



Grand River Conservation Authority

Minutes - General Membership Meeting

Date: December 18, 2020
Time: 9:30 am
Location: GRCA Zoom Virtual Meeting
This meeting was streamed live on GRCA's Board Webcast page

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, Rodrigo Goller, Michael Harris, Helen Jowett, Daniel Lawrence, Geoff Lorentz, Ian MacRae, Kathryn McGarry, Jane Mitchell, Joe Nowak, Warren Stauch, Bruce Whale, Chris White

Regrets Marcus Adili, Kevin Davis
Staff Samantha Lawson, Karen Armstrong, Dwight Boyd, Beth Brown, Nancy Davy, Brandon Heyer, Sonja Radoja, Lisa Stocco, Pam Walther-Mabee, Martin Keller, Eowyn Spencer, Rob Anderson, Stephanie Shifflett, Scott Robertson

1. Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order by the Chair at 9:42 a.m.

2. Certification of Quorum

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

3. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed the Members and made the following remarks:

- The Board effectiveness survey that was distributed on November 27 will be extended and recirculated following today's meeting.
- Staff had anticipated that a report regarding considerations for returning to in-person meetings would be prepared for the December meeting. Due to the recent increase in covid cases and competing priorities, that report has been deferred to a future

meeting to allow staff time to review and consider options and requirements for a safe return

- On November 29, the Chair joined Guelph MPP Mike Schreiner and Mayor Kathryn McGarry on the banks of the Grand in Cambridge as part of a conference to urge the Provincial government to cancel or amend the proposed changes to the Conservation Authorities Act. As we now know, the legislation received Royal Assent on December 8th with schedule 6 intact. Samantha has a report on this later in the agenda.
- On December 10, the Chair participated in a Facebook live event hosted by Tim Louis, MP for Kitchener-Conestoga to discuss how the community is working to fight climate change, and to highlight potential impacts of the provincial legislation changes under Schedule 6 of Bill 229.
- Welcome Bryan McIntosh as a new member of GRCA's Management Committee in his role as Manager of Information Management, Technology and Business Solutions. Bryan is taking over the position from George Sousa, who is retiring at the end of this year.
- The Chair added a note of thanks to GRCA staff and the Board for their resilience during the past year, and for the honour of holding the position of Chair for the past five years

4. Review of Agenda

20-172

Moved By Richard Carpenter

Seconded By Susan Foxtan

THAT the agenda for the General Membership Meeting of December 18, 2020 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

20-173

Moved By Ian MacRae

Seconded By Rodrigo Goller

THAT the minutes of the General Membership Meeting of November 27, 2020 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

9.1 Conservation Areas Year End Update

- P.Walther-Mabee presented an overview of 2020 Conservation Area operations, highlighting extended closures as a result of the pandemic, steps taken to re-open the parks as provincial regulations allowed, and safety precautions and changes to regular operations that were implemented to mitigate risks to staff and the public. New technology was developed and implemented to help manage capacity problems that emerged early on in the re-opening phase.
- B.Heyer continued the presentation, highlighting capital projects completed in 2020 and an overview of ongoing construction and maintenance within the conservation areas
- Board members discussed the impact the pandemic had on the conservation areas, the significant increase in visitation in both the conservation areas and passive lands, safety precautions, the importance of connecting with nature, and lessons learned to continue improving conservation area operations
- Board members thanked GRCA staff for working so diligently to continue safe operations throughout a busy season
- C.White noted that increased visitation highlighted some areas of concern relating to passive lands and thanked staff for going over and above to respond to the challenges this season presented, adding that the importance of conservation areas should be highlighted to Ministries and outside organizations as we adapt to new legislation

10. Correspondence

20-174

Moved By Ian MacRae

Seconded By Jane Mitchell

THAT Correspondence from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, Township of Centre Wellington, City of Brantford, City of Waterloo, Melancthon Township, Township of North Dumfries, Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, Township of Wilmot and Township of Guelph/Eramosa regarding Schedule 6, Bill 229: Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 (Budget Measures) be received as information.

Carried

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

None.

12. Reports:

12.1 GM-12-20-94 - Chief Administrative Officer's Report - Update on Bill 229: Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 (Budget Measures)

- S.Lawson provided a detailed overview of amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act through Bill 229, which received Royal Assent on December 8, 2020
- Amendments were made to a number of items which will have a significant impact on Conservation Authorities. The full impact of the amendments will continue to be assessed and considered as regulations under the Act are yet to be announced. Some changes were enacted immediately, and implications are being considered
- Board members discussed the impact of the changes, highlighting areas of concern relating to Ministerial Zoning Orders (MZO) under the Planning Act, liability for permits that are required to be issued in support of MZOs, governance and operational matters
- The Chair reminded Board members that operational interference is a significant concern, and noted that Members are to contact the CAO directly with respect to any operational concerns
- S.Lawson added that the Province has announced a working group that will include representatives from conservation authorities and other experts. The focus of the group will be to provide input to help the province develop regulations relating to mandatory programs and services, agreements with municipal partners, and how local members can participate through advisory boards. S.Lawson will keep the Board informed of any updates regarding this working group
- The Chair advised that an ad hoc committee of the Board will be established to help provide input and direction on adapting to the changes to the CA Act. After some discussion, it was decided that the committee will be appointed following the Election of Officers at the January meeting. Board members were asked to advise S.Lawson by email if interested in participating in the ad hoc committee

20-175

Moved By Kathryn McGarry

Seconded By Jim Erb

THAT Report Number GM-12-20-94 –Amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act through Bill 229 be received as information.

Carried

20-176

Moved By Chris White

Seconded By Richard Carpenter

THAT an ad hoc Governance Committee be struck to provide input and direction on adapting to changes to the Conservation Authorities Act and pending regulations.

Carried

12.2 GM-12-20-93 - Report of the Audit Committee

- There were no questions or concerns regarding this report

20-177

Moved By Bernie Corbett

Seconded By Jane Mitchell

THAT the Report of the Audit Committee be received as information.

Carried

12.3 GM-12-20-86 - Per Diems and Honorariums for 2021

- There was a question raised about compensation for the Chair and clarification of the honorarium was provided.

20-178

Moved By Ian MacRae

Seconded By Kathryn McGarry

THAT Report Number GM-12-20-86 – Per Diems and Honorariums for 2021 be received as information.

Carried

12.4 GM-12-20-89 - Cash and Investment Status

J.Challinor left the meeting at 10:39 a.m.

20-179

Moved By Richard Carpenter

Seconded By Susan Foxtton

THAT Report Number GM-12-20-89 Cash and Investment Status – November 2020 be received as information.

Carried

12.5 GM-12-20-92 - Financial Summary

- B.Whale inquired about the provincial contribution to the GRCA. S.Radoja noted that some year-to-date actual spending could be deferred at year end depending on the status of specific water control structure projects as provincial year-end does not align with the calendar year-end.

20-180

Moved By Susan Foxtton

Seconded By Richard Carpenter

THAT the Financial Summary for the period ending November 30, 2020 be approved.

Carried

12.6 GM-12-20-87 - Residential Wind-down Program: Status Update

- There were no comments or concerns regarding this report

20-181

Moved By Chris White

Seconded By Joan Gatward

THAT Report GM-12-20-87 - Residential Program Wind-down: Status Update be received as information.

Carried

12.7 GM-12-20-91 - Application to Intake 6 of the National Disaster Mitigation Program

- There were no comments or concerns regarding this report

20-182

Moved By Richard Carpenter

Seconded By Susan Foxtton

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority include a letter of support in the funding application to the National Disaster Mitigation Program (NDMP) to complete a variety of flood mitigation projects in the Grand River Watershed.

AND THAT matching funds totaling \$420,500 be drawn from a combination of the WECl grants, land sale proceeds reserve, gauge reserve, water control structures reserve, and IT reserve, as eligible.

Carried

12.8 GM-12-20-88 - Grand River Watershed Flood Warning System

- There were no comments or concerns regarding this report

20-183

Moved By Les Armstrong

Seconded By Bruce Banbury

THAT Report Number GM-02-20-88 – Grand River Watershed Flood Warning System be received as information.

Carried

12.9 GM-12-20-90 - Current Watershed Conditions

- S.Shifflett presented an overview of watershed conditions throughout 2020, highlighting flood events, water levels, annual temperatures and overall precipitation, GRCA reservoir levels and flow augmentation procedures over the past year
- J.Mitchell inquired about the status of the West Montrose reservoir project, and D.Boyd noted that it remains an option for future response to climate change and population growth

G.Lorentz left the meeting at 11:10 a.m.

20-184

Moved By Joe Nowak

Seconded By Les Armstrong

THAT Report Number GM-12-20-90 – Current Watershed Conditions as of December 9, 2020 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

- S.Lawson provided a note of thanks for H.Jowett and her five years of service as Chair of this Board. Board members echoed the note of thanks and congratulated H.Jowett for completing five terms as Chair
- W.Stauch inquired about Foundation donations. S.Lawson provided that the Give Grand Campaign is underway and that donations are being accepted through normal channels

17. Closed Meeting

20-185

Moved By Ian MacRae

Seconded By Richard Carpenter

THAT the General Membership enter a closed meeting to discuss a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition.

Carried

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

20-186

Moved By Richard Carpenter

Seconded By Kathryn McGarry

THAT the General Membership return to open session.

Carried

The General Membership reconvened in open session and the live meeting stream was resumed.

17.1 Minutes of the Previous Closed Session

20-187

Moved By Susan Foxton

Seconded By Richard Carpenter

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

Carried

17.2 GM-12-20-C08 - Property Disposition - City of Kitchener

The Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) owns approximately 99 acres of land in the City of Kitchener in the vicinity of the Fairway Road bridge over the Grand River. In 2010, the General Membership declared surplus 17 hectares of the landholdings. These lands are currently designated for residential and mixed use in the City of Kitchener Official Plan. The Waterloo Catholic District School Board has identified these lands for a future school site.

20-188

Moved By Bernie Corbett

Seconded By Bob Bell

IN ORDER TO FURTHER THE OBJECTS of the Grand River Conservation Authority by raising funds through the disposition of surplus lands;

THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority sell the lands described as Part of Lot 9, Plan 591, being Parts 6 to 8 on 58R-17541; City of Kitchener, being all of PIN 22713-5410 (LT); and Part of Lot 14, Registered Plan 591, together with an easement over Part Lot 14, Plan 591, Parts 7, 21 & 22, 58R-16576 as in WR541490; City of Kitchener, being part of PIN 22713-6067 (LT); to be more particularly described on a new Reference Plan to be deposited; to the Waterloo Catholic District School Board, at the offered rate of \$750,000 per acre based upon the total acreage of the Property (presently estimated at 17.5 acres) less \$35,000 in recognition of costs to be borne by the Buyer for a consent application. The parties agree that should the Property area be found to be more or less than 17.5 acres, then the Purchase Price shall be adjusted on closing accordingly.

Carried

18. Next Meeting

General Membership - January 22, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. - Election of Officers

19. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

20-189

Moved By Susan Foxton

Seconded By Les Armstrong

THAT the meeting of the General Membership be adjourned.

Carried

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer