



Grand River Conservation Authority Minutes - General Membership Meeting

Date: June 25, 2021
Time: 9:30 am
Location: GRCA Zoom Virtual Meeting
Link to be distributed via email prior to meeting

Members Present Les Armstrong, Bruce Banbury, Robert Bell, Richard Carpenter, John Challinor II, Brian Coleman, Bernie Corbett, Jim Erb, Susan Foxtan, Guy Gardhouse, Joan Gatward, Michael Harris, Helen Jowett, Daniel Lawrence, Geoff Lorentz, Ian MacRae, Kathryn McGarry, Jane Mitchell, Joe Nowak, Jerry Smith, Warren Stauch, Bruce Whale, Chris White

Regrets Marcus Adili, Kevin Davis, Cathy Downer
Staff Samantha Lawson, Karen Armstrong, Dwight Boyd, Beth Brown, Krista Bunn, Nancy Davy, Brandon Heyer, Sonja Radoja, Lisa Stocco, Pam Walther-Mabee, Rob Anderson, Katelyn Lynch, Eowyn Spencer, Ron Wu-Winter

Others Annie Cote-Kennedy, Laura Anders, and Jason Thompson representing the Grand Valley Trails Association

1. Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order by the Chair at 9:37 a.m.

2. Certification of Quorum

The Secretary-Treasurer certified quorum with 19 Members present. A total of 23 Members attended the meeting.

3. Chair's Remarks

The Chair made the following remarks in the preceding Source Protection Authority meeting and they are copied here for ease of reference:

- On June 18, the Provincial government announced a cabinet shuffle that included several new appointments and portfolios. The GRCA is pleased to welcome the Honourable Dave Piccini as the newly appointed Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, as well as the Honorable Greg Rickford, in his newly

merged role as the Minister of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry. Minister Rickford also remains appointed as the Minister of Indigenous Affairs. The Chair also thanked Minister Yakabuski and Minister Yurek for their time in these roles

- On June 21, the Chair attended a Conservation Ontario Council meeting, where a highlight of the agenda was reviewing their comments for submission to the Province for the phase 1 proposed regulatory changes to the Conservation Authorities Act

4. Review of Agenda

21-90

Moved By Warren Stauch

Seconded By Michael Harris

THAT the agenda for the General Membership Meeting 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 Meetings

J.Erb and J.Mitchell joined the meeting at 9:38 a.m.

21-91

Moved By John Challinor II

Seconded By Les Armstrong

THAT the minutes of the General Membership Meeting of May 25, 2021 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

- The Board heard from Annie Cote-Kennedy from the Grand Valley Trails Association regarding access for trail usage at Elora Gorge Conservation Area. The delegation provided a background of current and proposed trail access for GVTA members, identified challenges with existing access points, and noted that the GVTA is continuing to work with GRCA staff to find a solution.
- Ms.Cote-Kennedy highlighted that the GVTA is supportive of an annual usage fee for GVTA members, entering into an access agreement with the GRCA, and assuming responsibility for trail maintenance. The delegation also highlighted a proposed potential option to relocate access for GVTA members.
- The Chair thanked the delegation for attending the meeting and presenting their information. W.Stauch, I.MacRae, and B.Corbett indicated their support of staff continuing discussions with the GVTA to come to a mutually agreeable solution, and

S.Foxton noted that the Board should hear a staff review of the options as proposed by the delegation.

- A staff review is included the Board report at agenda item 12.10.

9. Presentations

There were no Presentations.

10. Correspondence

21-92

Moved By Ian MacRae

Seconded By Les Armstrong

THAT Correspondence from the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry regarding 2021-2022 Water Erosion Control Infrastructure funding be received as information.

Carried

10.1 Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry - 2021-2022 Water Erosion Control Infrastructure funding notification

B.Coleman and B.Bell joined the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

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

None.

12. Reports:

12.1 Minutes of the Ad-Hoc Conservation Authorities Act Committee - June 15, 2021

21-93

Moved By Ian MacRae

Seconded By Bruce Whale

THAT the Minutes of the Ad-hoc Conservation Authorities Act Committee meeting held on June 15, 2021 be received as information.

Carried

12.2 GM-06-21-49 - Environmental Registry Posting 019-2986 - Regulatory Proposal (phase 1) under the Conservation Authorities Act

S.Lawson provided a detailed presentation regarding the phase 1 regulatory changes under the Conservation Authorities Act as proposed by the Province, which included the following key highlights:

- A brief overview of changes to the CA Act over the last six years
- An overview of the current proposed updates, which include changes to mandatory programs and services where levy dollars can be applied, non-mandatory programs delivered on behalf of municipalities, and non-mandatory programs as decided by the Authority, as well as governance updates that include the requirement for community advisory boards

- The impact of the proposed changes, including changes to programs and services and current funding models, and creating and implementing agreements with watershed municipalities to support identified programs
- A detailed transition plan as required by the updated CA Act, that outlines the working plan for how the GRCA will come into compliance with the updated regulations by January 1, 2022
- An overview of GRCA's comments on the proposed updates, which were developed by staff following review, and incorporated comments provided by the Board at the May 28 meeting, and the Ad-Hoc CA Act Committee. Comments are due to the Province on June 27, 2021

Board members discussed the proposed updates and GRCA's proposed response. Key concerns with the updated regulations as proposed by the province included the following:

- Information related to invasive species
- Timelines required to come into compliance with the updated regulations
- Challenges with creating and implementing agreements with a participating and non-participating municipalities within the Grand River watershed
- The impact the proposed regulations will have on existing programs and services

Board members also noted the importance of continued communication with the Province, noting that the Province has newly appointed Ministers of Environment, Conservation and Parks, and Natural Resources and Forestry. The Chair noted that congratulatory letters will be sent to the new Ministers, and will include requests for them to meet virtually with the GRCA Chair and CAO.

21-94

Moved By Susan Foxtan

Seconded By Ian MacRae

THAT Report Number GM-06-21-49 - Environmental Registry Posting 019-2986: Regulatory proposal (phase1) under the Conservation Authorities Act be received as information,

AND THAT Grand River Conservation Authority Report GM-06-21-49 be submitted to the Province through the Environmental Registry.

Carried

12.3 GM-06-21-43 - Conservation Ontario Governance Accountability and Transparency Initiative

21-95

Moved By Bernie Corbett

Seconded By Richard Carpenter

WHEREAS the provincial government has passed legislative amendments related to the governance of Conservation Authorities;

AND WHEREAS the Grand River Conservation Authority remains committed to fulfilling accountable and transparent governance;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority endorse the three key actions developed by the Conservation Ontario Steering Committee to update Conservation Authority By-laws, to report proactively on priorities, and to promote/demonstrate results;

AND THAT staff be directed to work with Conservation Ontario to implement these actions and to identify additional improvements and best management practices.

Carried

12.4 GM-06-21-42 - GRCA Human Resources Policy Update

21-96

Moved By Helen Jowett

Seconded By Warren Stauch

THAT the Human Resources Policies dated June 2021 be approved and implemented.

Carried

12.5 GM-06-21-52 - 2021 Foundation Member Appointments

21-97

Moved By John Challinor II

Seconded By Brian Coleman

THAT the following new Member be appointed to the Grand River Conservation Foundation for a term of three years:

- Ankur Gupta;

AND THAT the following Members be re-appointed to the Grand River Conservation Foundation for a term of three years:

- Floyd Davis
- Paul General
- Kathy Reston;

AND THAT the following Members be re-appointed to the Grand River Conservation Foundation for a term of one year:

- Joel Doherty
- James den Ouden

Carried

12.6 GM-06-21-41 - Cash and Investment Status

21-98

Moved By Jerry Smith

Seconded By Susan Foxton

THAT Report Number GM-06-21-41 – Cash and Investment Status – May 2021 be received as information.

Carried

12.7 GM-06-21-51 - Financial Summary for the period ending May 31, 2021

21-99

Moved By Joan Gatward

Seconded By Ian MacRae

THAT the Financial Summary for the period ending May 31, 2021 be approved.

Carried

12.8 GM-06-21-47 - Maintenance Agreement - County of Brant

21-100

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Joan Gatward

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority enter into a maintenance agreement with the County of Brant for the lands known as the Paris Properties described as Part of Lots 32,33,34 and 35, Concession 1, South Dumfries, Paris, County of Brant.

Carried

12.9 GM-06-21-46 - Provincial Offences Act Officer Appointments

21-101

Moved By Les Armstrong

Seconded By Ian MacRae

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority appoints Brad Kuntz and Kaitlyn Rosebrugh as Provincial Offences Act Officers to enforce section 29 of the Conservation Authorities Act.

Carried

12.10 GM-06-21-45 - Elora Gorge Conservation Area - Grand Valley Trails Association Access Request

- P.Walther-Mabee provided a detailed overview of the historic relationship with the Grand Valley Trails Association, and ongoing challenges related to access points at Elora Gorge CA
- Capacity management programs have been implemented at all GRCA conservation authorities due to increased visitation in a strategic effort to balance high visitation with the conservation of natural resources
- Illegal entry through unsanctioned access points at Elora Gorge is an ongoing challenge that results in trespassing and recurring property damage, and poses a significant risk to public safety. Staff are continually monitoring illegal access points and repairing damage
- Discussions between GRCA staff and the GVTA have included proposed alternate trail routes, which would move the trail outside of the conservation

area and ensure GVTA members are accessing Elora Gorge through existing designated entry points. The Elora Gorge is a pay for use conservation area. Conservation areas are required by regulations under the CA Act to have designated entry points

- The presentation also highlighted challenges with proposed solutions as presented by the delegation earlier in the meeting.
- GRCA staff are willing to continue discussions with the delegation to seek a mutually beneficial decision
- Board members discussed the information provided, and inquired about alternative trail options, alternative access points, property maintenance and available resources to handle occurrences of trespassing and repairing damage. P.Walther-Mabee responded to questions, noting that consideration of moving the trail outside of the park has been presented as an option, and that alternative solutions will continue to be explored
- The Chair highlighted that while this is an ongoing concern currently at Elora Gorge CA, the outcome will impact all GRCA properties that are accessed by the public for recreational use, adding that staff will continue discussions with the GVTA, and could include the municipality in a future meeting if required

21-102

Moved By Ian MacRae

Seconded By Bob Bell

THAT Report Number GM-06-21-45 – Elora Gorge Conservation Area - Grand Valley Trail Association Access Request be received as information.

Carried

12.11 GM-06-21-48 - GRCA Hunting Program Update

21-103

Moved By John Challinor II

Seconded By Ian MacRae

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority remove the Crawford Tract from the list of Grand River Conservation Authority properties that are available for permitted hunting effective September 1, 2021.

Carried

12.12 GM-06-21-44 - Emerald Ash Borer Strategy - Implementation Update

- R.Wu-Winter provided a presentation on the GRCA's Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) strategy and Hazard Tree Management program
- The presentation highlighted the devastating impact of the EAB since since it's appearance in the watershed in 2010, the implementation of a hazard tree risk program to better prioritize the risk associated with damaged trees, and the progress GRCA staff have made in the removal of hazard ash trees across the watershed

- The EAB strategy included the use of a chemical treatment for ash trees in the earlier stages of an EAB infestation, and some successes have been noted with the status of those trees
- Over 16 thousand hazard trees have been removed from GRCA properties over the past eight years by arboriculture and forestry staff
- The EAB Strategy has been funded by operating and reserve funds, as well as special MNRF approval for the use of land sale reserves to fund a portion of the project. Moving forward, some outstanding work remains
- Board members discussed the presentation and inquired about the future of ash trees and the Emerald Ash Borer, comparison to other invasive species seen in the past, and reforestation efforts to offset the significant loss of trees. R.Wu-Winter responded to questions, noted the GRCA's high annual tree-planting rate, and discussed the consideration of the future of ash trees in Ontario. It was noted that the future of the EAB remains unknown at this time, as does the need for ongoing treatment of ash trees
- G.Gardhouse requested that staff provide an update in the Fall on the status of the Gypsy Moth infestation. H.Jowett added a request for an information page that can be shared with members of the public inquiring about the infestation, and K.McGarry noted that Invasive Species Ontario is an excellent resource for information about the Gypsy Moth and other invasive species

21-104

Moved By Bernie Corbett

Seconded By Joan Gatward

THAT Report Number GM-06-21-44 – Emerald Ash Borer Strategy – Implementation Update be received as information.

Carried

12.13 GM-06-21-50 - New Hamburg Regulatory Floodplain Mapping Updates

21-105

Moved By Les Armstrong

Seconded By Bruce Banbury

THAT the updated New Hamburg Floodplain Mapping Update completed by the GRCA be endorsed for use when dealing with planning matters and permit applications in the Study Area.

AND THAT amendments to the Grand River Conservation Authority's Ontario Regulation 150/06 mapping be approved to incorporate the revisions to the floodplain and associated regulated allowance.

Carried

12.14 GM-06-21-53 - Current Watershed Conditions

- D.Boyd noted that high precipitation is expected in the coming days, which staff will be closely monitoring

21-106

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By John Challinor II

THAT Report Number GM-06-21-52 – Current Watershed Conditions as of June 15, 2021 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 noted that on a recent trip to Snyder's Flats CA, he noticed the waste bins were overwhelmed. S.Lawson noted that staff check the area on a regular basis, and that staff may consider adding additional receptacles
- J.Mitchell thanked the Board and staff for sharing condolences following her husband's recent passing
- R.Carpenter requested that a map of GRCA properties in Brantford and Brant be provided following the meeting

17. Closed Meeting

21-107

Moved By Helen Jowett

Seconded By Ian MacRae

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

Carried

The General Membership convened in closed session and the live stream was paused.

21-108

Moved By Richard Carpenter

Seconded By John Challinor II

THAT the General Membership return to open session.

Carried

The General Membership reconvened in open session. Due to a technical difficulty, the live meeting stream was not resumed.

17.1 Minutes of the Previous Closed Session

21-109

Moved By John Challinor II

Seconded By Ian MacRae

THAT the minutes of the previous closed session be received as information.

Carried

17.2 GM-06-21-C08 - Property Agreement - Township of Woolwich

21-110

Moved By Ian MacRae

Seconded By Brian Coleman

IN ORDER TO FURTHER THE OBJECTS of Grand River Conservation Authority by improving overland drainage on adjacent lands to mitigate potential erosion issues on Grand River Conservation Authority property;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Grand River Conservation Authority enter into a Mutual Drain Agreement under the Drainage Act with Andrew Martin and Milky Wave Inc. over those lands described as Part of Lot 101, German Company Tract, Township of Woolwich, Regional Municipality of Waterloo for the installation and maintenance of a drainage outlet.

Carried

18. Next Meeting

19. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:39 p.m.

21-111

Moved By Guy Gardhouse

Seconded By Susan Foxton

THAT the meeting of the General Membership be adjourned.

Carried

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer