

Ecology Action Centre

Annual General Meeting 2024
Tuesday September 17, 2024 – 6:00-8:30pm
Held at the Zatzman Sportsplex, Nantucket Room and virtually on Zoom

(Co)Chair of AGM: Christina Macdonald

Secretary: Michael Sime

Members in Attendance: 60 in person and 35 virtual

For more information, please see the [2024 EAC Annual Report](#)

1. Welcome

Christina welcomed everyone to the 53 EAC AGM. Thanks to Florence and Lis who welcomed everyone at the door. She welcomed the people who are attending online, reminding them that they can participate through chat (managed by Vicki and Emily). Materials were digitally sent out in advance to save on paper. Polls will be done by show of hands in person and online.

2. Land Acknowledgement & Moment of Silence

Helga, Co-Chair of the EAC Board provided a land acknowledgement describing the original, Indigenous names of places that have influenced her. She drew attention to the traumatic arrival of the Europeans that led to systemic racism and cultural genocide and the long road of progress that is still in front of us. Helga also described the modern environmental racism seen today through the mistreatment of African Nova Scotians and First Nations peoples. Helga closed with a quote from an Indigenous leader and thanked Mi'kmaq for their stewardship of the land.

3. Acceptance of Agenda and Approval of Minutes of 2023 AGM

For more information, see the [2023 AGM Minutes](#)

- Agenda:
 - Moved by Michael Sime
 - Seconded by Alyda Faber
- Minutes:
 - Moved by Maggy Burns
 - Seconded by Dawn Burstall

- Unanimously approved

4. Board Report

Christina, Co-Chair of the EAC Board, provided some reflections on the EAC's work, including the following:

- 14 Board Members served this past year
- **Impact, Finances, Fundraising, HR** were the four major generative themes, looking outward rather than at the operational level
- **Impact** - Described BOW (Becoming an Outdoors Woman), a daughter of a woman she met uses the EAC newsletter in her St. Mary's University Environmental Sciences program as regular discussion material. Lesson being, you never know how your work is influencing others
- **Fundraising** - When you speak about the EAC, you need to do so in a way that it's from a personal connection. So that it resonates with whom you speak. Christina took the opportunity to speak with her tour goers about the Coastal protection act and EAC's involvement.
- Reviewed for the room the concept of Board committees (Audit and Risk, Governance, Recruitment and Nomination and Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion) and the self evaluation process.
- Thanked the staff

5. Executive Director's Report

Maggy Burns, EAC's Executive Director shared her thoughts and reflections with members. She began by reading words by Maurice Mitchell, a social and economic justice leader in the US.

- The AGM is a time to reflect, celebrate, learn, (and eat cake!)
- We've all felt the pull to anger and despair, it's connections like those held within the EAC, to this planet, that sustain us.
- These are the fundamentals of the EAC, fierce care, connection, this is what will see us to a just future, we're here for the long game. It's not a linear process. Once we had to work to convince people of the very existence of climate change, now we're fighting the fossil fuel organizations and for green energy.
- We've seen many great things happen in recent years. Maggy acknowledged the EAC 50 years project and other large projects and transformations. Listed many accomplishments like EAC energy audits, the work of Bike Again, the upcoming establishment of a food council, Saving West Mabou beach from development. She acknowledged the unexpected public uprising in response to the overturned coastal protection act.

Question & Answer

Q: Could the ED or Board speak to the decolonizing work, on an institutional level?

A: **Maggy:** It's my hope and belief that it's happening organization wide. To some extent, it goes back 15 years when the EAC previously stepped away from racially themed challenges, and we're looking to rectify that. The work is situated in the teams; transportation team working in marginalized communities with the popup bike hub,

A: **Dawn:** We did a survey on how the Board is doing on attracting people from diverse backgrounds to serve on the board. The more that the board and staff represent the communities they serve the better they can serve them.

Q: Is there any consideration on taking more advocacy towards affordable housing lost to other development?

A: **Maggy:** Not sure I can do the answer justice right now, it's hard to answer without those EAC staff working on those particular issues. Affordable housing is front and centre for EAC.

A: **Kortney - Built Environment team:** We are trying to find ways of affordable housing creation, retention. I've been connecting with other non profits working directly in the housing space. Solutions to non-market housing solutions.

Motion to approve the 2023-2024 Executive Director's Report

- Moved by Grant MacDonald
- Seconded by Ray Plourde

Unanimously approved

6. Financial Report

Roland Evborokhai, the Treasurer, delivered the financial report. For additional details, please see the [2023- 2024 Annual Report](#).

EAC is a non-profit, but contextually, non-profit doesn't explain the EAC well. Profit can mean any number of things, the team leading EAC is running it for profit that does not include currency, but in impact that affects decisions made on social and environmental issues. Roland sparked a standing ovation for the very "profitable" leadership team of the EAC.

Roland commented that although the revenue technically decreased from the previous year (~\$37,000) it is a change of less than 1% and material change considering the full year's revenue of \$3.89 million.

The EAC leadership goes beyond "keeping the lights on" and are doing well considering the constraints in this inflationary time.

Transferred the entire surplus of \$49,231 to the strategic fund. The strategic fund is intended for mid-to-long term initiatives that are outside of the standard budgetary planning.

Q. Ray Plourde: That was the best financial report from a treasurer I've ever heard!

A.: Thank you!

Motion to approve the 2023-2024 Financial Statements

- Moved by Helga Guderly
- Seconded by Virginia Olsen

Unanimously approved

Motion to approve the BDO Canada LLP as EAC's Auditors for 2024-2025

- Moved by Anika Riopel
- Seconded by Hannah Minzloff

Unanimously approved

7. Appointment of Volunteer Board of Directors 2024-2025

Christina acknowledged completion of Anne Winters' final term as a board member, who served 6 years, and "was a calm, consistent, and thoughtful presence on the Board throughout her time at the EAC".

Introduced new board members: Milka Pietikainen, Curtis Whiley, Louis Joe Bernard, Zahra Williams.

Motion to approve the 13 continuing Directors and 4 new Directors as Board members.

- Moved by Roland Evborokhai
- Seconded by Jane Matheson

Unanimously approved

8. Recognition of milestone years of service of EAC staff

Maggy spoke on the many wonderful accomplishments and character traits of the milestone reaching staff.

Marla Macleod - 20 years with EAC

Ben Hammer, Ashleigh Boers, Simon Ryder-Burbudge - 5-6 years with EAC

9. EAC Annual Awards

Awards were presented by Brandy Rivers, who stated the importance of acknowledgement of these groups and good work they've done for Mi'kma'ki

Danielle Moore Sunshine

1. Save Dartmouth Cove - Accepted by Jill Brogan

- *For their tireless work to protect Dartmouth Cove from unwarranted infilling, which has led to Transport Canada rescinding its approval of the infill proposal, and for their continued advocacy and efforts to engage community members since that decision.*

2. Mike Lancaster

- *For promoting the stewardship and preservation of wild lands around Nova Scotia, particularly Micou's and Troop Islands, the Bluff Wilderness Area and the proposed Ingram River Wilderness Area. His careful documentation of endangered species and old forest habitat in the former Bowater Mersey Lands led to the recently announced creation of the Island Lake Wilderness Area. He has trained many stewards of our wild areas and has ably served as the coordinator of the Healthy Forest Coalition.*

3. Save Our Old Forests (SOOF)

- *For bringing together environmental advocates, community members, creatives, and local businesses to raise awareness about the importance of protecting Nova Scotia's old forests. The volunteers have engaged in inspiring community-building work through their free Soup Sundays, the SOOFSTOCK music festival, educational workshops, and other engaging events. They've engaged with provincial and municipal governments and encouraged citizens to take action on important topics, such as the campaigns to protect Beals Brook and Goldsmith Lake Wilderness Areas.*

Tarred Duck

1. Provincial Government

- *For political gaslighting by not proclaiming the CPA. For wasting taxpayer dollars and years of effort, offloading responsibilities on anyone but themselves and setting generations of Nova Scotians on the wrong path when it comes to a sustainable future for our coast and communities.*

2. St. Barbara's Limited / Atlantic Mining Nova Scotia

- *For trying to bluff, bluster and otherwise weasel their way out of paying for the reclamation of their now exhausted/closed Touquoy open-pit gold mine at Moose River, NS, as required by law.*

3. Paper Excellence

- *Notable for their disregard of community approval, this Indonesian- Chinese conglomerate which controls an area of forested land in Canada 4 times the area of Nova Scotia has refused to appear before the federal parliament's sub-committee on natural resources. They have sued Nova Scotia for lost profits over the closure of the Northern Pulp mill and have now reached a settlement with the province, whereby they are considering opening another pulp mill in Liverpool with a guaranteed income of 14%. Would they respond to community concerns, NO!*

Bubby Mooers

1. Kai Retter - Accepted by Kai Retter, Karen McKendry, Mimi O'Handley (**latter two are EAC employees**)

- *For their wonderful contributions to the Wilderness Issues Team and the People's Parade planning committee, as well as helping Karen McKendry over their summer break, and the Built Environment team with promoting the bioblitz. Outside of the EAC, they lead an environmental issues group at their high school. They bring enthusiasm and sincerity to every space that they're in, and it's been wonderful having them as an EAC volunteer.*

2. Sobaz Benjamin, Mark Day Jr., Thomas Elliot

- *For their incredible dedication and invaluable contributions to organizing the second annual People's Parade for Life on Earth, and for the vital work they do every day to uplift community and foster creative possibilities.*

Tooker Gomberg

1. Protect Liverpool Bay - *Helga Guderly acknowledged how happy the group was to win this award*

- *Protect Liverpool Bay has been successfully advocating against the expansion (and eventual elimination) of open net pen salmon feedlots in Liverpool Bay. Their efforts convincing municipal council and local politicians culminated with Tim Houston and his local MLA, Kim Masland, expressing their opposition to the expansion. The scheduled Aquaculture Review Board hearing concerning Cooke's expansion was indefinitely postponed.*

2. Little Dyke Community Coalition

- *Little Dyke is a community that has been living with the effects of a large quarry in the middle of their community for years. The most recent proposal to expand the quarry will cause more noise, dust, and other impacts to health and the environment. To get the attention of decision makers they went to a meeting in the legislature and disrupted it by playing recordings of the very noisy trucks that rumble through their community every day. They stopped the meeting, got removed without getting arrested, got media attention, and put their MLA and the quarry owner on the spot. Perfect grassroots activism!*

10. Keynote Speaker

Marla Macleod introduced **Nanci Lee** as the keynote speaker by listing her accomplishments, locally and internationally. Nanci spoke on moving from ally to friend in Rematriation of land and governance

- Economic and reparative models. Often people are left thinking what can we do during this “polycrisis”?
- Dr Roshi Wong - “We may say that we serve, serving needs to be liberated from every hierarchy, face to face, belly button to belly button.”
- Discussed the process of letting go of colonial practices and acknowledged a quote from Maggy Burns - “how do you break your **own** patterns?”
- The challenge can be crunchy and difficult, but it can be beautiful and sacred. Pick up your own ancestral spiritual bundle.
- Dr. Roshi Wong - Creating a paradox with our very being is the spiritual imperative of our lives

Q: Can you explain the origin of rematriation vs repatriation?

A: They were bringing back clan mother ways; ways that were led by clan mothers. These reclamations by Women of First Light are leading this process at the Tatamagouche centre.

Q: Can you expand on “rewilding”?

A: It's a term, phrase, and movement. Part of rewilding the land, bringing back the indigenous plants and animals, but also rewilding of the self. A huge part of this is being grounded, I see this in black and indigenous friends. Listening to the pace of the land, it's very different from the pace we've become steeped in.

Q: What is the process by which rematriation occurs?

A: What ***didn't*** work was entrenchment and fear of reparations. Some of the practical aspects are transition teams (e.g. United Church of Canada, Women of First Light) who find the values and process of the way forward.

Q: Can you expand on community land trusts?

Nanci handed the mic to Curtis

A:**Curtis Wiley**: We're starting to join a larger movement of other community land trusts. The first was born of the civil rights movement. I work with the province to help get land back to African Nova Scotians. Advocating for rezoning and community action. The focus on individual ownership is being challenged by our community led stewardship.

Q: impacts on the Chedabucto popup windfarm?

A: The Pockwock lake, which is where we get our water from, has restricted access to a communal piece of land. For 25 years we didn't have access to the water that ran through our backyard. The windmills are adjacent to the Melvin land tract, we get about \$40k a year from their use of this land, which is good. The community was involved in this process, and other similar processes are going on currently.

11. Member's Forum

Members shared their thoughts and feelings about EAC's important work.

A suggestion was made to provide Certificate Awards to all recipients of the EAC Annual Awards and not just the first place candidates.

12. Adjournment 8:20 pm

Christina provided thanks to all those who made the AGM a success.

- Moved by Maggy Burns
- Seconded by Helga Guderly