



DRAFT - MINUTES OF MVFN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2026
Nature Talks Meeting – 7:00 p.m.
AGM Meeting – 8:20 p.m.

Members' Night and the Annual General Meeting of MVFN were held in-person, on the above date, at the Almonte United Church Hall. Brian Gillespie, Chair of the Nature Talks Committee, welcomed attendees and proceeded to explain that two speakers will be presenting tonight on topics of interest to Club members. The Indigenous Acknowledgment was then read.

The first speaker, Ken Allison, Chair of the Birding Committee, shared his "Nature Notebook" sightings which focused on photos submitted by members of trees, animals and birds. This was followed by his very informative presentation on the "Deer Flies of Lanark County".

The second presenter was Brian Gillespie. His slide/photo presentation focused on the Fauna and Flora of Haida Gwaii, islands off the Coast of British Columbia. Also included were photos of birds, sea animals, the deer population and sea creatures, plant life, Algae, the Moon Snail as well as the Humpback whales found in the tidal zone in that region.

Both presentations were very well received and the speakers were thanked and presented with a gift of appreciation.

An "Announcement" session followed where upcoming events organized by members of MVFN were advertised. The announcements included: A Film Festival scheduled for March 29, 2026 at the Civitan Hall and organized by Paddling Chair Art Solomonian and his Committee; the next Nature Talks presentation scheduled for March 19th which will feature David Hawke speaking on the "Signs of Spring"; and the movement "One Mississippi – A River Reconciliation Project" comprising of a group of local citizens who envision a sustainable community development project about the present and future health of the Mississippi River. Ron Williamson will be representing MVFN on this project and he advised that an information session was being planned for around Earth Day on April 26th.

The AGM was called to order at 8:20 p.m. with Valerie Wilkinson as Chair. There were an estimated 37 paid members attending the AGM meeting. She clarified that she was chairing the meeting in the capacity of Past-President since the position of "President" still remained vacant. She further explained that she and members of the Board of Directors, Paul Frigon, (First Vice President) and Brenda Boyd (secretary) have been operating as a team sharing the tasks that would normally be filled by the President. She then proceeded to outline the rules of procedure that would be followed at the meeting tonight.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Moved by Pete MacEwen, seconded by Ken Allison: THAT the Agenda be approved. CARRIED.

2. Declaration of Pecuniary interest: None

3. DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: February 20, 2025

Moved by Brenda Boyd, seconded by Paul Frigon: THAT the DRAFT Minutes of the AGM meeting held on February 20, 2025, be approved. CARRIED

4. 2025 REPORTS OF THE BOARD:

(a-b) The following President's Report and Committee reports were included in the Annual Report for ease of reference:

The President's Report	MVFN Birding Committee
The Cliff Bennett Nature Bursary Fund	Conservation and Habitat Restoration
Environmental Education Committee	MVCA Kintail Christmas 2025
Nature Talks Committee	Outings Committee
Paddling Committee	Publicity Report
Spring Gathering Report 2025	Young Naturalists Program
Membership Report	

Val Wilkinson proceeded to read aloud the President's report, highlighting the various activities/programs as well as the environmental experiences across the Mississippi River watershed that the committees actively offered in 2025. She acknowledged the leadership roles of the Chairs in carrying out these programs and added that Gretta Bradley will be stepping down as Chair of the Outings Committee. She mentioned the support given to environmental organizations locally and across Ontario. She expressed thanks to 2nd Vice-President, John Grierson, who not only filled the newly created role of "Program Coordinator" but also spearheaded MVFN's "IT Renewal" Project- a project which will provide improvements much needed by the Membership and Finance Committees to modernize and streamline their processes. Special thanks were extended to founding member Cliff Bennett who has faithfully led and advised the MVFN since its inception 38 years ago. Mr. Bennett has, only recently, stepped down as a member of the Board and his achievements will be celebrated later in 2026.

Please refer to detailed comments regarding the work of the committees as outlined in the AGM Report. Thanks were extended to Louise Beckinsale for coordinating and formatting all the information contained in the AGM Report. Finally, the Chair expressed sincere thanks to the Board members for their patience and diligence in handling the administrative necessities of MVFN.

Moved by Pete MacEwen, seconded by Georgina Wigley: THAT the President's Report, as well as the Committee Reports contained in the AGM Report, be approved. CARRIED

(c) 2025 FINANCIAL REPORT

Moved by Sylvia Miller, seconded by Jane Olivier: THAT the Financial Report for 2025, be approved CARRIED

(d) 2025 FINANCIAL REVIEW

Moved by John Blais, seconded by Paul Frigon: THAT the 2025 Financial Review submitted by Trish Larkin, be approved CARRIED

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On behalf of the Club, the Chair expressed thanks and appreciation to Trish Larkin for volunteering her services in such a timely fashion.

5. ELECTION OF MVFN BOARD MEMBERS FOR 2026

A list of proposed Board members for the year 2026 was tabled. Four positions were vacant, viz.:

- **President, 2nd Vice-President, Director at Large, Treasurer**

The Chair invited anyone interested in volunteering for the “vacant” positions to please show their hand. **Brenda Boyd nominated David Jolliffe for the position of 2nd Vice-President.**

The Chair then requested nominations from the floor two more times. No additional names were forthcoming. However, she stressed that if, after consideration, should any member wish to volunteer their services, to please contact a member of the Board or its committees.

Moved by Jeff Mills, seconded by Peter Moller: THAT the following proposed list of Board Appointees be approved with the addition of David Joliffe as 2nd Vice-President. CARRIED.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President • 1st Vice-President: • 2nd Vice-President: • Past President • Secretary • Director at Large • Director at Large • Finance Chair • Treasurer • Membership Chair • Environmental Education Chair • Nature Talks Chair • Publicity Chair 	<p><i>Vacant</i></p> <p>Paul Frigon</p> <p>David Jolliffe</p> <p>Valerie Wilkinson</p> <p>Brenda Boyd</p> <p>Pete MacEwen</p> <p><i>Vacant</i></p> <p>John Blais</p> <p><i>Vacant</i></p> <p>Sylvia Miller</p> <p>Bob Smith</p> <p>Brian Gillespie</p> <p>Louise Beckinsale</p>
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NOTE: The Conservation & Habitat Restoration Committee has been deleted from the above list pending the availability of a Chairperson. CARRIED.

6. Other Business: None

7. Adjournment

On behalf of the membership, Val Wilkinson was thanked for her continued efforts and leadership.

Moved by Bob Smith, seconded by Ken Allison THAT: the meeting adjourn.

CARRIED.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Beverly Blais
Recording Secretary.