

## Meeting of GLPOA Board and Fish Committee (FC) – 18 January 2025

**Location/Time:** Golden Lake Community Hall at 12:00 Noon

### **In attendance:**

GLPOA Board: Dave Clark, Sylvia Hillier, Kate O’Hara, Theresa Rasp,  
Natalie Corbin, Allison Wood, Janet Cottreau

FC: Jay Foran, Stephanie Mundt, Marion Zohr, Brian Yourth,  
Diana Wilson, Don Bishop, Jason Brule, Justin Brule

Sylvia called the meeting to order at 12:00 noon. Agenda previously circulated.

Dave, who agreed to moderate the meeting, opened with a welcome to all in attendance. His intro remarks noted the FC does good work, including success in their fundraising efforts resulting in a healthy amount in their FC bank account, promoting and conducting the very successful smelt harvest and Fish Fry, all outside of the WRPP initiatives. Dave went on to state the FC is appreciated by GLPOA, confirming the FC funds are under direction of the FC, and GLPOA is hopeful the FC will continue to expand their activities in the future.

Jay presented the concerns as understood by the FC – attached to the minutes of this meeting, summarized for minutes as:

#### *Communication Problems:*

FC “blindsided” by Board decisions; delay in GLPOA Board decisions; FC lack of trust in GLPOA Board; FC reluctance to remain within GLPOA

#### *FC Funds*

FC funds to be used at FC discretion; GLPOA funds earmarked for new WRPP entity; decision for those funds communicated to FC as a “done deal”; should have sought a decision by FC on this matter

#### *WRPP*

Stage 1 is a 107 day project; what is GLPOA liability?

## *General*

FC discouraged by alleged Board comments made (“who cares about fishing?”)

Dave responded on behalf of Board:

### *Separate “Not for Profit” for WRPP*

Some years ago it was agreed (by Kevin O’Connor, Gail McPhee) the FC would operate as a committee “at arm’s length” from the rest of the GLPOA. However, the FC was never set up properly as an arms-length group (requires separation from GLPOA) and as such the FC remained under the governance of the GLPOA Board. At the time the proposed solution to enable the FC to remain at arms-length was the establishment of a separate non-profit which was declined and the FC agreed to the current governance model. GLPOA offered the same option for WRPP initiative as separate entity only as a suggestion to FC and it was not intended as a mandate or requirement.

### *WRPP Exposures*

GLPOA has @ 400 members, and has limitations in cash, people (volunteers), and risk assumed by members. Decisions cannot jeopardize activities of the entire association. For example: if Corporate Tax Filing requirements had not been discovered, it would have meant dissolving GLPOA. Association insurance coverage endorses most activities, but specifically excludes others. WRPP initiative exceeds GLPOA ability to be carried out under the association policy.

### *WRPP Risk*

The risk presented by WRPP led the Board to make decisions to protect GLPOA, and it was suggested a new non-profit would be best to take on this project. Board concedes the intent was misconstrued, and the optics did not convey the correct perception.

### *Committee Reporting/Communication*

All committee chairs provide reports at scheduled Board meetings; Board expects committee chairs to keep their members informed of Board discussions. The board was surprised the FC was not made aware of Board concerns re WRPP activities. The goal is to recover from mistakes so this lack of communication does not continue, and leave Board and FC people frustrated.

### *WRPP Challenges – Board Perspective and Open Discussion*

There are no confirmed agreements with MNRF for the proposed one-year trial, with an estimated cost of \$40,000, i.e. licensing, insurance, CRA requirements. There is a need to protect GLPOA from perspective of insurance, CRA requirements, and volunteer participation without diminishing volunteer numbers. If WRPP receives approval from MNRF then we need to establish (a) where the funding comes from, (b) will money be provided before or after approval/activities, and (c) if the MNRF approval is contingent on the WRPP being deemed a commercial venture.

### *Discussion (cont'd)*

Dave noted Peter Heinermann resigned as FC co-chair before the 21 September board meeting, and also noted Board concerns with Don moving ahead with WRPP activities were not new. Dave reiterated that MNRF approval would need funding, bodies to do grant applications, insurance. Our membership base is only 400, and work for WRPP will require additional volunteers, already difficult to recruit to manage the current GLPOA mandate and activities.

Dave confirmed WRPP was suspended, not cancelled. While conceding the intent of the direction for “suspension” of WRPP may not have been properly communicated by the Board, he also acknowledged accountability of the Board for any perceived misunderstanding by FC and membership. It was noted there needs to be better communication from the FC to the GLPOA Board and vice versa.

At this point, Don noted of the two paths forward, the plan with AOPFN involvement is not viable, and there is no firm commitment from MNRF.

Sylvia pointed out the Board needs to be aware of what goes on with the FC, and the FC needs to keep the Board informed of their plans/activities. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sent in April by Don/Peter to AOPFN was not shared with the Board until September. This action could leave the Association exposed to legal and contractual obligations for GLPOA. The Board made decisions deemed necessary at the time to protect the association, based on the information that came to light.

The Board needs to be advised of the scope of the lake rehabilitation – not just walleye. There are many different initiatives for rehabilitation. The WRPP is taking place under the GLPOA corporate banner, and association insurance coverage relates to specific scope of authority of GLPOA. If the WRPP venture is deemed in any way by a regulatory authority, it is outside of our non-profit organization mandate and insurance coverage.

Janet shared a means of communication used by RPC Board, where information is shared between FC and Board on a regular basis. We can adapt this method of

reporting for GLPOA to properly ensure more efficient and factual communication. This could apply to all committees to streamline flow of information, updates, approvals.

Sylvia noted the WRPP initiative within GLPOA is a matter of risk and balance for GLPOA exposure. FC is looking for insurance for a 107 day project. Board needs to see a commitment for funding, a strategy that is a comprehensive plan beyond Year One.

Dave suggested the following for improved communication going forward

- WRPP activities “suspension” wording to be revisited for review by FC (and subsequent information to membership)
- Board to receive heads up from FC for their meetings/activities
- Email communication will be to designated key persons at Board/FC

## New Beginnings

1. Communication be carried out in a timely manner; list for e-mail to be limited to FC members Jay, Don, and Board Members Sylvia, Kate, Dave
2. FC to inform Board ahead of any proposed meetings, agreements and/or documentation between FC and MNRF (or other entities).
3. Amend “suspension of WRPP activities” wording for review by Board and FC to: *“WRPP suspended pending certain activities leading to written commitment/scope of project provided to GLPOA Board for review and approval”*. As the first critical path item is the approval by the MNRF, all activities associated with this approval are to continue. An additional activity is determining availability of liability insurance.
4. Board Meetings are scheduled annually in April, June, August and late September, with the Annual General Meeting held in July. It is understood the FC will provide reports to the Board – in person or in writing – at each meeting to get everyone back on track and on the same page.

5. FC is to continue with their events; FC funds to be managed by their members. Board approval required for expenses over \$500; under \$500 no Board approval.
6. Procedures are to be treated as guidelines, within reason. ~~We~~ are acting on behalf of a membership under the umbrella of a non-profit corporation, and can at any time be subject to audit by regulatory authorities.
7. Kate is to contact insurance broker re potential coverage for 107 day program (Stage One) under the GLPPOA policy, and at what premium/conditions. If that option is not viable, she will work to find alternative coverage for advice to FC.

Sylvia asked the room if questions and concerns were answered.

It was noted if the WRPP were to receive assistance and approval from MNRF, it has potential for all lakes, not just Golden Lake. The project will need to show:

- That fingerlings can be raised
- That the project will in fact do what we think it will
- That the lake can support it.

Diana asked if the Board would consider reapproaching AOPFN re the draft MOU. Don noted he has followed up with AOPFN eight (8) times with no response. It will be reviewed by the Board to determine if we re-open this matter with AOPFN in the spring.

Can it be determined what accountability MNRF will accept for their involvement in the WRPP initiative.

Diana and Brian noted they would not be able to organize/coordinate any fish fry in May 2025. FC will need to recruit new volunteers to take this on if it is to go ahead this year.

Business being concluded, Sylvia moved to adjourn meeting at 1:45. Motion carried.