



# Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance

Regular Meeting Minutes

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| <b>Date of Meeting:</b>                         | <b>Tuesday, June 22, 2021</b>  |
| <b>Location:</b>                                | <b>Electronic Meeting</b>  |
| <b>Members Present:</b>                         | <b>Laura Patrick, Chair, Islands Trust Trustee<br/>Gary Holman, Vice Chair, Capital Regional District (CRD) SSI Electoral Area Director<br/>Sylvia Barroso, Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNR)<br/>Dale Green, Capital Regional District, Senior Environmental Science Officer, Environmental Protection<br/>Jason Griffin, Cedar Lane Water Service Area Commission<br/>Alan Martin, Fulford Water Service Area Commission<br/>Mike McCormick, Beddis Water Service Area Commission<br/>Tim Slaney, Scott Point Waterworks District<br/>Sandra Ungerson, North Salt Spring Waterworks District Trustee</b> |
| <b>Members At-large Present:</b>                | <b>Gayle Baker, Transition Salt Spring Society<br/>Doreen Hewitt, Cusheon Lake Stewardship Committee<br/>Ian Peace, Salt Spring Island Water Preservation Society<br/>Pierre Mineau, Salt Spring Island Conservancy<br/>Margaret Thomson, Salt Spring Island Agricultural Alliance</b>   |
| <b>Members At-large Regrets:</b>                | <b>Rhonan Heitzmann, Salt Spring Water Company</b>   |
| <b>Technical Working Group Liaison Present:</b> | <b>John Millson, Technical Working Group Chair</b>   |
| <b>Staff Present:</b>                           | <b>Shannon Cowan, Coordinator<br/>Jason Youmans, Island Planner<br/>Sarah Shugar, Recorder</b>   |
| <b>Staff Regrets:</b>                           | <b>William Shulba, Senior Freshwater Specialist</b>  |
| <b>Others Present:</b>                          | <b>Kathy Reimer, Salmon Enhancement Society<br/>One member of the public</b>   |

These minutes follow the order of the agenda although the sequence may have varied.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Patrick called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and acknowledged the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance is meeting within Coast Salish Territory.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The following additional item was presented for inclusion in the agenda:

3.2 Comments and Questions from the Public

**By general consent**, the agenda was approved as amended.

**3. MINUTES**

**3.1 Draft minutes of the April 15, 2021 Regular Meeting of the SSIWPA Steering Committee**

**By general consent**, the minutes of the April 15, 2021 Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance Regular meeting were adopted.

**3.2 Comments and Questions from the Public - None**

**4. BUSINESS ITEMS**

**4.1 Chair's Report**

Chair Patrick reported Trust Council will consider first reading of the Islands Trust Policy Statement at a special meeting on July 8, 2021. The Islands Trust Policy Statement updates policies concerning First Nations Reconciliation, Climate Change and Affordable Housing. SSIWPA could comment on the first draft of the Islands Trust Policy Statement when it is available. Chair Patrick recommended a new book entitled Stories from the Magic Canoe of Wa'xaid by Briony Penn.

**4.2 Coordinator's Reports**

**4.2.1 SSIWPA Coordination April, May 2021**

The report was received.

**4.2.2 SSIWPA Report to Local Trust Committee May 25, 2021**

The report was received.

**4.3 Action and Decision Logs**

The report was received.

**4.4 Technical Working Group Report and Recommendations**

#### 4.4.1 Key Messages for Rainwater System Public Education proposed for addition to existing Groundwater Education Materials Workplan area

Technical Working Group Chair Millson presented a Scope of Work Memorandum dated June 9, 2021 regarding Key Messages for Rainwater System Public Education.

In discussion the following comments were noted:

- There was a question regarding incentive programs and whether a hub for incentive programs could be developed. S. Cowan reported Transition Salt Spring is planning to launch a Green Coach incentive program. SSIWPA will assist with Transition Salt Spring's rebate program. Member Baker reported the Green Coach program is expected to launch in the Fall 2021.
- There was a suggestion that the Steering Committee review the incentive program prior to launch.
- The CRD is contributing \$10,000 for the rainwater rebate program and the conditions of the rebate are based on the 2020 rebate program and adjustments can be made.
- There was a suggestion to use incentives to align the cost of water for all water improvement districts. NSSWD has the lowest rate and lowest surcharge rate.
- The following comment was recorded in the chat section of the meeting: "M. McCormick is right, NSSWD rate structure is the elephant in the room. The water data table developed by Shannon should be shared with WDs and the public. SSIWPA could also consider a recommendation to NSSWD re a more aggressive rate structure."
- There was a question regarding whether the rebates available for well protection such as well caps, decommissioning, surface seals etc. The Green Coach program will offer rainwater rebates offered through rainwater supply system vendors and woodstove upgrade rebates.
- The Green Coach program is targeted at climate action mitigation strategies.
- There was a suggestion to bundle incentive programs as a resource for homeowners.

**By general consent**, the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance direct the Technical Working Group to assist in the development of appropriate education materials for the key messages in the Scope of Work Memorandum dated June 9, 2021.

Technical Working Group Chair Millson reported the TWG received the Water System Survey 2020 DRAFT for review and the TWG will provide further technical review of the Water Systems Survey if given further opportunities to engage.

Technical Working Group Chair Millson reported the TWG recommended that SSIWPA consider writing a letter to the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee in support of integration of SSI Watershed Ecosystem Resilience Mapping based on calculation of the 'precipitation interception potential' into updated Salt Spring Island Groundwater Recharge Maps, and with the work of Dr. Tara Martin on Salt Spring Island forests and climate resiliency. TWG Chair Millson reported this work

would be to develop a holistic map of groundwater recharge potential by layering data.

In discussion the following comments were noted:

- There was a question regarding whether funds are available for the request. Planner Youmans reported he would need to look into funding.
- Member Mineau reported the SS Conservancy is in support of this work.
- The following comment was recorded from the chat section of the meeting: “It would be great if we could get a presentation from GW Solutions of this work at a future meeting”
- There was a suggestion to discuss further with Freshwater Specialist Shulba regarding his groundwater recharge work on Pender Island.
- It is essential to ground truth the mapping.

**By general consent**, that the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance write a letter to the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee to support the integration of Salt Spring Island Watershed Ecosystem Resilience Mapping based on calculation of the “precipitation interception potential” into updated Salt Spring Island Groundwater Recharge Maps, and with the work of Dr. Tara Martin on Salt Spring Island forests and climate resiliency.

#### **4.5 Stewardship Video Series Scope of Work - Transition Salt Spring**

Member Baker presented a Scope of Work Memorandum dated June 9, 2021 regarding a stewardship video series.

**By general consent**, the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance direct the Technical Working Group to provide advice and technical assistance in review of the script for one or more Salt Spring Island watershed stewardship videos in accordance with the attached Scope of Work Memorandum dated June 9, 2021.

#### **4.6 Proposed Small Water Systems Working Group Terms of Reference – Beddis CRD Water Commission**

Member McCormick presented a draft Small Water Systems Working Group Terms of Reference. The Beddis Water Service Commission requested SSIWPA to coordinate communication among local water commissions and water district boards. A Water Systems Working Group would have the ability to share common concerns and possible common solutions, while striving to help deliver a sustainable and effective water supply for the entire island, both now and in the foreseeable future. A consolidated working group could be most valuable in providing islanders meaningful representation within the context of a movement to a more unified island water delivery model.

In discussion the following comments were noted:

- There was a question regarding whether NSSWD would be included.
- A major cost for water districts is the cost of dealing with residual waste from the DAF plant systems. Currently, residual waste is trucked off island at a cost of \$100 per year

per household in the Beddis Water District. The residual waste from a DAF plant could be used in ditches to sequester nutrients that would reduce nutrient loading in lakes.

- The following comments were recorded in the chat section of the meeting:
  - “A couple of useful links on funding: [www.bcwaterfunders.org/funders-funds](http://www.bcwaterfunders.org/funders-funds), <https://waterbc.ca/community/programs/access-to-funding/>”
  - “The title would be changed to Water Systems Working Group”
  - “Agree with Shannon that this should be all systems - and drop 'small' from title”
  - “Sandra - I worked with Beddis commissioners to pull together the proposal here and it was intended to include all, not just "small"!”
  - “The proposal was distributed to all of the water systems already, except for those in the steering committee who received it in the agenda”
- There was a suggestion for CRD and NSSWD staff to provide technical support.
- There was a suggestion that a progressive rate structure would be the most effective water conservation tool.
- The Salt Spring Island Water Optimization Report recommended an island wide water utility.
- Best practices for monitoring and data collection for the water systems would also be a great topic to discuss with the small water systems.
- There was a suggestion to include EmCon Services Inc. in discussions regarding ditches and ways to reduce nutrient loading onto lakes. It was noted EmCon Services Inc. re-ditched across from Beddis water treatment plant last week and there could have been potential to use the residual material from the water treatment plant in the ditches.

**By general consent**, the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance requests its coordinator to coordinate an inaugural meeting of water purveyors regarding the Terms of Reference for a Water Systems Working Group. Mandate to be clarified by the group.

#### **4.7 Workplan 2021-22**

##### **4.7.1 Watershed Stewardship and Protection Plan Project Charter Endorsed In Principle (Islands Trust)**

Planner Youmans presented the Watershed Stewardship and Protection Plan Project Charter Version 0.1 dated May 25, 2021. The Project Charter was endorsed in principle at the Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee May 25, 2021 meeting.

##### **4.7.2 Water System Data Survey Report Draft 2 (SSIWPA)**

Coordinator Cowan presented a draft Salt Spring Island Water System Survey 2020 report dated June 13, 2021.

In discussion the following comments and questions were noted:

- There was a question regarding whether the reported conclusions equal recommendations. Coordinator Cowan reported that SSIWPA itself would do well to determine next steps or recommendations. And, that the new section “Shared Concerns and Trends” was not intended to indicate conclusions.

- There was a question regarding whether there has been an analysis of volume of bulk water withdrawal compared to finished water to help identify how much water is lost in operations. Coordinator Cowan pointed to Table 3.
- There was a suggestion to add a table to compare the final price per cubic meter that takes into account the user fee, parcel tax, etc. (to provide a common denominator). To identify the average cost per cubic meter.
- Include context for non-revenue water such as leakage and other uses.
- To emphasize the need to identify leaks early to ensure preservation of the freshwater source
- The Province does not provide capital funding to improvement districts and fixing leaks continues to be an issue for water improvement districts.
- Early leak detection technology could be shared by water systems and could be valuable to the island.
- The following comment was recorded from the chat section of the meeting: “Agree with Sandra’s comment, I fully support need for improved funding structure for small water systems, and promote that at every opportunity I have. Higher level executive pressure is needed to generate political will for change”

**By general consent**, the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance receive the Water System Data Survey Report (amended) for information and recommend that the report be reviewed at the first meeting of the Water Systems Working Group.

Coordinator Cowan will amend the Water System Data Survey Report according to the suggestions noted above, and will circulate the next draft version to Steering Committee members as well as to potential members of the Water Systems Working Group.

#### **4.7.3 Professional Design Guide for Rainwater Systems for Potable Use (CRD) – project endpoint**

Coordinator Cowan reported the Potable Rainwater Systems Design Guide for Professionals project could be removed from the work plan as there is no need for such a “Design Guide”. Professionals who design rainwater systems for potable indoor use are already at the forefront of the Canadian Standards Association Rainwater Codes, the Building Codes, the Plumbing Codes and more.

**By general consent**, the Salt Spring Island Watershed Protection Alliance agreed to remove the Professional Design Guide for Rainwater Systems for Potable Use (CRD) from the Workplan 2021-22.

#### **4.7.4 Weston Lake Water Availability**

Member Green reported the Weston Lake Water Availability Memorandum of Understanding is in process. The RFP will be referred to the TWG for review. Islands Trust is providing the funding and CRD is overseeing the study.

In discussion the following comments and questions were noted:

- Important to understand all of the demands on the lake and climate change impacts.
- There was a question regarding when a statement of capacity for the Fulford system would be available. D. Green reported ideally the study could be completed in 6 months. There are two phases in the RFP. Not sure if the consultant will require further data. D. Green will report back with a timeline at a future meeting.

T. Slaney left the meeting at 11:43 p.m.

- There was a suggestion to make a preliminary estimate of the capacity of the Fulford system based on existing data.
- There was a question regarding the Vortex development application. Planner Youmans reported the Vortex applicant has taken the application out of abeyance and is in discussions with staff.
- There was a question regarding whether the Fulford Water District license would need to increase. Member Barroso can look into whether the Fulford Water District has applied for additional volume and report back.
- There was a question regarding whether the Vortex applicant has asked for a specific volume of water and it was noted that the proposed development and additional connections could require a water supply increase of up to 30%.
- There was a suggestion to add a table for license volumes of water districts.
- There was a question regarding whether all water districts have water licenses.
- Member Griffin reported the Cedar Lane Water District groundwater water license application is in process.
- There was a comment for Coordinator Cowan to encourage water districts to apply for water license if they do not have one already.
- The water allocation plans historically were focused on surface water. FLNR intends to update the plans. Member Barroso will provide the link to the Salt Spring Island Water Allocation Plan.
- Water licenses are also issued to Fisheries and for conservation.
- Planner Youmans reported the primary question for the Weston Lake study is “Is there a difference between the licensed allocations on the lake versus the amount of water that is needed to maintain in the lake, anticipating climate change to ensure that environmental needs are met.”
- The following comments were recorded in the chat section:
  - “Should Vortex be supplied with all available watershed data (to ensure their models are robust and timely)?”
  - “John, yes we have to think through the role Vortex plays in the Weston study (or vice versa).”
  - “Salt Spring Island Water Allocation Plan”
  - “Info is available from BC Water Licensing”

**Action:** Coordinator Cowan will inquire with groundwater systems regarding water licensing; she will include each water license volume in the amended Water System Survey report and will encourage Water System decision-makers to apply for a water license if they have not.

D. Green left the meeting at 12:02 p.m.

#### 4.7.5 Algal Bloom Notification Update (Water Preservation Society)

Coordinator Cowan presented a memorandum dated June 14, 2021 regarding Monitoring and Public Notification of Potential for Cyanobacteria Toxins in Two Drinking Water Lakes on Salt Spring Island - Bloom Notification Alert System. Member Peace reported Island Health restricts their testing to treated water.

In discussion the following questions were noted:

- There was a question regarding SSIWPA's role in public notifications for algal blooms. Island Health has advised that property owners that draw water from a lake are responsible for the quality of the water and Island Health is not responsible for notification. Island Health is responsible for notification of treated water for water system users. SSIWPA could have a role in educating lakefront property owners that they are responsible to ensure water quality and educating property owners regarding algal blooms in general.
- The CRD posted cyanobacteria test results on the CRD website in the past. It would be useful for the CRD to post testing results on the website.

The following comments were recorded in the chat section:

- "Cusheon Lake -Secchi Disk depth was 4.85 m yesterday . Lake is very clear."
- "What happens with "notifying" occasional (seasonal) lake users - tourists, swimmers, dog walkers etc."
- We will and just a comment - none of this has been about notification for recreational use. That system is robust and in place. The current bloom is not a risk to swimmers. The cell count should be > 100,000 cell/ml of lake water to constitute a risk. Health Canada ref. Island Health works with CRD to put up a sign at the lake if there are cyanotoxins detected above 15 ug/L or cells above 100,000/ml. If anyone has questions about this, be welcome to call me.
- "Does the CRD not monitor lakes for recreational water quality also, and publish results that might indicate potential harm to rec users?"

M. McCormick left the meeting at 12:10 p.m.

**Action:** Coordinator Cowan and Member Peace will continue to work on Algal Bloom Notification and will report back at a future meeting.

#### 4.7.6 Proof of Water at Time of Subdivision (IT)

Planner Youmans reported Proof of Water at Time of Subdivision is a Salt Spring Island Local Trust Committee project. A draft bylaw was referred to the TWG and FLNRO for review and is in process.

There was a suggestion that SSIWPA could summarize the various agency requirements for proof of water at time of subdivision.

The following comments were recorded in the chat section:

- "I have to leave momentarily. Re proof of water, it would be useful for SSIWPA to summarize water supply / quality requirements of various agencies and suggest harmonization possibilities."
- "table of concordance needed to show different agency requirements was a recommendation in our edit"
- "good productive meeting"

#### **4.8 Membership**

##### **4.8.1 New Representative from Water Preservation Society – Ian Peace**

Chair Patrick welcomed Ian Peace as the new Water Preservation Society representative.

#### **5. UPCOMING MEETINGS**

Tuesday September 28, 2021 from 1:30 – 3:30 – Draft Workplan and Budget.

Thursday, November 25, 2021 from 10:00 – 12:00 – Adopt Workplan and Budget

#### **6. ADJOURNMENT**

**By general consent**, the meeting adjourned at 12:16 p.m.

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Laura Patrick, Chair

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Sarah Shugar, Recorder