

MWA Board meeting October 9, 2024
Work Commons Conference Room and Remote connections

In attendance were: Marnie Mackenzie (Vice President), Jennifer Hopkins (Treasurer), Mary Pat Goulding (Secretary); Board members: Stan Chop. And on ZOOM - Beth Torpey (joining at 5:30), David Converse (ex officio, past President) Guests: Valerie Dillon (telephone).

Secretary's Report – Mr. Chop moved to approve the Board Minutes- May 8, 2024, and approve the review and receipt by the MWA Board of the Executive Committee Minutes: July 10 and 15, 2024, and Sept 19, 2024. Seconded by Ms. Torpey. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report – Ms. Hopkins reported that 2023 990 return needs to be submitted to the Federal Government by November 15. MWA received a \$10,000 grant from Vermont Community Foundation for continuing efforts.

Project Manager Report - Report will be available at a later date.

Administrative Specialist Report – Ms. Mackenzie asked if everyone had a chance to read the Administrative Specialist report and if there are any questions. No questions. It was noted that Kendall is accomplishing a lot in a short period of time.

New Business:

Ms. Symes' employment with MWA has been terminated. Her work performance was not compatible with the scope of the Job Description. Effort was made to bring her performance up to the expectations of the job description. Unfortunately, these efforts did not accomplish the goal. Unemployment is now required by the State to be paid by non-profits. It is anticipated that Ms. Symes will apply for this benefit.

Stipend new hire's moving expense – Discussion of offering New Hire Stipend. Ms. Hopkins suggested that if be offered on a case-by-case basis. This should be formalized in a policy with specific guidelines and included in the MWA handbook. Board consensus is that such a policy should be drafted for approval by the Board. The Board also noted that all of MWA's benefits should be reviewed for consistency and equity.

Health Stipend – A \$320 per month Health Stipend benefit for 30 hour/week employees was passed by the Executive Committee since it is now a State requirement that some form of Health benefit be provided to employees working 30 hours of more per week. Board approval is necessary. Ms. Hopkins moved to approve the Health Stipend payments pending review of all of MWA's benefits. Motion seconded by Mr. Chop. Motion passed.

Swag/Give-a-way branded materials – Discussion of swag Mr. Converse suggested a budget of \$1500 for the purchases of swag.

Mr. Chop moved that an annual budget of \$1,200 be available to purchase swag. Items to be purchased will need to be reviewed by the Executive Board. Motion seconded by Ms. Goulding. Motion passed.

Education and Outreach/Events – MWA held multiple very successful events over the summer and early fall months:

Symposium: Cyanobacteria - Memphremagog Matters - July 24 at the Gateway A professional symposium on the topic of Cyanobacteria was held in July and had an attendance of approximately 50 people. Attendees were complimentary of the quality of the presentations. This presentation can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/1KjHweDweMM> or on the MWA website. With regards to Cyanobacteria, Mr. Converse commented on the improved water quality of the Lake this season. Ms. Dillon confirmed Mr. Converse's observation that to date there have been minimal Cyanobacteria blooms in the Lake. She also reported that she and Patrick Finn, the Harbormaster, are positioned to collect samples of Cyanobacteria blooms and submit them for analysis to Peter Isles, the State Aquatic Biologist. This can provide a better characterization of the Cyanobacteria present in Lake Memphremagog.

Clyde River September, River clean up – This was a well-attended event with 25 participants with canoes filled to capacity. For the third year a resident of Salem Lake volunteered to truck the debris to the Landfill. NEWSVT accepts this debris at no charge.

September 24 & 25, Youth Discovery Program (YDP) on the Northern Star - Mr. Chop reported that the MWA's 4th grade water-based experience was a "great" success. Represented schools were Barton, Coventry, and Orleans elementary. All three classes had attended the 3rd grade YDP the previous spring. The purpose of the water-based event is to augment the spring land-based event by inviting the same students. There were six instructors three from MWA, and two from Northwoods. And one from MCM. The curriculum used for the event was developed for MWA by Lynn Rublee. This curriculum mirrors the State standards required for 4th grade. Prior to boarding the Northern Star each 4th grade teacher was provided with the curriculum in order to prepare the students for the cruise. Evaluations from the teachers for this program were very positive.

MCM floating Classroom Report – Mr. Converse reported that the MCM floating classroom activities have significantly expanded this calendar year with the hiring of a director for the Science Center.

Scott's Cove Phragmites removal – Proceeding very well. Currently the third dumpster is being filled.

New Scholarship Committee – The Committee has been formed and will be meeting in the near future.

Fall News & Brews- October 20, *Living With Beavers*, Essex House, Island Pond – 4-6 pm
Currently there are nine RSVPs. Additional publicity is underway.

New Business

Ms. Dillon reported on the State Geological mapping committee meeting she attended. Currently this group is sponsoring some mapping work in the Newport area using new technology, which is able to view the bedrock, this work is providing new information on how water in the NEK is moving. This will help with future management and planning. Reports will be forthcoming. Work will be expanding in the NEK.

This may be a good topic for a MWA “Memphremagog Matters” summer 2025 Symposium.

The next Board Meeting is scheduled for December 11, 2024, at 5 pm.

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Ms. Mackenzie moved to adjourned, Ms. Hopkins seconded.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Pat Goulding

Secretary MWA