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LICA Watershed Committee (LWC)
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 12, 2025
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Boardroom and Microsoft Teams

Present:	Paul Kip Shawn Elgert Nathan Ballard John Ilchuk Abdi Siad-Omar Julie Hink Alyssa Krawchuk Richard Bourgeois Wayne Bamber Louise White Robert Machatis
Observers and Guests:	
Staff:	Kristina Morris, Executive Director Kayla Metcalfe, Environmental Coordinator Jodie Genest, Community Outreach Coordinator Lori Jodoin, Administrative Professional Eveline Hartog, Administrative Professional
Regrets:	Raymond Cowell Janessa Desjarlais

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

The Executive Director called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

1.1 LICA Vision, Mission, and Values & Territorial Acknowledgement

1.2 Meeting Expectations

The Chair reviewed expectations for virtual attendees, which include:

- Attending meetings in person, when possible,

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- Participating with cameras on for the duration of meetings,
- Providing notification 10-15 minutes in advance prior to leaving the meeting to ensure quorum is maintained,
- Silence cell phones.

1.3 Member Introductions

1.4 Approval of Agenda

1.4.1 November 12, 2025, LWC Agenda

#1 Moved by Louise White AND CARRIED that the November 12, 2025, LWC Agenda be approved as presented.

1.5 Approval of Minutes

1.5.1 June 3, 2025, LWC Meeting Minutes – DRAFT

The Environmental Coordinator informed the Committee that the Board amended Motion #5 from the June 3, 2025 LWC meeting to include the whole budget total in the motion.

#2 Moved by Alyssa Krawchuk AND CARRIED that the June 3, 2025, LWC Meeting Minutes be approved as presented.

2.0 COMMITTEE REVIEW & ELECTIONS

2.1 Committee Terms of Reference Annual Review

The Committee reviewed the Terms of Reference with the proposed changes. The Executive Director reminded the Committee that the LICA Watershed Committee was a technical committee and only meets on an as-needed basis.

#3 Moved by Paul Kip AND CARRIED that the LICA Watershed Committee Terms of Reference be accepted as amended.

2.2 Committee Chair Appointment

The Executive Director opened the floor for nominations for the position of Committee Chair for a one (1) year term.

Paul Kip was nominated by Richard Bourgeois and seconded by John Ilchuk.

After three calls by the Executive Director, with no further nominations put forward, nominations were ceased.

The Executive Director declared Paul Kip elected by acclamation as Committee Chair for a one (1) year term.

Initials

3.0 POLICY REVIEW

3.1 LICA Policies Review

3.1.1 Policy 1.3 *Responsibilities of the Board of Directors*

Policy 1.3 *Responsibilities of the Board of Directors and Code of Ethics* was reviewed by the Executive Director with the Committee.

3.1.2 Policy 1.5 *Decision-Making Process*

Policy 1.5 *Decision-Making Process* was reviewed by the Committee. They were informed by the Executive Director that LICA operates on a Consensus-based decision-making model as outlined within the policy.

3.1.3 Policy 1.8 *Committees*

Policy 1.8 *Committees* was reviewed by the Committee. The Executive Director noted that Committees must have at least two Board members appointed, and that one Board member must be present at all meetings as the Board liaison. Committee Chairs will be chosen at the first Committee meeting after LICA's Organizational Meeting.

3.1.4 Policy 1.11 *Volunteer Hours*

Policy 1.11 *Volunteer Hours* was reviewed by the Committee. They were reminded of the expectation to track and report their volunteer hours for the month on the LICA sign-in sheet at the meeting and/or via email (lica2@lica.ca). These hours are reported within LICA's interim grant reports to the Government of Alberta, and it is crucial to have accurate numbers of in-kind support. The Executive Director reminded them that reviewing agenda material prior to meetings, travel time to the office and other tasks members are asked to support, such as disseminating LICA materials, citizen science, etc., should be included in their volunteer hours.

3.1.5 Policy 1.12 *Conflict of Interest*

Policy 1.12 *Conflict of Interest* was reviewed by the Committee. The Executive Director stressed the importance that, in cases of conflict of interest, the Committee member must openly state that they have a direct or perceived conflict of interest and must recuse themselves from the discussion and decision. This is noted in the minutes for the public record.

A Committee member wondered if Industry representatives would be considered as having a conflict of interest when being on a LICA committee and also being one of LICA's funding partners. The Executive Director replied no, as these members do not have a personal or financial gain in the decisions.

3.1.6 Policy 1.16 *Review of Absences of Directors and Committee Members*

Policy 1.16 *Review of Absences of Director and Committee Members* was reviewed by the Committee. They were reminded that attendance is crucial to ensure that quorum is obtained in order to make decisions. Currently, quorum for the LICA Watershed Committee is seven (7) members attending.

The Executive Director also reviewed, under *Implementation*, the results of consecutive absences for Elected and Appointed Board seats.

3.1.7 Policy 2.7 *LICA Expenses and Remuneration*

Policy 2.7 *LICA Expenses and Remuneration* was reviewed. The Committee was informed that if they had any questions as to whether they were eligible for stipends, to contact the Executive Director.

3.2 Supporting Documentation

3.2.1 Committee Member Code of Ethics & Confidentiality Form

Each member in attendance was requested to sign the *Code of Ethics* for retention by LICA. Those members attending virtually will have the Code of Ethics form forwarded to them via Docusign for signature.

3.2.2 Board and Committee Member Sign-on Form

The Committee was requested to complete the Committee Sign-on form for retention by the Financial Coordinator, to ensure that their contact information has not changed over the past year. It was clarified by the Executive Director that the bottom portion of the form is to be completed only for members who claim stipends.

3.2.3 Approved Expense Rate Reference Sheet

The Executive Director reviewed the expense rate reference sheet with the Committee, highlighting the approved rates for meals, mileage and stipends.

3.2.4 Board and Committee Stipend Form

The Executive Director reviewed the Board and Committee Stipend form, which is used to record mileage and stipends. One form is completed per month for each member by the Executive Director, which requires signatures from the Committee Chair and individual members. For those members attending virtually, the Executive Director will forward stipend forms via Docusign.

3.2.5 Direct Deposit Authorization Form

The Committee members were given the option to complete the Direct Deposit form, noting that a VOID cheque will be required to accompany the form.

4.0 ONGOING BUSINESS

4.1 Environmental Coordinator Update

The Environmental Coordinator presented her report to the Committee, noting:

- The signs for the LARA project are currently in production. The final versions have been attached to her report for the Committee's information.
- The 25th Anniversary Scholarship opportunity was well-received with a total of 9 submissions. Benjamin Cale was the successful candidate and was recognized at LICA's Annual General Meeting.
- The Beaver River Watershed video project is now completed, noting that the video can be viewed on LICA's YouTube channel. As of today, the video has been viewed 650 times.
- Two weeks during the summer were dedicated to collecting eDNA samples for the AIS early detection monitoring program. A future meeting with the University of Alberta to discuss the results of the sampling analysis has been scheduled for November 19.
- A successful Beavers in our Landscape workshop led by Cows & Fish was hosted on October 2, 2025. 10 attendees participated, with responses regarding the material being very positive.

4.2 State of the Watershed Progress Update

4.2.1 Proposed Website Outline & Template

The Environmental Coordinator presented the Beaver River State of the Watershed (SOW) proposed website outline and template for decision. The website leads with a 'one-page' approach which would include a navigation bar to the following sections: *Story of the Watershed* page (addressing the major themes from the SOW report), *Approach* page (explaining the overall objectives of the SOW report and their methodologies), *The Report* page (explaining how the objectives of the SOW report fit into water management in the province), and a *Get Involved* page (allowing LICA to promote SOW and IWMP content and participation by means of Calls to Action).

The website design will include various visualizations such as photos, maps, and dynamic' cards, which would be interactive with the viewer. The Environmental Coordinator indicated that Committee feedback was requested on the appearance and feel of the proposed website, as well as the *Get Involved* page. The Committee felt that the proposed template was a very good start and suggested that some edits to the template should be made, such as correcting the title on page 4 to read *A New Reality* and a mention of greenhouse gases in this section. As well,

under the *Get Involved* page, the Committee suggested that the following sections be included:

- Awareness of both invasive species and species at risk, linking to both of those pages on the LICA website, as well as information on the LakeWatch program and linking it to that section on LICA's website.
- A citizen science section and linking it to that section on the LICA website.
- Campaign section for Riparian Health and Keep our Lake Blue, and link to those sections on the LICA website.
- A link to LICA's events calendar to stay up to date on all LICA events.

These suggestions will be forwarded to Fiera Biological Consulting for inclusion in the SOW website.

#4 Moved by Paul Kip AND CARRIED that the Committee approve the recommended changes for the proposed website outline and template.

4.3 2025/2026 IWMP Budget Update

The Environmental Coordinator reviewed the remaining budget for the 2025/2026 fiscal year. Budgeted details have changed due to lower costs and in-kind contributions. The Environmental Coordinator indicated that an invasive species workshop would be held in January 2026, up to a cost of $3,000.00, as previously decided. As a few of the presenters have offered to do the workshop with in-kind support, it is anticipated that not all of this budget will be spent. Due to this, she suggested that the advertisement of the workshop be increased, gifts for the speakers be purchased, as well as promotional items for the attendees, such as lanyards. This will support spending the full $3,000 previously allocated to this specific workshop. The committee had no concerns with this approach.

Other items that the Environmental Coordinator is considering regarding using the remaining $2,266.22 in the overall IWMP Implementation budget include inquiring about the possibility of Fiera Biological Consulting recording the SOW results presentation previously offered at LICA's Annual General Meeting (AGM). Unfortunately, due to technical issues during the AGM, the audio did not record, and it would be valuable for this presentation to be posted on LICA's YouTube channel. The committee agreed that the presentation summarized the SOW very well and encouraged her to reach out to Shari to see if this is a possibility to pursue. They also discussed printing more of the LARA trout pond signs for use in other areas of the region. LARA's Agriculture Director will let her know by the end of the week if their Board approves installing these signs in other areas.

#5 Moved by Louise White, seconded by Richard Bourgeois, AND CARRIED that the Environmental Coordinator purchase the suggested items to support the Invasive species workshop up to $3,000, and to use the remaining IWMP budget of $2,266.22 to have Fiera Biological Consulting record the State of the Beaver River Watershed presentation. Any remaining funds may also be allocated towards the possible production of additional educational signs, with approval from LARA's Board of Directors.

4.4 Invasive Species Workshop Update

The Environmental Coordinator reminded the Committee that an Invasive Species workshop was the second workshop topic chosen by the Committee at an earlier meeting this year, and that planning is underway to host this in January 2026. The Coordinator is currently planning a half-day workshop with four different speakers, each presenting for an hour but dealing with different elements of aquatic invasive species.

The Committee was in favour of proceeding with the workshop layout suggested as long as each presenter was not speaking on the same topic regarding invasive species. The Environmental Coordinator confirmed that they would be speaking on different topics.

A Committee member suggested that LICA consider renting the theatre at the Bonnyville Centennial Centre for this event; approximate cost for the rental would be $275.00. The Executive Director also suggested that LICA may want to look into an app used as an effective Q&A session after the presentation, where questions are posed to the presenters and boosted by participants using a QR Code.

4.5 2026/2027 Initial Project Planning

The Environmental Coordinator presented the approved budget of $35,000 for the 2026/2027 fiscal year. The Coordinator presented a table listing projects previously conducted by LICA, along with suggestions for projects for the upcoming year. The Coordinator advised the Committee that she will be on temporary leave for the 2026/2027 fiscal year, so an interim coordinator will be actioning the chosen project.

The Committee discussed several projects, including:

- Supporting local water groups such as Skeleton Lake Stewardship Association, Muriel Lake Basin Management Society or the Moose Lake Watershed Society on projects.
- There should be a focus on the protection of the wetlands in the interest of our current drought conditions. A Committee member felt that, currently, farmers want to build in the wetlands due to their dugouts being dry. It was suggested that perhaps we could look at creating more wetlands to also enhance biodiversity. A Committee member pointed out that one would need to look at ways that current dugouts could be enhanced to encourage wetlands. It was asked if this type of project would align with GoA policies, what opportunities exist for their creation, in addition to the cost factor of creating new wetlands. He concluded that the definition of a wetland by GoA has many qualifying standards. Another Committee member agreed with this statement, indicating that there were many factors to consider regarding wetland creation, such as soil, existing waterbodies, depth and usage.
- It was suggested that perhaps LICA could look at another partnership with LARA regarding dugout creation or enhancement.

It was agreed that LICA's primary focus should be on drought and wetland protection. After seeking some direction on potential collaborations, a Committee member suggested that working with agencies such as Ducks Unlimited or local

municipalities would be good options just as long as the municipality had the appropriate designation. They will provide suggested contacts to the Environmental Coordinator.

The Environmental Coordinator requested a secondary project option, should there be roadblocks to the wetland/drought project. The Committee suggested:

- Continuing with invasive species awareness and prevention.
- How agricultural producers can reduce their carbon emissions

It was determined by the Committee that LICA's work on invasive species should be considered as the project to pursue.

The Environment Coordinator said that she would work on the two suggested options and will bring an update to the Committee in the new year.

4.6 2026 Citizen Science Project Planning

The Community Outreach Coordinator presented a project idea of developing a citizen science program specific to monitoring cormorants. This idea was included as a recommendation in the IWMP. She mentioned that people can now obtain a license to hunt these birds in a specific season. A Committee member agreed, stating that now the birds were a problem in some areas, and LICA could be a vehicle for getting information to the public on this. The Community Outreach Coordinator agreed, indicating that LICA could initiate an awareness campaign focusing on the following:

- Where cormorants are being sighted.
- Is the population of cormorants growing?
- Where are they coming from, where are they feeding, and what are they eating?
- Provide links to the public with further information.
- Produce a brochure that would include the information listed above.

The Community Outreach Coordinator indicated that she would be consulting other organizations, such as Fish & Wildlife, biologists, and municipalities, regarding the cormorant population in the LICA region. A Committee member encouraged the project and stressed the importance of LICA mission to gather and share credible data/information and not endorsing management strategies and control. LICA must remain unbiased, and this topic is highly controversial. He suggested that the Environmental Coordinator should reach out to Andrea McGregor in Lac La Biche who has done extensive research on this topic.

#6 Moved by John Ilchuk AND CARRIED that the Community Outreach Coordinator does preliminary research and project development on the cormorant citizen science project proposal to be presented to the LICA Watershed Committee in the new year.

5.0 ACTION LIST

5.1 Follow-up on Action List

5.1.1 June 3, 2025 Action Items

The Committee Chair reviewed the Action List from the June 3, 2025 meeting.

6.0 UPCOMING MEETING DATES/EVENTS

6.1 Board Meeting and Christmas Luncheon -December 10, 2025

6.2 Next Meeting – TBD

The next meeting is expected to be late January or early February. A Rallly poll will be sent in the new year regarding dates for the next Watershed Committee meeting.

7.0 ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

#7 Moved by Richard Bourgeois AND CARRIED that the meeting be adjourned.

Approved on: _____
Date

_____
Signature

_____
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