



**Mono Mulum Citizens' Coalition (MC²)**  
**AM Minutes**  
**November 3, 2024**  
**Monora Pavilion**

Meeting was called to order by President Holmsen at 2:00 pm

The Land Acknowledgement was read by B. Jafelice.

President Holmsen welcomed the members to the 36<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting and requested the approval of the November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Annual General Meeting. Copies of the 2023 Minutes are available at the welcome desk and are posted on the Mono Mulum Coalition website:

<https://www.monomulum.com/>

Motion to approve the 2023 Minutes was made by K. Holmsen and seconded by D. Macfarlane.  
*Carried.*

**President's Report**

President Knut Holmsen outlined the highlights of 2023 and gave special thanks to Anne Brossard who served on the environment committee. Frank Flood served on the Land Use Committee and to Rita Reitsma.

Holmsen also cited Doug Thompson, Mono and Cheryl Russel, Mulum for their in-depth reporting on municipal affairs. Municipally speaking their endeavours have contributed to a more open, transparent, and responsive communication between both Councils. We started the year on a positive note, but then in just a few months, the board went from 9 to 3, all from natural reasons, age, health, family issues.

The membership which had stagnated during COVID lost the attention we had planned to give it. So, the three remaining board members Del, Jill and I sat down and did some soul searching.

Where do we go from here?

We unanimously agreed that MC2 was too important, and we agreed to press on by ourselves, and start the rebuilding. A downturn like this was not new to MC2 and it has always been rebuilt, by committed boards, volunteers, and members.

We held a strategic planning session which included past board members, and key volunteers, facilitated by Doug Thomson who will report on it later.

Jill and Matthew Johnson started the process by hosting a BBQ at their beautiful property in Mulmur and close to 60 people attended, and they also organized wonderful weather, so it was a great event and we gained new members.

The slate of the new board includes two new members, who both are established residents with a long commitment to our community.

The path forward has started with new energy and the importantly confirmation of our mission. And communication with our members has started using a new format under the guidance of Cathy Noonan, former board member and a very active present volunteer together with her daughter Rachael

We have begun interacting with other regional organizations with similar projects like ours.

So, are we finished?

Far from it.

Make no mistake, the work of safeguarding and building communities is never done, and we are ...very seriously ....in need of more volunteers to share the load.

We know that in the hills of Mono and Mulmur resides some very special people with outstanding knowledge, experience, and wisdom. Real community builders.

We need you to come and join us and spend maybe only 3 hours a month at a board meeting or chairing one of our committees or working on projects where your personal passions lie.

Housing is a dramatic problem getting worse by the day. Our development planning for new communities need to keep pace with changing needs, but to stay ahead of the population growth, which includes our own immediate area. Home production is largely locked into set thinking and is totally out of sync with the technology world surrounding us. Advanced systems for the management of drinking water, rainwater, grey water, sewage, construction materials and methods cannot be delayed any more. Most of these building methods exist in the world right now, ready to be applied. All we need is the will.

Land use of the most fertile farmland cannot continue. According to Ontario Farmland Trust, in Ontario alone we lose 319 acres of farmland every day.

Yet we must accommodate the fact that 80% of the residents of Mono work outside the community and can only travel there by car.

No overall plans for transportation

other than ploughing through critical wetlands and wheat fields, to build highways,

I read the other day that

THE MOST ENDANGERED SPECIES ON EARTH IS THE HOMO SAPIEN.

Nature is under severe attack to provide a fast short-term profit for people with absolutely no thoughts to the future. Even worse maybe, they have no respect for neither nature nor animal life, including humans.

Scientists say that without insects, the world would not exist after only 6 months. The dramatic loss of bees and even mosquitoes locally, is a warning signal, we better pay attention.

I remember asking a wise person...how do you avoid litigation and court battles.....talk before before everyone ends up hating each other.

We must engage from the beginning. That must be our goal and mission

It's becoming more and more clear that we must start by cleaning up our own back yard.

So come and join us to do exactly that.

President Holmsen acknowledged special guest Mayor Creelman. +Add report as read...

### **Treasurer's Report**

FY 2023/2024

Delfino Bernardi presented the Treasurer's Report. Copies were available at the welcome desk and can be found at the Coalition's website.

From July 2023 to June 30, 2024, our fiscal year was on a course of normal historical cycle of expenditures and revenue. The dip in total reserve on account from last year to this year was caused by the event on April 28, 2024, or almost at the end of our year. We have recovered our reserves on account somewhat since due to an increase of donation and membership. Also, a BBQ event held at Jill's house seems to have helped a lot in recruiting more members, donations and perhaps volunteers and board members.

The highlights of this year treasurer management are:

- Switching treasurer
- Switching of two of three account co-signers due to resignations
- Adding a "depositor only" member to facilitate deposits on time (Cathy)
- Switching banks from TD to DUCA (a no fees account)
- Solving a few issues with switching banks, co-signers, combined with board member resignations and required documentation as requested by the financial institution to comply with their regulatory obligations.

Now that all those issues are resolved, the banking is functioning in a much better efficient and satisfactory level.

For 2023/2024 fiscal year end our account was \$11,602.02.

Since we are a charity corporation operating under the "less than \$500,000.00" we are not required by law to be audited. I recommend we save the money of the audit. If anyone has any question now or at any time, they are more than welcome to contact me or any board members for any question on these matters.

Motion for acceptance of the Treasurer's report was made by Don MacFarlane and seconded by Knut Holmsen.

*Carried.*

A second motion was made by Knut Holmsen: That as our yearly revenue was well under \$500,000, we do not need to appoint an auditor, nor do we require an audit or a review engagement. This was seconded by Harvey Kolodny. *Carried.*

### **Election of Board Members**

Cheryl Russel presented a Slate of Officers for the 2024-2025 Board.

List alphabetically: Delfino Bernardi; Catherine Campbell, Barbara Jafelice, Jill Johnson; Don MacFarlane.

Motion to approve the recommendation made by Don MacFarlane, seconded by Sharon Martin. *Carried.*

Ross Martin asked if nominations from the floor were entertained. Russel explained the nomination procedure as outlined in the organization's by-laws.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

#### **Land Use Committee, Delfino Bernardi, Chair**

As usual we are continuing to monitor ongoing developments in both Mono and Mulmur municipalities. We have and continue to inform our members of any significant issues arising that may be of interest or that at least you should be aware of it. In Mono like in Mulmur, we have the constant issues of developers wanting to build new housing. While we meet our "Place to Grow" as mandated by the province, and the fact is that land is relatively cheap to buy in our municipalities and there is still plenty of requests for more housing developments. Water protection, sewage treatment plants as well as services required by the increased population is proving to be challenging financially for our municipalities. More highways being built such as 413 and the Bradford bypass are a concern to our area as we will be affected by the pressure of increased population and commercial entities as it relates to land use and good land use planning.

Importation of soil is a concern in both municipalities as well. We are wondering if all soil is being tested at source or at destination to ensure no contaminated soil is dumped in what appears to be filling gravel pits in both municipalities.

The committee is looking at adding more volunteers to the roster to facilitate more research and intelligence gathering on this very important committee. Budget season is here, and I urge everyone to stay tuned for development on these very important matters as it will affect decisions on land use.

#### **Communications Committee:**

It is our goal to communicate with you MORE, but in smaller soundbites. We are doing our best to get you a monthly, one page, News Brief and send out "quick read" notices/reminders once to twice a month. We are thankful to Cathy Noonan and her daughter Rachel Noonan, who are formatting our News Brief in preparation for publication.

As we grow into this new format, we would appreciate your feedback on the news you are getting and the overall content we're presenting.

We do monitor the news of other organizations to keep up to date on issues and redistribute that information, where possible. It is more challenging with a one-page format.

We participate in webinars hosted by Environmental Defense, the Alliance for a Liveable Ontario, the Reform Gravel Mining Coalition, the Canadian Environmental Law Association and The Greenbelt Promise. In monitoring these organizations there is one common theme, and that is the level of concern that exists about the direction of our Provincial Government in all matters on the environment.

In actuality, there is a tremendous amount to report on and we can only do so much. If there are others who are available to monitor and report on some of these organizations, your participation would be appreciated.

We lost our Communications Guru earlier this year and we thank Felicite for her continued support in assisting our learning in how to navigate the back end of a website. In the coming months we will be working to update our website and evaluate the need for a new brochure. All help on tech matters is graciously accepted.

#### **Environmental Committee:**

This past spring, the Environmental Committee arranged a presentation by Dr. Andrew Judge. Dr. Judge is an Anishinaabe Scholar and Land Restoration Specialist. Hopefully many of you were able to attend the presentation. We received great feedback and we thank former board members, Rita and Arnold and the Environment Committee, Anne, and Leah for their organization of that event.

There are countless topics to speak on when it comes to the environment, but we thought we would take a few minutes to consider the fate of WETLANDS - still water, swamps, marshes, bogs, and fens. They exist throughout our province; they exist in our communities of Mono and Mulmur and they may exist in your own backyards. Wetlands are these enviable ecosystems that do so much for us, while appearing like they're doing very little. They hold an incredible storage of diversity and life sustaining benefits. They are sponges that reduce the severity of floods & droughts. And we know there is a direct correlation between loss of wetlands and flooding. They filter pollution & they store carbon.

Despite their importance, we have lost 72% of Ontario's wetlands, and that is why our Provincial leaders need to commit to protecting what is left, a mere 28%.

We had policies and programs that were established to protect our wetlands, but our current Provincial Government has greatly reduced those protections.

Environmental Defense has described our government's actions as "slashing" and "gutting" in reference to these policy changes. Ontario has a Wetland Evaluation System (OWES). It is the mechanism used to designate and protect provincially significant wetlands, but the Ford government is said to have abandoned this wetland conservation strategy. At a recent event held by The Forks of the Credit Preservation Group, David Donnelly an environmental lawyer, spoke about this policy change. He explained wetlands as complex eco systems; large wetland

bodies surrounded by many smaller ones. Despite these wetland bodies being interdependent and reliant on one another, he indicated that the Provincial Government has deemed only the larger wetlands worth protecting; the smaller being insignificant. In essence, abandoning a long-standing wetland conservation strategy, and abandoning science.

My takeaway on his description was that if I was a frog, living in a large wetland, let's call it Mono, I would no longer be able to visit my friends in the smaller interdependent wetland to the north, let's call it Mulmur. That's because the habitat pathway, much like a wildlife corridor, that I need to get to Mulmur no longer exists. And in fact, as a small wetland habitat, it seems to me that Mulmur would no longer exist.

Now that Mulmur is gone my wetland in Mono is having more difficulty filtering pollutants and absorbing and balancing heavy rain falls. My wetland is under a great deal of pressure and stress but there's nowhere for me to move because my neighbouring wetlands have been erased.

The fate of our wetlands seems related to another Provincial mandate. By December 31st of this year, our Conservation Authorities must provide the Provincial Government an inventory of surplus "land which is suitable for the purposes of housing and housing infrastructure" and available for disposal.

Susan Watson of Guelph has written an article describing what has happened in her community since this request for an inventory of surplus lands. She writes,

"The GRCA is moving quickly to dispose of 20 acres of land in Guelph which was part of the former Kortright Waterfowl Park." Land that was acquired from the Kortright Waterfowl Park for conservation and recreation ....in 1977 is now worth more than 350 times its original value. "The GRCA has identified 8 more parcels for disposition within the Grand River watershed." She also notes that "30 per cent of this land purchase was paid for by Guelph citizens, 60 per cent by the Ministry of Natural Resources and only 10 per cent by the GRCA. The vision of that purchase, as documented, was to "provide parkland and open space for future residents."

One can only conclude that the reason for this "surplus lands" request by our Premier is that there is an intention to sell these lands for development to developers.

If we want to keep the lands that are under the umbrella of the Conservation Authority, that we thought were in fact "Conserved" then we need to write our government and demand they remove Conservation lands from their housing agenda. And we need to do it very soon.

I would encourage you to write a letter to Sylvia Jones and let her know that you expect her to protect our Conservation Authority Lands and not sell them, that she has an obligation to protect our wetlands and a responsibility to maintain policies that protect habitat and not dismantle them.

It doesn't have to be a long letter, or complicated. We know a written letter sent by mail or dropped off to her office is far more effective than an email. It is advisable to send the same

letter to the Premier and to the Ministry of Natural Resources. Let's give her something to read this week. If possible, have everyone in your household send a letter. Let's get her attention.

And lastly, if you would like to become involved in our Environment Committee, please speak with one of our board members.

### **Membership Committee:**

Early in 2024 we formed a committee to embark on increasing our Membership through greater awareness of MC<sup>2</sup>. Our Membership numbers are stable and heading in the right direction. That said, we need to be more effective in spreading the word about who we are and what we are about.

We are working to partner with local organizations with missions that complement our own. With the Forks of the Credit Preservation Group, we have shared events through our respective newsletters and with NDACT (North Dufferin Agriculture & Community Task Force) we promoted their fundraising initiative in our summer News Brief.

As small independent non-profits entities we know this is a way to make us all stronger. We had an "End of Summer" gathering in September and hosted more than 50 guests to lunch and great conversation on a beautiful sunny day. It was an opportunity to connect with both familiar and unfamiliar faces. We asked members to bring a friend as a way to introduce them to an organization that we all care about. Our new mantra is "bring a friend". Our voice is important and respected in our communities, but it only has value if it is heard. MC<sup>2</sup> is the voice for our communities but the Board cannot be the sole entity for membership recruitment. We need all members to take on that role.

What if every member household recruited one additional household? Our second new mantra is "ask a friend". As Members you are our best advocates, and we appreciate your help in encouraging others to join. We welcome our newest members, and we are grateful for those of you that have been with us for so long.

### **Strategic Planning: Chaired by Doug Thomson** **Strategic Planning Session Outcome Report**

#### **Introduction:**

The strategic planning session held on July 26 was designed to clarify the organization's future direction, set actionable goals, and outline a framework for achieving long-term success. The session included past and present Board members and volunteers and was facilitated to encourage collaboration, creative thinking, and data-driven decision-making.

#### **Objectives**

The primary objectives of the session were to:

- Review and refine, if necessary, the organization's mission and vision.
- Conduct a SWOT analysis to assess strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- Set long-term strategic goals and short-term actionable objectives.
- Outline strategies for resource allocation, performance measurement, and risk management.
- Develop a clear action plan with responsibilities and timelines.

## **Mission Review**

The session began with a review of the organization's current mission statement. Following a facilitated discussion, the team agreed to update the mission statement and to further consider the development of a vision statement that will better align with the evolving goals of the organization.

The current Board members are working through the new vision and mission statements for eventual communication with the broader membership.

The new statements will reflect a stronger focus on communication, government relations and cross-promotion with like-minded organizations.

## **SWOT Analysis (Strength; Weakness; Opportunities; Threats)**

A comprehensive SWOT analysis was conducted, identifying the following key insights:

### **Strengths:**

1. Strong brand recognition with both Mulmur and Mono local governments.
2. Loyal membership.
3. Respected history of accomplishments, providing useful public interactions with Council.
4. Solid financial strength.

### **Weaknesses:**

1. Lack of Board succession planning leading to Board burnout.
2. Over-reliance on a small number of volunteers and lack of success in recruiting new Board members.
3. Gaps in internal communication and knowledge sharing.

### **Opportunities:**

1. Emerging climate change awareness and how it is affecting all of us.
2. Advances in digital technology for more effective and robust communications.
3. Potential for strategic collaborations with other environmental organizations.

### **Threats:**

1. Inability to attract new Board members and volunteers.
2. Broad sections of the citizenry are no longer civically generous.

When we say, "Civically generous", we are referring to individuals or actions that demonstrate a strong sense of civic responsibility and willingness to contribute to the common good or welfare of the community. It implies going beyond basic civic duties to actively engage in and support the well-being of society through acts such as volunteering, charitable giving, or public service.

## **Strategic Goals and Priorities**

Building on the SWOT analysis, the group identified the following strategic goals for the next 1-2 years:

Goal 1: Recruit 4 new Board members immediately and another 4 in 12 to 18 months.

Goal 2: Deliver a robust communications plan to our members\*

- Objective: \* Invest in new social media profile and continue to showcase special events for our members. Have this profile in place for early 2025.

### **Conclusion and Next Steps**

The strategic planning session successfully clarified the organization's future direction and provided actionable steps for the coming years. The next steps involve:

- Communicating the strategic plan across the organization.
- Establishing regular check-ins (quarterly reviews) to monitor progress.
- Adjusting strategies and objectives based on performance and external factors.

Finally, the organization is well-positioned to achieve its goals and navigate the challenges ahead.

### **Presentation to Past Board Members**

Don MacFarlane presented Knut Holmsen a special token to recognise and acknowledge his commitment and dedication to the MC2. His leadership was integral in keeping the organization growing and contributed to the organizational integrity of MC2. Presentations were also made to Arnold de Graaff, and Rita Reitsma citing their importance to the organization.

He added that Félicité Morgan was instrumental in setting up and operate our website.

Delfino Bernardi thanked everyone for attending.

Motion for adjournment was made by Don MacFarlane. Seconded by Cheryl Russel.

*Carried.*

At 3:10 p.m.