



Muskoka

WATERSHED COUNCIL

Minutes

Friday, May 24, 2024

1:00 pm

Council Chambers (District of Muskoka) & Zoom

Present (In-person)

Neil Hutchinson (Acting Chair)
Andrew Fyfe
David Parsons
Peter Sale

Terry Crew
Peter Johnston
Michael Peppard
Kevin Trimble

Joan Frain
Pete LeMoine (left @ 1:45 pm)
Geoff Ross

Present (Zoom)

Nancy Alcock
John Cooper

Patricia Arney
Richard Lammers (@ 1:35 pm)

Brian Bochek

MWC Staff

Rebecca Willison

DMM Staff

Glenn Cunnington

Guests

Rupert Kindersley *
Wendy Somerville
Joel Harrison
Terry Rees *
Carolina Koebel *
Lisa Gillan *
Sarah Song *

Preston Nielsen *
Bill Heatlie
Katherine Rannie *
Paide Marchand *
Katrina Krievins *
Paul Frost *
Clark Smith

Scott Millard
Esther Giesbrecht
Keith Somers
Lisa Beaulieu *
Connie O'Brien *
Maggie Xenopoulos *
Joanne Smith

* Attended by Zoom

Welcome

MWC Acting Chair Neil Hutchinson called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm and provided a Land Acknowledgement.

Confirmation of Minutes

MOTION

Moved by Peter Johnston, seconded by Pete LeMoine

THAT the Minutes of the Muskoka Watershed Council meeting dated April 19, 2024 be approved.

CARRIED

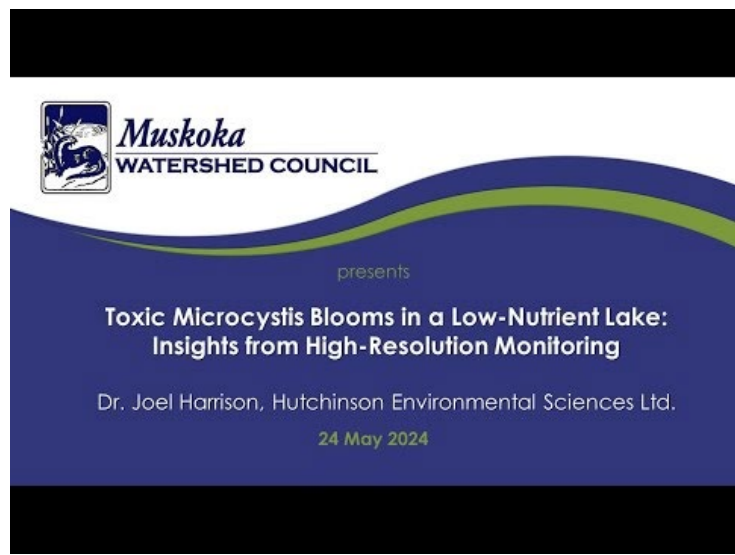
Business Arising from the Minutes

- None.

Presentations

[Toxic Microcystis Blooms in a Low-Nutrient Lake: Insights from High-Resolution Monitoring](#) – Dr. Joel Harrison, Hutchinson Environmental Sciences Ltd.

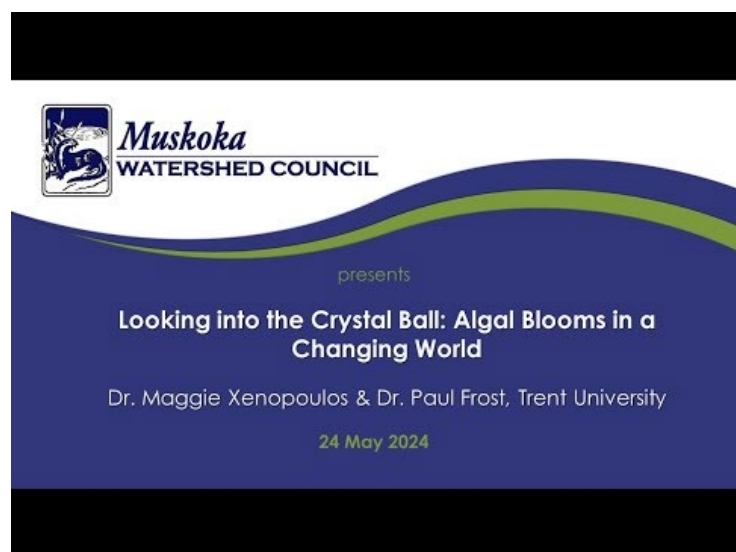
In his presentation, Dr. Harrison discussed how high-resolution monitoring on Lake Eugenia supports a shift in the school of thought that “an increase in phosphorus loading leads to an increase in lake phosphorus resulting in a bloom”, to “an increase in temperature leads to an earlier, stronger, deeper stratification which increases access to phosphorus in the sediments, resulting in a bloom”. In this case, management should focus less on reducing phosphorus inputs into a lake and focus more on stopping the transfer of phosphorus from sediments to the water column where it becomes available to cyanobacteria.



After answering questions, Neil thanked Joel for his informative presentation.

[Looking into the Crystal Ball: Algal Blooms in a Changing World](#) – Dr. Marguerite Xenopoulos and Dr. Paul Frost, Trent University

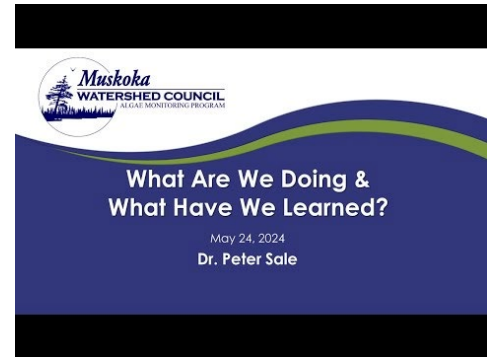
Dr. Xenopoulos' lab at Trent University is collaborating with researchers around the Great Lakes to investigate potential early warning signals of harmful algae blooms. She is trying to get a large partnership research grant through NSERC to test the hypotheses that these signals may be related to lake morphology, low dissolved oxygen, thermal stratification (timing, strength, and permeance), and internal nutrient stores. Peter Sale noted that MWC would like to support her in this grant.



After answering questions, Neil thanked Maggie and Paul for their presentation.

MWC Algae Monitoring Program: What are We Doing & What Have We Learned? – Dr. Peter Sale, Chair, Algae Subcommittee

Peter Sale provided a brief overview of the MWC Algae Monitoring Program and discussed the results of the 2023 program, noting that the [2023 Annual Report](#) was released that day.



Committee Updates

- **Integrated Watershed Management** – Kevin Trimble reported that MWC has received several municipal one-time grants to assist in moving the IWM initiative forward. Delegations to the outstanding municipalities are now being scheduled to appeal for more involvement and additional grants. Work is ongoing with DMM and the Town of Huntsville to organize meetings of the 13 area municipalities in the watershed to start building an MOU and governance/funding model to facilitate a watershed management strategy. Volunteers are stepping up from the MWC and CRT memberships to assist with communications, the Summit and NGO outreach.
- **Communications Committee** – Neil Hutchinson reported that he is editing the current article series, titled “Living in our Changing Watershed” published on MuskokaRegion.com and the MWC website. Pete LeMoine is in the process of recruiting a new Chair or Co-chairs for the Communications Committee.
- **Fundraising Committee** – Peter Sale reported that the Fundraising Committee has met again with Kyra Watters from Well Known to discuss marketing MWC. The Committee is also investigating the possibility of becoming a charity or setting up a charitable trust for MWC.
- **Membership Committee** – Michael Peppard reported that a short survey will be sent to all members asking how we can better engage them in the work of MWC.

Program Updates

- **Muskoka Summit on the Environment** – Peter Sale reported that a core group of people met May 15th to discuss the summit format and identify possible speakers. Rene Caisse Theatre is being considered for the venue, but other locations are also being investigated. A larger group of people will be recruited to sit on the Organizing Committee to handle logistics and marketing. People interested in assisting should contact Rebecca at info@muskokawatershed.org.

Partner Updates

- **Town of Gravenhurst** – Councillor Peter Johnston reported that his fellow councillors are starting to show more enthusiasm for IWM and he has shared the resources from the Municipal IWM Conference with a number of lake associations.

New Business

- **MWC Treasurer** – Neil introduced Terry Crew as MWC's new Treasurer and Director.

- **MWC Volunteer Appreciation Lunch and MWC Meeting** – Rebecca Willison reported that the Lounge at the Baxter Ward Community Centre has been booked for MWC's lunch and meeting on June 21st. The Township of Georgian Bay has generously waived the fee for the rental. Members from the Township of Georgian Bay and local environmental organizations will be invited to attend and speak about some of the unique issues they face in that part of the watershed and how they try to address those issues.

Next MWC Meeting

MWC's next meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 21st at 1 pm in the Lounge of the Baxter Ward Community Centre in Port Severn. A volunteer appreciation lunch will be held at noon.

Adjournment

Neil Hutchinson adjourned the meeting at 3:10 pm.