

## *Draft Minutes for Approval May 21, 2020 Meeting*

### Minutes Water North Coalition (WNC) January 16, 2020 Teleconference

#### **Attendees**

Bob Marshall – County of Grande Prairie  
Grant Dixon – Advanced Technology Applications (ATAP)  
Dan Rites - Alberta Water and Wastewater Operators Association (AWWOA)  
Adam Norris – Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance  
Antoine Rempp – Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo  
Willis Fitzsimmons – Saddle Hills County  
Ian Willier – Big Lakes County  
Bob Buckle - City of Cold Lake  
Cal Mosher – Town of Beaverlodge  
Richard Simard – Big Lakes County  
Jason Stedman – Lac La Biche County  
Tamara Wuttunee-Campbell - Aquatera  
Randy Dupuis – Town of Peace River  
Wally Olorenshaw – Town of Rainbow Lake  
Keith Straub – Town of High Level  
Vern Lymburner – Town of Valleyview  
Dion Hynes – Birch Hills County  
Terry Carbone – Birch Hills County  
Jennifer Besinger – County of Grande Prairie  
Lisa Ratte – Lakeland Industry and Community Association (LICA)  
Erin Ritchie – Lakeland Industry and Community Association (LICA)  
Shawn Acton – M.D. of Greenview  
Fred Wiebe – Mackenzie County  
Gaylene Whitehead – Northern Sunrise County  
Diahann Potrebenko – Village of Rycroft  
Janet Pomeroy – Athabasca Watershed Council  
Tanya Hunter – Alberta Environment and Parks

#### **Administration**

Melonie Doucette, NADC Senior Northern Development Officer  
Sheila Sikora, NADC Research Officer

#### **Welcome, Attendance, and Information from Members**

Chair Bob Marshall called the meeting to order at 10:00am. Bob suggested that NADC follow up with Grande Cache to determine if there are still representatives from this hamlet.

Bob Marshall took attendance. Gaylene Whitehead of Northern Sunrise County asked how many First Nations and Metis members were on WNC. Bob Marshall indicated that Gift Lake Metis Settlement was currently a member, and also mentioned First Nations and Metis representatives that had been

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members in the past. Bob noted that Gift Lake had not attended a meeting recently. Gaylene offered to help recruit more First Nations and Metis individuals to the Coalition.

Grant Dixon of ATAP reminded the membership of the importance of attending the Door To Edmonton conference on February 4-5, 2020. There is low registration. Sheila to re-send information about this event to the membership.

Jason Stedman of Lac La Biche informed the group that the county lost one of its runs with regard to the sewer/waste treatment system that resulted in half of the capacity being lost due to structural issues. The county is addressing these issues, having to clean the one side of the system holding tank for bacteria. The county will clean the other side in spring. Jason was not sure of the technical details, but he noted that operators with similar facilities may be interested in any design flaws that may be unearthed. A preliminary investigation is being conducted to determine design flaws, operator error, etc. Bob Marshall suggested that an update on this situation be discussed at the next meeting. Jason stated that he would share fixes and results of the investigation at the May meeting.

### **Review and Adoption of Previous Meeting Minutes and Agenda**

#### **Adoption of Minutes of Grande Prairie, October 3, 2019 meeting**

Moved by Diahann Potrebenko of the Village of Rycroft that the minutes be accepted at 10:16am.

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **Adoption of the Agenda**

Moved by Gaylene Whitehead of Northern Sunrise County to accept the agenda as presented at 10:18am.

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **Business arising from previous minutes**

#### **Review of Action List**

Melonie Doucette of the NADC reviewed the action list:

Under Ongoing items:

- Tanya Hunter will provide information updates during this meeting and has agreed to follow up with further items when she attends the May meeting.
- Representatives from the Ministry of Health may be attending in May to deliver a presentation on outstanding items.

Under New items:

- Presentation ideas and reviewing subcommittee work plans will take place at the May meeting.
- Kristen Andersen of Associated Environmental will be attending the May meeting. More information derived from her presentation in October will be discussed later in this meeting.

Under Operational items:

- Reviewing the operational structure of the WNC will be moved to a strategic planning session in 2021.

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- Bob Marshall will share more on the call for vice-chairs for each of the three subcommittees. An organizational meeting will be held at the end of this meeting to appoint a Vice-Chair for the Coalition.
- The Terms of Reference have been updated to reflect that a voting member in attendance will act as an alternate Chair should the Chair or Vice-Chair not be in attendance.

### **Update on Information from Kristen Andersen (Associated Environmental)**

Bob Marshall stated Kristen's presentation in October indicated that funding is available for municipalities to restore wetlands. WNC is working with Alberta Environment and Parks on how municipalities can access these funds. Once that information has been collected, it will be shared at the May meeting. Bob noted that Kristen possesses a wealth of information on many topics, and she will work with NADC to develop a list of topics on which to present. Bob stated that the group could benefit from Kristen being a WNC member and a non-voting request form to become a member of WNC has been received. Willis Fitzsimmons felt it was a good idea to have Kristen as a member and was prepared to make a motion. Diahann Potrebenko also stated that the technical support Kristen could offer would be beneficial to the group.

Moved by Willis Fitzsimmons of Saddle Hills County to accept Kristen Andersen of Associated Environmental as a non-voting member of WNC at 10:24am.

### **MOTION CARRIED**

### **Update from Alberta Environment and Parks**

Tanya Hunter provided updates on lead guidelines, renewal fees, discipline-specific training requirements, training proposals in response to operator attendance guidelines, and the WNC seat on the Advisory Committee.

Lead guidelines:

Tanya stated that a letter outlining changes in lead concentration and sampling procedures as well as where to find guidance documents had been emailed/sent out recently. She stated that if this letter was not received, members should contact Okey Obiajulu and he'll ensure that the information is sent. Terry Carbone suggested that Tanya send the information to Melonie and for Melonie to forward that information to the group. Tanya agreed to forward the letter to Melonie so that it could be emailed to the membership and uploaded to the Google Drive. Tanya stated that Deb Mooney and Lyndon Gyurek gave a presentation at Water Week on the new guidelines and wondered if the group would be interested in hearing this presentation on lead and sampling. Gaylene Whitehead suggested a workshop. A suggestion was made to include this presentation during a summer meeting. Melonie indicated that the hours of the May meeting could be extended to accommodate more than one presentation. Tanya stated that the Q&A portion of the presentation would be important. Grant Dixon pointed out that lead samples have to be collected within a short window after May 1 and it would be helpful to have the presentation sooner than later. Keith Straub suggested that links to documents be sent to the membership so that people can review the guidelines ahead of time. Tanya to send link to Melonie. Melonie to forward link to membership.

Certification – Renewal Fees:

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Tanya stated that a notice was sent to operators and employers indicating that there will be a \$130.00 fee for renewals beginning July 1, 2020. This fee will be once every three years. She asked if members received this notice. Tanya stated the revenues from these fees would support the subscription/maintenance costs for the online system. The \$130 amount was deemed the lowest amount to charge to cover maintenance costs. It has taken 18 months to put this fee in place. Tanya stated the method of fee collection has not yet been determined, but will be in place before July 1, 2020. Tanya stated that a review every 3-4 years would be conducted to determine if the fee is still sustainable. The department will work with the Treasury Board to determine where the department is at and a review will take place this time next year. Tanya stated that changing the fee is not something that can be easily done and she doesn't anticipate an increase.

### Discipline-Specific Training (5 Year Strategic Plan for Water/Wastewater Operator Certification):

Tanya informed the group that updated guidelines for January 1, 2020 have not yet been posted. She stated that one of the changes was the requirement of discipline-specific training. She also noted that for small systems, the required CEUs had changed from 0.6 to 1.8 every three years. Tanya stated that anyone can write level 1 exams as long as they have some post-secondary education and are 18 years of age and older. Discipline-specific examples will be posted on the website. Tanya stated these examples could be reviewed at the May meeting. Tanya stated she would forward the link to Melonie so that the link to the certification page can be forwarded to the membership.

### Training Proposals in Response to Operator Attendance Guidelines:

Tanya indicated that there is no desire at this time to lessen the experience requirements through a developed curriculum (i.e., as an operator gains experience, employers should provide the technical experiences in the background). The letter from Environment and Parks on this issue was sent to the Recruitment, Training, and Retention subcommittee. Tanya will discuss this matter in more depth at the May meeting.

Bob Marshall asked Tanya about the status of a WNC member sitting on the Advisory committee. Tanya stated the matter has still not been decided. Tanya said she is lobbying for a WNC member to sit on the committee. She said it is stuck in the process and noted that a briefing note was sent to Ministers. Tanya said that approval has to be given before a member is appointed. She said she would keep Bob updated on this matter. Bob noted that RMA provides a chance for delegates to talk with Ministers and may be a means for WNC to advocate on this matter.

Adam Norris stated that a presentation out of Peace River would be one to watch for with regard to working on wetland consultation. He asked whether there would be someone from government to speak on this presentation. Bob stated that efforts have been made to reach out to the Alberta Environment and Parks and Kristen Andersen of Associated Environmental. Melonie stated she spoke with Wanda Watts from the Alberta Environment and Parks about an information package for WNC. Melonie to reach out to Wanda about the information package.

### **New Business and Updates**

### **Status of Subcommittee Chairs and Vice-Chairs**

Bob Marshall stated that for the Advocacy subcommittee, Bob Buckle is the chair but the vice-chair position is still vacant. Bob Buckle indicated that it would be nice to have a person from the membership be vice-chair, and to not be afraid to help.

Bob stated that there is no Chair or vice-chair for the Education and Awareness subcommittee. Tamara Wuttunee-Campbell of Aquatera agreed to be chair of this subcommittee.

Bob noted that Jennifer Besinger of the County of Grande Prairie is chair of the Recruitment, Training, and Retention subcommittee, and that Grant Dixon of ATAP is the vice-chair. Jennifer stated that there is some time commitment to the positions but noted the spectacular support of the NADC.

Bob stated that he is looking to have the vacant positions (vice-chairs for two subcommittees) filled by the May meeting.

### **WNC Quarterly Bulletin**

Bob informed the group that the WNC Quarterly Bulletin was uploaded to the Google Drive and also sent out by email. The aim of the bulletin is for members to share information about the value of Coalition with councils and staff in their organizations. He encouraged the membership to download the bulletin and share with staff. Sheila confirmed that the bulletin would be disseminated quarterly. Willis Fitzsimmons stated it was a great idea, and provided ongoing awareness. Bob encouraged the group to forward topics they wanted shared to either him or NADC.

### **Resolutions for AUMA and RMA**

Bob stated a draft of the resolution was sent to the membership in December for feedback. Feedback was collected and the revised version is on the Google Drive. Bob asked if there were any questions about the resolution, and none were posed. Bob asked for a motion to approve the resolution. Bob Marshall stated he would bring the resolution forward to council and to the RMA regional meeting in February, and Bob Buckle stated he would bring the resolution to the mayor's caucus in March, and to the floor at AUMA in the fall.

Bob Buckle of the City of Cold Lake moved that the revised resolution be accepted by the membership at 10:54am.

### **MOTION CARRIED**

### **Subcommittee Updates**

Advocacy:

Bob Buckle indicated that the resolution for AUMA and RMA has been covered, noting that he will bring the resolution before the Mayors' caucus in March. A request for a decision will be made there for the resolution as an emergent issue. Bob indicated that a response has not been received from Alberta Environment and Parks with regard to inter-basin water transfers. Bob said he would ensure the group gets an answer. The issue around water diversion licenses and misinterpretation of the Water Act is the

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next action item for the subcommittee. The plan is to formulate a letter to Alberta Environment and Parks on the matter. With regard to recruitment, Bob asked Melonie to comment, and Melonie indicated there was no update on this issue. Bob noted the WNC quarterly bulletin had been mentioned.

### **Recruitment, Training, and Retention**

Jennifer Besinger stated that the subcommittee is looking into marketing water/wastewater operator careers to high school students. Jennifer acknowledged the letter received from Alberta Environment and Parks regarding the peer cross training proposals, and looks forward to Tanya's update at the next meeting in May. She also looks forward to asking future questions of Tanya at the May meeting with regard to discipline-specific training for operators. The subcommittee also investigated funding opportunities for students and concluded that there is not much in terms of offerings now that the STEP program has been cut. The subcommittee is also exploring developing a template to share services and if there is interest in sharing water/wastewater operator services across areas. The letter/template supports the idea behind Inter-Municipal Collaboration Frameworks (ICF). Jennifer also explained that efforts continue with regard to overlaying operators with a map of facilities to know where plants that are operator-rich are located.

### **Education and Awareness**

Sheila provided an update of the activities of this subcommittee. Sheila stated that if members were attending events that they believe would provide a good opportunity for exhibiting information on WNC, to contact her and request materials. She has been continually updating the documents and wants to ensure that members who are exhibiting have the most recent versions. Sheila stated that during the October meeting there was some discussion of using Aquatera's fill in as you go model to ascertain the cost of water. Sheila also discussed the fact sheets addressing water topics and how the intent was for municipalities and organizations to use the information from these fact sheets in their publications, on social media, etc., to increase water literacy. The first fact sheet developed by Meghan Payne, on septic system tips, was shared by other organizations and municipalities on social media, and was well received. Meghan, before she stepped away as Chair, suggested that the next fact sheet concentrate on managing run-off and improving water quality. Sheila noted that no one has agreed to draft another fact sheet. Tamara Wuttunee-Campbell stated that she would be Chair of this committee.

### **Next Meeting**

#### **Location and date of future meetings**

Bob informed the group that the next meeting would be held in Big Lakes County on May 21, 2020. Volunteers are needed to host the summer and fall meetings. Bob asked if anyone was interested in hosting these meetings. Bob Buckle said he would take a request to council to host the summer meeting. Bob Marshall noted that technical staff are invited to meetings as the information shared is for operators as well as councilors. Bob reminded the membership to RSVP NADC so that there is a count of how many lunches the host community will have to prepare.

Grant Dixon reiterated the importance of attending the Door To Edmonton event in February. The event is offered every two years, and is organized by Western Canada Water. The event is an invitation

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to government to speak on the regulations and legislation affecting water and wastewater. Grant emphasized it would be valuable and worthwhile for members to attend.

### **Future agenda topics, upcoming presentations, and potential exhibitions discussion**

Bob Marshall encouraged members to bring ideas forward for presentations. He stated that Waste Go would be presenting at the May meeting. Tanya Hunter will attend and provide updates. The membership will also review work plans and new goals at the May meeting.

### **Adjournment:**

Moved by Gaylene Whitehead of Northern Sunrise County at 11:10am to adjourn the meeting.

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **Organizational Meeting:**

Melonie conducted the nomination for vice-chair of the coalition. The nomination is for a vice-chair for a one-year term effectively immediately. Melonie explained that if more than one person were nominated, a secret ballot would be conducted in May.

Melonie called for nominations for vice-chair from January 2020-January 2021. Willis Fitzsimmons nominated Richard Simard of Big Lakes County for Vice-Chair. Richard Simard accepted the nomination. Melonie called for nominations a second and third time with no additional nominations.

Moved by Bob Marshall that nominations be ceased at 11:11am.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Melonie asked for a motion at 11:12am to accept Richard Simard of Big Lakes County as vice-chair of the Water North Coalition.

**MOTION CARRIED**

Willis congratulates Richard.

### **Adjournment**

Melonie asked for a motion to adjourn the organizational meeting at 11:13am.

**MOTION CARRIED.**