



June 18, 2020

To members of the Boards of Directors of lakes and other interested parties

Subject: Important message to the Associations of Lakes of Val-des-Monts: Future of the Federation

The Federation of Lakes of Val-des-Monts, which marks its 15th anniversary, is obliged to make a turn. In fact, the Municipality of Val-des-Monts recently notified the Federation, in a letter dated May 18 and signed by the Mayor, that it was terminating the 2019-2023 memorandum of understanding which bound it to the Federation. In its decision, the Municipality indicated that it wished to repatriate the expertise and consultation services within its Department of the Environment and Town Planning and that consequently it withdrew the financial support which it offered to the Federation. The Municipality will increase its staff and expertise by creating a senior consultant position within the said Service. This position would include responsibilities for monitoring and inspecting the standards and regulations of the Municipality with the power to issue statements of offense. By letter, dated May 25, the Federation requested a face-to-face meeting to discuss the situation. A meeting between the President and the Vice-President of the Federation, accompanied by the Consultant, and certain members of the Council and Administrative Services of the Municipality was held on June 9. The Municipality then reiterated its decision, without any possibility of considering other scenarios. The Municipality has indicated that it wishes the Federation to become a lobby organization for the Associations. The Federation could, in the same way as the Associations, put forward its points of view concerning the implementation of the PDE or any other issue of the Water resource through the new Consultant Executive position of the Municipality. The Municipality would like the Federation to continue its grant requests from granting agencies. However, any subsidized project should be approved by the Municipality beforehand. It was agreed that the summer 2020 activities would be maintained, as planned. However, as of September 30, 2020, the Federation as it existed before would cease to operate.

It must be admitted that over the years, the Federation has had difficulty diversifying its financial sources. Requests for grants from granting agencies are very time consuming and are not always successful. Despite the fact that in 2019-2020, the Fondation de la Faune approved two projects and that Emploi Canada Summer allowed in 2019 and 2020 the hiring of students to assist the Federation Consultant, without funding from the Municipality, the financial resources of the Federation are insufficient to pursue its mission. Lately, the Federation has had great difficulty in collecting membership fees and, despite efforts to promote benefits for member associations, the Federation has even seen the number of members decrease. The result is that the Municipality was the main donor of the Federation, which made it vulnerable. Without the financing of the Municipality, the Federation will no longer be able to meet its objective, as described in its letters patent and its general regulations, namely: to assess the state of watercourses and water bodies through of water samples and data collection in the field and lead projects to maintain and improve water quality.



The Federation could pursue its objective of educating and sensitizing the population, public decision-makers and private sector stakeholders on the importance of operating a sound management of water resources. However, this role of lobbying the various actors will not offer a counterweight to the aims of the Municipality which could, on occasion, be in conflict with the aims of the Lake Associations. The Municipality's recreational tourism, residential development and business directions could conflict with the interests of local residents because they would increase traffic and the presence of motorboats on the lakes. In fact, the Federation has always prized its independence from the Municipality in order not to become a regulatory tool (inspection and verification of monitoring of standards and regulations) and to preserve a certain objectivity and room for maneuver. The Federation saw in its unifying role a democratization of the services and expertise offered to all lakes and associations (small and large).

It goes without saying that this sudden and unexpected decision by the Municipality destabilized the Federation's Board of Directors since it expected the Federation to be a main player in the implementation of the Watershed Master Plan (PDE), recently adopted by the Municipality, for the next 4-5 years. It should be remembered that the PDE is an initiative of the Federation and not of the Municipality and that the Federation was a major player in the Watershed Management Committee. The Federation's Board of Directors met by conference call on June 16, 2020. Among the subjects discussed, the members expressed their desire to remain on the Board given the change in status that will be required (or a lobby status). Of the 9 members of the Board, only one member has indicated his intention to remain in office to help the Federation make this transition. Consequently, as of September 30, there will be 8 positions to fill. It will be up to the new Board to define the new objectives of the Federation as well as its needs. A status change process must be undertaken to regularize the letters patent and regulations with the new role of the Federation. If no one is interested, a dissolution procedure must be undertaken.

In summary, the Municipality has ended its memorandum of understanding with the Federation which will end on September 30, 2020. Consequently, the Federation will no longer be able to retain the services of its Consultant-Expert and will contravene its mandate as defined by its statute and its general regulations. The massive resignations within the Board of the Federation, effective on September 30, will force the Member Associations to question the future of the Federation. If the members choose to dissolve the Federation, a dissolution and liquidation procedure must be approved at the AGM or at a special meeting. In the coming weeks, you will receive the 2019 Annual Report, the 2019 Financial Report, as well as an invitation for nominations to form a new CA. It will be up to the new council to carry out the consultation to determine the new orientation of the Federation. At the time of writing, the social distancing measures due to the Covid-19 would allow a meeting of less than 50 people from June 22. A public AGM is probably not an option, but member consultation could be done electronically. You will find attached the letter from the Mayor, the Federation's response as well as the minutes of the June 9 meeting.



In closing, and without knowing the outcome of this process, we would like to thank the consultants Stéphanie Milot and Mélanie Renaud, as well as all the presidents and administrators (former and present) who, over the years, have worked within the Federation of Lakes of VDM and have given it its excellent reputation.

With our sincere greetings and thanks,

Daniel Brazeau, President

Élise Amyot, Vice-President et responsable for Communications,

Jean Claude Drapeau, Secretary

Luc Villeneuve, Treasurer

Serge Gascon, Administrator and member of the Communications Committee

Manon Saint-Denis, Administrator and member of the Communications Committee

Tim Frank, Administrator

Robert Lafleur, Administrator

Brian Davidson, Administrator

Please circulate this message to your respective associations and groups.