

Natural Environment and Lake Stewardship Committee

Wednesday, March 08, 2023

written by Claire Huene, Co-chair / Secretary

Committee Members Present:

Karen Laustsen (Chair); Claire Huene (Co-chair / Secretary); Connie Beaton; Ade MacDonald-Smith; Mustafa Hashimi (Village Admin, sitting in for Council Rep)

Public Attendees:

None

Regrets:

Karen Foudy (Council Rep); Sharon Cockx; Bob Miller; Debby Brotzell; Tooney Fink (Committee Volunteer)

Online meeting called to order by C. Huene at 6:30 p.m.

- **Agenda** – Regular meeting of the NELS Committee
- **Approval of Prior Minutes** – Minutes of the January 19, 2023 meeting were approved January 31, 2023.

1. Updates / Old Business

COMPOST PILE:

- NELS re-iterated its position (in writing, as part of the NELS update to Council for the Feb. 16/23 Council meeting) that removal is the best option. Asked Council to consider (1) if the pile could be hauled away to a landfill site, or (2) donated as clean fill to one of two large construction sites in the area (at the Springbank dry dam site, or the project at the intersection of highways 1A and 22).
- Outcome from Feb. 16/23 Council meeting: Admin was asked to investigate the cost for removal, as well as the cost to flatten the pile where it is and add topsoil.

BEAR-PROOF GARBAGE AND RECYCLING BINS:

- In writing (as part of the NELS update to Council for the Feb. 16/23 Council meeting), NELS indicated (1) its appreciation to Council for the decision to buy or rent bear-proof garbage bins, and (2) its strong disagreement with Council's view that bear-proof recycling bins are not required. NELS' position is that even small amounts of food remaining in/on recyclables could become a bear attractant.
- Mustafa told NELS that the non-bear-proof recycling bins would be on a trial basis. He said that admin would work to educate villagers about what can be recycled

and how, and that if bears were attracted to the Village garbage area again this season, the issue of bear-proof recycling bins would be revisited.

CARRIAG RIDGE:

- A “stay” was not granted. Mediation has been ordered. Individual “pre-mediation” sessions will take place with appellants, with actual mediation probably in June.

EDUCATIONAL EVENTS:

- The astronomy event with Jeff Z. for Friday, January 27/23, had to be cancelled due to inclement weather.
- Karen L. is making arrangements for a **Bear Awareness event** to take place on **Saturday, May 13/23** (the weekend before the Victoria Day weekend). Time of day TBA, and other details not yet confirmed. It is possible that one of us will have to present the material as developed by the person from Cottage Country. Because of the short timeline, nailing this down needs to be a priority.

2. West Spring Project

BIOLOGICAL SURVEY:

- Although we agreed that this should go “on hold” until 2024, Karen L. has been in contact with the biologist and discussion is ongoing to consider different options.

FAIRY TRAIL BOARDWALK:

- Karen L. will create a proposal to submit to Council. Still waiting on details about the poles from TransAlta (re: preservatives), and (post-Mach 08/23 meeting) also considering a simplified, less expensive plan. Update at the next meeting.

3. NELS Three-year Plan Projects

- We agreed to choose only one or two items from the 3-year plan to focus on at any one time.
- At this time, our focus will be preparing for the Council’s upcoming **Land Use Bylaw Review**. We have scheduled a working meeting to start reviewing and discussing the Land Use Bylaw on **Saturday, April 15**. Time TBA.
- **Inventory of natural areas and assets** – Karen will speak with Cows and Fish about splitting the project into two parts (riparian areas and uplands areas) and then write up a proposal for Council.
- After the meeting, however, we discussed this further and decided to postpone and re-visit this project for 2024. Karen L. will follow up with Cows and Fish.
- Connie and Claire will start research for a **monitoring / impact assessment process for the disc golf course**. Update at the next meeting.

4. Lake Stewardship Committee

- Bob was unable to attend on Jan. 19/23. Update at the next meeting.

5. Climate Resilience and Adaptation Plan

- Council adopted the plan as information at the Feb. 16/23 Council meeting.
- NELs asked Mustafa whether Council intends to implement the recommendations, or if the report was completed as part of applying for some kind of funding.
- Mustafa indicated that the process of creating a climate resilience and adaptation plan for the village was a required first step towards accessing funding for specific strategies and initiatives, in our case related to water and water wells in the Village.
- (FYI, funding is through the “Climate Resilience Capacity Building Program,” developed and administered by MCCAC - Municipal Climate Change Action Centre, which is a partnership of Alberta Municipalities, Rural Municipalities of Alberta, and the Government of Alberta Municipal Climate Change Action Centre. As a matter of interest, Morrison Hershfield was one of nine contractors that were pre-qualified by MCCAC.)

6. Other

- Connie had some questions for Mustafa about info coming out of the Feb. 16/23 Council meeting minutes. She expressed concerns about the possible controlled burn in the spring, and wondered whether villagers need to let their insurance companies know if/when a burn is scheduled. Also whether the village requires any special insurance in case damage to private property results from some aspect of a burn. Mustafa said he didn’t know but would bring it up with Council and look into it.
- Connie also asked if NELs could consider running some kind of event to try to attract new members and/or volunteers to the committee. To be discussed at the next meeting.

7. Next meeting: Wednesday, May 10, 2023

Please mark your calendars.

- **Adjournment** - Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Certified by the Secretary of the NELs Committee this 21 day of March 2023.

Claire Huene