

Ecology Action Centre

Annual General Meeting 2023

Tuesday September 19, 2023 – 6:00-8:30pm

Location: Virtual: Zoom & In person: Zatzman Sportsplex, Nantucket Room

Chair: Helga Guderley

Secretary: Virginia Olsen

Members in Attendance: 50 in person and 43 virtual

1. Welcome

Nancy Anningson, Director of Operations and Development welcomed members to the Ecology Action Centre's Annual General Meeting. Nancy outlined how in-person members and those joining virtually can participate in the meeting. In-person member voting will be done by a show of hands, virtual attendees will vote by a Zoom poll.

2. Land Acknowledgement & Moment of Silence

Helga, Co-Chair of the EAC Board provided a land acknowledgement. She brought our thoughts and attention to the environmental racism that is the history we share. On behalf of the board of the EAC, Helga thanked the Mi'kmaq for their millennia of stewardship of the shores and forests that we are all working to protect.

3. Acceptance of Agenda and Approval of Minutes of 2022 AGM

- a. Agenda: Moved by Grant MacDonald; seconded by Mike Sime
- b. Minutes: Moved by Simon GreenlandSmith ; seconded by Janet Ross Unanimously approved

4. Board Report

Helga, Co-Chair of the EAC Board, welcomed everyone to the 52nd EAC Annual General Meeting and provided some reflections on EAC's work, including the following:

- Acting upon our new Strategic Plan and following our Vision, Mission and Values helps EAC to be a stable and highly effective organization
- The past year has brought many meaningful accomplishments, and we must thank the hard-working EAC staff for them.
- We must thank the Board of Directors: Volunteer Directors are elected for three year terms, but positions can be held for two successive terms. The board is highly integrated into the orientation of the EAC, without being involved in the daily decisions made by staff. The Board has focused upon working with the Strategic Plan and adopting the Vision, Mission and Values Statements. The board serves a crucial role in maintaining the functioning of the EAC, mainly by its advisory, consultative, and evaluative roles. Much of the work of the board is done by committees, including the Nominations and Recruitment, Governance, Audit and Risk and the Executive Committee.

- The Nominations and Recruitment Committee has done a fantastic job in choosing three stellar candidates for board membership: Calla Farn, Andrea Argueta and Dan Rutabringua Gakire. If accepted at this AGM, the board will have 15 members, as our current members have all agreed to continue.
- The board has established a systematic performance review of the ED performance, with staff input every second year. This year we carried out a full review and the outcome was truly positive.
- Helga concluded the Board Report by thanking EAC Members. Member participation be it in workshops, public activities, or committees, is central to EAC's work. Funds raised by memberships are very important and accounts for 16% of the EAC's budget.

5. Executive Director's Report

Maggy Burns, EAC's Executive Director shared her thoughts and reflections with members. She began by reading a poem by Abena Beloved Green titled Slow and Steady

The following summary reflects Maggy's report to EAC members:

- This year EAC transformed to a four-day working week. This change fits with the organization's Vision, Mission, and Values. It is one of the organization's responses to the challenging times we live in.
- 2022-23 at EAC has been a remarkably full year and there are many meaningful accomplishments to celebrate. For more information see the Annual Report. [Annual Report](#)
- Here are a few highlights:
 - Our Kelp Kurious project established a seaweed farming and education centre in Mahone Bay to support a sustainable, diverse and resilient coastal economy.
 - We mobilized citizens to send 3,561 letters to provincial decision makers to save West Mabou Beach Provincial Park from a proposed golf development.
 - We conducted four new Youth Mobility Audits in schools across Nova Scotia.
 - We celebrated when, after a decade of work, Halifax council officially endorsed Part A of the JustFOOD Action Plan – the HRM's first food strategy.
 - We also celebrated the Halifax council voting to fully fund HalifACT, Halifax's climate action and sustainable development plan.
 - We launched home energy efficiency workshops in Millbrook First Nation, mobilized citizens to stand up against the proposed Goldboro liquid natural gas plant, released our Voices on the Climate Plan video series – and so much more.
- We also spent this past year implementing our new strategic direction. In it, EAC is choosing to think ahead multiple generations and build towards a joyful time of thriving and flourishing. Planning and working for the next 50 plus years of EAC and our work of supporting vibrant and resilient human and ecological communities.
- EAC couldn't do this work without our stalwart members, our inspiring allies and community partners, our dedicated volunteers and our brilliant employees. Thank you all so much.

- At EAC we believe that part of our work as an environmental movement is cultivating hope. Not empty optimism but the deep work of hope which, like transformation and decolonization, is about moving into the unknown.

Maggy ended her remarks with another poem, this one by Shalan Joudry titled Finding Bone Needles

Members were invited to ask questions

Q: Thoughts about how the 4 day work week is going?

A: Collaborative approach, ongoing evaluation.

Q: Is EAC able to measure the effect of 4 day work week on productivity

A: transition to 4 day work week involves a change in workplace culture. We are trying to work smarter, not harder. Cape Breton University is doing analysis.

The EAC 2022-2023 Annual Report is available on the website at

https://ecologyaction.ca/sites/default/files/2023-09/AnnualReport_2022-23.pdf

Motion to accept Directors' Reports and Executive Director's Report

Moved by: Jane Matheson

Seconded by: Liz Weld

Unanimously approved.

6. Financial Report

Roland Evborokhai, the Treasurer, delivered the financial report. For details, please see the 2022-2023 Annual Report.

https://ecologyaction.ca/sites/default/files/2023-09/AnnualReport_2022-23.pdf

Members were invited to ask questions.

Q: Bequests, are they spent the year received or spread over a number of years?

A: Depends on the conditions of the bequest. If there are no conditions then it is spent as needed.

Q: Stability Fund? Is it used when revenue is low?

A: Surplus is distributed between these 3 funds, as needed: Emergency Fund, Strategic Fund (Rainy Day Fund), Fern Lane Fund

Q: FernLane? Is there a five year plan for the building?

A: Currently assessing, prioritizing and working on a plan.

Q: Why are Professional Fees so high?

A: Using consultants.

Q: What are the biggest fundraising events

A: Blue Nose Marathon and Xmas tree sale. There was no xmas tree sale in 2022.

Motion to approve the 2022-2023 Financial Statements

Moved by Charles Bull

Seconded by Keith McMaster

Unanimously approved

Motion to appoint BDO Canada LLP as EAC's Auditors for 2022-2023

Moved by Mike Sime

Seconded by Maggy Burns

Unanimously approved

7. Appointment of Volunteer Board of Directors 2023-2024

Grant MacDonald read the names of all the Board Members and welcomed the 3 new members being recommended to the membership. Grant spoke about the Board's Recruitment and Nominations Committee's successful recruitment of potential new Board members. The 3 new members are Andrea Argueta, Dan Rutabingwa Gakire, and Calla Farn. All currently serving Board members will continue serving on the board in 2023-24.

Motion to accept list of 15 Directors to the Board

Moved by Simon Greenland Smith

Seconded by Joanna Bull

Unanimously approved

8. Recognition of milestone years of service of EAC staff

Maggie spoke about each person's valuable contribution to EAC and the work done by EAC.

5 years with EAC: Christine Callegari, Anika Riopel, Karen McKendry

10 years with EAC Joanna Bull

Heartfelt thanks

9. Celebration Of Life

Marla shared her thoughts about 3 EAC members who passed away. Alan Ruffman, Meinhard Doelle and Jen Powley will be missed and condolences were expressed for their families.

10. EAC Annual Awards

https://ecologyaction.ca/sites/default/files/2023-10/EAC_Annual_Awards_2023.pdf

Joanna Bull, Community Engagement Manager

- EAC Annual Awards has been a tradition at our AGM since the early 80s – to recognize the best and the worst of the year when it comes to the environment. Our staff and board members submit nominations for each award category, and then vote on who they think are the most deserving.

The following are this year's award recipients

TARRED DUCK AWARD:

THIRD PLACE: Nova Scotia Premier Tim Houston

FIRST PLACE: tied for 1st place are Premier Tim Houston and Kameron Coal

DANIELLE MOORE SUNSHINE AWARD

THIRD PLACE: Vanessa Burchill and Family

SECOND PLACE: ATU Local 508

FIRST PLACE: Save West Mabou Beach Provincial Park

BUBBY MOOERS AWARD

THIRD PLACE: Unama'ki/Cape Breton Climate Change Task Force

SECOND PLACE: Ducie Howe, Dorene Bernard, Charles Bull, Sadie Quinn and Hope Moon

FIRST PLACE: Wekatesk Augustine

TOOKER GOMBERG AWARD

Arlington Forest Protection Society

Keynote Speaker

Joanna Bull introduced the keynote speaker as “a passionate advocate for change with a twinkle in her eye”.

Dr. Lynn Jones – Creating a unique path: Down the Marsh Community Land Trust challenges the status quo

Dr. Jones spoke about her lived experience of environmental racism and her work. She spoke about ongoing struggle for reparations, affordable housing and how we can work together in right relationship with each other.

11. Members' Forum

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

12. Adjournment 8:30 pm

motioned for adjournment Ray Plourde

2nd by Jane Matheson