

MWA Board meeting May 14, 2025
Work Commons Conference Room and Remote connections.
5:00 PM

Attendees: Tom Latta, President; Marnie MacKenzie, Vice President; Jennifer Hopkins, Treasure; Mary Pat Goulding, Secretary; Stan Chop, and Beth Torpey (ZOOM) Board Members; Dave Converse, ex officio, past president.

Secretary's Report: Approval of: Board Minutes- January 8, March 12, 2025

Executive Committee Minutes – January 16, March 6, March 27, 2025

Ms. MacKenzie moved to accept the Executive Committee minutes from January 16, March 6, and March 27, 2025. Mr. Latta seconded the motion. Motion passed. January 8, Board meeting minutes need editing will be ready for the next Board Meeting.

Treasures Report: Ms. Hopkins reported that MWA is in good financial shape. Adjustments will be made for the first quarter to show reimbursements and paying down of some of the MWA escrow accounts thus lowering MWA liabilities.

Project Manager's Report: Mr. Hurley's report noted that in the future the Great Lakes Fisheries fund will be available to grantees directly from Great Lakes instead of the Vermont Housing and Conservation Board (VHCB). The Leahy funding will remain with the VHCB, which for MWA is the capacity funding of approximately \$75,000.

President's Report: Mr. Latta reported that the Employee Handbook is under review but not ready for Board approval due to the suggestion of two additional benefits not included in the current update. One is the addition of two extra holiday benefits, the day after Thanksgiving and a floating holiday which can be used at the employee's discretion. The second addition for which the language is still under discussion is a reimbursement to employees for using their cell phones for MWA business. The proposed benefit is \$30.00 per month for full-time employees and proportionally for part-time employees. A determination needs to be made if this would be a policy attached to the Handbook which could be amended without re-issuing the Handbook or included in the Handbook as a permanent benefit.

Another addition included in the updated Handbook is a health stipend for employees who work over 30 hours per week. This benefit is paid quarterly in the amount of \$320 a month. Other updates to the Handbook cover procedures for the dismissal of an employee. It was agreed that an updated Handbook including the two additional discussion items will be sent to the Board via email for approval.

Ms. MacKenzie moved to approve and adopt the five-year revised MWA Strategic Plan. Mr. Chop seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Mr. Latta reported that the Executive Committee approved a one-time increase of \$500 to the scholarship committee. Thus, increasing the Scholarship Budget from \$1500 to \$2000. This increase was requested because the committee received four very strong applicants and wanted to recognize all of them. Each applicant will be awarded \$500.

This year three board members will be termed out. They are Farley Brown, Mary Pat Goulding, and Karen Hruby. The MWA By-laws require the appointment of a nominating committee to prepare a slate of candidates for the MWA Annual meeting. Lacking volunteers from the assembled board members Mr. Latta appointed a nominating committee. The committee will consist of Farley Brown and Karen Hruby. Mr. Latta will contact them directly to ask them to be on the committee and review their duties. He will provide them with some ideas discussed at this Board meeting.

Administrative Specialist Report – See Administrative Specialist report attached to agenda.

Recaps, Updates, and Upcoming

All Board members have signed and returned Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest. Board Members are reminded that they need to be paid members of MWA.

Ms. Hopkins suggested that a reminder be sent to the Membership at large to pay their dues before the Annual meeting and remind them that the beginning January 2026 the MWA membership-year begins January 1-December 31. Ms. Hopkins noted that some of our members probably need snail mail reminders because they do not use email.

Ms. MacKenzie reported that Ms. Hruby has been refilling the MWA pamphlets at various public locations.

Ms. Hopkins reported that MWA is hosting the Greeter Training Program. There will be 50 attendees.

May 21, 2025, at 1:00 pm will be storage unit clean up. Executive Board Members will meet at the storage unit.

Outreach and Education:

Youth Discovery - May 29th, May 30th, and June 4th, and 5th, Volunteers are still needed.

Ms. Hopkins reported that MWA will be hosting the Northeast Kingdom Greeter Training. The training will be on Sunday, May 18, 2025, from 9:00- 4:30. There was a discussion of how to provide a second boat for the washing demonstration.

Annual Bird Watch scheduled for June 7, 2025. MWA is monitoring the registrations of which there are a number.

Eagle Point Paddle is scheduled for June 21, 2025. This event will be led by Ben Applegate and Ms. Goulding will assist in getting boats in the water and parking.

Clyde River cleanup is scheduled for September 6, 2025, location to be determined.

News and Brews – Louis Abbott would like to partner with MWA to show her film *Steamers and Dreamers* in Newport perhaps at the City Cinema. Ms. Goulding will try to contact the City Cinema. Mr. Chop commented that the last News and Brews was interesting and informative.

Ms. Goulding reported some positive feedback on the quality of MWA's latest Newsletter.

Partner News, Mr. Convers, reported that the Northern Star is ready to sail on Saturday, May 17, 2025. MCM will have three new employees this season, a new boat director and two employees for MemSEC. The boat is in good shape and the schedule is set. MemSEC will be partnering with MWA for several Fall student cruises.

No report for MCI

New Business – Ms. Hopkins reported that she has been talking with Patrick Finn about Vector Lake and having a Decon unit at the City Dock.

Lucas Campbell will be doing a DASH program at the City Dock this season. MWA will probably contract with Mr. Campbell to also do DASH at South Bay. MWA may also have MR. Campbell do a DASH at the Whipple Point boat access if we still have valid permits. MWA may have to pay for some of this work depending on the cost and status of the Vector Lake grant.

Ms. Torpey noted that although she applauds the State for providing a Decon Station to Newport City. It is her opinion that having a Decon Station in our region invites Wake Boats to our Kingdom Lakes. She does not believe that proper decontamination of Wake Boats is probable at a volunteer Decon stations due to the structure of the Wake Boats. Ms. Hopkins noted that at least for Memphremagog the Decon stations are valuable to attempt to mitigate the spread of Zebra Mussels.

Ms. Torpey reported that the State may remove the "Home Lake Rule" out of the Wake Boats regulations. Ms. Hopkins suggested that Ms. Torpey explain to the Board the "Home Lake Rule." The Home Lake Rule is a sticker program requiring Wake Boat owners to register their boat in their Lake of origin or Home Lake and that boat is not allowed to move to another lake without during a single boating season. Therefore, eliminating the possibility of spreading zebra mussels from lake to lake. The following season the Wake Boat may move to a different lake after decontamination and drying out over the winter. The rationale for this regulation is based on scientific research that has determined that zebra mussel veligers can survive for up to 30 days in standing water that is not a

closed system. Many of our local lakes would like this home lake rule that allows their boats to be on their lake but not go to another lake.

Ms. Hopkins reported that Zebra mussels are now on the Vermont side of the Lake and there are no plans to do any further monitoring. This was in response to Questions from Mr. Converse and Mr. Latta.

7/1/2025

Respectfully submitted by
Mary Pat Goulding
Secretary MWA