

Alton CLC Meetings Summary - 2017

Meetings held: February 27, April 3, May 15, August 21, September 25, October 23, December 11

February 27

Meeting was called to order at 6:15 pm.

The Agenda was approved. Committee agreed to discuss CLC structure and plan. Alton representative explained that once a year the province's [Guide for the Formation and Operation of a Community Liaison Committee](#) requires the CLC to review its objectives, mandate and membership. CLC members asked to bring input on a Terms of Reference to the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8 pm.

April 3

Meeting called to order at 6:15 pm.

There was considerable discussion about membership to the CLC, in particular the section *CLC Member's Roles and Responsibilities* (page 3 of [Guide for the Formation and Operation of a Community Liaison Committee](#)), and aligning with it. A motion was carried that membership should not be granted to candidates who do not meet the criteria in this section.

Feedback received from CLC members on Terms of Reference and Terms of Reference to be circulated to CLC members and posted on the Alton website.

Alton representative reported that winter activity at the river and cavern sites is quiet. The representative said discussions about the project continue with individuals and organizations and with the Mi'kmaq.

Recent media about Alton was shared with CLC members, including Alton's response to an opinion-editorial published in The Chronicle Herald.

Alton representatives to attend the Youth Expo in Brookfield on April 22, 2017.

Feedback from CLC member that Alton newsletter mailed to local residents in January 2017 was well received.

Meeting adjourned at 8 pm.

May 15

Meeting was called to order at 6:15 pm.

Members toured the research lab at Dalhousie University, Faculty of Agriculture, where salinity tolerance testing taking place on Striped bass eggs, larvae and juveniles.

Alton representative shared recent updates to the Alton website, www.altonnaturalgasstorage.ca, such as addition of Frequently Asked Questions section, and provided an update on community activity.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

August 21

Meeting was called to order at 6:50 pm.

A representative of Ikanawtiket provided members with a presentation on the Shubenacadie River study taking place to examine the water quality of tributaries flowing into the river. The study is described in the January newsletter for Alton, pages 6 and 7.

An Alton representative shared information on Alton from the AltaGas quarterly results on July 27, 2017, that brining for cavern development is expected to begin in late 2017 or early 2018.

An Alton representative shared that the Environment section on the Alton website has been updated and includes a new slide deck to explain river monitoring, research and environmental protections. See <https://altonnaturalgasstorage.ca/environment/>

An Alton representative provided an update on local community activities including support for the new playground at Dennis Park in Stewiacke.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

September 25

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm. The Agenda was approved.

Charles Lyons, the Vice-President for Environment, Health, Safety, Security and Sustainability for AltaGas, provided an overview of environmental protections and safeguards at Alton. A summary of the protections is available in a presentation on the Environment page of the Alton website.

A CLC member asked what emergency training would be provided to local first responders for the storage facility. Lyons said educational sessions can be provided to local first responders, in coordination with other training they already receive on natural gas. Training would take place as the in-service date for Alton gets closer.

CLC members asked about the routing for the natural gas line to connect the Alton site with the Maritimes & Northeast Pipeline. Lyons explained that the route is still being finalized. See the [Regulatory section](#) of the Alton website for information on the pipeline environmental assessment which was approved in May 2013.

CLC members shared that many people do not understand that the brining process can not take place when natural salinity in the Shubenacadie River estuary reaches 28 parts per thousand. Brining operations are required to stop when river salinity reaches this level. It was suggested that additional communication to the public is needed on this matter. An Alton representative referred CLC members to the information on salinity on page 2 in the January newsletter for background, as well as the Fish Monitoring Trial information including the two-minute video.

An Alton representative shared that the September community newsletter is posted to the Alton website and distribution of print copies underway to local residents and stakeholders.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30.

October 23, 2017

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Tim Church provided an overview of his presentation on natural gas and Alton at the Core Energy Conference held in Halifax earlier in October.

Highlights from the presentation include:

- Natural gas can drive energy savings, reduce GHGs and provide choice for consumers in Nova Scotia.
- Natural gas is providing low-cost energy solutions in Nova Scotia to thousands of homes, businesses, large industry (including many of the province's largest employers), health care facilities and universities.
- Natural gas burns cleaner than coal or fuel oil, emitting 30 per cent less carbon dioxide than fuel oil and 50 per cent less than coal.
- Approximately \$69 million has been invested to develop Alton to date. And with completion the project will represent an investment of more than \$130 million in rural Nova Scotia.
- More than 70 Nova Scotia companies have provided goods, services and labour to Alton since 2014.

A member of the committee brought forward views from local residents near the Alton river site regarding ongoing traffic and activity.

A member of the CLC asked if alternative use for the brine had been explored. A representative of Alton directed members to the [FAQ](#) on the Alton website that includes a Q and A on this matter in the Salt Brine section.

A member of the CLC asked about the temperature of the brine when it is released into the Shubenacadie River estuary. There is information on this matter in the [Exposure Pathway Assessment Framework document](#) on the Alton website. The brine temperature is monitored and the brine will be held at air temperature in the brine pond for several hours before it is released.

An Indigenous representative of the CLC asked if Alton Gas directly approached a local community member regarding his opinions published in local newspapers about the project. Alton provided information to the Chronicle Herald and the Truro Daily News and has posted the information to the project website (*The geology of gas storage* and *Explaining natural gas storage*) in response, and had contacted the community member previously.

An Indigenous CLC member also inquired if Alton Gas has reached out to other individuals and groups opposed to the project to directly inform them of the project activities, to hear their concerns and to address them.

Members of the CLC asked questions about the use of natural gas in fleet vehicles. A link to the website for the [Canadian Natural Gas Vehicle Alliance](#) was subsequently shared with members.

A representative of Alton shared that the September newsletter has an article on page 2 about mud build-up in the Alton channel, and how it was expected to occur since brining has not yet started. Members can refer people with questions about the mud to that article.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

December 11

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm. The Agenda was approved.

An Alton representative shared that an upcoming meeting early in 2018 will include a review of the [Committee's Terms of Reference](#). The committee is to review its Terms of Reference on an annual basis. The group discussed the effectiveness of the meetings and should continue to bring forward ideas to improve meetings.

An Alton representative said the project continues to share information with the community and to respond to media inquiries about the project. Recent postings to the Alton website include a [natural gas report](#) from the Canadian Gas Association, facts about Alton and natural gas in Nova Scotia, and a guest commentary shared with local media.

To help community members receive timely information on the project, a new link – Sign up to receive project updates - has been added to the project's landing page www.altonnaturalgasstorage.ca

A discussion took place regarding winter road conditions and safe snow plowing at Alton's river site.

An Indigenous CLC member asked about the testing on Striped bass eggs, larvae and juveniles at Dalhousie University. The testing, conducted in a purpose-built lab at Dalhousie University, is described in the September 2017 (page 3) and January 2017 (page 3) community newsletters for the project. The testing confirms project assumptions that as designed the project should not negatively impact Striped bass. The testing protocol is described in [Alton Natural Gas Storage Estuarial Environmental Monitoring & Toxicity Testing](#). The protocol was approved by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans as part of the monitoring plan for Alton.

Alton representatives expressed thanks to the members of the committee for volunteering their time during 2017 to provide input and feedback.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.