

# **Algonquin Highlands**

## **Candidate Responses to Questions from CEWF**

*Updated September 24th, 2018*

Responses herewith from Carol Moffatt, David Lawson, Liz Danielson, Brian Lynch

### **Carol Moffatt, Mayor, Acclaimed**

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, are you personally committed to continued municipal support for the Upper Trent Water Management Partnership?
2. What would you do to strengthen the flood control and mitigation provisions of your municipality's Official Plan? For example, would you support initiatives to provide better flood plain mapping and flood mitigation planning as the basis for decision-making?
3. Do you agree that municipal governments should work with local lake associations, the Trent Severn Waterway (TSW) and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) to further improve water management operations on reservoir and flow-through lakes and the connecting rivers? For example, are you in favour of: a. urging water conservation to support recreational use of the reservoir lakes; and b. the acquisition of lake-specific data with regard to the location and depth of trout spawning beds to improve and protect fish habitat?

Having grown up as a cottager on an Algonquin Highlands flow-through lake, I fully understand the

effects and frustrations of fluctuating water levels. I Tweet regularly about #reservoirlakesand just a few weeks ago Tweeted photos of my dad's "midsummer mudflats".

I've been involved in the "water levels file" for much of my 12 years as an elected official and fully understand that management of the water isn't nearly as easy as many believe it to be; that it's both complex and complicated. We don't have to like it but we have to understand it in order to make change.

I was the County Warden when the 2013 floods occurred, and I managed daily phone calls with TSW in order to advise the public, via social media and radio, of that ever-changing situation. As a photographer I sought out a pilot who could fly me over the flood zones for aerial photographs which were then shared with other municipalities and the public in order to fully demonstrate the severity of the situation. In the absence of any communications strategy by others, my social media reach on the issue was upwards of 70,000 and helped keep the public informed and focused in a frightening time. Those photos have been much-used in a variety of lobbying work, and I regularly solicit anecdotal

and photographic feedback from the public, also for use in lobbying.

Following the 2013 flood, I called a meeting with MNRF and TSW to discuss the communications challenges experienced at that time, discussions which contributed significantly to the much-improved communications that now exists between and among a wide range of stakeholders affected by water levels. As well, an entirely new flood-related section was added to the County website; and last year we introduced a Road Closures page to the County site where public works staff can quickly notify the public of any road problems - including flooding. We haven't fixed the fluctuating levels, but at least we're better prepared than ever to help keep people informed and safe.

Since then, I've actively participated in spring freshet conference calls, along with local, regional and other stakeholders, so that we can better prepare for spring levels and inform the public about what's happening.

For a long time, municipalities weren't permitted to participate in CEWF and I lobbied against that, citing political access to upper levels of government necessary for the good work of CEWF. As such, I am thrilled with

the creation of the Upper Trent Watershed Management Partnership that pairs the brains of CEWF with the political access of local politicians. I'm proud to be Co-Chair of UTWMP and help provide a regular forum for the six municipalities to discuss issues and strategies.

I was pleased to be one of two Mayors who presented the mandate, concerns and mitigation plans of UTWMP directly to the ministers of Natural Resources and Environment at the 2017 annual conference of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO). I was also proud to be part of a multi-partner meeting, including TSW, to discuss collaboration toward common goals on the matter. Along with my colleagues, I was extremely satisfied with the County's subsequently successful application to the National Disaster Mitigation Program to get digital terrain mapping for the purposes of risk assessment, flood mapping and mitigation planning and protection. Publicly-provided flooding photos from my files were used to illustrate the severity and effect in the County - which is why I keep everything! (side note: Thanks has to go to County Planner Charlsey White for the professionalism and dedication she demonstrated in keeping this file moving and successful).

So far, we've substantially moved the needle in terms of communication, collaboration and planning ... but we've only just begun.

To answer the questions asked:

Do municipalities have a role to play? Absolutely.

What would I do to strengthen the OP? We await the LiDAR mapping as noted above; and we should be discussing increased waterfront setbacks not only to keep safe both public and private infrastructure but also to reduce municipal liability and keep people safe when the water comes because our new normal has proven to be fickle and demanding.

Should municipalities work with MNRF and TSW on water management operations? Yes; when the control of the water was transferred to the federal government in the early 1900s there wasn't much happening in the watershed and it's drastically different now. It seems unreasonable that the economy and lifestyle of one region (the canal) trumps that of the reservoir system (#MyHaliburtonHighlands). I appreciate it's an old system built in a different time however, discussion needs to continue in this regard.

Julia Shortreed, Candidate for Ward 1

## **David Lawson, Candidate for Ward 1**

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, are you personally committed to continued municipal support for the Upper Trent Water Management Partnership?

I do agree that municipalities have to be involved in the Haliburton Sector of the Trent River watershed. For there to be any improvement there has to be commitment from everybody, so yes, I support the Upper Trent Water Management Partnership.

2. What would you do to strengthen the flood control and mitigation provisions of your municipality's Official Plan? For example, would you support initiatives to provide better flood plain mapping and flood mitigation planning as the basis for decision-making?

Yes, I would support better flood plain mapping and flood mitigation planning, the more information you have and the more accurate and up to date that information is, the better the decision that can be made.

3. Do you agree that municipal governments should work with local lake associations, the Trent Severn Waterway (TSW) and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) to further improve water

management operations on reservoir and flow-through lakes and the connecting rivers? For example, are you in favour of: a. urging water conservation to support recreational use of the reservoir lakes; and b. the acquisition of lake-specific data with regard to the location and depth of trout spawning beds to improve and protect fish habitat?

I believe that municipal governments all parties involved TSW MNRF and local lake associations should work together for the conservation of water, water is probably the most important resource we have. Anything that can be done to protect the fish habitat and all environmental areas is worth doing.

### **Liz Danielson, Councillor for Ward 2 – Acclaimed**

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, are you personally committed to continued municipal support for the Upper Trent Water Management Partnership?

Municipalities absolutely have a support role to play in guiding the improvement of equitable water management systems. Working with both the CEWF and UTWMP communications must continue with both TSW and MNRF. Despite considerable improvement over the last few years, I am personally committed to offering whatever support I can in helping to strengthen these

lines of communication. Even prior to being elected in Algonquin Highlands, I have urged members of CEWF to include municipalities, if not in CEWF's membership, in a partnership to help lobby upper levels of government to ensure fair and equitable management of the watershed's resources.

2. What would you do to strengthen the flood control and mitigation provisions of your municipality's Official Plan? For example, would you support initiatives to provide better flood plain mapping and flood mitigation planning as the basis for decision-making?

As the municipality's Deputy Mayor, I have been able to participate in both the county's official plan development as well as the OP for Algonquin Highlands. I have long voiced my support to put in place requirements for greater setbacks and shoreline protections. Through the County I was extremely pleased to support the application for digital and flood plain mapping to assist in risk management. While it is my understanding that this is the first phase of a larger project, should I be appointed to the position of Deputy Mayor I will continue to support this and any other helpful initiative in this regard.

In addition to work strengthening official plans Algonquin Highlands and the County are both working to improve



infrastructure like culverts and ditching to ensure better water flow and reduce flooding. I have also strongly supported the development of a shoreline protection program/by-law that will also control structural changes to the shorelines themselves. I will continue to support these initiatives.

3. Do you agree that municipal governments should work with local lake associations, the Trent Severn Waterway (TSW) and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) to further improve water management operations on reservoir and flow-through lakes and the connecting rivers? For example, are you in favour of: a. urging water conservation to support recreational use of the reservoir lakes; and b. the acquisition of lake-specific data with regard to the location and depth of trout spawning beds to improve and protect fish habitat?

I believe that open lines of communications and partnerships between the County, lower tier municipalities and the Coalition of Haliburton Property Owners Associations on behalf of all the lake associations in the county and beyond must continue. Initiatives being undertaken by individual lake associations to carefully document water levels, take samples and provide information that will assist in protecting fish habitat are crucial. Their work is absolutely key in helping to ensure the health of our lakes and in establishing minimum

water level standards needed to continue to enjoy our most important resource.

Lisa Barry, Councillor for Ward 2 - **Acclaimed**

Jennifer Dailloux, Candidate for Ward 3

### **Brian Lynch, Candidate for Ward 3**

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, are you personally committed to continued municipal support for the Upper Trent Water Management Partnership?

I believe that lacking local Conservation Authorities, municipalities should take a lead role in working to improve water management in our area.

2. What would you do to strengthen the flood control and mitigation provisions of your municipality's Official Plan? For example, would you support initiatives to provide better flood plain mapping and flood mitigation planning as the basis for decision-making?

We have seen the effects poor or non-existent flood plain mapping has had during recent years of above average water flows.

3. Do you agree that municipal governments should work with local lake associations, the Trent Severn Waterway (TSW) and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) to further improve water management operations on reservoir and flow-through lakes and the connecting rivers? For example, are you in favour of: a. urging water conservation to support recreational use of the reservoir lakes; and b. the acquisition of lake-specific data with regard to the location and depth of trout spawning beds to improve and protect fish habitat?

Water management is an important facet of lake levels and all levels of government need to work together to achieve maximum use of lakes and waterways for recreational use and for protecting fish habitat.