



Grand River Conservation Authority

Minutes - General Membership Meeting

Date: November 23, 2018
Time: 9:30 am
Location: Auditorium
Grand River Conservation Authority
400 Clyde Road, Box 729
Cambridge, ON N1R 5W6

Members Present Les Armstrong, Bruce Banbury, Robert Bell, Elizabeth Clarke, Brian Coleman, Bernie Corbett, Susan Foxtan, Guy Gardhouse, Helen Jowett, Cindy Lunau, Kirk McElwain, Jane Mitchell, Joe Nowak, Vic Prendergast, Wayne Roth, Mike Salisbury, Pat Salter, Sandy Shantz, Shirley Simons, George Stojanovic, Warren Stauch, Chris White, George Wicke

Regrets Geoff Lorentz, Fred Morison, David Neumann

Staff Karen Armstrong, Dave Bennett, Dwight Boyd, Beth Brown, Joe Farwell, Samantha Lawson, Sonja Radoja, Tracey Ryan, Lisa Stocco, Sara Wilbur, Pam Walther-Mabee, Krista Bunn, Cameron Linwood, Stephanie Shifflett, Eowyn Spencer

1. Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order by the Chair at 9:38 a.m.

2. Roll Call and Certification of Quorum – 13 Members constitute a quorum (1/2 of Members appointed by participating Municipalities)

The Secretary-Treasurer called the roll and certified a quorum with 23 Members present. A total of 23 Members attended the meeting.

3. Chair's Remarks

Chiar's remarks were given during the Source Protection Authority meeting, and are copied here for reference.

The Chair welcomed the Members and made the following remarks:

- I would like to personally thank each and every member for a great four years on this board. This board has accomplished a lot and we hope to see many of the same faces returning, but we do understand that change is sometimes necessary to help pave the way forward. With the new Conservation Authorities Act, and a newly updated Strategic Plan, staff are in a confident position to move forward and continue its work in improving the health of the Grand River watershed, and its residents. For any members who may not be returning to the board after this meeting, on behalf of all of the staff of the GRCA, you are sincerely thanked and wished the absolute best on your future paths. Also, all members here today are invited to attend the Chair's Reception, following the December meeting at approximately 11 a.m. December 14th, in the office of the CAO here at GRCA head office.
- The GRCA Annual Kid's Christmas party is happening on Sunday, December 9, from 2 p.m. until 4. Board members and families are encouraged to attend to meet Santa and enjoy some crafts for kids.
- On November 2, Joe Farwell and I met with Cambridge MPP Belinda Karahalios to discuss GRCA projects and continued partnership with the province. On November 30, we are scheduled to meet with Amy Fee, and December 6, with Marwan Tabbara. Ms. Fee and Mr. Tabbara are the MPP and MP for Kitchener South-Hespeler, respectively.
- Conservation Ontario Council is scheduled for December 10. Joe Farwell and I will attend on behalf of GRCA.
- The Grand River Conservation Foundation has started its annual Give Grand Campaign. Donations for this campaign can be given as seasonal gifts, and funds go towards planting one tree, or developing one metre of trail. Contact the Foundation directly to make a donation.

4. Review of Agenda

18-204

Moved By Susan Foxtton

Seconded By Guy Gardhouse

THAT the agenda for the General Membership Meeting of November 23, 2018, be approved as circulated.

Carried

5. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interests made in relation to the matters to be dealt with.

6. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

18-205

Moved By Chris White

Seconded By Shirley Simons

THAT the minutes of the General Membership Meeting of October 26, 2018, be approved as circulated.

Carried

7. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.

8. Hearing of Delegations

There were no Delegations.

9. Presentations

There were no Presentations.

10. Correspondence

10.1 Hon. Sylvia Jones, MPP - Bill 148 Response

18-206

Moved By Jane Mitchell

Seconded By Sandy Shantz

THAT Correspondence from Hon. Sylvia Jones, MPP regarding GRCA's comments on Bill 148 be received as information.

Carried

11. 1st and 2nd Reading of By-Laws

None.

12. Reports:

12.1 GM-11-18-118 - Chief Administrative Officer's Report

- Orientation packages and presentations for new members are being prepared, and J.Farwell requested direction from members regarding the timing of the orientation. Following board direction, a half-day orientation session will be scheduled for new members in January. All board members will be welcome to attend.
- B.Corbett asked about the plan for conservation areas revenue for the 2018 season given the amount by which revenue to-date has exceeded the budget. J.Farwell responded that operating costs also increase with increased attendance, and that any surplus revenue is placed in a stabilization reserve for the conservation areas.

- G.Stojanovic commented that this is the second year that the levy for City of Hamilton will not be adjusted per the December 21, 2017 order of the Mining and Lands Commissioner, and suggested that the Authority consider adding a recommendation to the budget resolution that other participating municipalities be made aware of possible changes to their apportionment of the 2019 levy allocations in the event that the City's appeal of the decision is successful. K.Armstrong responded that annual levy notifications to participating municipalities will include information on the City of Hamilton's levy apportionment and potential implications for the other municipalities.

18-207

Moved By Bernie Corbett

Seconded By Warren Stauch

THAT Report Number GM-11-18-118 – Chief Administration Officer's Report be received as information.

Carried

12.2 GM-11-18-110 - Cash and Investment Status

18-208

Moved By Kirk McElwain

Seconded By Wayne Roth

THAT Report Number GM-11-18-110 Cash and Investment Status – October 2018 be received as information.

Carried

12.3 GM-11-18-116 - Financial Summary

18-209

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Chris White

THAT the Financial Summary for the period ending September 30, 2018 be approved.

Carried

12.4 GM-11-18-113 - Reserves 2018

- S.Radoja presented an overview of the 2018 Reserves, including operating, capital and land sale reserves, specifically highlighting what is driving increases and decreases in specific accounts.
H.Jowett commended GRCA and S.Radoja for managing the reserves in a strategic manner. Additionally, H. Jowett noted that J.Farwell mentioned GRCA's request to use reserves to fund master plans to B.Karahalios during her recent visit to GRCA.

- Board members had questions regarding expansion possibilities at existing conservation areas, funding a new area to better accommodate the existing population, restoration work and more efforts towards conservation of environmentally sensitive lands, review of and funding options for master plans for GRCA lands, information systems vulnerability and protection, and funding staff positions from reserves.
- S.Radoja and J.Farwell provided the following additional information:
 - An overall strategy for GRCA passive lands will include consideration of expansion possibilities
 - Conservation authorities now fall under the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks. Acceptable use guidelines for the Land Sale Reserve date back to the 1990s, and board approval is required to request funding for projects outside of approved uses
 - A request has been submitted to MECP to use the Land Sale reserve to fund a master plan for one passive land area. Alternate funding options will be considered if the request is denied.
 - The Information Services department is aware of potential issues with internal systems, and are progressive in protecting against threats. K.Armstrong added that the GRCA does have cyber insurance.
 - One staff position will be temporarily funded through a reserve fund and sustainable funding options will be reviewed.
- In regard to master plans for passive lands, M.Salisbury asked if GRCA should consider a new dedicated reserve fund for these projects. J.Farwell said that staff will review options and return to the board with information.

18-210

Moved By Susan Foxton

Seconded By Jane Mitchell

THAT the *Property and Liability Insurance* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance, less significant uninsured losses, and no interest to be allocated to this reserve for 2018;

AND THAT the *Building and Mechanical Equipment* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance, less expenses or any unspent budgeted building maintenance and equipment amounts be transferred to this reserve for future expenditures, and no interest to be allocated to this reserve for 2018;

AND THAT the *Small Office Equipment* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Personnel* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance, plus any NEER Rebate assessed by Worker's Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) less expenditures or accruals for sick leave, vacation, staff restructuring and/or termination of employees, and no interest be allocated to this reserve for 2018;

AND THAT the *Nature Centre* Reserves be maintained at amounts equal to opening balance, less expenses related to major maintenance of the Nature

Centre buildings, plus \$30,000 to Guelph Nature Centre Reserve for purposes of putting aside funding towards the construction of a new Guelph Nature Centre, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Information Systems and Technology* (formerly Computer Replacement) Reserve be maintained at a level where interest income and charge-out rates equal total operating and capital costs over the long run;

AND THAT the *Cottage Lot Program* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to the opening balance, plus unspent 2018 budgeted cottage lot expenses, less unbudgeted expenses related to EAB infestation, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Water Management Plan* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance, less expenses related to updating the water management plan, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Planning Enforcement* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance, plus any savings related to budgeted and unspent legal fees, less any expenses in excess of budget related to enforcement of planning regulations, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Property Rental* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance, less unbudgeted maintenance expenses related to rental properties, plus any unspent budgeted property repairs and maintenance expenses including demolition costs, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Forestry Management* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance plus transfers to reserve of timber revenues, less expenses related to forest management expenses (including Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) expenses) as budgeted (or forecast), plus interest;

AND THAT the *Cambridge Desiltation Pond* Reserve be maintained at an amount that reflects the funds advanced to the Authority by the City of Cambridge, less actual cost to maintain the pond, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Completion of Capital Projects* Reserve be maintained at an amount that reflects obligations under outstanding capital contracts, less payments;

AND THAT the *Gravel* Reserve be maintained at an amount that includes all gravel income to date, less eligible expenditures, consistent with the original or subsequent agreements with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Land Sale* Reserves be maintained at amounts that include the proceeds of land sales, less costs (including interest charges) incurred to prepare lands for sale, less net expenditures and/or borrowing authorized by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) and as per policy statement dated June 13, 1997, less unbudgeted hydro capital maintenance expenses, plus any repayment of the hydro loan, less spending on hazard tree management as approved by correspondence from MNR dated April 25th, 2018, less floodplain mapping expenses, plus interest;

AND THAT the *General Capital* Reserve be maintained at an amount which reflects the surplus transferred in from the former Dunnville Lock reserve, less expenditures for any Water Management Capital projects approved by the General Membership, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Conservation Areas Capital/Stabilization* Reserve be increased by \$300,000 representing an amount to be set aside for future capital projects, increased by any surplus generated by the Conservation Areas in 2018, and less spending for trail development at Dickson Wildlife area, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Gauge* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance less expenses related to gauge equipment and floodplain mapping projects as identified in the budget (or forecast) as applicable, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Watershed Restoration* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance, plus special project funding surpluses, less expenditures for wetland acquisitions or enhancements in the watershed, less expenditures for natural heritage restoration projects and conservation services watershed restoration projects as outlined in the budget (or forecast), plus interest;

AND THAT the *Water Control Structures* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to the opening balance, less any funding required for spending in excess of budget, plus any unspent major maintenance budget amount, plus any unspent operating budget amount that was to be funded from general levy, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Motor Pool Equipment Replacement* Reserve be maintained at a target level of approximately 25% of replacement cost of the Motor Pool fleet, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Motor Pool Insurance* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to the opening balance, plus interest, less significant uninsured losses.

Carried

12.5 GM-11-18-114 - Proposed 2019 Outdoor Education User Fees

T.Ryan presented an overview of GRCA's six nature centres, the educational programs provided at the centres, and the sources of funding and fee considerations for the programs. S.Foxton requested that the increase for PD camps be reconsidered, as the amount of the increase is insignificant. T.Ryan said that the fee for PD camps can be kept at the 2018 rate.

18-211

Moved By Susan Foxton

Seconded By Les Armstrong

THAT the proposed Outdoor Education User fees for School programs be approved and become effective on September 1, 2019 until June 30 2020, with the exception of the PD camp fee, which will remain at the 2018 rate.

AND THAT the proposed ski program fees and the Outdoor Education User fees for non-school programs become effective January 1, 2019.

Carried

12.6 GM-11-18-115 - 2019 Complimentary Membership Passes

J.Farwell advised that GRCA membership passes will be issued for retiring Board members for 2019, and encouraged all members to make use of the membership passes to enjoy nature and engage with conservation area staff.

18-212

Moved By Pat Salter

Seconded By Shirley Simons

THAT Report GM-11-18-115 – 2019 Complimentary GRCA Membership Passes be received as information.

Carried

12.7 GM-11-18-112 - Provincial Offences Officer Designations

S.Foxton asked if there is a full complement of staff in the planning department as she understood there was a staff shortage in the spring in that group.

J.Farwell responded that no incremental staff have been brought on, but that the designation of officers will allow current staff to complete more tasks.

18-213

Moved By Les Armstrong

Seconded By Elizabeth Clarke

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority designates Joao (John) Brum, Ashley Graham, Patricia (Trisha) Hughes and Ashley Rye as Provincial Offences Officers.

Carried

12.8 GM-11-18-111 - Environmental Assessments

18-214

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Chris White

THAT Report Number GM-11-18-111 Environmental Assessments be received as information.

Carried

12.9 GM-11-18-117 - Current Watershed Conditions

S.Shifflett presented the current watershed conditions, noting below normal temperatures for the last two months. A return to average conditions is anticipated for the winter, including both deep colds and warm melts through the season.

S.Shifflett also provided an overview of a recent fish kill at Shand Dam.

18-215

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By George Wicke

THAT Report Number GM-11-18-117 – Current Watershed Conditions as of November 14, 2018 be received as information.

Carried

13. Committee of the Whole

Not required.

14. General Business

There was no General Business.

15. 3rd Reading of By-Laws

None.

16. Other Business

- W.Stauch invited board members to register for the 2019 Heritage Day. The free event will be held at the Sanderson Centre in Brantford on February 15, 2019. The program will be finalized soon, and will feature a celebration of the Sanderson Centre's 100 year anniversary, and the 25th anniversary of the Grand River's Heritage River designation.
- W.Stauch asked for staff to comment on levels of chloride in drinking water from high use of salts on roads and sidewalks. D.Boyd said that staff can bring some information to the board. He added that the Region of Waterloo is aware of managing salt to protect drinking water, and has a progressive program in place to raise awareness of the issue. Other municipalities have similar programs to raise awareness. There was a brief discussion regarding possible alternative solutions.

17. Closed Meeting

18-216

Moved By Les Armstrong

Seconded By Sandy Shantz

THAT the General Membership enter a closed meeting to discuss a potential litigation matter.

Carried

18-217

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Les Armstrong

THAT the General Membership return to open session.

Carried

17.1 Minutes of the previous closed meeting

18-218

Moved By Les Armstrong

Seconded By Pat Salter

THAT the minutes of the previous closed session be approved as circulated.

Carried

17.2 Litigation or Potential Litigation

18-219

Moved By Susan Foxton

Seconded By Chris White

THAT Correspondence received November 6, 2018 regarding potential litigation that was the subject of the closed meeting of November 23, 2018, be received as information.

Carried

18. Next Meetings

- General Membership - December 14, 2018 at 9:30 a.m.
- Chair's Reception - December 14, 2018 at 11:30 a.m.
- Orientation Meeting for new members - To be scheduled for second week of January
- General Membership - January 25, 2019 at 9:30 a.m.

19. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:59 a.m.

18-220

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Shirley Simons

THAT the General Membership Meeting be adjourned.

Carried

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer