



## Board of Directors Meeting

June 17, 2023

Lac La Biche

Approved Meeting Minutes

### Meeting Summary:

The Athabasca Watershed Council (AWC) met in person in Lac La Biche on June 17 with the board meeting following the AGM. The board heard year-end staff activities and financial reports during the AGM portion of the event. During the board meeting, they approved Feb. 9, 2023 meeting minutes; elected officers; approved an updated budget based on confirmed AEPA funding; discussed how we can achieve our strategic and IWMP goals; and shared round table updates and upcoming events. The next board meeting will be held September 21, 2023.

### Meeting Attendees:

SEAT	DIRECTOR	ALTERNATE	Quorum
AEP Representative	Abdi Siad Omar		√
Provincial/Federal Government	vacant		
Municipal (Upper Basin)	vacant		
Municipal (Middle Basin)		Gary Cromwell	√
Municipal (Lower Basin)			
Forestry	Dan Moore		√
Oil & Gas	Janice Linehan		√
Ag or Industry	vacant		
Agriculture			
Mining/Utilities			
Indigenous			
Indigenous			
Indigenous	vacant		
Health or Environment	Brian Deheer		√
Health or Environment	Julie Hink		√
Stewardship	Kendra Gilbert		√
Stewardship	Paula Evans		√
Research and Academia			
Member-at-Large	Laura Pekkola		√
Member-at-Large	Ida Edwards		√
Past President	vacant		
Quorum = >50% filled seats (14) = >7			10

<b>Staff present:</b> Petra Rowell, AWC Executive Director Sarah MacDonald, Watershed Science Coordinator Ashley Johnson, Science and Outreach Coordinator Caity Seifert, Project Coordinator Kailyn Gibbons, Watershed Technician	
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**Actions arising from the June 17, 2023 AWC Board meeting:**

<b>Action (Lead):</b>	<b>To be completed by:</b>
Ashley post the approved Feb. 2023 meeting minutes to the website.	Next meeting (Sept)
Develop and share list of all previous funders with the board and continue the discussion about potential funding sources.	Ongoing with 15 year anniversary work.
Add a stakeholder discussion to the next meeting.	Deferred to Nov.
Board members think about how to be an ambassador for the Athabasca Watershed Council. - Create a slide deck about the AWC for use by board members	Ongoing. Nov.
Write a formal letter of thanks to AEPA with a list of accomplishments, activities enabled with new funding.	ASAP

**1. Welcome**

**a. Call to Order, Health and Safety, Quorum**

AWC President and meeting Chair Dan Moore called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. Executive Director Petra Rowell confirmed health and safety logistics and that quorum was met.

**b. Treaty Land Acknowledgements**

The Chair provided a Treaty Land acknowledgement as follows: *The Athabasca Watershed Council acknowledges that our watershed is located on Treaty 6, 8 and 10 territories. We make this acknowledgment as an act of Truth and Reconciliation, showing our respect for the land and the Indigenous ancestors who came before us. We also acknowledge and respect the languages and culture of today's First Nation and Metis people, whose presence continues to enrich our watershed.*

**c. Round Table Introductions**

The Chair invited all participants to introduce themselves and to say a few words about their summer plans.

**2. Administration**

**a. Review Meeting Objectives and Approve Meeting Agenda**

As per the agenda circulated prior to the meeting, meeting objectives were as follows:

- Board orientation
- Officer election
- Approve an updated 2023-24 budget
- Hear updates on summer, fall planned activities

The agenda was approved by consensus (motion by Kendra/no objections) as presented with no additions or deletions.

**b. Review Action Items and Approve Meeting Minutes**

Petra went through the Feb. 9, 2023 meeting’s action log and minutes: all action items have either been completed or are in progress.

<b>Action (Lead):</b>	<b>Status:</b>
<i>Action: Ashley post the approved Nov. 22 2022 meeting minutes to the website.</i>	Done.
<i>ACTION: Develop and share list of all previous funders with the board and continue the discussion about potential funding sources.</i>	Ongoing with 15 year anniversary work.
<i>ACTION: add a stakeholder discussion to the next meeting.</i>	Deferred.
<i>ACTION: Board members think about how to be an ambassador for the Athabasca Watershed Council.</i>	Ongoing.

The minutes were approved by consensus as presented.

*Action: Post the approved Feb. 2023 meeting minutes to the website.*

**3. Board Member Orientation / Q and A Session**

**a. Quick Overview of structure, key documents**

Petra provided an overview of AWC governance documents and organizational structure. She noted that many of these documents are provided to Directors in their binders, but are also on the website. She reviewed the vision, mission and value statements. She also explained that our bylaws set out the rules around membership and elections. The Board Terms of Reference identifies which seats are held by which sectors. Petra noted that the board has 4 key roles including:

- 1. Define and advance the organizations purpose.*
- 2. Ensure, develop and conserve resources (financial, human and property).*
- 3. Provide oversight (exercise effective control).*
- 4. Engage in outreach with stakeholders (manage relationships).*

These 4 roles, and the tools we use to implement them, drive our annual calendar of activities.

**b. Election of Officers**

With Petra facilitating the election process, a slate of officers was presented and approved by consensus (motion by Janice, no objections) with officer positions filled as follows:

- *President Dan Moore*
- *Vice President Kendra Gilbert*
- *Treasurer Paula Evans*
- *Secretary Julie Hink*

**4. Reports and Updates**

Petra welcomed new staff member, Caity Seifert. She also welcomed summer students Kailyn and Kendra. With staff and the Alberta Environment and Protected Areas (AEPA) cheque received and in the bank, the AWC is expecting a very busy summer!

**a. Quick overview of 2023-24 first quarter finances (approve updated budget) and activities and plans for the remainder of the fiscal year.**

Petra provided an updated budget, based on confirmed/received core grant funding from AEPA. This updated 2023-24 budget was approved by consensus with no objections. She explained that additional funds will largely go to a 4<sup>th</sup> full time staff position and travel (with more staff out doing more things).

Petra also asked for a motion to add a 2<sup>nd</sup> staff person (Sarah MacDonald) as a signatory to our ATB bank accounts. This motion (made by Brian Deheer; seconded by Julie Hink) was approved by consensus with no objections.

Finally, Petra asked for a motion to enable the AWC Executive Director to utilize investment tools, including GICs and additional savings accounts, to maximize interest income, where it is practical to do so. Brian Deheer made the motion to allow the AWC Executive Director, with the approval of a second Director (usually the Treasurer), to set up additional savings accounts or to purchase short term GICs, as she sees fit. The motion was seconded by Julie Hink. There were no objections / all were in favor.

**b. Discuss how we can achieve our strategic plan and IWMP goals**

Knowing about our structure and function, Petra asked board members for ideas on how to better achieve our goals. Some responses included:

- Good to see balanced information and collaborations
- Would like to see more information like the Ponds and Dams poster shared more broadly
- Also like to see more human interest stories / shorter 'snippets' that are easy to digest (i.e., caring for your property, water conservation tips, issues with non-disposable wipes, we can all make a difference, etc.)
- Glad to see activities that engage youth; could reach out more to 4H and Junior Forest Wardens
- Could reach more public by having a booth at Farmers Markets, newspaper articles
- Send a formal letter of thanks to AEPA (Minister and DM) with some of our achievements
- Create a short slide deck for board members to use with their sectors.
- Consider a facilitated strategic planning session for the board

**5. Other Business (Round Table Updates and Announcements)**

The Chair asked for a round table of updates from our Directors and their sectors/ affiliations. In particular, we would like to know what's going on in your sector; if your sector has any water issues; and if you are hearing/have any feedback for AWC activities:

- a. Laura thanked Ashley for assisting with a session at the Inside Education Generate Navigate event in Canmore.

- b. Ida noted issues with Tansy and vetch and other invasive species in the Town of Athabasca and is looking for AWC support to address these issues along the Tawatinaw River.
- c. Ida also noted that an urban deer study is being conducted in Athabasca (Sarah has been in touch with the researcher) and work is being done on the trails (Muskeg Creek, Athabasca Landing) around Athabasca.
- d. Abdi noted AEPA is pleased with the work that the AWC is doing and looks forward to seeing what activities increased funding can support.
- e. Petra noted the AWC's 15 year anniversary is coming up in 2024 – something to discuss this fall.

**6. Next Steps / Meetings:**

- a. July 6 – 13 Fort Assiniboine Bicentennial Voyageur Canoe Brigade (a paddle from Whitecourt to Athabasca, with community events in Whitecourt, Blue Ridge, Fort Assiniboine, and Athabasca. There can be 6 to 8 paddlers per canoe, so each team is approximately 12 people.)
- b. Sept. 21/23 – board meeting (in person)
- c. Nov. 23/23 – hybrid
- d. Feb 15/24 - online

After board and staff photos were taken out on the deck, the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.

**Meeting Adjourned.**

