Alphonse, Calvin Swustus Senior, Alison Nicholson, Shannon Waters, David Slade, Tim Kulchyski (until 11:40), Michelle Staples. **Advisor:** Oliver Brandes
Observers: Arlette Malcolm, Director, Resource Stewardship Operations, Coast Area – West Region (WLRS)
Staff/Project Leaders: Danielle Paydli, Jill Thompson, Tom Rutherford, Heather Pritchard
Audience members: Working group members, staff, volunteers, interested public.

1	Welcome	Chief Daniels asked Councillor Christopher Alphonse to offer an opening prayer.	
2	Introductions Board Roundtable	<p>Welcome to new Board members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chief Cindy Daniels ● Councillor Calvin Swustus Sr ● Councillor Christopher Alphonse <p>Introduction to Arlette Malcolm, BC Ministry of Water Land and Resource Stewardship, Resource Stewardship Operations, West Coast Region.</p> <p>Observing today. Arlette is part of the Xwulqw'selu Watershed Planning G2G table.</p> <p>Roundtable of brief reflections on the value and aspirations of serving on the CWB.</p> <p>Chief Daniels invited Arlette to join the Board members at the table.</p>	Roundtable of introductions.
3	Agenda Review / Revisions	Alison moved to adopt the agenda. No opposition.	Carried by consensus.
4	Review February 26th, 2024 Draft Minutes	Alison moved to adopt the minutes. No opposition.	Carried by consensus.

5	Announcements & Correspondence (see below)	Jill reviewed the upcoming events as listed at the bottom of the agenda. Tim added - 6PPPQd conference after this today . Fish Gut alley has the highest levels measured for this toxin in the province.	Information
6	Public Input	No requests for public input today.	
7	Hul'qumi'num Watershed Lesson	Chief suggested that Christopher could be asked to start that next month.	Deferred
8	The Cowichan Watershed Board: a) How it all began! b) Cowichan Tribes engagement and leadership throughout the years c) The importance of CWB beyond the Cowichan d) Current priorities and the future of CWB e) Board Q&A	See detailed discussion notes below, and slide decks in the agenda package, for orientation presentations offered by: a) Rodger and Tom b) Tim c) Oliver d) Danni	Information, Q&A
9	BREAK		
10	Overview of CWB Initiatives/Projects: a) 2023 Annual Report - for review. b) Community Engagement c) Xwulqw'selu Watershed Plan d) Cowichan Weir e) Working Groups / Watershed Targets f) Fish Kill Response	Staff and Board members provided overviews and updates on the priority work and current projects of the CWB. a) Jill - draft Annual Report will be circulated for input, and approval next month. b) David Slade and Jill shared insights on the CWB approach to community outreach. See notes below. c) Tom and Alison provided an overview of the CWB's Xwulqw'selu Watershed work. d) Tom and the Cochairs provided an overview and update on the priority project to replace the weir at Lake Cowichan. Chief Daniels	Information, Q&A,

		<p>reflected that it was her first time up on the weir, and she would like to take the new councillors up there by bus. Young councillors will take over from us and need to understand the weir.</p> <p>e) Heather Pritchard provided an overview of the CWB's work on 7 targets. See notes below.</p> <p>f) Heather and Tom gave an overview of the recent work to coordinate all parties to develop a response to last summer's Fish Kill to hopefully prevent a recurrence. See notes below.</p>	
11	<p>Other Business:</p> <p>A. Cowichan Tribes representation on the Cowichan Watershed Society (Not for Profit Society) Board</p> <p>B. Watershed Tour / BBQ</p> <p>C. Set date/location for River Cleanup.</p> <p>D. Support letter from CWB to Agricultural Land Commission RE Estuary Restoration Project. Decision.</p>	<p>a) Danni provided an introduction to the Cowichan Watershed Society, and the requirement that at least 2 of its members be Cowichan Tribes members. Calvin volunteered to join Tim on the Society.</p> <p>b) The idea of a Watershed Tour / BBQ was introduced.</p> <p>c) Cowichan Tribes was asked whether they would like to host River Cleanup at the Mini Big House location as in previous years. Chief offered to take the request to the council. Tentative date Sun Aug 25.</p> <p>d) Staff outlined that the Estuary Restoration Project has been discussed, with a presentation from Nature Trust last year, and there seems to be broad agreement that the project aligns with our Targets. Discussion was held about what should be included in the CWB letter of support for the Estuary Restoration Project. Decision to</p>	<p>Decisions:</p> <p>a) Calvin Swustus will join the CWS.</p> <p>b) Date TBD</p> <p>c) Chief to confirm location and Aug 25 as date.</p> <p>d) Staff to draft a letter of support from the Co-Chairs to the ALC for the Estuary Restoration Project.</p>

		keep the letter simple, expressing that the CWB supports the project.	
12	Adjourn. Next CWB meeting - May 27th (on Zoom)	Chief Daniels adjourned the meeting at 12:12pm	

Board meeting package, including presentation slide decks:

<https://cowichanwatershedboard.ca/document/cwb-board-meeting-package-april-29-2024/>

Detailed Discussion Notes

8a) Rodger Hunter, CWB's first Coordinator, provided a presentation on the initial formation and intention of the Board.

- Feb 9 2010 – first official meeting – didn't imagine then that 3 members would still be here now. Testament to the value of doing this.
- 2003 - there was a major drought – fish being trucked up river; MNC was almost charged for pollution dilution; Catalyst shut down. MLA Graham Bruce said we need a plan. Cowichan Basin Water Management Plan resulted.
- 2007 - CBWMP was dense, daunting and a hard read. 3 yrs after completion, very little implementation. Leadership lacking.
- Plan for leadership was supposed to be a Cowichan Basin Watershed Advisory Council (CBWAC). Alison and Rodger were contracted to populate the CBWAC but Rodger felt it wouldn't work. Needed local leadership. This was a representation framework – see diagram – not elected; how would they be representative of those viewpoints? How were these groups devoted to public good?
- Rodger acknowledged Gerry Giles for her leadership, and Albie Charlie – from the beginning – everything is connected. Whole of watershed thinking.
- Approached committee to use a model that focussed on local leadership with CVRD and Cowichan Tribes including fed and prov gov't, opinion leaders including public health, special advisors, and strong TAC. TAC looked a bit like the original CBWAC framework. It was agreed and populated.
- Some early accomplishments. E.g.
 - Watersheds 2014 – people came from all over Canada, and beyond. Showcased what we were doing... cross pollination of ideas.
 - Intervenor in environmental appeal RE storing more water in the lake (changing timing RE existing weir). We won that appeal.

8 a) Tom Rutherford, CWB's Coordinator / Executive Director, ~2016-2022

Reflected on Nutsamat and the level of trust that was needed and demonstrated for the watershed. Chief Seymour said "We need this. As partners you need us, and we need you." It was a privilege to be in this room, and to be trusted with that. All of us are committed to this work and to each other.

My training is technical, and the challenges are not small, unless we find a way to work openly and honestly together, we're going to fail.

There is only one CWB – there is nothing like this anywhere else in BC or in Canada. That speaks volumes.

8 b) Tim Kulchyski, founding CWB member and Cowichan Tribes' staff biologist

This is the only place in southern BC where we have halted the decline of chinook. They talk about 4 fish in some places. There is no way that would have been possible without the CWB and the people here.

I think of a flows committee meeting, where Ross F was chairing. Drought discussions had started in 1998,1999, 2003 – infamous years for drought. Sitting with all the known data – everyone in the room pushing for a drop in flows, I had to bring forward that Cowichan Tribes didn't think that was the right decision. Mayor Forrest said "OK we will table this, no decision." We can't sacrifice without knowing what we're sacrificing. Sent it for more discussion with Cowichan Tribes. Just like that, the discussion shifted, and it's been shifting ever since.

Can be really tough to continue to hold the line, or talk about things people don't want to talk about. It's really helped to have a platform like this.

8 c) Oliver Brandes, Advisor, Water Policy and Law. POLIS Project on Ecological Governance.

Cared about how decisions were made. Background in law, public policy and economics, and was interested in a model where people on the ground were making real decisions. What I saw here was special; it opened my mind to new ways of doing governance.

- 1) Can cross scales – across jurisdictions.
- 2) Bring attention – heart, brain and wallet.
- 3) Fundamental understanding – real leaders are the people in place.

How are we perceived by others?

- We aren't alone - drought, fire, flood, water quality – whole province is living it.
- The CWB watershed governance framework is influencing how the province is going to behave differently to address these issues.
- Model in collaboration – if we believe shared authority is important, this is a living model. People around the world are looking at the model. Different than stakeholder tables.
- Targets – things to work toward. Understandable.

Advice: The biggest threat is the thing you don't know about yet. That's why governance matters – only the smartest room, not the smartest person, can handle that.

8 d) Danni Paydli, Executive Director

- See presentation and notes, including Danni's "Vision for 2030"

10 e) Heather Pritchard, Targets Director

Heather spoke about feeling it was a gift to work with this group, and provided an overview of her work to revive the working groups and refresh the origins targets.

- 7 Targets – positive and understandable. Noone could possibly disagree. These are how the watershed should be.
- The Group then developed indicators – how are we going to know we're achieving that vision?
- Currently, working to integrate indigenous teachings into the indicators and targets.
- Responding to the Fish Kill provides an example of how this work is effective. Working Groups meant we had a group of people already talking about how to have healthy fish; how to have healthy water. We knew the people

who needed to be in the room to solve this problem and could pull them together quickly, before the next dry summer. The Pacific Salmon Foundation recognized this, and was willing to fund us because we had those well-established connections, and can set an example for other areas.

10 f) Fish Kill - Observed no talk of blame; all taking responsibility and solution oriented. Participants pooled together money to buy more equipment, sharing equipment, sharing knowledge.

Workshop 1 – how will we monitor

Workshop 2 – what are the levers we can pull – e.g. weir ops, lake sewage response, fish regulations? Strength of this board made the difference.

Tom added his reflection that “when those fish died, it was a gut punch”.

- PSF reached out knowing CWB could find a model to deal with it.
- The people who responded were mostly the people in our working groups and it was helpful that we already know each other, and how to work together. The amount of work we accomplished in a very short period of time on a very difficult issue is awe-inspiring, and we were able to do that because of the way we normally do our business.
- Also - Dr. Ken Ashley, world specialist on these issues, came to help on his own time which speaks to the importance of the Cowichan River provincially.