

SOURCE PROTECTION COMMITTEE (SPC) MEETING MINUTES

March 27, 2024

Grand Bend Legion Hall, Grand Bend ON

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mary Ellen Foran, Dave Frayne, Paul Heffer, Doug Hocking, Matt Pearson, Allan Rothwell, John Thompson, Jennette Walker

MEMBERS ABSENT

John Graham, Rowland Howe, Philip Keightley, Alyssa Keller

LIAISONS PRESENT

Davin Heinbuck – Ausable Bayfield Source Protection Authority (SPA) Liaison
Lori Holmes – Huron Perth Public Health

DWSP STAFF PRESENT

Donna Clarkson, Mary Lynn MacDonald, Aaron Clarke, Abigail Gutteridge, Daniel King

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Matt Pearson called the meeting to order at 11:17 a.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

AGENDA

MOTION #SPC: 2024-03-01

“That the agenda for the March 27, 2024 meeting be approved.”

Carried by Consensus.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION #SPC: 2024-03-02

**Moved by Paul Heffer
Seconded by Allan Rothwell**

“THAT the SPC minutes from January 31, 2024 be approved as presented.”

Carried.

BUSINESS OUT OF THE MINUTES

None

DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

None

CORRESPONDENCE

1. A brief note of thanks from John Graham for the well wishes sent by the Source Protection Committee (SPC) Members earlier in the winter.
2. Several responses to the letter sent to the Minister regarding the proposed withdrawal of free water testing in Ontario were received by staff, from local health units, counties, municipalities and other Source Protection Regions. It was also picked up by other media including local radio, online articles, and CBC Ontario Morning, which featured an interview with Chair Matt Pearson.

CHAIR'S UPDATE

Chair Matt Pearson noted that approval had been received from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) for the Section 36 Amendments to the Source Protection Plans, and they have now been posted. He also informed the SPC, that Mary Lynn MacDonald, Co-Drinking Water Source Protection (DWSP) Program Supervisor has announced her intent to retire later this spring. Chair Matt expressed his thanks to Mary Lynn for her many years of work within the Source Protection Program in this region and wished her well in her future endeavours.

Chair Matt also reported the sad news that SPC Member Bert Dykstra passed away from illness, last month. He stated that he, as well as all members of the SPC, enjoyed working with Bert for many years and he will most certainly be missed. Bert Dykstra was one of the Agricultural representatives on the SPC.

PROGRAM UPATE

Mary Lynn MacDonald, Co-Drinking Water Source Protection (DWSP) Program Supervisor, provided a program update to SPC members. She reported that the Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley Source Protection Plan (SPP) Section 36 Amendment has now been approved by the MECP. There is no requirement for future SPP updates under section 36 of the Clean Water Act, as future updates to the plans can be made through locally initiated amendments under section 34 of the Act. The amended plans became effective at noon on March 26, 2024 and posting requirements are underway by staff. Notification will be provided to Source Protection Authorities, county mapping departments, affected municipalities and property owners who will require revised risk management plans according to the new approved policies. Mary Lynn congratulated the SPC on four years of work for this amendment.

Mary Lynn also reported that staff have been meeting with the MECP regarding the Workplan and Budget for the 2024-2027 period. Staff had included funding for new categories including targeted municipal support and best practices for private drinking water systems, but were informed that the funding was oversubscribed. Funding for wellhead protection area re-delineation was also reduced; however, staff decided to retain funding requests for Palmerston, Harrison and Atwood, but at a reduced amount. Funding for best practices work is paused, so staff provided MECP with a report outlining the rationale and development of the Water Wise events, in support of these successful events. Budgets should be confirmed with Source Protection Regions in the next few weeks; however, re-opening Transfer Payment Agreements with funding requests may be possible in the future.

Mary Lynn also provided an update the most recent Water Wise event. In total, 370 bottles were distributed by the Kirkton-Woodham Optimists, and 111 were received for testing. The next upcoming event will be in Atwood, and both the Dublin and Londesboro Lions and the Ashfield-Colborne Lakefront Association have expressed interest in holding second events.

Finally, Mary Lynn noted that the consultation for the Section 34 Amendment to the Maitland Valley Source Protection Plan for both Lucknow and Century Height's wellhead protection areas has been completed. Very few comments were received and staff have been directed by the SPA to submit it to the province.

2023 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

Donna Clarkson, Co-DWSP Program Supervisor, presented the Annual Progress Report for the 2023 reporting year. This standardized report seeks to collect information from all implementing bodies and summarizes the progress on implementation. Of note for 2023, the Township of Minto completed 2 risk management plans that were outstanding from the previous year. In addition, the third round of septic inspections began in 2023, and 10 of 12 Official Plans were updated to include Drinking Water Source Protection. Overall, staff report that each category scored in the annual report is progressing well. Once approved by the SPC, staff will take the reports to the SPAs for their support to submit the Annual Report to the MECP by May 1, 2024.

MOTION #SPC: 2024-03-03

**Moved by Jennette Walker
Seconded by John Thompson**

**“THAT the ABMV Source Protection Committee endorse Report #9:
Annual Progress Report 2023, and**

**“FURTHER, THAT the Source Protection Committee direct staff to present
the Annual Progress Report 2023 to the Ausable Bayfield and Maitland Valley Source
Protection Authorities for submission to the Ministry of the Environment,
Conservation and Parks.**

Carried

LIAISON UPDATES

Michael Halder is the new MECP Liaison / Program Analyst for the ABMV Source Protection Region and sent a brief message to the SPC. Michael noted that MECP is updating the guidance document for section 34 amendments in an attempt to streamline the process for all involved. He also confirmed that funding applications have been received from all SPAs to enter into 3-year TPAs spanning 2024-27 and the review process is underway.

Lori Holmes, Public Health Manager for Huron Perth Public Health, provided an update to the SPC. She noted that she has been in contact with staff regarding the Water Wise events and that HPPH is committed to providing in-kind support for these successful and useful events. She also noted that HPPH also sent a letter to Minister Thompson and

other Southwest Public Health Units regarding the potential phase out of free drinking water testing. Lori also reported that student programs will be starting shortly at the health unit, including local beach sampling. Finally, she reported that there have been several cases of measles in the region in 2024, which is higher than usually seen.


Davin Heinbuck, liaison for the Ausable Bayfield Source Protection Authority had no formal update, but thanked the SPC for welcoming him and reported that he has been taking time to familiarize himself with the DWSP program and was looking forward to working with the SPC.

NEXT MEETING

As there will be a pause in some of the SPC work over the next months, the SPC may not meet again until September. However, Chair Matt noted that a posting for an Agricultural representative for the SPC will go ahead soon.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:19 p.m.



Matt Pearson
Chair



Abigail Gutteridge
Secretary