



**Board of Directors Meeting #1**  
June 24, 2021  
**DRAFT** Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Summary:**

The Athabasca Watershed Council Board of Directors met on June 24, 2021. The meeting focused on a number of business/ administrative items as follows:

- Minutes of the previous (March 29, 2021) board meeting were approved.
- From the elected Directors, the Board approved Dan Moore, Kendra Gilbert and Paula Evans as President, Vice-president and Secretary, respectively.
- Several Committee updates were provided: Committees are for the most part finished reviewing their Terms of Reference and workplans and starting to implement projects such as a web refresh and seeking input on the draft IWMP.
- The Executive Director provided a report showing activities undertaken in the first quarter of the fiscal year in support of strategic plan objectives; she also provided a membership and communications report and a fiscal update.
- A round table of updates was shared: there is a lot going on in the watershed, including lake stewardship initiatives, research and monitoring programs, municipal planning processes, industry water conservation initiatives, etc.
- The next board meeting is Sept. 16, 2021.

**OUTSTANDING ACTIONs LOG:**

Action	Completed by:
Petra to post the IWMP on the website to invite comment and work with the Tech committee to address feedback.	ongoing
Petra to undertake planning for the Oct. WPAC Summit and keep the Board apprised.	Oct.
Petra to bring options back to the board on how to fill vacant board positions and how to improve communications with sectors and stakeholders.	November strategic planning session
Petra to send out appropriate 'thank you' to retiring Directors and Alternates.	As needed
Petra to include a Nominations Committee TOR and a process and criteria for developing position statements in the AWC Policy and Process Guide.	July
Petra to work with Committees to finalize Committee TORs and other documents including the Policy and Process guide, Employee Handbook, IWMP Strategy, CECE Strategy and fundraising plan.	ongoing

**Meeting Attendees:**

SEAT	DIRECTOR	ALTERNATE	Quorum
AEP Representative	Abdi Siad-Omar		√
Provincial/Federal Government	Vacant	Vacant	
Municipal (Upper Basin)	Lavone Olson		√
Municipal (Middle Basin)		Colleen Powell	√
Municipal (Lower Basin)	Sterling Johnson		√
Forestry	Dan Moore		√
Oil & Gas	Janice Linehan		√
Small Agricultural Producer	Marv Fyten		√
Agriculture	Vacant		
Mining/Utilities	Vacant		
Indigenous	Cleo Reece		√
Indigenous	Vacant		
Indigenous	Vacant		
Health or Environment	Morris Nesdole	Julie Hink	√
Health or Environment	Brian Deheer		√
Stewardship	Kendra Gilbert		√
Stewardship	Paula Evans	Alia Schamehorn	√
Research and Academia	Robert Holmberg	Scott Ketcheson	√
Member-at-Large			
Member-at-Large	Laura Pekkola		√
Quorum = >50% filled seats (15) = 8			<b>14</b>
<b>Staff present:</b> Petra Rowell, AWC Executive Director Sarah MacDonald, Watershed Science Coordinator Indah Holmberg, Communications Coordinator			

**Call to Order**

As interim Chair, Morris Nesdole called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. giving the following acknowledgement:

*Athabasca Watershed Council acknowledges that the Athabasca watershed is located on Treaty 6, Treaty 8 and Treaty 10 territories. The Athabasca Watershed Council respects the histories, languages, and cultures of First Nations, Metis, Inuit people whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant watershed.*

**1. Administration**

**a. Introductions, health and safety, determine if quorum is met.**

Petra Rowell, Executive Director, confirmed that quorum was met. The Chair welcomed everyone, and health and safety were addressed.

**b. Review and Approval of Agenda**

Robert Holmberg, moved to approve the agenda as presented. All in favor. Approved by consensus.

**c. Review of Actions Arising and Approval of Past Meeting Minutes**

An update on actions from the March 29, 2021 board meeting was not given but completed actions are listed below:

Actions Completed	Notes:
Post the approved December 17, 2020, and February 11, 2021 meeting minutes on the website.	Done.
Morris to follow up with Larry to get signing authority at the bank.	Done.
Board members to provide input to Lavone on how to update the AWC website (like, dislike, missing info, etc.).	Done.
Brian to provide meeting details to Petra for a presentation to the Healthy Waters LLB group April 13.	Done.
Petra to poll for November and February meeting dates.	Done.

Paula Evans made a motion to approve the March 29, 2021 board meeting minutes with a small correction to the name of the ‘Ad Hoc Resolution Committee’ (pg. 3). All were in favor of the motion. Approved by consensus.

**2. Old Business**

**a. 2021 AGM Election Results**

Petra noted that a list of Directors elected at the June 12 AGM was included in this meeting package.

**b. Board Orientation (key documents list)**

Petra provided a list of key documents and their web links (e.g., bylaws, strategic plan, etc.) for Directors in the meeting package.

**3. New Business**

**a. Process for and Selection of Executive Officers**

As per the 2020 bylaws, AWC officers are selected at the first board meeting following the AGM. At the last Executive Committee meeting, it was agreed that a discussion of the process for selecting officers would be included on today’s board meeting agenda. To inform this discussion, Petra included a brief discussion paper in the board meeting package. After some discussion, as well as a review of officer duties, a process was agreed to. Petra was asked to act as Presiding Officer. She then proceeded with asking for nominations from the floor three times for each officer position.

For President, after a call three times for nominations, Sterling Johnson nominated Morris Nesdole and Paula Evans nominated Dan Moore. Both agreed to put their names forward. Both were provided an opportunity to speak to their qualifications. A vote (by show of hands) was conducted. Dan Moore was approved as President.

For Vice-President, after a call three times for nominations, Brian Deheer nominated Kendra Gilbert who agreed to let her name stand. Kendra provided a few words before being acclaimed Vice-President.

For Secretary, after a call for nominations three times, Morris Nesdole nominated Paula Evans as Secretary. She accepted, said a few words, and was acclaimed as Secretary.

For Treasurer, after a call for nominations three times, Paula Evans nominated Morris Nesdole. Although he initially accepted, there was some confusion on who the position of Past President would fall to, and whether a director can hold two officer positions. After some discussion, the entire matter was referred to the Executive Director to bring back clarity to the next board meeting. *[Note: The Executive Committee subsequently met to discuss this issue and in the interests of moving forward constructively, all nominees relinquished their claims to the Treasurer and Past-President. With these seats now vacant, this matter has been resolved, and Executive Committee will undertake a search for a new Treasurer.]*

\*Note from this point forward, the new President, Dan Moore, chaired the remainder of the meeting.

#### **b. Board Approval of Alternates**

Petra pointed out the Board contact list included in the meeting package. She welcomed Alia Schamehorn as a new Alternate (for the Stewardship seat held by Paula Evans). Alia noted she is looking forward to getting to know everyone! Robert Holmberg asked the board to make a motion to switch positions with his alternate Scott Ketcheson (in effect, Robert resigned as Director, nominated Scott to be appointed as Director for Research and Academia, and Scott identified Robert as his Alternate). Brian Deheer made the motion to accept this change. None were opposed. The board approved the motion by consensus. (\*Note that as this is an interim appointment, Scott will have to run for re-election at the next AGM.) Marv Fyten then motioned to accept the amended board contact list, which includes all Alternates and appointments to committees. None were opposed. Approved by consensus.

#### **c. Recognition of Retiring Directors**

Morris thanked all outgoing Directors and Alternates. In particular, he acknowledged Tom Weber for his many years of contributions as a founding member of the AWC. He also noted Robert Esau's lengthy term. Outgoing Directors and Alternates include Tom Weber, Robert Esau, Andrew Hutchison, Jamie Giberson, John Ritchie and Joel Gervais.

*Action: Petra to send out appropriate thank you's to retiring Directors and Alternates.*

#### **d. Discussion: Need for a Nominations Committee**

At their last meeting, the Executive Committee recommended that in the future a formal Nominations Committee be struck to recruit, retain and acknowledge the work of Directors. This Committee would also ensure processes are in place to facilitate the election of Directors, as well as the selection of Alternates and Officers. Petra has started to draft a Terms of Reference for this Committee (included in the meeting package) and will include this information in the Policy and Process Guide.

*Action: Petra to include a Nominations Committee TOR in the draft Policy and Process Guide.*

**e. Discussion: Developing a Process, Criteria and Tools for Developing AWC Position Statements**

Petra reviewed the Board's recent activity regarding signing on to a Trout Unlimited letter to the Minister of Environment regarding riparian restoration and *Water Act* approvals; providing input to the WPAC collective letter to the federal government regarding the Canada Water Agency; and providing a supportive quote to the Ministers June 22 healthy rivers announcement. She is working on refining a process and criteria for guiding AWC work in this area. She also noted that the AWC can issue its own position statements. The Board discussed the process and criteria and agreed it's a work in progress and will be improved over time.

*Action: Petra to include the process and criteria for developing position statements in the draft Policy and Process Guide.*

**4. Committee and Other Reports:**

**a. Committee Reports**

- i. **Executive Committee:** (Chair Morris Nesdole) Meeting minutes were included in the board package for information.
- ii. **Governance Committee:** (Chair vacant) With Tom Weber retiring, a new Chair will be selected at the next meeting. The June 4 and June 18 webinars on AWC bylaws and policies, despite low attendance, stimulated good discussions about AWC policies and practices. This information will inform the Committee as it works on a revised Policy and Process Guide (including the Board and Committee TORs) which will be provided to the Board after this meeting, with a request to review. The document will come back to the Board for final approval.
- iii. **Finance Committee:** (Chair Morris Nesdole) The Finance Committee met April 14 to review their TOR, review relevant financial policies and plan for the coming year of fundraising initiatives. Discussion scheduled for today (on Emergency / Contingency Funds, Membership fees) due to a lack of time, will be deferred to a future meeting.
- iv. **Human Resources Committee:** (Chair Colleen Powell) Colleen noted that the AWC has hired an HR Consultant to update the Employee Handbook; the first draft is looking much improved. The ED has opened a WCB account and renewed both Board and Business liability insurance. The AWC has received Canada Summer Jobs (federal) funding, combined with our own dollars, will cover a student for 16 weeks; Sarah is currently advertising for the 'Science and Education Coordinator' position and starting interviews at the end of this week. The AWC has also been approved for Alberta New Jobs funding (25%) but still looking to raise about \$10k to fund a full time 1 year Communications Coordinator position.

v. **Technical Committee:** (Co-chairs Dan Moore and Robert Holmberg)

The Co-chairs provided a number of project updates as follows:

- The Integrated Watershed Management Plan is posted on the website at <https://awc-wpac.ca/iwmp/>. Staff will be mailing it out Indigenous groups over the summer looking for feedback.
- Sarah's State of the Pembina Riparian webinar is June 29 <https://awc-wpac.ca/event/2021/6/29/the-state-of-riparian-areas-in-the-pembina-river-watershed/>. Fiera has almost completed reports for the Upper, Mid and Lower sub-basin; data is going onto the riparian portal <https://riparian.info/#/nav>. Sarah is working with other conservation groups to find landowners with conservation/restoration projects.
- Sarah has purchased all needed equipment for the East Slopes Benthic Invertebrate Sampling project. Staff will be out in the headwaters in August - September doing CABIN and STREAM protocols
- The AWC have been asked to join AEP, UofA, NSWA, EPCOR in an NSERC submission for \$500k to develop an ice/water quantity and quality model for the lower Athabasca

- vi. **CECE Committee:** (Chair Lavone Olson) The Committee met April 19 and May 27, reviewed its TOR and updated its Communication, Education and Community Engagement Strategy. Indah completed the 2020-21 annual report <https://awc-wpac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Annual-Report-2020-21-Final-compressed.pdf> and is producing e-newsletters monthly. Both Sarah and Indah are increasing the number of social media postings (see #waterwednesdays and #Fridayreads). Indah has also put out a member's communications survey (in the last e-newsletter). She is just beginning a web refresh.

*Action: Petra work with Committees to move draft documents through the final Committee edits and approvals, then to the board for final approval including the Policy and Process guide, Employee Handbook, IWMP Strategy, CECE Strategy and fundraising plan.*

**b. Executive Director's Report**

Petra provided an update on the first quarter of the fiscal year, outlining activities undertaken by staff and committees in support of the Strategic Plan, providing an overview of membership numbers and communication statistics, and lastly, providing a financial update. In particular, she noted how important communications are, the desire to hire a full time communications person to develop things like a story map (e.g.,

<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=a1880eaa2c6b44619c6c79a6df1ea0ef>) and how we need about \$10k more to do this.

### c. Updates on Other AWC Collaborations:

- i. **Alberta Water Council:** As the WPAC member, Morris provided an update on their activities including recent release of the [Alberta Water Futures](#) and [Wetland Policy Implementation Review](#) reports. He also noted that [work](#) on source water protection tools and a drought simulation continues. It was noted that both Dan and Petra are on a new Ad Hoc Governance group to scope out a project for consideration by the Board. Brian Deheer is also now on the board representing the Alberta Wilderness Association/Alberta Environmental Network.
  
- ii. **Lac La Biche Watershed Management Plan:** Brian Deheer provided an update, noting that the Lac La Biche Watershed Management Plan is now complete and approved by LLB County council. The Healthy Waters LLB Stewardship Group has received a Watershed Stewardship Grant for Wetland Conservation including a wetlands exercise with Grade 5s at Aurora Middle School and an Ecotrust grant for doing a series of education and outreach events (posters, videos, open houses covid permitting). Both the Group and Brian individually received Environmental Stewardship Awards from LLB County. Laura noted a resource for school groups wanting to do pond dipping or other wetland activities ( see <https://www.insideeducation.ca/learning-resources/classroom-learning-resources/elementary-school/#wetland-wonders>).

## 5. Round Table Updates and Sector Reports

Several members made positive comments about progress to date. Additionally,

- Laura noted she continues to be the AWC rep on the WPAC collective initiative, led by the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance, to develop a series of watershed videos.
- Cleo noted that while she is a member of the Fort McMurray First Nation, she sits as an individual, bringing her own perspective to the AWC. She commented on the idea of a story map, noting that many local place names have been lost over time.
- Dan spoke to the AFPA water conservation, efficiency and productivity plan. He noted that the Alberta Water Council may be initiating a review of CEP plans in the near future. The Alberta Newsprint Company has been able to reduce their water use by about 10%.
- Scott noted that with his work in the mid to lower part of the basin on understanding hydrology and wetlands, he looks forward to contributing to the Technical Committee.
- Abdi thanked everyone for a great meeting.

## 6. Upcoming Meeting Dates and Times

- a. Next Board Meeting – September 16, 2021
- b. Board Meeting – November (to be determined)
- c. Board Meeting – February (to be determined)

*Action: Petra to poll for November and February meeting dates for this fiscal year.*

**7. Meeting Adjourned**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:56 pm.