

Council of Community Organizations Meeting held on Sept. 23, 2008

The September COCO Meeting was held at the White's Lake Legion on September 23. Shelley Thomas Chair of the Resources Opportunity Centre in Terence Bay was Chair of the Meeting.

Those in attendance were pleased to be joined by Municipal Candidates Reg Rankin from District 22, Gina Byrne from District 23 and Federal NDP Candidate for Halifax West Tamara Lorincz. It is always most helpful for our elected representatives and community members to hear first hand from one another about issues in our communities. Bill Estabrooks MLA for Timberlea Prospect, a regular attendee at COCO Meetings was unable to attend due to an out of town commitment.

Tamara Lorincz updated us about a number of upcoming events sponsored by the NS Environmental Network The NSEN AGM will be held on October 4. She reported on the film and discussion about "The Story of Stuff" which outlines how to get folks to think critically about sustainable consumption and production One of the gatherings is to be held at the Tantallon Public Library at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, October 21, 2008. Further information about additional film dates and other speakers can be found at: www.nsen.ca

WRWEO reported on the guided hike that took place on Sunday, September 21. The Sheldrake Lake Hypolimnetic project has resumed after some difficulties were resolved.

The Western Common Citizens Advisory Committee set up to deal with planning for the wilderness portion of the Western Common has been advised that EDM and Gordon Radcliff firms have been hired to develop a Management Plan for the Wilderness acres of the Western Common from Hwys 103 to Brookside. There is a consultation process underway beginning with interviews with community persons and then two public meetings will be called. Issues such as defining boundaries, impacts from the Bayer's Lake Strategic Study and the Ragged Lake Strategic study, concerns about the ever expanding HRM landfill site and ongoing dialogue required with the Chebucto Wilderness Steering Committee to address issues of connectivity were noted.

Councillor Reg Rankin gave a report on the HRM legal matter at Drysdale Bog. HRM lost the case in court. Councillor Rankin would like to see a rezoning exercise undertaken to address the Industrial 3 zoning in Goodwood.

Gina Byrne asked a number of questions concerning the Hwy 113 project and other environmental and planning issues in District 23.

St. Margaret's Bay Stewardship Association in concert with several community groups is sponsoring two All Candidates meetings on Tuesday October 7 at 7 p.m. at the White's Lake Legion for District 22 and on Wednesday October 8 at 7 p.m. at the St. Margaret's Centre for District 23. It is expected that the format will include responses by the candidates to 4 questions given in advance of the meeting with 2 hours allocated for the discussion, questions and answers.

The Resources Opportunity Centre at Terence Bay is going through a transition time with the retirement of dynamic staff member Barb Allen who has been a driving force in establishing excellent programs for the Prospect Communities. Shelley Thomas, Chair of the ROC Board gave great thanks to Barb for her leadership. New programs coming on stream were outlined and more information can be found on the website

www.prospectcommunities.com

The ROC has been awarded the management oversight for the operation of the soon to be built Prospect Road Community Centre. The Community Centre Project begun in 2003 has had a long history of involving the community in articulating its wishes and being involved in the realization of these in concert with HRM staff. The model they have created would serve other communities well.

The AGM for the ROC will be held on November 12

The Terence Bay Lighthouse Committee remains active in its goal to keep the Lighthouse repaired and the property accessible to the public. The Coast Guard is currently making repairs to the Lighthouse.

FBWHT work during the summer included completion of water quality monitoring work on both the Wooden's River and Prospect River systems. Work on the preparation of "The Walking Guide to the Old St. Margaret's Bay Road" for publication continues.

The Trust is a member group of the Chebucto Wilderness Coalition Steering Committee. Our work since the June 2 meeting with Minister Parent has focussed on getting support for the protection of public lands bound by Hwys 103 and 333 Wilderness Areas Protection from HRM Regional Council and from Judy Streach, MLA for Chester St. Margarete's. HRM Council has voted in favour of protecting the provincial lands. Meetings have occurred with Judy Streach who is supporting this initiative. Minister Morse will meet with members of the Steering Committee on October 21. In the meantime we continue to build our list of supporters and widen our supporting members groups. The public is invited to copy the petition and gather signatures. Our petition can be found online at www.fivebridgestrust.ca

The next COCO Meeting is slated for Thursday, November 13 at the Tantallon Public Library. Host group will be the Five Bridges Wilderness Heritage Trust.