

Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park
Management Advisory Board Meeting
Thursday August 3, 2006

Approved Meeting Summary

Present

Wally Hobbs	Rick Meridew	Dave Coulas (OP)
Murray Kidd	Kim Dunford	Jennifer Fay (OP)
Tom Flynn	Thomas Cole	Kim Harris (OP)
Wendy Lyttle	Mary Anna	Graham Cameron (OP)
Don LaCombe		Pam Lawrence (OP)

Regrets

Julia Madden

Meeting called to order at 4:20 p.m.

Welcome to new Management Advisory Board Member Rick Meridew.

Review and approval of meeting summary (June 12, 2006).

Motion: To approve the meeting summary as an accurate reflection of the June 12th meeting.

Mover: Tom Flynn

Seconder: Wendy Lyttle

Carried.

Chair Update

- Letter received from the Minister. Reply to our letter dated June 28, 2006. Extremely important for us to respond to this letter.
- Minister has missed the most important part – the ecological position – the subcommittee was doing such great work and we have the Biologist for a short time but this does not resolve the problem of maintaining this position full time. Too large of an area for one individual to monitor. The Board needs to give a positive response pointing out the expectations that were out there before this area was protected under the Provincial Parks Act.
- Board has the success of the Park at heart.
- The Board has been doing a good job working toward the ultimate goal of a Management Plan that will work. Project must be appropriately acknowledged by the Province. Need to ensure that a core group of OP staff are in place and funding is available.
- The appointment of a full time biologist is critical. Ecological Integrity (EI) will never be accomplished without a full time biologist.
- Clear from the Open Houses that enforcement is an important element as well.
- Recommendation made that the Board arrange a meeting with the Minister or the Deputy Minister.
- A letter from OFAH addressing interests that were negotiated in the Charter has been sent to the Deputy Minister.
- The SGKH has expressed an interest in measuring the direction set out in the Charter. They recognize that core staffing support is required to assist in delivering this direction. The SGKH would like to draft a letter with some recommendations or comments to the Minister signed by the four Signatories of the Charter.

- Biologist contract length dependent on budget available.
- MAB received comments/concerns from the Open Houses related to funding. This is very much a concern for them.
- Request a follow-up meeting with the Minister after the letter has been sent
- Set up a meeting with Deputy Minister, Gail Beggs, to let her know that we have concerns and that a letter will be forthcoming in response to the Minister's letter.

Motion: To prepare a draft response to the Minister's letter of June 28, 2006. In this letter make reference to 3rd paragraph, Funding for the Park, "The planning, development and long-term management of the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park (KHSSP) in accordance with the Charter are a priority for this government."

Amending motion: To also include setting up a meeting with the Deputy Minister prior to drafting the letter if possible.

Mover: Thomas Cole

Seconder: Rick Meridew

Carried.

Action Item: *Thomas Cole and Rick Meridew to set up meeting with Gail Beggs, Deputy Minister and also prepare a draft response to the Minister for the next Board meeting.*

- Open Houses – Thank you to all of the MAB members that could attend. OP staff did an excellent job with displays.
- Feed back from member who was not in attendance – more or less positive – a lot of concern about the money and whether it will be available to meet the commitments made in the Charter. Hold more Open Houses and direct communication with the public.
- **Open House Numbers - Cavendish Community Centre– 132
- Wilson Park Community Centre – 103**
- Issue raised at Open Houses – fur bearing animals/Trapper's license. Clarification required from MNR legal department on this issue with a follow-up letter to advise the Ontario Fur Managers Federation. A trapper's license allows the trapper to hunt fur-bearing animals. There is legislation that governs hunting in the park. The legislation that governs the Trappers will prevail over the legislation with respect to the park.

Action Item: *Superintendent to look into this.*

Discussion on Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park Act (KHSSP Act) - Bill 100

- The text of the Charter is not legislation – it does however contain the legislative wording within the document in highlighted boxes. If there is any conflict between the legislation and Charter or if there is any room for interpretation, the legislation will govern not the Charter.
- The legislation is valid when it is proclaimed in force. After a Bill passes third reading it then receives Royal Assent and changes from a Bill to a Statute. The Statute indicates that certain sections will come into force and effect at a date to be proclaimed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Bill 100, which is now a statute, has several sections that have not come into force and effect yet. Only Section 5 of the KHSSP Act is in effect.
- The park has been regulated as a park, and is protected under the Provincial Parks Act, but does not have the protection of the *KHSSP Act*. The Charter tried to described the intent of the legal wording of the *KHSSP Act*.
- Open Houses – Other concerns raised:
 - Trail system should be approved before addressing the use of ATVs. Individuals felt that without the knowledge of the approved trail network, they could not make an informed choice for options presented in the Management Options Document (MOD).
 - How will the approved trail system be presented to the public?

Common use trails for the purpose of access. Public information map for multiple use trails.

Specific use trails. Trails to hunting watches only, for example, would not be shown on maps available for the general public.

- ATV use for the purpose of hunting. OP position on this, as with all the options in the MOD, is that we do have commitments in the Charter addressing access and existing rights and traditional rights that are guaranteed. Also have a priority not only to maintain the ecological integrity but try to enhance it as well. Any of the options would maintain ecological integrity. OP is not willing to go below the current level of EI; therefore, did not generate options that would degrade the EI of the site but all options beyond that would actually work towards enhancing or improving the EI of the site. By putting some level of management over ATV use to access for the purpose of hunting OP is recognizing that
 - a) ATV use will only happen on an approved road and trail system, and
 - b) working to meet our other obligations in the Charter talking about protection of EI.

Motion: To receive the update given by the Chair to this point.

Mover: Wally Hobbs

Secunder: Wendy Lyttle

Carried.

Chair Selection

- Term for four members of the Board is up on August 5th. Need to select a new chair and vice-chair as per our Terms of Reference.
- Persons that would be supported would be the current Chair and Co-chair. If they are re-appointed this would give the Board some continuity.
- A Board member indicated that he would be prepared to sit in the Co-chair position on a pro tem basis only, with the understanding that when appointments take place, that the Board would open the vote again for a permanent Chair.
- This would mean a total of five vacancies on the Board as of Aug.6.

Motion: To appoint Murray Kidd as Pro Tem Chair and Thomas Cole as Pro Tem Co-Chair for the Management Advisory Board.

- Discussion about the pro tem appointments.

Change of Motion: To appoint Murray Kidd as Chair and Thomas Cole as Co-Chair for the Management Advisory Board to act in this role until new appointments are made.

Mover: Wendy Lyttle

Secunder: Wally Hobbs

Carried.

Superintendent Update

- Action Item from June meeting. Summary of MAB priorities will be forthcoming.
- Last meeting roads and trails – Motions that were placed are appropriate – Subcommittee was recommending to the board that they present an Interim Road and Trail Network to the Minister.
- Superintendent met with the Managing Director of Ontario Parks and had some detailed discussion around the Road and Trail System that will be presented to the Minister. Needs to fit in along with our Management Plan which goes to the Minister for approval. Superintendent will focus on this piece of work and discuss with some of OP senior staff for input.
- Biologist needs to do inventory as to what trails are a threat to the EI of the park.

- Release of the Management Options Document has been the main focus of OP staff as well as the preparation of two public Open Houses.
- **Correspondence Received**
 - RE: Beaver Lake Road. Petition circulated re: Beaver Lake Road as an access road to the park in relation to the roads EA work that is being done. This was submitted to our Minister and addressed to the Chair. The Board responded to the letter.
 - Letter supporting the appointment of Rick Meridew to the MAB from the SGKH.
 - Catchacoma Cottage Association Newsletter had an insert with a KHSSP update and OP staff were not contacted to comment on this.
 - North Kawartha Council minutes were posted publicly, some ended up in the Lakefield Herald prior to the Open Houses. Search and rescue is an OPP responsibility. For all Provincial Parks, search and rescue is coordinated through OPP. Whether the park is there or not the municipality still has responsibilities. Agreements are in place between OPP and municipalities. North Kawartha Council minutes indicate that they will be hosting a meeting with representatives from their township, OPP, KHSSP staff, Long Lake, Loucks Lake and area cottage associations and Galway, Cavendish and Harvey. The Superintendent has not been contacted yet but is more than willing to attend such a meeting.
 - Emergency plan and response for the KHSSP: This is the Senior Operations Technician responsibility. The park has an Emergency Plan in place. This is an internal document and is not open for public input or comment. It does not carry any weight or influence over municipality authority or OPP or any other provincial authority. This is a policy document that carries jurisdiction over the actions of park staff and carries the weight and authority of the park superintendent. It talks about who is responsible for what; who to contact when something happens; how to evacuate a park protocols; deaths in a park; vehicle accidents; search and rescue; etc. This document also contains: emergency contact numbers - local and provincial; resources available - both staffing and equipment available. We've taken the added step, for safety reasons, entering into some information sharing protocols where we have provided maps for EMS staff to access locations in the park.

Motion: To accept the Superintendent update.

Mover: Rick Meridew

Secunder: Mary Anna Zakula

Carried.

Open House Discussion

MAB feedback from the West Side:

- No negativity; positive; some people opposed, some supportive, of Beaver Lake Road being used as an access road; stakeholders in support of the things that OP and the MAB are doing; Concern raised about advertising – how do we get the message out to the public as to what the area is all about; Some negative views but found that people weren't informed/did not read the material – once information was explained people were okay; People left satisfied with the information that they were given; Funding concerns raised; Willingness of a number of people to share stories/information of the area; When options are approved can OP manage properly?; Limited funding problem for management of the area; On both sides of the Park people still have a passion to see this area protected

MAB feedback from the East Side:

- Hunters, ATV access - terminology in the management options document not clear – gray areas concerning hunting and trapping that need to be addressed; still underlying distrust of the whole process, need to do a better job of getting information to the public; Some negative but when information was explained once again they were okay; Concern raised over ATVs and fishing.

Additional Open House Feedback

- Questions on funding; Science and EI, how are we going to achieve this?; Input received to date indicates the future of the park depends on the management of the area; Free bear tags; Planning direction; If Ontario parks and the board do not engage all of the stakeholders in the area this process will fail; Elderly hunters think that we have forgotten about them – grandfather clause; Retrieval of game – when game is shot outside of the park and wanders into the park.

Planning Direction

- Campsites have existed since original canoe routes established. Private property owners do not want to see campsites continue on their lakes. OP receives many complaints from campers about noise and EI damage on private property. This is part of the balanced view that many do not see. Comments on camping on access lakes coming out in planning work.
- Future planning work. We are on schedule. Assistant Deputy Minister approves the next few planning documents. Target date for the Preliminary Management Plan is spring 2007.

Open Meeting Discussion

- The topic of open versus closed MAB meetings was brought up again and whether certain groups should be permitted to make presentations to the Board. Members were reminded that this topic had already been discussed with the Managing Director of Ontario Parks and after that discussion the Board determined that their meetings would remain closed. When the Board requires expertise in certain areas, meeting requests to a specific group(s) can certainly be made. Refer to previous meeting summaries regarding open vs closed meeting discussions.
- Superintendent is meeting with various groups to keep them informed of the process.

Next meeting – Monday September 25

Meeting adjourned: 8:50

Mover: Wendy Lyttle

Secunder: Don LaCombe