



**Grand River Conservation Authority
Addendum - General Meeting**

Friday, August 23, 2019

9:30 a.m.

Auditorium

Grand River Conservation Authority

400 Clyde Road, Box 729

Cambridge, ON N1R 5W6

	Pages
10. Correspondence	
<i>d. City of Guelph - 2020 Budget Direction</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>e. Julie McCann - Residential Wind-down</i>	<i>3</i>
12. Reports:	
<i>j. GM-08-19-85 - Provincial Update to Conservation Authorities</i>	<i>4</i>

August 16, 2019

Grand River Conservation Authority

Re: 2020 Budget Process Guideline Established

This is to provide you with Council's approved [2020 budget strategy](#) which considers and proactively plans for a number of expected fiscal challenges as a result of provincial legislative changes, the city's continued effort to achieve sustainable capital funding and elimination of the infrastructure gap, providing new resources to implement the objectives of Council's forthcoming Strategic Plan and previously committed service level enhancements all while maintaining affordable tax/user fee rates to deliver the service excellence that our community expects. This strategy report was approved by Council on Monday, July 22, 2019.

2020 Base Budget Development

- 2020 inflationary gross expenditure target of 2.0%
- Revenue target increase to be reflective of current market conditions
- 2020 operating impacts from 2019 approved capital projects to be incorporated as projects are completed.
 - Example - If project is expected to be completed in June 2020 – phase in 50% of operating impact in 2020 and remaining 50% in 2021
- No growth or service enhancement budget requests will be recommended to Council unless it is considered urgent based on audit or service review or it's been identified as a 2020 priority in the Strategic Plan

2020 Budget Reduction Strategy

As part of the aforementioned strategy, Council also passed the following motion: "That staff be directed to provide correspondence to the City's local boards and shared services requesting a budget reduction strategy be implemented with options for Council to consider as part of the 2020 budget approval."

The city departments are considering budget saving opportunities that are sustainable options that include but are not limited to:

- Services not identified as a priority through Council's Strategic Plan
- Services that score above average satisfaction through the Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Services that are not a legislated requirement or are delivering at service levels above legislated levels

We encourage each local board, agency and service delivery partner to consider these and any other options that may be relevant to assist in mitigating the 2020 budget deliberations this fall.

Budget Submission Deadlines

The City respectfully requests 2020 Budget submissions by the following dates:

Operating Budget

- Draft operating budget information is due September 13, 2019
- Final operating budget and all budget documentation is due by October 4, 2019
- Presentations to Council are due by October 18, 2019

Please see below the schedule of budget presentations to Council.

	Date	Item	Start time
1	Wednesday, October 23, 2019	Budget Presentation and Public Delegations for Capital Budget	6:00 PM
2	Wednesday, October 30, 2019	Presentation and Public Delegations for Non-tax Supported Operating	6:00 PM
3	Thursday, November 7, 2019	Council Deliberations and Approval of Capital Budget and Non-tax Supported Operating Budget	4:00 PM
4	Monday, November 18, 2019	Presentation of Tax Supported Operating Budget	4:00 PM
5	Wednesday, November 20, 2019	Presentation of Local Boards and Shared Services Budgets	4:00 PM
6	Wednesday, November 27, 2019	Public Delegations for Tax Supported Operating Budget and Local Boards and Shared Services Budgets	6:00 PM
7	Tuesday, December 3, 2019	Council Deliberations and Approval of Tax Supported Operating Budget	2:00 PM
8	Thursday, December 5, 2019	Council Deliberations and Approval of Tax Supported Operating Budget – if required	2:00 PM

Please advise as soon as possible if you plan to participate/submit a presentation. Presentations will be PowerPoint format and submitted to Ron Maeresera, Senior Corporate Analyst of Finance, Client Services, Corporate Services by email: ronald.maeresera@guelph.ca 519-822-1260 x 2231.

The Procedural By-law limits presentations to a maximum of ten minutes.

If you have any further questions please don't hesitate to call Ron Maeresera at the number listed above.

Thank you for your continued cooperation.

Sincerely,

Tara Baker

Tara Baker, GM Finance & City Treasurer,
Corporate Services, Financial Services
T 519-822-1260 x 2084
E tara.baker@guelph.ca

TB/wm

c. Mayor Cam Guthrie, CAO Scott Stewart, City of Guelph Executive Team, City Clerk, Stephen O'Brien

August 20, 2019

Attn: GRCA Board of Directors
c/o Samantha Lawson

In response to your email dated Friday, August 16, 2019, please distribute the following correspondence to the members at the meeting to be held on Friday, August 23, 2019 regarding the demolition of the Kagera House, our residence since May 1, 1998.

We noted in your report, GM-08-19-76, that the primary reason for demolishing the property and its buildings is cited as due to “the house has had persistent trouble with water in the basement”. This problem is only occasionally an issue during a quick spring thaw. It is a century old stone home built in the late 1800s with an earthen floor. All century old stone homes were constructed with similar basements. We truly hope that this is not a reason to demolish all century homes.

In addition, the GRCA management and housing personnel have never indicated before that our house was uninhabitable due to the situation in the basement. You have collected monthly rent cheques from us since our arrival on the property dated May 1, 1998.

We have incurred expenses over the years regarding the maintenance and improvement of the home and property with the hope of remaining residents and business owners on this property. In your initial report on closing down the tenancy program, it was cited the expectation was 10 – 15 years for its completion. This timeframe would have enabled us to have our children complete their education, locate a suitable property for both our families and the business while also maintaining and stewarding the property.

We are asking for the Board to reconsider the final decision on the Kagera Property and its demolition. We are asking you to consider allowing us to remain as tenants until such time as we locate and secure an alternate appropriate home for both our family and our business.

We were only informed of the meeting last Friday with the arrival of the email. Due to the timing with summer vacations, a trip with my children had already been planned to a cottage for the week following. As a result, no one can represent or be present at the meeting as a delegate.

We do, however, ask you to consider this correspondence at this time with the members and fellow Board members. We thank you for your due diligence and continued respect in this matter.

Sincerely, Julie McCann and Zoltan Marton

Grand River Conservation Authority

Report number: GM-08-19-85
Date: August 23, 2019
To: Members of the Grand River Conservation Authority
Subject: Provincial Update to Conservation Authorities

Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-08-19-85 – Provincial Update to Conservation Authorities be received as information.

Summary:

Not applicable.

Report:

On August 16, 2019, Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, Jeff Yurek, issued a letter to Conservation Authorities and municipalities across Ontario. The letter reiterates the Province's previously introduced changes to the Conservation Authorities Act requiring Conservation Authorities (CAs) to focus on core programs and services and requests that all CAs begin preparations and planning to wind down programs that fall outside the scope of core programs.

The correspondence, as well as a press release issued by Conservation Ontario and a background information sheet are attached to this report for information. As the Minister notes in his letter, he is reviewing relevant legislation and regulations that govern Conservation Authorities, and suggests he will be seeking input on upcoming regulatory changes. GRCA staff will be seeking clarification from MECP and from Board members regarding next steps.

Financial implications:

Not applicable.

Other department considerations:

Not applicable.

Submitted by:

Samantha Lawson
Chief Administrative Officer

Ministry of the Environment,
Conservation and Parks

Ministère de l'Environnement,
de la Protection de la nature et des
Parcs



Office of the Minister

Bureau du ministre

777 Bay Street, 5th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 2J3
Tel.: 416-314-6790

777, rue Bay, 5^e étage
Toronto (Ontario) M7A 2J3
Tél.: 416.314.6790

August 16, 2019

To whom it may concern:

As you know, on June 6, 2019, our government passed the *More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019*, which updated the *Conservation Authorities Act*. We made these legislative changes to improve public transparency, consistency, and accountability in conservation authority operations. These changes will give greater control to individual municipalities on conservation authority programs and budgets. These changes will also require conservation authorities to re-focus their efforts on the delivery of programs and services related to their core mandate, such as those related to:

- Risk of natural hazards;
- Conservation and management of CA owned or controlled lands;
- Drinking water source protection;
- Protection of the Lake Simcoe watershed;
- Other programs or services, as prescribed by regulation.

Furthermore, over the coming months, I will be reviewing all of the relevant legislation and regulations that govern Ontario's conservation authorities to explore even more opportunities to re-focus their efforts and to ensure they are best serving the interests of the people of Ontario.

In the meantime, I request that you review and consider your own conservation authority's activities and begin preparations and planning to wind down those activities that fall outside the scope of your core mandate. I also encourage you to refrain from developing new policies that are not aligned with your mandate or with provincial policies. Finally, I ask that while we are undergoing this review and updating the legislation and regulations that you do not proceed with any increases to your fees or levies.

I appreciate the work of conservation authorities and the feedback that was provided on the legislative changes. I look forward to receiving further input and recommendations as we move forward with upcoming regulatory and policy proposals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeff Yurek".

Jeff Yurek
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Province Moves to Constrain Conservation Authorities' Programs and Services

NEWMARKET (August 19, 2019) Conservation authorities and Conservation Ontario are stunned by a letter that the Province circulated recommending that conservation authorities start shutting down any programs not related to their 'core mandate' as described by the Province in the proposed changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act* earlier this year.

Conservation authorities (CAs) and their member municipalities received letters from Jeff Yurek, Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP), addressed to 'whom it may concern' on Friday evening (August 16) recommending that CAs start to wind down any programs not directly related to their 'core mandate'.

"This is confusing and extremely disappointing," said Kim Gavine, General Manager of Conservation Ontario, the Association which represents Ontario's 36 conservation authorities. Conservation authorities provide a wide variety of watershed management programs in partnership with all levels of government. These programs help to reduce or prevent the costly and devastating damages of flooding, protect water resources, help to reduce pollution from getting to the Great Lakes and support healthy watersheds.

"We've been caught completely by surprise," Gavine said. "We've been working for months in good faith with the government to make a number of planning and development approvals streamlining changes to support their agenda to eliminate the deficit and implement the Housing Strategy." There was no consultation with Conservation Ontario or the CAs about this letter before it was circulated.

"I can only assume they are trying to avoid criticism about downloading conservation authorities' programs and services to municipalities," she said. Conservation authorities' provincial funding for natural hazards was reduced by 50 percent earlier this year.

Gavine pointed out that what the government is proposing isn't taking into consideration the fact that the CA Act is still a work in progress.

"The changes being proposed by the government to the *Conservation Authorities Act* haven't even been proclaimed and we are only starting discussions about the regulations that go with the legislation which will specify which actual programs and services are mandatory," she said. After mandatory programs and services are agreed upon by the Province and conservation

authorities, then CAs can begin to negotiate the remaining non-mandatory programs with their member municipalities.

“It was a very pre-emptive move that disregards the process and relationship that conservation authorities and municipalities have together.”

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For more information:

Kim Gavine, General Manager, Conservation Ontario

905.895.0716 ext 231 (Cell) 905.251.3268 kgavine@conservationontario.ca

Jane Lewington, Marketing & Communication Specialist

905.895.0716 ext 222 (Cell) 905.717.0301 jlewington@conservationontario.ca

www.conservationontario.ca

MECP August 16th Letter to Conservation Authorities and Member Municipalities – Background Information for Conservation Authorities

NOTE: These notes are intended to be background for conservation authorities and Conservation Ontario in the event of inquiries about our media release.

Context for Conservation Authorities and Conservation Ontario

On Friday, August 16th, Jeff Yurek, the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) circulated a letter to all CAs and member municipalities which requests conservation authorities to 'review and consider [their] own conservation authority's activities and begin preparations to wind down those activities that fall outside the scope of [the CAs'] core mandate.

On Monday, August 19th, CO issued a media release criticizing the Province for moving to constrain CA programs and services before discussions about mandatory programs and services have been completed between CO and the Province.

The Letter from the Province

The first part of the letter refers to a 'core mandate' which reflects what is framed by the amended *Conservation Authorities Act (formerly Bill 108)* as mandatory programs and services.

The mandatory programs and services are related to: the risks of natural hazards (e.g. flooding), conservation and management of CA lands, drinking source water protection, Lake Simcoe Protection Act, and, programs and services related to the authority's responsibilities under an Act as prescribed by regulation.

The second part of the letter suggests that conservation authorities should start to "wind down" programs if they are not mandated. It also encourages CAs to 'refrain from developing new policies that are not aligned with [CAs'] mandate or with provincial policies.

There are concerns with this suggestion.

1. Consultation on mandatory programs has to happen before 'winding down' any programs

- We have been anticipating provincial consultations for the development of the regulations that will define these mandatory programs and services and what specifically is considered to be captured under these.
- Right now, we do not know the details of specific programs and services that are mandated. For example, a new regulation would specify what programs are eligible for funding under natural hazards, such as floodplain mapping, flood warnings, development review, enforcement, etc.
- We don't want increased risk to public safety or increased liabilities to the province, municipalities and CAs due to lack of funding for critical programs and services.
- The Province, municipalities and conservation authorities need to have detailed discussions before these mandatory program regulations can be drafted and finalized.

- As the province now contributes less than 8% of the conservation authorities' total budget, we believe that the CA Boards and their participating municipalities should be allowed the time to consider the full implications to their watersheds before reducing any programs or freezing fees and levies.

2. Conservation authorities and member municipalities need time to consult and decide which CA programs and services the municipalities value.

- The amended CA Act allows all conservation authorities to discuss establishing MOUs and agreements with our municipalities for non-mandated programs.
- The Act specifies that CAs can have “Municipal programs and services” and “Other programs and services”. Municipal programs and services are supported by an MOU or agreement between a CA and an individual municipality. Other (or non-mandatory) programs and services are recommended by the watershed Board as advisable and levy can be utilized only through an agreement with the municipalities.
- It is premature for conservation authorities to wind down programs without knowing what's covered by the mandatory program regulation and what 'non-mandatory' programs and services require agreements with our municipalities.
- To reach agreements for individual municipal MOUs and the non-mandatory programs and services, we need time to dialogue with our municipalities about what they value. In terms of non-mandatory programs and services, the proposed regulations will outline requirements for agreements as well as determine the transition period for all of this to be accomplished in a measured and responsible way.