

Kluane National Park Management Board
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Meeting Minutes 1-25
6:00pm, January 21, 2025
KNPMB Office, Haines Junction

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 6:06 pm. In attendance: Tom Buzzell (Chair), Elsabe Kloppers, Todd Chambers, Robin Chambers, Ellen Bielawski (remote), Craig MacKinnon (Ex-Officio Park Canada), Aynslie Ogden (Office Manager). Absent: Grace Southwick.

2. Review draft Agenda 01-25

Motion 01 01-25 Elsabe motions to defer agenda items 5.3 to 5.8 to next agenda, Robin seconds, approved unanimously.

3. Review Minutes 11-24

Motion 02 01-25: Todd motions to approve the minutes, Robin seconds, approved unanimously.

4. Presentations & New Business

4.1. GTC IPCA Interview scheduled for **6:15 pm**

- KNPMB welcomed Claudia Ho Lem and Jill Mills from the Firelight Group to the meeting
- **Action 01 01-25**: KPMB's MS Teams transcript of the meeting was requested by the Firelight Group. Individual consent forms were also requested to be completed and sent back.
- Verbal consent to participate in the interview was provided by the Board.
- Firelight group has been hired by GTC to gather information on management of protected areas.
- What are the main updates to the KNPR Management Plan, and why?
 - Clarity on First Nations-led Commercial Tourism: First Nations now have access to land inside the park to build a destination resort, with flexibility on what commercial tourism inside the park (e.g. assets) could look like
 - Zoning - updated to reflect existing land uses, better protect species, etc. Zoning was enacted to recognize environmentally sensitive areas (this zoning existed but hadn't been used previously).
- How did KNPMB and Indigenous Governments work with Canada to develop this plan?

- The planning group included First Nations and KNPMB representatives and Parks staff.
- The planning group met several times a year. Facilitators led the group through visioning and planning discussions.
- The process followed the example set by Gwaii Haanas.
- Lots of public consultation took place – these results were brought back to planning group to discuss.
- The work was consensus based; there were no real sticking points.
- Participants had common goals and worked from common information – this assisted the process in moving forward smoothly.
- How did past exclusion of First Nations from the park affect relationships with the park and KNPMB?
 - The Healing Broken Connections program began in the early 2000s.
 - A co-management conference held in Haines Junction in 2007 that was hosted by KNPMB.
 - First Nations have capacity today that they didn't have when the park was established because of the signing of Final Agreements.
 - Implementation of claims is taking generations; it was never envisioned to take this long.
 - It took a generation to convince Elders that it was ok to return to the park and do their traditional activities because their exclusion from the park was so engrained.
- Is the Park succeeding in getting more First Nations people back into the park?
 - It is better than it was in the 1990s, but it could be better.
 - People don't have history of where to go.
 - The park needs to be rediscovered for people to go there and do things again.
 - If a family has been fishing and hunting outside the park for several generations, where there are still good resources, families continue to go to these areas.
 - Strong view in communities that resources within the park are like a savings account at the bank.
- Are there any aspects of the management plan that have been helpful to get more First Nations back into the park?
 - A path has been set for this to happen. It is now possible to create a business enterprise inside the park. The idea is that commercial tourism would be run by citizens and used by citizens when tourists are not there. This will facilitate citizens becoming more comfortable with using land inside the park.
- Is it a good working relationship on the ground, or are there any challenges with getting FN staff hired etc.
 - KNPMB is not involved in day-to-day business of the park and does not hire park staff. Do recognize that other boards play this role.
 - Kluane has one of the highest percentages of First Nation hires of any national park in Canada. Many full-time career employees. Most positions have a First Nations hiring preference.
 - For nearly 20 years there has been a First Nation superintendent. The Board is on the hiring committee for the new superintendent.

- Every Final Agreement in Yukon formalizes the requirement for hiring to represent the Yukon (there is a legal obligation to have a representative public service – Chapter 22 of the Umbrella Final Agreement).
- Federal bureaucracy is a huge impediment to progress.
- What is the primary role of the Board with regards to the park?
 - The KNPMB advises on Management Plan, trans-boundary issues, heritage and cultural issues.
 - Board requests changes of the Minister when major changes are needed – e.g. reintroduction of commercial First Nation trapping into the park.
- What is the Board's relationship with the Minister?
 - Don't approach often; but when we have had to go it has been positive. No dispute resolution process has ever been required.
- What is the Board's role in the implementation of the Management Plan?
 - Raise issues when things are going off course.
 - Advise on issues that come up that may not be addressed for plan.
 - Supporting the development of the Management Plan has been the Board's focus for many years.
 - KNPMB was originally set up to address harvest in park. When Final Agreements were signed, providing citizens with access to the park for traditional pursuits, Parks staff were very worried this would result in population declines and conservation issues. The agreements anticipated the need for harvest closures etc. No conservation issues have arisen as was anticipated. The board is re-examining its role in light of this.
 - Other parts of the mandate include integration of scientific and traditional knowledge into management of the park, legislation pertaining to the park, park boundary adjustments, transboundary species and issues (sheep, bison, bears, salmon)
 - Board anticipates being involved in day-use area planning (front country planning) that locals use outside of tourist season, so not just for tourists also for locals
 - Awaiting appointment of next site superintendent – there has been rotations for 18 months. It will be interesting to see what can be done in next few years with the new superintendent and a stable board membership (there has been considerable vacancies and turnover in recent years).
- What does community want that Board can help enact?
 - Better access to park. Elders say it is a young person's park. This includes ensuring the road is plowed in winter so day-use area can be accessed, and ensuring services are maintained despite budget cuts.
 - Parks Canada needs to evolve to reflect new uses e.g. people want to use e-bikes now. Horsepacking trips started last summer.
 - Increasing recreation demand. Increasing business license applications for guiding in park. Increasing use every year.
 - Climate change – first prescribed burn in park this year to help manage forest health, return fire to the landscape. Hope to see this continue – opportunities to create fuel breaks to protect areas outside the park. This first burn was very

small; goal to win public support and get experience with logistics. Elders and knowledge holders were involved in guiding process and involved on the day of the burn. First Nations staff part of the crews. Good support from CAFN within whose territory the burn took place.

- Do communities want to see more traditional practices governing the park?
 - Visitor centres immerse visitor in First Nation language and culture – very different from what was there in the 90s.
 - First Nations are involved in delivering programming.
 - More First Nation content and language on signage in park.
 - River trip last summer brought elders to Lowell Glacier – promoted First Nation cultural activities.
 - Guiding principles in management plan developed very slowly. Started with vision statements, which took a long time. These were taken to Elders/Language Keepers for translation. First Nation artist developed images to go with each principle.
 - Inspiration from Gwaii Haanas to reflect First Nations language and culture in the the Management Plan.
- What are the biggest lessons learned from developing the Management Plan in terms of overcoming any major barriers, and what advice would you provide to others who are doing this?
 - Experienced few barriers in planning.
 - Did have some experiences when working with a parks planner who interpreted group direction inaccurately – tried to fit vision of group into the traditional Parks Canada style for a park management plan
 - Need to plan for the different levels of review that are required, working around election cycles, public consultation, selecting images that all can agree with, getting approvals and review of First Nation languages. It all takes a lot longer than might be expected.
 - Not everyone in the community will be pleased with the plan. Can't please everyone.
 - The needs of the community were reflected in Final Agreements; some of these took time to develop capacity to implement (e.g. horseback tours, commercial tourism, commercial trapping; right of refusal on number of commercial tourism permits issued, first right of refusal on contracts issued by park). Good to have these protections within agreements to provide for future generations even if Nation can't take advantage of these opportunities right away.
 - Citizens and activities will continue to be part of park's ecological integrity the same as moose or fish, this has to be written into the plan and not be a surprise. Parks management is not about excluding people for a "pristine" environment. The language that is used in management plans is important.
 - Visitor experience goal is not to achieve a growth target as it is in southern parks. The goal for KNPR is to improve the quality of visitor experience.
- How far along is the development of a Guardian program?
 - The guardians don't work for the park directly. They are employees of the First Nations. Parks funds one full-time guardian position. Other funding programs also fund the guardians.

- CAFN has 6 full-time guardians that are A-base salary positions and funded through fiscal transfer agreements.
 - Important programs because they get young people out working on the land instead of in the office. Youth can develop a career out on the land.
 - How is the park funded? How is KNPMB funded?
 - KNPMB has a five-year contribution agreement with Parks Canada. Amounts are stipulated in final agreements, include inflationary adjustments.
 - Boards and Committees were set under Umbrella Final Agreement.
 - A review is underway of all UFA Boards and Committees – funding levels need updating.
 - Park is funded by Parks Canada through the Federal Treasury Board Submission process.
 - The Park is not a charitable organization. It is a National Park and should be funded accordingly; it is Canada's responsibility to fund.
 - Funding for Park itself is very much tied to election cycles.
 - One ecologist for entire park. Kluane, together with Tatenshini Alsek, Wrangell St Elias parks are one of the largest protected areas in the world. The park is grossly underfunded.
 - Advised other new parks to lobby for law enforcement personnel. Kluane has 1.5 FTE and are stretched thin.
 - Board requested copy of final report once completed.
- 4.2. UFAIP Funding Engagement Interview scheduled for **7:15pm**
- The Board welcomed Aven Knutson and Allison Belshaw from CYFN to the meeting.
 - Background:
 - CYFN is working on gathering information to inform the negotiation of a new funding package for all UFA Boards and Committees, as well as Final Agreement Boards and Councils (specifically KNPMB and RRCs).
 - This involves preparing a submission on behalf of Boards and Committees with what is required to meet mandate; to include fiscal information along with narrative information to explain data.
 - What is the activity level of the board and how has this changed over the past 10 years?
 - Finally have a full board – for many years had vacancies. Takes forever to get appointees.
 - Periods of less activity – e.g. couldn't spend consultation funds for management planning during COVID.
 - A lot of Board involvement in development of management plan. Now this has moved on to implementation, the Board is now exploring where to prioritize other areas of mandate.
 - Office Manager – have had vacancies and changes over the year that affects what the Board is able to do
 - Funding isn't always responsive to these sorts of ebbs and flows.
 - Can you provide examples of how additional funding would be support doing more with the Board's mandate? Anything to add to responses sent in letter in July 2023?

- More funding would help with doing more programming to get citizens back into the park e.g. rafting trip
- The better Board members and community members and citizens can know the land, the better we can all care for it.
- Restarting Healing Broken Connections program – strong community desire for this. Host more culture camps – role for the Board to do these sorts of things, but this is costly. Parts of the park are only accessible by air. Need funding for this.
- Does the Board have a Strategic Workplan with short- and long-term goals?
 - Coming to the end of the current plan. Need to refresh.
 - Opportunity to refocus the Board's efforts from the last largest goal of Board for a very long time (to get Management Plan through Parliament).
- Aware of any foreseeable events that could affect the workplan/budget?
 - Strategic planning takes time (more honoraria), consultant support needed
 - Sheep working group – more time than usual
 - Commercial trapping area in park – will require significant time commitments.
 - Expect to become heavily involved in day-use-area planning.
- Does the board have a budget, and does the Board operate within this?
 - Yes and yes (have to work within Budget!)
 - Financial audits completed last few years as Board wanted to apply for a visa – strong financial management.
 - Covering costs associated with the above list will mean that other items will come off the budget (e.g. public engagement)
- Can you provide examples of costs that have been increasing over the past 10 years?
 - Calculations around inflation for honoraria – this made a substantial change in the budgets. Followed lead of Fish and Wildlife Board. Haven't been able to reflect this in the 5-year funding agreement. yet Would prefer this be done automatically in the future for all Board so don't have to calculate and be unsure if doing things incorrectly.
 - Raised staff salary to be competitive with YG rates for similar positions in order to attract/retain staff. Have reviewed yearly.
 - Costs for auditing have gone up dramatically
 - The amount spent on wages and benefits has decreased in the budget recently because short staff (didn't have all board members filled for several years) gaps in office manager staffing.
 - Office manager expenses can be dependent on what time a staff member has available to contribute. This is a part-time position, and staff have other jobs.
 - When staff changes, we have two staff on (to train new person). Since it takes a long time to change signing authorities (months and months), we need to keep on departing staff to ensure continuity.
 - Meetings can be dependent on capacity within the First Nations to be involved. Will be more meetings when First Nations have capacity – when their capacity is limited things slow down.
 - Had very poor internet prior to last year which we upgraded this year. This allow members to participate remotely from time to time, which saves on travel costs.

- Action 02 01-25: KNPMB may share compensation rates and job descriptions with CYFN if we want feedback on how we compare to other Boards and Committees.
- Action 03 01-25: KNPMB asked to share what the estimated annual time commitment is for Board members on a month-to-month basis; including time outside of regular Board meetings (e.g. for staffing, training, other agency meetings).
- Rent shows an increase after the Board moved to a new office in 2017. Before this the Board hadn't been active for several years and didn't have an office space; files were stored in basement of ARRC.
- What needs of Board are not supported now but need more support in future?
 - Sheep project and Trapping project will need extra 4 days/month on top of what currently doing (across all board members)
 - Strategic planning will need extra meetings, may require travel time and time for open houses. Can't fit this work into regular board meetings.
 - Today the Board has pushed agenda items to the February meeting because there is more work than time available.
 - More prescribed burns being planned for this year – this will require engagement of the Board.
 - Upcoming day-use planning process for Kathleen Lake will have additional work requirements as well.
- What training might be required?
 - Did financial training last year as a full board; some new members that may need this. This training helped board members to understand what they need to know to sign off on financial statements that the Board is responsible for.
 - There hasn't been a lot of Boards and Committees training available.
 - Office Manager may want/need specific training depending on their background.
- Has there been collaboration / information sharing with other Boards that have created administrative efficiencies for KNPMB?
 - Do a joint open house in town each year with – take turns funding the hospitality with ARRC.
 - Reached out to FWMB for advice on adjusting honoraria for inflation.
 - This board is very specific to KNPR, CAFN and KFN. Don't get into issues that ARRC is involved in.
 - Today the Board was interviewed by GTC to inform development of their new park – this will create more opportunities for collaboration.
 - White River First Nation also involved in park – anticipate spending more time with this Nation in future years.
 - Have reached out to ARRC/FWMB when developing operational manual – e.g on questions such as how to handle appointments that seem to take forever; sought advice on how terms can be extended

4.3. For info – Letter from Yukon Heritage Resources Board re: release of Annual Report

4.4. For info – Letter from Geographical Place Names Board re: release of Annual Report

5. Old Business

5.1. Chair's Update

- CIBC – it is time to move to the First Nations Bank and get a real credit card (not one from the Post Office). Can do online approvals with two fobs.
- **Motion 03 01-25**: Aynslie to find path forward with First Nations Bank. All in favour.
- Appointment renewal has been confirmed by email. Letter coming soon.
- **Motion 04 01-25**: Todd motions, Elsabe seconds, to extend Tom's appointment until letter arrives to make it formal.

5.2. Site Manager's Update

- Kluane National Park Management Plan
 - Jackie sent document to share with Board with graphic design. Board has approved wording/content. Some minor grammatical review required as well as the Board's input on the creative aspects prior to finalizing/printing.
 - **Action 04 01-25**: Ellen and Robin volunteered to review provide comments to Paul Gowdie on behalf of the Board
- Seasonal layoffs have occurred.
- Winter safety training and exercises are underway.
- KFN Resources Week February 3-5, 2025. Purpose: to update citizens on various topics including providing an educational component on commercial trapping, as well as discussions on sheep and moose and land use planning. Board indicated it would be great for KNPMB to have some attendance at this. Craig will check in with KFN to get an invite extended. Tom and Todd are not available.
 - **Action 05 01-25**: Elsabe could attend on the 3rd, conflict with SWMG meeting on the 4th. Will check with Grace on her availability. Is calling in a possibility (if so Robin would be available if Grace isn't). Ellen to confirm if available.
- Finances are strained with pending election. Proroguing of the Government has delayed the flow of funds on new/approved projects. A lot of stress across agency because of anticipated cutbacks.

5.3. Letter from Minister Guilbeault to KNPMB re: Trapping Recommendation
DEFER TO FEB

5.4. Letter from Minister Guilbeault to Minister Clark re: Trapping Recommendation
DEFER TO FEB

5.5. For info - Email from Environment re: cancellation of Grizzly Bear population project
DEFER TO FEB

5.6. For info – Presentation and Report from UFAIF Engagement Session November 26, 2024
DEFER TO FEB

5.7. For input – New date proposal March 20th B&C Engagement Session
DEFER TO FEB

5.8. Ellen - ECCC Policy on Assessing Imminent Threats
DEFER TO FEB

6. Finance and Administration

6.1. November and December 2024 Financials

- Issues with Sage – program crashed over the weekend. Tangerine provided assistance Monday morning to restore the database. November financials sent out late this afternoon. December financials to follow later this week.
 - Action 06 01-25: Board to review and approve November and December 2024 financials over email.
- Other Boards provide monthly transaction records, this provides information on each specific transaction that has been processed over the previous month, which provides more detailed financial information than is contained in the summary reports currently provided. Generally 1-2 pages depending on how much activity has taken place.
 - Action 07 01-25: Monthly transaction reports to be included with Financial Reports going forward.

6.2. Administrator's Update

- Pre-paid credit card
 - Our dispute has been officially registered. The case number is #314212.
 - It will take 60-90 days for them to complete their investigation, which will involve contacting the 5 merchants that made unauthorized transactions between January 4-8, 2025.
 - Action 08 01-25: Aynslie to switch pre-payments from Canada Post Pre Paid Visa to personal credit card
- Insurance renewal – Cooperators
 - Action 09 01-25: Aynslie is authorized to renew Board Indemnity insurance through Cooperators (Amount \$827)
- Insurance renewal – Acera
 - Action 10 01-25: No changes required to Contents Insurance. Aynslie to be in touch with broker to receive renewal terms based on last year's estimates.
- New KNBMP website
DEFER TO FEB
- TD1 and TD1YT for 2025
 - Action 11 01-25: All board members to provide updated TD1 and TD1YT for 2025. Forms are in today's meeting package.
- WCB Rebate
 - The Board received a small rebate of \$57.24 from WCB from WCB's excess surplus reserves. This amount will be retained in our account and p7t towards future premiums.
- Action 11 01-25: Print new business cards with new email address
- Action 12 01-25: Send regular pdfs not portfolios (not everyone has acrobat)

7. Updates or Additions

8. Action Log Review

DEFER TO FEBRUARY

9. Next Meeting Dates

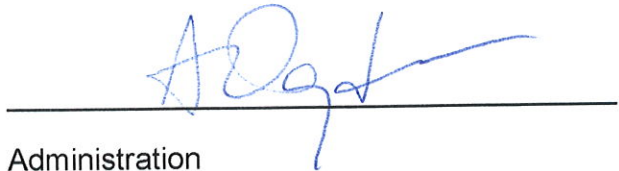
- Todd away Feb 8 to 18
- Tom away Feb 6 to 14
- Elsabe away Feb 11 to 16
- Robin away all Feb
- Aynslie away Feb 6 to 17
- Action 12 01-25: February meeting: Wednesday February 19, 2025. Aynslie to send MS Outlook scheduler and MS Teams invite.
- Action 12 01-25: March meeting: Tuesday March 18, 2025. Aynslie to send MS Outlook scheduler and MS Teams invite.

10. Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm



Chair or Vice-Chair



Administration