



Grand River Conservation Authority

Minutes - General Membership Meeting

Date:	December 14, 2018
Time:	9:30 am
Location:	Auditorium Grand River Conservation Authority 400 Clyde Road, Box 729 Cambridge, ON N1R 5W6
Members Present	Les Armstrong, Robert Bell, Brian Coleman, Jim Erb, Susan Foxton, Joan Gatward, Michael Harris, Helen Jowett, Geoff Lorentz, Cindy Lunau, Kathryn McGarry, David Neumann, Joe Nowak, Vic Prendergast, Pat Salter, George Stojanovic, Warren Stauch, Chris White
Regrets	Bruce Banbury, Jane Mitchell, Mike Salisbury
Staff	Karen Armstrong, Dave Bennett, Dwight Boyd, Nancy Davy, Joe Farwell, Samantha Lawson, Sonja Radoja, Tracey Ryan, Lisa Stocco, Sara Wilbur, Pam Walther-Mabee, Krista Bunn, Eowyn Spencer, Cam Linwood, Bryan McIntosh, Nathan Munn, Fred Natolochny, Ron Wu-Winter, Louise Heyming, Stephanie Shifflett, Kayleigh Keighan, Scott Robertson
Others	Kirk McElwain, Guy Gardhouse, Dan Lawrence

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)**

With 21 appointed members, the Secretary-Treasurer called the roll and certified a quorum with 17 Members present. A total of 18 appointed Members attended the meeting.

3. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed new and returning Members and made the following remarks:

- GRCA is awaiting confirmation of appointments for a few members, and we will have a full board early in the new year. Yesterday, Bernie Corbett, the board member from Haldimand for the past four years, called and asked to extend his appreciation to the board and staff for all the work of the GRCA. Mr. Corbett has been appointed to represent Haldimand on the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority.
- All members introduced themselves and shared where they are from and their interest in the GRCA board.
- A new member orientation session is scheduled for January 18, 2019. All current members are invited to attend.
- The Chair's Reception will be held today, December 14, at 11:30 a.m. in the Office of the CAO.

4. Review of Agenda

18-221

Moved By Susan Foxton

Seconded By Pat Salter

THAT the agenda for the General Membership Meeting of December 14, 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

18-222

Moved By Les Armstrong

Seconded By Joe Nowak

THAT the minutes of the General Membership Meeting of November 23, 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

- One additional correspondence item from Conservation Ontario regarding the transfer of responsibility under the Conservation Authorities Act was distributed to members.
- S.Foxton sought clarification that Conservation Authorities Act responsibility will be split between two ministries. J.Farwell confirmed that functions and responsibilities under the Act associated with the management and control of natural hazards will continue to be exercised by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, and that all other duties, functions and responsibilities under the Act will be exercised by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks.

C.Lunau joined the meeting at 9:51 a.m.

18-223

Moved By Vic Prendergast

Seconded By Chris White

THAT Correspondence from the Office of the Premier of Ontario regarding GRCA's comments on Bill 148, and from Conservation Ontario regarding the duties, functions and responsibilities under the Conservation Authorities Act, be received as information.

Carried

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

None.

12. Reports:

12.1 GM-12-18-119 - Proposed 2019 Conservation Area User Fees

- P.Walter-Mabee provided a presentation which highlighted the GRCA's recreational activities available at 12 conservation areas, and outlined the 2018 revenue, membership sales, number of visits to the areas, recent and upcoming infrastructure projects, and the proposed 2019 user fees.
- C.White inquired about the decision to eliminate individual park passes. P.Walter-Mabee responded that the individual passes are not compatible with the automatic gates now in use at some parks and that individual passholders were advised of the change early in 2018. At that time, operations staff provided a user survey to passholders and spoke directly to members of the public when individual passes were purchased to advise them of the changes for 2019.
- P.Salter commented that she would like to see yurts and glamping made available at campsites in the future.

18-224

Moved By Les Armstrong

Seconded By Brian Coleman

THAT the proposed 2019 Conservation Area User Fees be approved and become effective as of January 1, 2019.

Carried

12.2 GM-12-18-127 - Budget 2019 - General Levy Apportionment Update

- S.Radoja provided background information for members, stating that the City of Hamilton has requested budget information in a format not previously contemplated at the GRCA. GRCA has provided a response to Hamilton in the requested format. The City of Hamilton's revised request for information coincides with the Mining and Lands Commissioner decision issued on December 21, 2017, stating the agreement that was used for apportionment of the City of Hamilton's levy since the early 2001 was not valid. The City of Hamilton filed an application to the Divisional Court for judicial review.
- In the absence of a valid agreement, the GRCA followed levy Regulation 670/00 which resulted in the City of Hamilton's apportioned share of Grand River Conservation Authority's General Levy to increase substantially, and applies to the 2018 and 2019 budgets respectively. The City of Hamilton appealed the GRCA's 2018 levy apportionment and this is being held in abeyance pending the outcome of their judicial review of the December 21, 2017 Mining and Lands Commissioner decision.
- Members discussed potential implications to the GRCA budget, and S.Radoja advised members that other member municipalities will be kept informed regarding the levy allocations.
- G.Stojanovic raised a concern regarding the current board composition. J.Farwell advised the board that the current composition was struck by an Order in Council in 1994, and that changes to the CA Act since then have given the responsibility of CA board composition to member municipalities. A report will be brought to the board in the first quarter of 2019 with information regarding the background and a suggested process for reviewing the composition of this board. J.Farwell noted that the board composition is a separate issue from the levy.

18-225

Moved By Warren Stauch

Seconded By Kathryn McGarry

THAT Report Number GM-12-18-127 - Budget 2019 – General Levy Apportionment Update be received as information.

Carried

12.3 GM-12-18-126 - Budget 2019 - Notice to Municipalities

- Members were advised that the budget notice to be sent on January 21, 2019 will include a budget package that has not yet been presented to the board.

18-226

Moved By Susan Foxton

Seconded By Vic Prendergast

THAT a letter be sent to participating municipalities on January 21, 2019 advising them of the General Membership meeting to be held on February 22, 2019 to approve the 2019 Budget and the municipal levy;

AND THAT the GRCA 2019 Budget (draft #2), which will be presented at the General Membership meeting on January 25, 2019 be included with the letter.

Carried

12.4 GM-12-18-123 - Cash and Investment Status

18-227

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Chris White

THAT Report Number GM-12-18-123 Cash and Investment Status – November 2018 be received as information.

Carried

12.5 GM-12-18-121 - Financial Summary

18-228

Moved By Susan Foxton

Seconded By Joe Nowak

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

Carried

12.6 GM-12-18-120 - Environmental Assessments

18-229

Moved By Pat Salter

Seconded By Kathryn McGarry

THAT Report Number GM-12-18-120 Environmental Assessments be received as information.

Carried

12.7 GM-12-18-122 - Living Snow Fence

- L.Heyming provided a presentation regarding Living Snow Fences, a part of the Rural Water Quality Program in partnership with local municipalities,

agencies, and private landowners. The program allows a GRCA forestry specialist to organize the planting of trees to act as a snow barrier on private farmland along roadways. Living snow fences decrease snow drifts on to roads, improve winter driving safety, and improve crop growth for farmers.

- Members discussed some farmers using corn as a snow fence, RWQP funding opportunities, and minimum tree order or fence length in order to qualify for the program.
- More information regarding Living Snow Fences can be found on GRCA's website.

18-230

Moved By Michael Harris

Seconded By Warren Stauch

THAT Report Number GM-12-18-122 – Living Snow Fences be received as information.

Carried

12.8 GM-12-18-125 - Guelph Lake Plantation Restoration Project

- R.Wu-Winter provided a presentation regarding the Guelph Lake forest project that is currently underway and will improve the long-term ecological health of the conifer plantation forests on GRCA lands near Guelph Lake. Plantation thinning establishes good conditions for a variety of trees, and allows larger trees to remain vigorous, while allowing smaller trees and new growth to thrive. Forest restoration projects increase species and structural diversity and resiliency, improve wildlife habitat, and create a sustainable source of timber.
- Members discussed phasing closures of the area affected by the project, potential impact on recreational users of the property, trails and bike routes within the project area, and keeping the public informed during the project.

18-231

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Kathryn McGarry

THAT Report Number GM-12-18-125 – Guelph Lake Plantation Restoration Project be received as information.

Carried

12.9 GM-12-18-124 - Current Watershed Conditions

S.Shifflett presented a year-in-review of weather conditions across the watershed highlighting the following items:

- Extreme highs and lows were seen throughout 2018, including ice storms and melts in the winter, and dry spells in the summer.
- Environment Canada and MNR are predicting normal winter temperatures for Southern Ontario, but ups and downs are to be expected.

- Flood preparedness meetings for 2019
- Salt management project information from the Region of Waterloo was provided to members

18-232

Moved by Kathryn McGarry

Seconded By George Stojanovic

THAT Report Number GM-12-18-124 – Current Watershed Conditions as of December 5, 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

- The Chair noted that on November 29th, GRCA hosted its annual staff appreciation night. This is a fun event for board members and staff, and all are encouraged to attend when it comes around next year. Many staff members were recognized at the event for reaching milestones, and H. Jowett thanked J.Farwell on behalf of the board for his 30 years of service to the GRCA.
- The Chair introduced and thanked GRCA staff members present at the meeting.
- W.Stauch reminded members of the Heritage Day Workshop being held in Brantford on February 15, 2019.

17. Closed Meeting

- The Chair inquired if there were any questions pertaining to the closed meeting items and members indicated there were not. Thus, the General Membership did not enter a closed session.

17.1 Minutes of the previous closed meeting

18-233

Moved By Les Armstrong

Seconded By Susan Foxton

THAT the minutes of the closed session of November 23, 2018, be approved as circulated.

Carried

17.2 Labour relations or employee negotiations

18-234

Moved By Susan Foxton

Seconded By Les Armstrong

THAT the salary ranges for non-union positions be increased by 1.50% effective January 1, 2019.

Carried

18. Next Meetings

- New Member Orientation - Friday, January 18, 2019 at 9:30 a.m.
- General Membership - Election of Officers - Friday, January 25, 2019 at 9:30 a.m.
- Annual General Meeting - Friday, February 22, 2019 at 9:30 a.m.

19. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

18-235

Moved By Kathryn McGarry

Seconded By Vic Prendergast

THAT the General Membership Meeting be adjourned.

Carried

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer