



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday, April 26 at 2 p.m.
Reg Brown Community Room
Mountain Equipment Coop
10904 – 104 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta

BUSINESS AGENDA

1. Welcome: JoAnne Burek, President
2. Minutes of AGM, April 11, 2024
3. Audited Financial Statements for Year Ending February 28, 2025: Diann Connelly
4. Reports
 - a. President: JoAnne Burek
 - b. Membership/Donations: Jacky Rainville
 - c. Trail Maintenance: Helen Whitson
 - d. Permissions: JoAnne Burek
 - e. Trail Locations: Terry Elrod
 - f. Hikes and Website/Emails: Lee Stickles
 - g. Special Events
 - h. Casino: Diann Connelly
 - i. Birkie: Sherry Kunkel
5. Nominations and Elections
6. Appointment of Auditors
7. Order of the Laces
8. Adjournment of Business Meeting

PROGRAM

Linda Kershaw
Naturalist and Author

Thank you to our volunteers

Alda Watchorn	JoAnne Burek
Alexander Morozov	Johanna Fischer
Anita Piebiak	John Haines
Bonnie Guo	John Scotvold
Brad Jordan	Jon Spence
Darlene Barnard	Kurt Bagdan
Delaney Schlemko	Lee Stickles
Diann Connelly	Lin Keehn
Elizabeth Bagdan	Marja Allen
Ellen Homola	Martha Miller
Frank Potter	Mary MacArthur
Gary Davidson	Mike Dreimanis
Gene Miskiw	Oscar Zawalsky
Heather Innes	Peggy Funk
Helen Whitson	Peter Kershaw
Irene Malcolm	Scott Malcolm
Jacky Rainville	Sherry Kunkel
Jeff Allen	Stella Cormier
Jim Gannon	Terry Elrod

Thank you to our hike leaders, trail maintenance volunteers, casino workers, Birkie volunteers, auditors, and board members. You help make us successful.

WASKAHEGAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, APRIL 11, 2024. VIA ZOOM

MINUTES

BUSINESS MEETING

Attendance: Elizabeth Bagdan, JoAnne Burek, Diann Connelly, Stella Cormier, Johanna Fischer, Bonnie Guo, RoseMarie Jalbert, Brad Jordan, Sherry Kunkel, Mary MacArthur, Lorna Mathews, Martha Miller, Cathy Mowatt, Anita Piebiak, Jacky Rainville, Susan Richards, Delaney Schlemko, John Scotvold, Lee Stickles, Carol Suddards, Pat Trautman, Phyllis Verhaar, Peter Verhaar, Audrey Whitson, Helen Whitson, Rob Zonneveld

1. WELCOME: JoAnne Burek, President

Call to order at 7:00pm

2. MINUTES Of AGM, April 14, 2023

Approved as read.

3. AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 29, 2024: DIANN CONNELLY

Diann reported that the audit had been conducted March 6, 2024 by Marja and Jeff Allen.

Motion: Moved by Diann Connelly, seconded by Martha Miller that the audited statements be accepted as posted. CARRIED.

There was also an acknowledgement that members of the maintenance crew most often donate their mileage costs, that is, they do not claim travel expenses.

4. REPORTS

President: JoAnne Burek – See report.

Membership/Donations: Jacky Rainville – See report, posted. Jacky clarified for everyone attending that membership renewal is 12 months from the date when the previous membership was purchased. It is no longer a fixed date.

Hikes: Lee Stickles – See report.

Trail Maintenance: Helen Whitson – See report.

Permissions: JoAnne Burek – See report.

Trail Locations: Terry Elford – See report.

Hikes and Web site. Emails: Lee Stickles – See report.

Beyond Events: Anita Piebiak – See report.

5. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS: JoAnne Burek. The slate of officers presented was elected by acclamation.

President: JoAnne Burek

Treasurer: Diann Connelly

Secretary: Carol Suddards

Membership Secretary: Jacky Rainville

Trail Maintenance Coordinator: Helen Whitson

Trail Locations Coordinator: Terry Elrod

Hike Coordinator and Website: Lee Stickles

Directors at Large:

Elizabeth Bagdan

Brad Jordan

6. APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS:

Motion: Moved by Diann Connelly, seconded by Anita Piebiak that Marja and Jeff Allen be appointed auditors for the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

7. ORDER OF THE LACES

Lee Stickles announced that the 2023-24 Order of the Laces, recognizing the member logging the greatest number of hikes, was Sherry Kunkel who completed 25 of the 35 organized hikes.

8. ADJOURNMENT of BUSINESS MEETING

The meeting adjourned at 7:45.

PROGRAM

Following the Business Meeting, Pat Trautman, one of the Landowner's on the Battle River, presented a detailed history of Middle Section, Battle River. Pat's presentation with photos has been posted to the Waskahegan Trail Association Website, under the History tab, for the benefit of all members and the community.

WASKAHEGAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION

BALANCE SHEET As Of February 28, 2025 - Year End

ASSETS

Year End Feb. 28, 2025

Cash Assets:

GENERAL Bank Account Balance	27,337
CASINO Bank Account Balance	19,765
TOTAL Cash Assets	47,102

Investments:

GENERAL Invest. Account (Term Deposit)	0
CASINO Invest. Account (GIC's)	0
TOTAL Investments	0

TOTAL ASSETS 47,102

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Current Liabilities

	0
TOTAL Current Liabilities	0

EQUITY

Retained Earnings 47,102

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY 47,102

Approved for the Association by:

James Burch
President

Date: March 19, 2025

Allyn Kelly
Treasurer

Date: March 19, 2025

Audited by: 1.

Cynthia Allen

Date: March 19, 2025

2.

M J Allen

Date: March 19, 2025

WASKAHEGAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF INCOME - GENERAL ACCOUNT As Of February 28, 2025 - Year End

Year End Feb 28, 2025

REVENUE (GENERAL)

Donations	2,868.75
Membership Dues	2,544.04
Sales - Pins, Crests, etc.	0.00
Sales of Guidebooks	600.00
GST Rebate	163.84
TOTAL REVENUE (GENERAL):	6,176.63

EXPENSE (GENERAL)

GST Expense	36.28
Members BBQ	145.27
Office Expense	362.54
WCB Premium	200.00
Guidebook Printing	0.00
Volunteer Appreciation	382.86
Website	1,309.02
Stripe Fees	108.22
Casino Expenses Paid from General Account	
Insurance	2,074.00
Trail Maintenance	619.17
Equipment Storage	1,449.00
Casino GST Expense	104.56
Hauling Materials	655.50
Lease & Licenses	50.00
TOTAL EXPENSE (GENERAL):	7,496.42

STATEMENT OF INCOME - CASINO ACCOUNT As Of February 28, 2025 - Year End

Year End Feb 28, 2025

REVENUE (CASINO)

Casino funds	20,503.15
Interest earned on investment	0.00
TOTAL REVENUE (CASINO):	20,503.15

EXPENSE (CASINO)

Bank charges	22.50
Insurance	0.00
Equipment (Purchase)	0.00
Equipment Repair	0.00
Trail Maintenance	176.97
Equipment Storage	1,035.00
GST Expense	60.60
Leases & Licences	0.00
Hauling Materials	0.00
Transportation - Work Crews	14.00
TOTAL EXPENSE (CASINO):	1,309.07

Total Profit (Loss) 17,874.29

Approved for the Association by:

Janice Bueck
President

Date: March 19, 2025

[Signature]
Treasurer

Date: March 19, 2025

Audited by: C. W. Jefferys Allen & Marja G. Allen

C. W. Jefferys Allen

Date: March 19, 2025

[Signature]

Date: March 19, 2025

President's Report AGM 2025

Board changes

Early in the year we recruited a new secretary, Heather Innes. She replaced Carol Suddards, who discovered she would not be able to make most of the meetings this year. Thanks to Carol for all her work and contribution, and a big thank-you to Heather who jumped in and helped out with a new data privacy policy.

Data Privacy

Heather and I examined the information we collect from people personally and the practices we have in place to protect it. As a board, we discussed and clarified what information we need to share among ourselves.

We also changed some of our existing practices in light of current privacy standards. The biggest change was to stop publishing the names of our donors in the annual report. We should not assume that a donor wants to be publicized. We are looking into adding a checkbox on the donation form so that a donor can indicate whether they want their name made public.

Membership Administration Enhancements

At the end of July, we replaced the existing website software, which had become unreliable with respect to automatic renewals. The new software is lot simpler, and the charging part of it is based on the most popular software for online shopping sites.

Another change was triggered by the postal strike. Because we still needed to send out membership cards, we changed to emailing printable membership card.

Then when we saw this working, we realized it was time to move to online tax receipts for donations. We were very careful to ensure that these tax receipts meet all the requirements set out by Canada Revenue Agency.

Casino Update

We were fortunate to have our casino sooner rather than later. It was originally scheduled for late March in 2025. But at the end of August, AGLC asked us if we would be willing to have on Sept 13-14, just two weeks away. As our treasurer and casino chair, Diann Connelly, always likes to be ahead of the game, the planning and groundwork had mostly been done. So, it was easy to say yes.

Diann will tell you more about that in the casino report.

Nature Conservancy of Canada

In January, the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) met with the board, to determine whether there may be ways to collaborate. You might be aware that a section of the Waskahegan Trail goes through the Ball-Berg property, which is an NCC property.

It is hoped that with further conversations, some opportunities for synergism may come to light.

Guidebook Software Migration

Some time before September 2026, we will have to migrate our guidebook to a new software platform. That's because Microsoft has announced that their MS Publisher software, which is what the guidebook files are built on, will no longer be available as of that date.

We will be making plans to move to a new platform, possibly Adobe InDesign, which is highly popular and well-supported although not free. There may be members who are familiar with InDesign, who would like to volunteer to set up and assist with the migration. Stay tuned!

Thank-you!

I would like to thank the members of the board for their dedication and support – Heather Innes, Diann Connelly, Jacky Rainville, Brad Jordan, Terry Elrod, Lee Stickles, and Elizabeth Bagdan.

I would also like to thank the members for their continuing support of the vision and goals of the Waskahegan Trail.

Respectfully submitted,

JoAnne Burek

WASKAHEGAN TRAIL ASSOCIATION

MEMBERSHIP REPORT AGM

February 28, 2025

The duties of the Membership Secretary include being the primary contact for membership, mailing of the cards, guidebooks, decals, pins, and donation receipts. Keeping records and statistics are also part of the duties of the Membership Secretary.

Membership activity for year end February 28, 2025:

Memberships as of February 29, 2024	113
New Members	62
Resigned / Expired Memberships	(56)
Memberships as of February 28, 2025	119

Trends in Membership and Guide Book Sales				
AGM in April	Members @ Feb 28/29	New / Reinstated	Resigned/Expired	Books Sold
2014/15	111	35	34	22
2015/16	107	29	33	25
2016/17	111	41	37	28
2017/18	156	56	11	56
2018/19	156	53	55	41
2019/20	129	50	79	41
2020/21	199	70	0*	56
2021/22	228	76	47	79
2022/23	172	40	96	23
2023/24	113	45	104**	28
2024/25	119	62	56	23

** In April 2020, the board of directors granted members a free year of membership due to the pandemic crisis. Paid memberships resumed for 2021-22.*

***In February 2024, 52 members who did not renew in February 2023, were given a grace renewal. Paid membership resumed for 2024/25.*

Donations:

Sincere thank you to all our donors in 2024/25. A total of \$3,050 was raised this year. A substantial donation was received from John Maude & Susan Quinn Charitable Foundation. We are registered with two online donation platforms: Canada Helps & Benevity. This year, we received 1 donation from Canada Helps.

Memberships:

The online payment system is working well. Members can now renew for a 1, 2, or 3 year term. Due to the Canada Post strike, membership cards are now being sent by email rather than by mail. We also send charitable tax donations by email. This saves time and cost for the organisation.

Members purchasing guide books, pins, or decals, will still receive these by mail. For members who do not wish to use the online platform, they can still mail a cheque. Alternately, those who prefer to pay by cash should do so at the AGM. We will also have the guide books, pins, and decals available for purchase.

Thanks for joining and continuing your membership. Hope to see you at the next hike.

Submitted by

Jacky Rainville

Trail Maintenance Annual Report for 2024 Season

The Trail Maintenance Crew had an almost perfectly planned work schedule in 2024 – the hikes were organized so that there was at least one make-up day each month for maintenances that needed to be re-scheduled due to rain. It's not always possible for this to happen; it took a lot of pressure off of the crew.

The move into the storage shed at Bulldog Storage was completed in May. A thank you to John S., Brad, Gary and Sherry for helping move everything into the city from the temporary storage at Brad's in the country. John S. took the main responsibility for organizing the new space (with help from Ellen, Sherry and Helen) and preparing/repairing of the equipment for each of the weekly maintenances. This is very much appreciated.

Lee continued to scout the planned hikes and report back the maintenance needs, so that planning could be done effectively. Lee often scouted after a full day of maintenance or would combine two scouting hikes into one trip. Thanks, Lee, for your perseverance in always being at least one hike ahead of us, and several, most of the time!

Ellen generously continues to keep up the WTA email list for us, for which we are most grateful.

Jon S. very kindly cut new markers this past winter to be used on the trails for the summer of 2025. You will notice the neatness and care with which they were cut in the picture below. Also, Jon was our main trailer puller for the 2024 season. Thank you Jon!



Here are the stats for the year:

Kms maintained: - ~60 kms

Total volunteer hours worked: - 456.5 hours

Average number of volunteers per maintenance- : 8 – 10 volunteers

Total maintenances completed: - 15, two of which were preparatory for the 2025 season.

Once again, we enjoyed our 5th year end maintenance wiener roast at the Hughston Stopover. Thank you to Sherry for organizing the food and Brad for providing the wood. Thank you to Lori and Jay Cridland for permission to use the site on their land.

A big thank you to all the trail maintenance volunteers, for your commitment and enthusiasm for the trail:

-Elizabeth, Darlene, Stella, Gary, Mike, Terry, Johanna, Peggy, Jim, Bonnie, John H., Ellen, Brad, Sherry, Peter, Alexander, John S., Jon S. Lee, Oscar and Helen

Respectfully Submitted by Helen Whitson, Maintenance Director

Permissions Report AGM 2025

Trail

Over 200 km of the Waskahegan Trail runs across the properties of over a hundred landowners. If not for their generous permission, the trail would not exist.

Nevertheless, hikers need to remember that permissions can change at any time for any reason. That's why we urge hikers to always check the Trail Conditions page on the website before setting out on a trail.

Administration

The role of the Permissions Director is to maintain the contact information of the landowners and to be their main point of contact if they need to reach out to us.

The role also includes maintaining our records of who has title to what piece of land the trail runs on. Each year in March, we reach out to the landowners by email if we have it, or with a letter. We share the hike schedule, trail maintenance news, and contact information.

If land has changed hands, this is when we find out about it.

For the last four years, we have not had an official Permissions director so I have been filling in. It's not a difficult job

Leases Update

We lease crown land for four properties, and all have come up for renewal in the last decade. Two lease renewals are still waiting for processing by the Alberta Government.

Submitted

JoAnne Burek

Waskahegan Trail Association
Trail Location Annual Report for 2024 Year
Terry Elrod, Director
22 April 2025

What Trail Location does

The responsibility of Trail Location (TL) is to document the Waskahegan Trail — its route, constructions (stiles, boardwalks, bridges, rope ladders), trailheads and landmarks, for use by the WTA. Almost the entirety of the trail on private land has been documented.

Putting TL information to good use

TL information has three important uses. It can be used to (1) update the Trail Guide, (2) communication with landowners about a trail issue, and (3) assist Trail Maintenance with both advance knowledge about the exact locations of trail features as well as real-time trail location information while in the field. Given that some trail sections are maintained only every other year or so, there are times when the trail is lost sight of while in the field. Having TL information in real time saves TM from delays and helps with TM planning. It also helps with keeping TL information up to date.

A search for a suitable smartphone application (“app”) resulted in the choice of AllTrails. It meets our needs while being affordable and usable on both iPhone and Android smartphones. It also has the crucial feature that trail GPS data can be shared only with designated WTA volunteers. However, the information that may be recorded in AllTrails, while adequate for our purpose, is of a different format, so TL information about trail features must be entered by hand, which has been tedious and labour-intensive. Nevertheless, most of the Waskahegan Trail on private land is now mapped on AllTrails.

Most hiking apps, including AllTrails, allow on-line sharing of hike routes with other app users. However, we have created an AllTrails account that is shared only with designated WTA leaders, a decision that is based on need to know. Our trail postings are not visible to other app users.

Waskahegan Hikes

This report covers the calendar year of January to December 2024

- **Downloadable schedule**
 - Can be downloaded at https://waskahegantrail.ca/wp-content/uploads/newsletters/WTA_Current_Hikes.pdf
 - Or on the website, look for “Resources for Hikers” on the right sidebar of the home page.
- **2024 Hike Statistics – about the same as most years**
 - 35 hikes with an average of 12.86 attendees (we are generally in the 12 to 12½ range but 2023 was almost 14 & 2017 was >15)
 - 80 individuals & 450 attendees with an average of 11.91 members & 0.94 non-member
 - 80 people attended at least 1 hike (65 members, 15 non-members), with 30 attending 4 or more (& 17 attending 10 or more)
 - We had 3 hikes canceled, 1 due to ice & 2 due to air quality (we’ve already had 4 canceled in 2025 with 3 due to cold)
- **Hike Leaders** – Big thanks to all of the hike leaders
 - Alda W., Anita P., Delaney S., Elizabeth B., Helen W., Irene & Scott M., JoAnne B. & Lee S., John S., Johanna F., Martha M., Mary M., Sherry K., Stella C., Terry E.
 - We are always looking for new hike leaders – Alda W. & Sherry K. lead their first hike and Frank P. lead a recent hike after being away for a while
- **Summer Schedule (May to October) & Winter Schedule (November to March 2026) –**
 - We didn’t need a Hike Committee Meeting this year as was held as a ZOOM call on March 26th & we quickly filled in the schedule
 - There will be 38 hikes from April 2025 to March 2026 -
 - website calendar & printable schedule have been updated
 - 14 non-hiking weeks – every other week during the winter (November to mid-April) plus some extra off weeks for holid

WTA Website and Email – <https://waskahegantrail.ca>

- Just general administration

Submitted by Lee Stickle

Special Events

This year we had two special events for members.

May 26 – Spring Social and BBQ at Miquelon Provincial Park

Beautiful weather, great hike, good food and good company. Many longtime members who we hadn't seen in a while came out on this day.

October 27 – Fall Social and Chili Lunch at the Wanisan Stopover

Nice weather and a great turnout. Thank you to Anita Piebiak for the two big pots of chili and to JoAnne for the cornbread muffins. We had a great time sitting around the campfire in the late fall enjoying a hot meal with friends!

For 2025, we are planning one special event, a Members Social and Hike on September 28 at Miquelon Provincial Park

Casino Event

In 2024 we were preparing for our casino fundraiser which would be held on March 30-31, 2025 in Camrose. We started lining up our volunteers early.

At the end of August, AGLC offered us the September 13-14 slot. The offer was first come-first serve, so we had to decide quickly. There were many positives with the new date: better weather, we'd get our funds sooner, and we could apply for the next one sooner. After checking with our key volunteers, we said yes. We knew we could get people to volunteer in two weeks just as easily as we could in 7 months.

For our casino advisor, we engaged Nicole Dotzlof, who is hired frequently by volunteers for Camrose Casino events. Working with her was a pleasure, so we would definitely hire Nicole again.

Nicole gave us a shift schedule template, which made scheduling the volunteers very convenient. Camrose is designated as a "minor" casino, which means there are fewer shifts and fewer volunteers needed. For example, there is only one cash count at the end of the night. This allowed the count room positions to be staffed by some of the evening people.

Donation of expenses

AGLC allowed claims for gas and lodging by volunteers who were coming from far away. No one made any claims, so this represented a significant donation by the volunteers.

Funds deposited

In November AGLC deposited \$20,530 into our bank account.

Next casino

Before the event was over, Nicole took our application for the next casino. Our next casino will be in Camrose again at in October-December 2028.

Thank you

We are grateful to our volunteers who made the event a success. They are: Peter Kershaw, Gene Miskiw, Lin Keehn, Peggy Lyons, Elizabeth Bagdan, Kurt Bagdan, Irene Malcolm, Mary McArthur, JoAnne Burek, Lee Stickles, Diann Connelly

Respectfully submitted

Diann Connelly, Casino Chair

JoAnne Burek, Assistant

Birkie Report

The Waskahegan Trail Association has been providing refreshments at the Canadian Birkie (formerly the Canadian Birkebeiner) since the festival began in 1985. We operate the Last Chance Food Station at Meadow Shelter.

Nordic Fair February 7, 2025

To commemorate forty years that the Birkebeiner has been held in Canada, WTA was offered a vendor table at this year's Nordic Fair. This event, always held on Friday, the day before race day, coincides with the skiers' registration.

We were most fortunate to be the table closest to those lineups, resulting in many good interactions regarding our organization. Virtually no one who had heard of us was aware of the extent of our trail, and certainly not where it was located. This is likely because of the same name staging area in the Blackfoot Recreation Area. So, people assume the Waskahagen trail lies within those boundaries. It was a unique and rewarding experience to be able to educate so many outdoor enthusiasts even a little bit about our history and current program.

I'm grateful to Helen and Brad for joining me for part of the day, allowing opportunity for us to work together to answer questions, and spell each other off so we could visit other tables of interest.

One of the biggest bonuses of meeting other vendors came as a result of talking with the Beaverhills Biosphere representative: we have opportunity for cross promotion with them in future.

Race Day, February 8, 2025

The day began with some of the most promising conditions seen in many years for the Birkie. However, things quickly got challenging once we arrived at our shelter. Not only was the water for making hot drinks partly frozen, but it seemed the propane stove was frozen. After some time (and not without some tension for several of us!), it was determined the propane tank was the component that had gotten too cold while being stored outside in -20 the previous night.

Meanwhile, the food was being prepared and set out in anticipation of the first of almost 250 skiers who were due to arrive in an increasingly short while. Most admirably, the team pulled together and accomplished our objective, not only with considerable know-how, and ability to adapt and improvise, but also with good cheer.

It was an enjoyable day to be out, with wonderfully moderate temperatures. Thank you to every member of the crew--you're the best out there!

Respectfully submitted

Sherry Kunkel

WTA's Birkie Food Station Organizer

Nominations for the Board – 2025-2026 Term

The following candidates have been nominated for the board:

Candidate	Year of term
Helen Whitson	2 nd year
Heather Innes	2 nd year
Jacky Rainville	3 rd year
Terry Elrod	3 rd year
JoAnne Burek	3 rd year
Diann Connelly	4 th year
Brad Jordan	4 th year
Elizabeth Bagdan	4 th year
Lee Stuckles	4 th year

Heather Innes joined the board in the middle of last year.

If there are no changes to the above, the new board will look like this:

President: JoAnne Burek

Treasurer: Diann Connelly

Secretary: Heather Innes

Membership Secretary: Jacky Rainville

Trail Maintenance Coordinator: Helen Whitson

Trail Locations Coordinator: Terry Elrod

Hike Coordinator and Website: Lee Stuckles

Directors at Large:

Elizabeth Bagdan

Brad Jordan