

# LAKE STEWARDSHIP AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE OF MCKELLAR TOWNSHIP

## Minutes

THURSDAY, Oct 13 2022 \*

7:00 PM

A presentation by Tianna Burke, MSc, Lands and Wildlife Programs Manager, Georgian Bay Biosphere, was given before the beginning of the committee meeting. Tianna has her Masters from Trent University, majoring in ornithology. She works at Georgian Bay Biosphere in the field of wildlife and species at risk. (GBB is a UNESCO designated biosphere, one of four in Ontario and one of 19 in Canada and includes the largest archipelago in the world).

Why we should care about birds: they bring joy, mindfulness of nature, and bring colour and sound to our environment. Birds also promote tourism, create nutrients in the soil, distribute seeds and control pests (eg. spruce budworm, anthills). The rodent population (which is a vector for disease if it grows too large) is controlled by raptors; woodpeckers create habitat for other species; and, vultures eat carrion, which can also produce disease. A healthy bird population is a good indicator of ecosystem health. Some species are doing well and others aren't. Insecticides negatively affect the health of birds. A local project has put 250 bluebird boxes in the fields of McKellar Township and adjacent areas – in 2021 half were occupied, 32 % by the eastern bluebird, 49% by tree swallows, 12% by house wrens and one nest was occupied by a black capped chickadee. It is important to clean out bird boxes every year to prevent the proliferation of parasites. Putting decals in windows prevents bird deaths from window collisions, cleaning bird feeders prevents disease, and keeping domestic cats inside will lower the death toll of about 350 million birds per year by cats.

Bats also create nutrients and control pests and the spread of disease by insects. They are a huge indicator of ecosystem health. There are 8 species in the McKellar area – 4 of those species are at risk. There is a decline in the bat population due to pesticide use, wind turbines, and a fungal infection known as white nose syndrome. Bat boxes encourage the growth of the bat population – the boxes should be mounted high so the bats can swoop to take off; two boxes back to back allow bats to self-regulate their body temperature; and, boxes should receive 6 hours of sunlight per day. They should also be cleaned of spider webs and wasp nests.

Other ways to promote the bird and bat populations include keeping dead trees standing (as long as they are safe) to provide habitat, decorating with boulders which warm up in the sun, removing artificial light at night that disorients birds and bats, and planting flowering plants so that there is something in bloom throughout the growing season to attract insects that provide food for birds and bats and pollination for crops and flowers. The GBB publication **Life On the Bay** will help plan how to improve your property to better support wildlife.

Following Tianna's presentation, the LSEC Committee meeting was opened. Tony Best and Nick Ryeland were in the Community Centre for anyone who wanted to attend this zoom meeting in person. Host of the zoom meeting was Jennifer Ghent-Fuller.

\*The meeting of Sept 8 2022 was cancelled due to lack of quorum. This is the first meeting since August 18 2022.

| Item | Time |  |  |
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| 1.   | X    | Land Acknowledgement: We would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Anishnaabe and the Mississauga people.  |  |
| 2.   | X    | <b>Roll Call:</b> Tony Best (Y) ; Jennifer Ghent-Fuller (Y) ; Melanie Jeffrey (Y) ; Al Last (N) ; Axy Leighl (N) ; Carl Mitchell (N)(on LOA); Sue Poff (Y); Nick Ryeland (Y); Lynda Taylor (N).<br>We had 5 committee members and a quorum.  |  |
| 3.   | X    | Motion to accept the minutes of August 18, 2022 as amended below. (attached).<br>Moved: Sue<br>Seconded: Tony<br>Approved: (Y)<br>Amendments: none<br>Moved: Seconded: Approved: (Y / N)   |  |
| 4.   | X    | <b>General Updates on Current Issues.</b><br>A. A report was requested by Council and was delivered on Oct 11 <sup>th</sup> . Thank you for reviewing the report and giving your feedback prior to the council meeting. Jennifer has made a request to Peter Hopkins to publicize our report on the Lake Manitouwabing Group Facebook page and the committee members agreed to have their names (not contact information) included with the posting.<br>B. WHAT'S NEXT – A discussion of the priorities for our committee for the coming year. A summary of the committee members' input so far is attached. By "the coming year," we will be generally attempting to do planning and research and come up with a product (or whatever) by mid to late June, which we can roll out over the summer.<br>We decided to concentrate on the following areas:<br>1. Sue, Axy and Al will work on a program of pollinator patches in the township including applying to the David Suzuki butterfly ranger program.<br>2. We will try to propose a waterfront guideline or bylaw which will give guidance for waterfront vegetation. As part of this we will also look at set back for new buildings. (Axy, Tony and Jennifer)<br>3. Septic – there may be an increase in the apron size required outside the septic bed. Nick will investigate this. We will also continue septic system education especially in regard to limiting water flow into the system. Nick, Tony and Jennifer.<br>4. Pesticides – we will fold a discussion of pesticide use on lawns into the work/education on waterfront vegetation. Melanie and Jennifer.<br>5. Sue and Jennifer will continue the work on Dark Skies.<br>6. Jennifer will start to research the background on Drinking Water Source Protection with a view to eventually having Micklelar Township included in such a program. This will likely be a multi-year project as it involves working with other townships and communities in the local watersheds and finding a Conservation Association willing to manage the program. |  |



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|              |   | <p>7. Carl suggested by email that we do further work on invasive species. Axy suggested in a separate phone call that we concentrate education regarding how invasive species travel to our area – by bringing in wood, bait from outside zone 15, and not cleaning boats etc.</p> <p>We will continue to cooperate with MLCA in various areas such as surface water testing and shoreline vegetation.</p> <p>We will support any effort of Council to create an email distribution list and also request to send out one page educational flyers with township mailings.</p> <p>Members are encouraged to have subcommittee meetings and Jennifer will facilitate with zoom if requested.</p>  |
| Goals<br>4.1 | X | <p><b>Waterfront –</b></p> <p>A. The talk by Carl Mitchell on “Implications of the 2021 Lake Capacity Study in on our YouTube channel <a href="https://youtu.be/dj4bHsS1kuY">https://youtu.be/dj4bHsS1kuY</a></p> <p>B. The distribution of 1600 Lake Protection Workbooks, Septic Smart and the cover letter is complete. Extras will be taken to the library for anyone who got missed. Many thanks to all who participated in the distribution: Susan Adamson, Anne Bradley, Tony Best, Lynne Campbell, Peter Haidle, Linda and Jack Sims, Laura Lipscei, Jeremy Sintzel, Axy Leighl, David Fuller, Lynda and Rob Taylor, Dianne Thompson, Carl Mitchell, Melanie Jeffery, Barbara Mallory, Nick Ryeland and Denny Knott.</p> <p>The response was overwhelmingly positive and enthusiastic. We may need to order more for the library as they have requested them. Some places will have been missed, if they are on islands or if there were chains across the driveways. We have only 6 copies remaining of the Lake Protection Workbook and 8 copies of the Septic Smart book. All property owners – lake front and inland – received a copy.</p> <p>There were some additional expenses for ink, paper (to print 1600 cover letters) and bags. <b>MLCA</b> will reimburse Jennifer for these expenses related to distribution of the Lake Protection Workbook, the Septic Smart booklet and the cover letter and reconcile expense sharing with the township at a later date.</p> |
| 4.2          |   | <p><b>Tire Reefs –</b> information which documents the deposit of these tire reefs into Lake Manitouwabing and their location has been put into the care of the McKellar Historical Committee. We will remove this item from our ongoing agenda.</p>   |
| 4.3          | X | <p><b>Water Sampling –</b> Water sampling was completed for E. coli on Sept 5. One site was resampled and three that were missed were done Sept 5. The resampled site showed a large drop in the E.coli count so the previously high level was likely due to the recent passing of a flock of geese. Jennifer G-F (and David Fuller) collected 18 phosphorus samples in Lake Manitouwabing at the same 12 sites used by the Lake Capacity Study in 2021 as well as 2 calcium samples. Deep and surface samples were collected at six sites and surface samples only were collected at another six sites. Oxygen content of the water was also tested with equipment loaned by Carl Mitchell. Phosphorus results were reported in mg not mcg, so almost all of the results were no more detailed than “less than 0.3 mg/litre.” More precise reporting will be arranged for next year. The intent is to sample each of the lakes we sample now for E. coli for phosphorus and calcium as well.</p>  |

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| 4.4  | X | <b>Septic Education</b> – The main thrust of education for the coming year could be the need to space and limit the flow of fluids into the septic system.   |
| 4.5  | X | <b>Shoreline protection bylaw</b> – Axy – updates see “what’s next.”   |
| 4.6  |   | <b>Presentations</b> - YouTube videos from this committee are posted here: _ along with a couple of videos from the library and one from Joyce Hopkins.<br><a href="https://www.mckellar.ca/en/township-services/resources/LSEC-and-Mckellar-Video-List-Sept-12-2022.pdf">https://www.mckellar.ca/en/township-services/resources/LSEC-and-Mckellar-Video-List-Sept-12-2022.pdf</a> (updated) |
| 4.7  |   | <b>Microplastics/Microfibres/ Washing Machine Filters</b> –  |
| 4.8  |   | <b>Earth Day / Clean Up Our Lakes</b> – will recur in late April 2023  |
| 4.9  |   | <b>Fish Stocking in Armstrong Lake</b> –   |
| 4.10 |   | <b>Fish Catch reporting signs for Armstrong Lake</b> - a sign is up at the community centre.   |
| 4.11 |   | <b>Catch and Release Signs</b> – are up at boat launch sites.  |
| 4.12 | X | <b>Benthic Study</b> – sampling has taken place. Report will likely be received in October. We will need to decide whether to continue. We can distribute all three reports together and then decide at a subsequent meeting (Nov or Dec)  |
| 4.13 |   | <b>Pesticides/Fertilizers</b> – would be included in any Drinking Water Source Protection. Also see “What’s Next” above.   |
| 4.14 | X | <b>Invasive Species</b> – signs are available from FOCA –<br>Question for AI – how many of the older red ones are up and how many private property owners refused them?  |
| 4.15 | X | <b>Dark Skies</b> – See “what’s next” above.   |
| 4.16 | X | <b>Water Levels</b> – Paper is on the Mckellar web page.<br>Moved:<br>Seconded:<br>Approved: (Y / N)   |
| 4.17 | X | Dr. Chris Houser of the University of Windsor will give a presentation on the impact of boat wakes on shoreline erosion at the beginning of our Nov 10 <sup>th</sup> meeting.  |
| 4.18 | X | <b>Butterflyways</b> – See “what’s next” above.  |
| 4.19 | X | <b>ICECAP</b> – can the work on this start up again now that there is increased staffing in the township?  |
| 4.20 |   | <b>EV Chargers</b> -   |
| 4.21 |   | <b>Foodcyclers</b> – the township decided not to participate in the promotion this company offered (April 2022)  |
| 5.   |   | Communication/ Facebook/Flyers/Public Presentations in the Summer-Scheduling-Topics/Township web page<br>Our postings on the township are under “Environment”  |
| 6.   | X | Next meeting date and time is <b>Thursday Nov 10, 7 pm</b> on zoom. We need someone to attend in the community centre (council chambers) please.   |

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| 7. | X | <b>Motion to adjourn.</b><br><b>Moved: Sue</b> <b>Seconded: Melanie</b> <b>Approved: (Y)</b><br><b>Time: 8:50 pm</b> |
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