

**2023 Annual General Meeting (Zoom)
Thursday, April 18, 2024
DRAFT MINUTES**

1. Call to Order

President, Glenn Tunnock, called the meeting to order at 2:30. Explaining that the Friends of the Tay have met the requirements for announcing our AGM, we established that we had a quorum.

2. Acknowledgement of the Land

Glenn acknowledged our responsibility to the land and to recognizing all of those Indigenous peoples across this land, First Nations, Inuit and Metis. We also acknowledged the customs, the traditions and the Indigenous knowledge of the land we share and the hope that we will work together to sustain a healthy future for mother earth.

3. Opening Welcome

Glenn welcomed all participants to the meeting. He gave a special welcome to those organizations that we have partnered with over the year which shows the strength of the partnership networks that are vital to our mutual interests. He thanked everyone who had renewed their membership with a special thanks to those who generously donated to the Friends. Glenn then explained the two components of the AGM: the business portion and the educational portion. He then reminded participants of the protocols for a Zoom AGM meeting.

4. Approval of the Agenda for 2023 AGM

Moved by David Taylor, seconded by Colin Stephenson, that the Agenda for the 2023 AGM be approved. **Carried.**

5. Approval of the May 11, 2023 Meeting Minutes of the 2022 AGM

Moved by Colin Stephenson and seconded by Donna Walsh that the 2022 AGM Minutes be approved. **Carried.**

6. President's Message

Friends of the Tay Watershed Association was established in 2001, fresh after the Walkerton tragedy which was the genesis for a more conscientious approach to the management of our water resources across Ontario. I was professionally involved in working with Walkerton and many other municipalities across Ontario in the first wave to establish source water protection policies and procedures and later in the second wave to create the organizational structures

required to administer source protection areas. As we fast forward to 2024, we are fortunate that the Town of Perth has created a source protection zone for its drinking water supply and that the rural municipalities of TVT and DNE have and in fact are upgrading their official plans and zoning by-laws to ensure that the quality of our water resources is not compromised through land use decisions made on waterfront development applications.

Friends of the Tay Watershed, since its inception have embraced a mission to conserve and protect the quality and quantity of water in the Tay Watershed. Through our Tay Net program and our partnerships with Parks Canada and the RVCA, we carefully monitor conditions within the watershed. This role includes such activities as monitoring water taking permits by OMYA and golf courses, by providing comments or professional input on development applications such as the Caivan development, by providing input to area municipalities on their official plan updates and by raising public awareness of effective environmental management tools to conserve our water resources. And when I talk about water resources, I am referencing both surface and groundwater resources.

Early in the life of Friends of the Tay Watershed, a watershed management plan was drafted. Some 20 years later, it is time to review that plan and fortunately, the timing of this initiative will coincide with the RVCA's 2023 Watershed Conditions Report, which our guest speaker, Sommer Casgrain-Robertson, will enlighten us on the status of the report and how collectively we can move forward with implementation measures. We look forward to an active role in that process as "eyes on the water" so-to-speak or perhaps taking a paddle anywhere in the watershed, indeed a watershed that extends from Carnahan Lake in Central Frontenac some 95 km draining some 46 lakes and numerous marshes. The Tay Watershed covers some 865 Km² [334 square Miles] and touches on 6 municipalities including the Town of Perth. The Tay River is the key water source for the Town and also for OMYA.

Although there is an environmental consciousness out there, there will always be a need to encourage, to notify and cajole the public on their responsibilities to the environment. We have two landmark activities this year with that in mind. On May 25th, we are planning a Tay Canal walk where individuals and families are invited to walk along the canal through the Town and engage with local experts positioned along the route who will share their knowledge of the history, wildlife and ecology of the Tay. This is an opportunity for you to ask questions like: when and why the canal was built, why is the naturalization of the shoreline important, what are invertebrates that inhabit the watershed ecosystem and why are they important, why do we need planning policies to protect water quality...and so many more questions you may want answered. I am pleased to announce that a new member of our Board of Directors, who we hope you will elect, Adrienne MacKay is leading this event as well as another event in September where we will invite the public to help us clean up the canal. And on the by and by, Friends of the Tay will be participating in Trashure Day this weekend.

Working with our youth continues to be an important focus. We continue to offer our Water Guardian Bursary to inspire eligible students to pursue post-secondary studies in the natural sciences. Once again we are able to make not one, but two bursary awards of \$1,000 each. You'll hear more about these later in the Agenda.

Our annual Watershed Discovery Day in August provides an opportunity to raise the public awareness on measures to sustain a resilient and healthy watershed. This event is held in partnership with other organizations and in 2023, participation included local Indigenous communities. We hope you can attend this year's Watershed Discovery Day which will be held on Saturday, August 17th at the Crystal Palace. The theme of this year's Watershed Discovery Day is Rediscovering our Waterfront, very appropriate given our Canal Walk venture this spring. Please mark it on your calendar. We thank the Farmer's Market for enabling us to share their space and we thank the Perth Library for providing a children's time component to this annual event.

2024 promises to be a busy year for Friends of the Tay Watershed as we plan to continue our webinar series with topics to include the emerging role of conservation authorities under amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act. We are also planning a webinar that will focus on the impacts of climate change in the Arctic.

This is National Volunteer Week and an opportunity for me to extend a sincere thanks to the members of our Board of Directors who offer countless hours of their time to the work of Friends of the Tay Watershed. Our Treasurer, Marion, is stepping down after many years of keeping the books in good order. Thanks and thanks again Marion for all your help. CRA I am sure also appreciates your efforts. As with many organizations, we are looking for new Board members to fill various roles such as Treasurer, Vice-Chair and membership chair. We would appreciate the services of anyone who is willing to step forward and today with our elections, this is the perfect time.

I would be remiss if I did not extend a sincere thank you for the time and effort those partners extend to us, such as the RVCA, Watersheds Canada, the Otty Lake Association, the Christie Lake Association, the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Association, Parks Canada, Climate Network Lanark and our area municipalities, Tay Valley Township, the Town of Perth, the Township of Drummond/North Elmsley, and the County of Lanark. We also thank all our members who inform us of watershed concerns they have or who take personal initiative to keep our watershed healthy.

Friends of the Tay is an association that thrives on input from its members and in this regard I would encourage you use our Facebook page. This social medium provides an opportunity for Friends and others to post photos and send us messages of wildlife and landscapes throughout the watershed and beyond. I would like to close by extending once again, a sincere thanks to my Board members who spend countless hours working on our mandate and I would like to also extend a sincere thanks to all of our Advisory panel and our members who support Friends of the Tay Watershed in many ways, be it financially by helping us plan and implement our programs and help us with our river clean-up. Thanks and thanks again.

One final note, you can find more details of our Association's program by reading our Annual Report which is available on our website at www.taywatershed.ca

7. Comments from Area Municipalities

Steve Fournier, Reeve of DNE and Warden of the County of Lanark thanked the Friends for keeping the health of the Tay in our vision, for our work with Climate Network Lanark and area municipalities. Although Rob Rainer, Reeve of Tay Valley Township, was not in attendance he sent a message to the Friends. He thanked the Friends for our persistent and selfless efforts to help ensure a healthy Tay River and its watershed. Tay Valley Township welcomes working with the Friends when and where necessary.

8: Webinar: 2023 Watersheds Condition Report presented by Sommer Casgrain-Robertson, General Manager of Rideau Valley Conservation Authority

Glenn introduced Sommer who provided us with an overview of a landmark document, *The 2023 Watershed Conditions Report*, the first such report since 1968. This updated document will help RVCA and stakeholders such as municipalities, government agencies, scientists, private landowners, consultants and residents develop a deeper understanding of the watershed's existing environmental characteristics and conditions as the prerequisite for a management plan.

9. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer, Marion Letts, reviewed the audited Financial Statements for 2023, which were shown on the Zoom screen (details also available in the Annual Report). The report included *2023 Financial Summary* and the *2024 Budget*. Richard Schooley moved that the Treasurer's report of April 2024 be approved as circulated. Seconded by David Taylor. Carried.

10. Election of 2024 Board of Directors

Proposed list for the Board of Directors slate for 2024-2025

President, Glenn Tunnock Otty Lake;

Vice-President – Vacant;

Secretary, Judy Buehler Perth;

Treasurer – Vacant;

David Taylor Tay River Glen Tay;

Director, Taro Alps GB&CLA and Upper Watershed;

Director, Carol Dillon Tay River Glen Tay;

Director, Adrienne MacKay, Glen Tay

Director, Annie Dalton Perth;

Director, Richard Schooley Scotch Line;

Director, Donna Walsh Christie Lake Association;

Director, Colin Stephenson Tay River, Glenn Tay.

There were no nominees from the floor. Richard Schooley moved that the Board of Directors slate be accepted. Seconded by Taro Alps. Carried.

11. Awards

David Taylor presented an award to **Marion Letts for her contribution as Treasurer**, for the experience and professional expertise with which she has managed our financial resources, and for her tireless contribution to the delivery of our programs over the last 8 years.

Carol Dillon presented the award for **Contribution to the Friends of the Tay Watershed Association to Colin Stephenson** for the experience and professional expertise that he has contributed to the development and management of this organisation, and for his tireless dedication to the delivery of our programs for over 19 years.

Judy Buehler drew the name of the lucky winners of the **\$25 Gift Certificate to Maximilian Restaurant – Alyson and Forbes Symon**.

12. Tay Canal Walk – Adrienne MacKay

Adrienne spoke of her Tay Walk of May 25. She focussed on the many experts that will be stationed along the route: Amanda Lange, Aquatic Habitat Monitoring Coordinator, RVCA, Water Quality and Invertebrates; Brandon Holden, Acting Lake/Shoreline Program Coordinator, RVCA, Shoreline Naturalization; Shaun Thompson, Retired Ecologist, Wetlands, Wildlife & Habitat Diversity; Glenn Tunnock, President, Friends of the Tay Watershed, Watershed Conservation; Colin Stephenson, Long-time Perth Resident, Tayside Textiles and Early Industry; Susan Code McDougall, Local Historian and Author, Tales of the Tay.

13. Acknowledgement of Sponsors

Taro Alps thanked our sponsors who have supported the Friends for many years: Little Stream Bakery, H&R Block, Maximilian Restaurant, Hourglass Café, Stor N Lock, and 88.1 My FM.

14. Water Guardian Bursary

Carol Dillon spoke on the 2024 Bursary. This is the 15th year in which the Friends of the Tay Watershed have been offering watershed graduates the opportunity to win a one-thousand dollar bursary towards their future studies. The Bursary is based on environmental interest and action rather than on marks. The purpose is to help develop “water guardians” for the future. Some changes to the timing and promotion of the bursary that were made last year have shown to be successful. Most significant was the change to the timing of the application period, to coincide with the end of the School March Break and thus avoiding the busy time of exams in June. This change in timing seems to be working well.

While the original intent of the Bursary was to present one per year, thanks to our sponsors, the FoTW budget has allowed the option to present two Bursaries should more than one worthy candidate apply. That option was used this year in selecting two winners.

The winners of the Water Guardian Bursary for 2024 are Clara Misener and Orria Nielsen. Both are students at Perth Collegiate and both are members of the Lanark Climate Network Youth Group. Their selection was based on their keen interest in and work for the betterment of the environment. The Water Guardian Bursary continues to be an investment in the future.

13. New Business

There was no new business.

Glenn thanked everyone for joining in the 2023 AGM. He also thanked Sommer Casgrain-Robertson of RVCA for her excellent presentation.

14. Adjournment

President, Glenn Tunnock, adjourned the 2023 AGM by adjourned at 4:06. **Carried.**