

Responses to CEWF Questions from Candidates in Minden Hills

Municipality	Ward/Office	Candidate	Acclaimed?	Response?
Minden Hills	Reeve	Brent Devolin		
	Reeve	Brigitte Gall		October 22, 2014
	Reeve	Barb Reid		August 18, 2014
	Deputy Reeve	Rick Ashall		September 19, 2014
	Deputy Reeve	John Beattie		
	Deputy Reeve	Cheryl Murdoch		not able to contact
	At Large	Daryl Moore		
	At Large	Ron Nesbitt		
	1	Jeanne Anthon		August 18, 2014
	1	Lisa Schell		
	2	Ken Redpath		
	2	Pam Sayne		September 18, 2014
	3	Jean Neville		
	3	Richard Bradley		response promised

Note: Responses below are provided in the sequence received by CEWF

**Responses from Barb Reid
Candidate for Reeve, Minden Hills**

Questions from the Coalition

1. Do you agree that municipalities have a role to play in working to improve water management in the Haliburton sector of the Trent River watershed? If so what is your personal commitment in this regard?

Municipalities are directly affected by the dam operations decisions made by the Trent-Severn Waterway. No longer can we sit back and assume the TSW is taking the appropriate action to prevent or manage flooding. We have worked very hard over the past year to maintain closer relationships with TSW management so that local conditions are reported in a timely manner and dam operation decisions are made with sufficient lead time to avoid flooding.

2. Do you agree that, rather than seeking the establishment of Conservation Authorities in those areas currently lacking a CA, there is merit in municipalities contracting the existing CAs to provide specific expertise and services such as low water response planning or floodplain mapping for reservoir lakes deemed to have significant flood risk?

I do not know if spending additional tax dollars on a proxy for a Conservation Authority will bring any additional information to the table that isn't already available. If there is a case to be made for this, I'd be very interested in learning more.

3. Do you support the key recommendation of the AECOM Water Management Study that the TSW adopt a constraint-based water management model capable of considering lake specific navigation and environmental constraints such as those already identified by Coalition member lake associations? If so, what would you do about it?

I would like learn what this means and understand what a municipal role might look like.

4. Will you urge Parks Canada to release dam safety reviews as they are completed and urge the federal government ensure public safety by immediately investing in dam repairs and maintenance so as to remove the deferred maintenance deficit and bring the dam infrastructure up to at least a 'good' or 'fair' state of repair?

Because dam conditions have a direct relationship to the protection of municipal and private property, Parks Canada should be compelled to release safety information along with a plan to address infrastructure that is below safe levels of repair.

5. Actions have been taken by Haliburton County and some of its municipalities to improve communications during flood events. What further actions are needed – for example to raise awareness of municipal Flood Emergency Preparedness Plans and to communicate other water management issues such as during times of low water?

I would be interested in working with other municipalities and stakeholders to identify additional actions that can be taken to ensure all members of the community know where to go to find information.

6. Do you agree that municipal government should work with local lake associations to facilitate improvements to water management operations and structures on reservoir and flow-through lakes as exemplified by the following list:

- Urging action to upgrade those reservoir lake dams with a Parks Canada (poor) asset condition rating of "C" or "D" viz. Canning, Horseshoe, Elliot Falls (Moore Lake), Jack's, Big Bob, Contau, Drag, Miskwabi, Eagle, Oblong, Mississagua, Moore Falls #1 (Gull Lake), Little Bob, Redstone West?
- Installing a weir on Maple Lake (Algonquin Highlands) to reduce water level fluctuations?
- Installing an automated water level gauge on Mountain Lake (Minden Hills) rather than relying on data from Horseshoe Lake?
- Improving infrastructure at the Kennisis Lake dam (Dysart et al) as part of the announced refurbishment or rebuilding of the dam, for example improving boater safety with redesigned docking and ramp facilities?
- Obtaining flood damage curves for Boshkung Lake (Algonquin Highlands), Horseshoe, Mountain, and Twelve Mile lakes (Minden Hills)?
- Reducing use of ATV's for access to the Jack's Lake dam (North Kawartha, Havelock-Belmont-Methuen) due to the resulting trail damage?

Yes to all except the last item of which I have no knowledge.

Responses from Jeanne Anthon Candidate for Ward 1, Minden Hills

Questions from the Coalition

1. Do you agree that municipalities have a role to play in working to improve water management in the Haliburton sector of the Trent River watershed? If so what is your personal commitment in this regard?

JA: Yes, lower-tier municipalities especially are too often subject to the dictates of larger centers along the Trent River watershed and accordingly must be provided a position at discussion tables to ensure their concerns and needs are considered. I have read and support the CEWF mission and objectives plus the 2008 Panel Report on the Future of the Trent-Severn Waterway. I commit to keep these matters before local council.

2. Do you agree that, rather than seeking the establishment of Conservation Authorities in those areas currently lacking a CA, there is merit in municipalities contracting the existing CAs to provide specific expertise and services such as low water response planning or flood plain mapping for reservoir lakes deemed to have significant flood risk?

JA: Yes, I worked with Ontario Conservation Authorities several years ago in developing a watershed management tool and envied areas that utilized Authorities. I would suggest that, if an authority is contracted to manage our Haliburton systems, representation from this area sit on the Board of Directors. There will be a cost to municipalities but this would hopefully be offset by the more efficient operations of our watershed-based ecosystems. Two recent floods cost several million dollars and climate changes threaten to repeat these disasters. An agreement for Conservation Authority management should have excellent return on investment.

3. Do you support the key recommendation of the AECOM Water Management Study that the TSW adopt a constraint-based water management model capable of considering lakespecific navigation and environmental constraints such as those already identified by Coalition member lake associations? If so, what would you do about it?

JA: I can support the key recommendations of the Study. Historic use of the TSW system has changed dramatically but management plans have not. In particular, I would reinforce concerns with water quality and the need for waterflows to be maintained during spawning season. I served on the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations for fourteen years, four years as President, and would be most comfortable in facilitating meetings between the TSW and Lake Associations in Minden Hills.

4. Will you urge Parks Canada to release dam safety reviews as they are completed and urge the federal government ensure public safety by immediately investing in dam repairs and maintenance so as to remove the deferred maintenance deficit and bring the dam infrastructure up to at least a 'good' or 'fair' state of repair?

JA: Yes, the public has the right to know and comment on dam safety reviews. Public concerns around dam repairs and maintenance are at an all-time high following the Minden Flood of 2013. I am on the Minden Hills Disaster Relief Committee and can relate real examples of extreme stress and fear, especially with our elderly residents, regarding the stability of the dams above the village and the potential for a catastrophic event. Public safety is paramount, extreme weather events are occurring more frequently, and I will advocate for the re-assessment of municipal infrastructures for renewal in these contexts.

5. Actions have been taken by Haliburton County and some of its municipalities to improve communications during flood events. What further actions are needed – for example to raise awareness of municipal Flood Emergency Preparedness Plans and to communicate other water management issues such as during times of low water?

JA: As part of their Emergency Plan renewal during the Minden Hills flood of 2013, Minden Hills activated an excellent, user-friendly website with the most up-to-date information regarding water levels, anticipated precipitation, emergency plans for homes, businesses and individuals. Hard copies of this information should be at hand at all times for those without ready access to internet. I would advocate for MNR to release their updates in a more timely manner rather than the several hours delay during the Minden Flood. A Disaster Information Centre plus a Communications Officer and Disaster Relief Co-ordinator should be identified and ready for action at any time. An annual 'dry run' should be conducted. Municipalities, in conjunction with the Ontario Government, should be prepared to issue emergency funds within hours of a disaster not two months later as happened in 2013. A reserve specific to this need should be established.

6. Do you agree that municipal government should work with local lake associations to facilitate improvements to water management operations and structures on reservoir and flow-through lakes as exemplified by the following list:

- Urging action to upgrade those reservoir lake dams with a Parks Canada (poor) asset condition rating of "C" or "D" viz. Canning, Horseshoe, Elliot Falls (Moore Lake), Jack's, Big Bob, Contau, Drag, Miskwabi, Eagle, Oblong, Mississagua, Moore Falls #1 (Gull Lake), Little Bob, Redstone West?
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- Reducing use of ATV's for access to the Jack's Lake dam (North Kawartha, Havelock-Belmont-Methuen) due to the resulting trail damage?

JA: Municipal Government should establish a firm relationship with their lake associations for a number of good reasons: a sensitivity to current issues and potential resolution with both parties, recognition of the value of volunteer work by lake associations and the ensuing benefits to all residents, better awareness of municipal plans for changes affecting waterfront properties, and building trust and confidence, to name a few. Your list demonstrates some of the many issues that would benefit from such interaction. I would advocate for regular timely progress reporting to citizens and ratepayers via web sites and media on the TSW and Minden Hills Initiatives. CEWF's conclusions and recommendation are powerful in their scope and analysis and you are to be commended for your extraordinary contribution to this challenging issue.

**Responses from Pam Sayne
Candidate for Ward 2**

Thanks you for this opportunity to not only respond to your questions but also become better informed through CEWF.

Your homework on the Trent River Watershed is of much value to me personally but even more critical for those of us that will be elected to our Municipal Council.

Working in the areas of the environment and in Building science I know the power and value of water is often underestimated. Our development decisions have not taken into account the critical management systems of our waterways. Climate change will only bring this concern further to light and we need to have our management and structures in place now - not when it is to late.... again.

Although getting my answers on the website may be good for getting elected, I think I would like to focus on getting a better understanding of your findings of the history and what hasn't worked.

[I look forward to having] a discussion in the nearest future on the questions you raised.

Responses from Rick Ashall
Candidate for Deputy Reeve, Minden Hills

1. Do you agree that municipalities have a role to play in working to improve water management in the Haliburton sector of the Trent River watershed? If so what is your personal commitment in this regard?

Q1 response:

As evident from the Minden flood in 2013, the management of the Trent Severn Waterway directly affects municipalities and it is crucial that investments are made in the Haliburton sector.

I am supportive of the work of the Coalition and believe municipalities need to work to improve the communication and the relationship with the TSW on an ongoing basis. The concerns relating to the reservoir and flow through lakes needs to be given more equitable treatment by the TSW.

As municipalities we need to continue to pro-actively present our case to Parks Canada, the Provincial and the Federal government.

Personally, I am committed to understanding the TSW situation better than I do and representing our case.

2. Do you agree that, rather than seeking the establishment of Conservation Authorities in those areas currently lacking a CA, there is merit in municipalities contracting the existing CAs to provide specific expertise and services such as low water response planning or flood plain mapping for reservoir lakes deemed to have significant flood risk?

Q2 response:

I believe that the Conservation Authorities are an accountability of the Provincial government. I personally believe that the Provincial government should be more actively engaged in the Trent Severn Watershed than they appear to be. I was under the understanding that municipalities had done flood plain mapping. I would like to understand the accountability of the CA's on behalf of the province to the TSW before considering contracting of services by the municipality.

3. Do you support the key recommendation of the AECOM Water Management Study that the TSW adopt a constraint-based water management model capable of considering lake specific navigation and environmental constraints such as those already identified by Coalition member lake associations? If so, what would you do about it?

Q3 response:

I do not have sufficient knowledge of a Constraint Based Water Management model to make a commitment at this time. If elected, I would invest the time to understand the merits and the costs associated with such a model and how to move forward with positioning it.

4. Will you urge Parks Canada to release dam safety reviews as they are completed and urge the federal government ensure public safety by immediately investing in dam repairs and maintenance so as to remove the deferred maintenance deficit and bring the dam infrastructure up to at least a 'good' or 'fair' state of repair?

Q4 response

Absolutely. It is unacceptable that personal and property safety can be put at risk.

5. Actions have been taken by Haliburton County and some of its municipalities to improve communications during flood events. What further actions are needed – for example to raise awareness of municipal Flood Emergency Preparedness Plans and to communicate other water management issues such as during times of low water?

Q5 response:

I am supportive of improved communication. I believe that the townships need to work together on this to ensure consistency, relevance and timing of the communication. The use of alternative forms of communication including social media needs to be considered. I personally find that the simple communication approach taken with regard to Fire Conditions is effective. Most people understand the message, probably not all the details, but they know the risk is low, high or in between.

6. Do you agree that municipal government should work with local lake associations to facilitate improvements to water management operations and structures on reservoir and flow-through lakes as exemplified by the following list:

Q6 response:

I agree that municipalities need to work more closely with lake associations. I do not have sufficient knowledge on the specifics in this list. I do believe that there needs to be a prioritization of the list so that we are focused on the high-risk areas first. I am sure all entities on the list are valid concerns but I think a shotgun approach to addressing all of the needs does not achieve the expected results over a period of time.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I appreciate the work of the Coalition on this important topic and if elected I am committed to working with the Coalition to build my understanding and to determine how best to represent the concerns relating to one of our most important natural assets, our water. I believe that in a number of instances the townships need to work together through Haliburton County to be more effective.

**Responses from Brigitte Gall
Candidate for Reeve**

1. Do you agree that municipalities have a role to play in working to improve water management in the Haliburton sector of the Trent River watershed? If so what is your personal commitment in this regard?

Q1 response:

As a former cottager I witnessed the effects that blasting, poor shoreline and septic management had on the water quality and aquatic life on the lake - where I had made a significant investment. As a Municipality and Council we should strive to support the growth, health, and security of our most valuable assets - that being our nature-based assets. I would encourage council to consider a standing agenda item wherein we invite our Lake Association presidents and Stakeholder Groups to come to Council to update us on the efforts and successes of each of our satellite communities so that we can understand where the gaps, concerns, and areas where increased two-way communication are needed.

2. Do you agree that, rather than seeking the establishment of Conservation Authorities in those areas currently lacking a CA, there is merit in municipalities contracting the existing CAs to provide specific expertise and services such as low water response planning or flood plain mapping for reservoir lakes deemed to have significant flood risk?

Q2 response:

Absolutely. I would encourage that our council consider establishing a committee to developing a Gull River Management Plan which not only looks at the Gull River in terms of streamlined communication needed between our various levels of Government, reaching out to our existing groups with expertise and knowledge, but also addresses the other areas which the Gull River within the Village of Minden plays a foundational role in terms of Recreation, Tourism, Economic Development, Flood Management, as well as a Cultural and Historical asset.

3. Do you support the key recommendation of the AECOM Water Management Study that the TSW adopt a constraint-based water management model capable of considering lake specific navigation and environmental constraints such as those already identified by Coalition member lake associations? If so, what would you do about it?

Q3 response:

On this, I must confess I am ignorant. To address that, I would reach out to the CEWF to bring to our council their knowledge as a committed stakeholder group to assist council to understand the various complexities of any constraint based water management model.

4. Will you urge Parks Canada to release dam safety reviews as they are completed and urge the federal government ensure public safety by immediately investing in dam repairs and maintenance so as to remove the deferred maintenance deficit and bring the dam infrastructure up to at least a 'good' or 'fair' state of repair?

Q4 response

Yes. On this, I am unclear what the appropriate mechanism is in order to facilitate the release of what should be public safety information is. Cities such as the GTA are compelled to release infrastructure information (bridges, by-passes, etc.), as are municipalities. It seems very odd to me that the Federal Government should and would not release that critical information, and I would support that fervently.

5. Actions have been taken by Haliburton County and some of its municipalities to improve communications during flood events. What further actions are needed – for example to raise awareness of municipal Flood Emergency Preparedness Plans and to communicate other water management issues such as during times of low water?

Q5 response:

This is a very important question, thank you for asking this. Minden Hills has an EMP (Emergency Management Plan). This is the governing document, which outlines appropriate roles and channels of communication and action between our Emergency providers, and the Municipality. What we do not have is a Community Emergency Management Plan, wherein members of our community have access to critical information and flood mitigation recommendations. Given the complexity of our community and the various ways in which we connect (seasonal, permanent, senior, family, high risk groups such as people with disabilities or those with limited or no transportation, business, infrastructure etc.) I believe that we need to look to other communities best practices and establish a Community Emergency Management Plan so that all of our members have the information, phone numbers, and support they need should another flood event occur.

6. Do you agree that municipal government should work with local lake associations to facilitate improvements to water management operations and structures on reservoir and flow-through lakes as exemplified by the following list:

Q6 response:

One of the planks of my platform is that I would like to see a standing item on our municipal agenda where our various stakeholder groups (lake associations, businesses, environmental, eco-tourism, etc.) present to council at our Committee of the Whole. If the council you elect is informed about the successes of our lake associations as satellite communities (fundraisers for the food bank, heat bank, hospital board etc.), your council should know about those successes. If there are lake or water quality issues that your council is not aware of, they cannot move proactive decisions forward. Equally, information, rational, and decisions made at the council table should be shared with our stakeholder groups so that they are fully informed. The health and sustainability of our community is a shared responsibility. Information held in silos is not productive.