



Grand River Conservation Authority

Minutes - General Membership Meeting

Date: March 26, 2021
Time: 9:30 am
Location: GRCA Zoom Virtual Meeting
Link to be distributed via email prior to meeting

Members Present Marcus Adili, Les Armstrong, Bruce Banbury, Robert Bell, Richard Carpenter, John Challinor II, Brian Coleman, Bernie Corbett, Cathy Downer, Jim Erb, Susan Foxton, 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 Kevin Davis

Staff Samantha Lawson, Karen Armstrong, Dwight Boyd, Beth Brown, Krista Bunn, Nancy Davy, Brandon Heyer, Sonja Radoja, Lisa Stocco, Pam Walther-Mabee, Ashley Graham, Martin Keller, Fred Natolochny, Sonja Strynatka, Eowyn Spencer

Others Ella Haley (Sustainable Brant/Better Brant)

1. Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order by the Chair at 9:30 a.m.

2. Certification of Quorum

The Secretary-Treasurer certified quorum with 22 Members present. A total of 25 Members attended the meeting.

B.Whale joined the meeting at 9:31 a.m.

3. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed the Members and made the following remarks:

- The Grand River Conservation Foundation Community Conservation Grant applications will launch in the coming days. Information on these Grants can be found on the Foundation's website
- A town hall event hosted by the GRCA Chair, and GRCF Chair, Wayne Fyffe, specifically for the donors to the Guelph Lake Nature Centre project will be held in April. This virtual meeting will provide a forum for donors and members of the public to ask questions about the project. An invitation will be sent to Board members

J.Mitchell joined the meeting at 9:33 a.m.

4. Review of Agenda

The Chair noted the following additions to the agenda:

- A registered delegation has been added to agenda item 8
- A staff presentation has been added to agenda item 9

21-48

Moved By John Challinor II

Seconded By Warren Stauch

THAT the agenda for the General Membership Meeting be approved as amended.

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

21-49

Moved By Bernie Corbett

Seconded By Bruce Banbury

THAT the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of February 26, 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

8.1 Ella Haley on behalf of Sustainable Brant/Better Brant - Re: Growing the Greenbelt

- Ella Haley provided a presentation for the Board on behalf of Sustainable Brant/Better Brant. The presentation included the organization's input for the Provincial consultation on Expanding the Greenbelt, highlighting study areas, urban river valleys, groundwater source protection, risks of development on natural and agricultural systems, and considerations of a proposed 'bluebelt'

area surrounding the greenbelt. The delegation requested that the GRCA consider the proposed option when providing input to the Province

- The Chair thanked the delegation for the presentation and Ms. Haley exited the meeting

9. Presentations

9.1 Conservation Areas 2021 Operations Update

- Pam Walther-Mabee provided a detailed presentation on plans for the 2021 operating season of GRCA's Conservation Areas, noting that staff are anticipating a busy season. The presentation highlighted modifications in operating plans based on pandemic related safety precautions and restrictions, and improvements made to systems implemented in the 2020 season.
- Modifications include a capacity management plan for each Conservation Area, limiting or pausing some services for the season, continued health and safety precautions to ensure staff and public safety, and online booking systems for camping and tubing. Conservation area programs and services have been thoroughly reviewed in relation to pandemic related requirements, and as a result some services will remain paused for the 2021 season. These services include: facility and boat rentals, shower facilities, food concessions, pools and splash pads.
- All Conservation Areas are expected to open on schedule on May 1, 2021. The online camping reservation system will open on April 6, 2021.
- P.Walther-Mabee also noted that there were no reported cases of COVID-19 in GRCA staff in the 2020 operating season
- Board members thanked P.Walther-Mabee for the presentation. In response to questions, P.Walther-Mabee noted that an alternate booking option will be available for those that cannot book online, and that washroom facilities will be opening in phases, as sections become open to the public
- There was brief discussion related to the possibility of rapid COVID testing within the parks, and it was noted that it would not be feasible to test patrons

10. Correspondence

None.

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

The First and Second readings occurred at agenda item 12.a

12. Reports:

12.1 GM-03-21-26 - Proposed Bylaw 1-2021

- K.Armstrong provided a detailed presentation highlighting the proposed changes to the GRCA Administrative By-Law. The key updates identified in the report are proposed as a result of recently enacted changes to regulations under the Conservation Authorities Act, and the addition of

making general membership meeting recordings available for viewing following meetings.

- Board members discussed the proclaimed changes and their impact on the GRCA and Board Governance. Discussion points highlighted Board concerns with changes in municipal and citizen representative appointments, term limits and rotations for Chair and Vice-Chair positions, potential conflicts with staff requesting exemptions to term limits, and clarity around the intended meaning of some of the proclaimed changes
- S.Lawson and K.Armstrong responded to questions, highlighting that exemption requests for representative appointments need to be submitted by municipalities, and requests for exemptions for term limits and rotations for Chair and Vice-Chair can come from CAs. Additionally, Conservation Ontario is currently seeking legal interpretation to help clarify the updated sections of the Act
- The Chair summarized the discussion with the following direction to GRCA staff: to seek clarity on the proclaimed changes related to board governance by consulting with Conservation Ontario and other conservation authorities, and report back to the Board with updated information. Once further information has been reviewed, a motion to request an exemption for term limits could be prepared by Past Chairs of the Board

21-50

Moved By John Challinor II

Seconded By Les Armstrong

THAT By-law 1-2021 be read a first, second and third time and adopted by the General Membership, to take effect on March 26, 2021;

AND THAT By-law 3-2020 be repealed on March 26, 2021;

AND THAT a copy of By-law 1-2021 be forwarded to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks and posted publicly on Grand River Conservation Authority's website.

Carried

12.2 GM-03-21-20 - Cash and Investment Status

21-51

Moved By Susan Foxtton

Seconded By Ian MacRae

THAT Report Number GM-03-21-20 Cash and Investment Status – February 2021 be received as information.

Carried

12.3 GM-03-21-27 - Financial Summary

S.Radoja provided an update on GRCA's application to the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy program, noting the following key points:

- The GRCA submitted applications for the CEWS benefit for 2020, with assistance from KPMG to ensure accuracy in the application process
- Some Ontario Conservation Areas have now received notice that they are not eligible to receive the benefit
- Funding has been received by the GRCA and is being held in a reserve fund while staff await confirmation of eligibility, in anticipation of potential clawbacks

K.McGarry joined the meeting at 10:35 a.m.

21-52

Moved By Geoff Lorentz

Seconded By Susan Foxtton

THAT the Financial Summary for the period ending February 28th, 2021 be approved.

Carried

12.4 GM-03-21-22 - Replacement Compact Backhoe and Tractor Purchase

- In response to a question, B.Heyer clarified that there was one bid submitted for this tender

21-53

Moved By Richard Carpenter

Seconded By Bruce Whale

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority purchase one 2021 JCB 3CX Compact Backhoe Loader from Advance Construction Equipment Limited in the amount of \$110,000.00 excluding HST, and one 2021 John Deere 4052R, 4WD tractor with a cab and front loader from Premier Equipment Limited in the amount of \$61,185.72 excluding HST.

Carried

12.5 GM-03-21-23 - Replacement Truck Purchase

21-54

Moved By Joan Gatward

Seconded By Ian MacRae

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority purchase one 2021 Dodge Ram 1500 Pickup Truck from Blue Mountain Chrysler in the amount of \$31,896.00 excluding HST, one 2021 Chevrolet Silverado 2500 Pickup Truck from Scherer's Chevrolet in the amount of \$42,741.55 excluding HST, and one 2021 Chevrolet Silverado 3500 Pickup Truck from Scherer's Chevrolet in the amount of \$45,029.45 excluding HST.

Carried

12.6 GM-03-21-24 - 2021 Road Surface Treatment Tender Results

21-55

Moved By Susan Foxton

Seconded By Geoff Lorentz

THAT Grand River Conservation Authority award the tender for the 2021 road surface treatments to Cornell Construction Limited of Brantford, Ontario up to the amount of \$265,100.00 excluding HST;

AND THAT a total project budget of \$292,000.00 excluding HST be approved.

Carried

12.7 GM-03-21-21 - Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines Regulation Permit Application 188/20

- F.Natolochny provided a detailed overview of a permit application that requires Board approval as it does not meet the guidelines for delegation approval. The presentation also highlighted that the Board approved policies for delegated approval do not include considerations for this specific application as it relates to slopes and erosion, and that a review of the policy may be required to address this gap
- Board members discussed the application and F.Natolochny responded to questions, noting that the conditional approval has been discussed and agreed to by the applicant

C.White was temporarily disconnected from the meeting at 10:54 a.m. S.Foxton assumed the Chair until C.White rejoined the meeting at 10:59 a.m.

21-56

Moved By Richard Carpenter

Seconded By Bob Bell

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority approve permit application number 188/20 subject to:

Conditions:

1. The submission and approval of final plans to the satisfaction of Grand River Conservation Authority staff.
2. Retaining walls to be designed and installed by a qualified professional as indicated in the Slope Stability Assessment report prepared by Chung and Vander Doelen Engineering Ltd.

Carried

12.8 GM-03-21-25 - Province of Ontario Consultation on Growing the Size of the Greenbelt

- N.Davy provided a detailed presentation relating to the Provincial consultation on Growing the Greenbelt. The presentation highlighted the expansion and study areas included in the proposed provincial plan, and

provided an overview of GRCA's submission of comments and key items for the province to consider before seeking further consultation

- Board members thanked N.Davy for the presentation, and discussed the proposed expansion area, and its impact on environmentally sensitive areas as well as areas outside of the proposed greenbelt

21-57

Moved By Jerry Smith

Seconded By Susan Foxton

THAT Report Number GM-03-21-25 Province of Ontario Consultation on Growing the Size of the Greenbelt be provided to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs through Environmental Registry Posting #019-3136.

Carried

12.9 GM-03-21-29 - March 2021 Flood Event

- D.Boyd provided a presentation on the recent weather event that triggered flooding across the Grand River watershed. The presentation highlighted the weather system that triggered the event, water flow levels, flood messages issued, areas that were more greatly affected by flooding, and recently updated floodzone mapping in Grand Valley and Waldemar which helped facilitate emergency response in those communities. D.Boyd also highlighted the GRCA website which provides real-time data and up-to-date flood warning information, and its role in reducing phone calls and inquiries during emergency response

21-58

Moved By Kathryn McGarry

Seconded By Brian Coleman

THAT Report Number 03-21-29 – March 2021 Flood Event be received as information.

Carried

12.10 GM-03-21-28 - Current Watershed Conditions

- B.Corbett inquired about Lake Erie levels and mitigation measures in place for those areas, as well as current conditions in the lower grand. D.Boyd shared the GRCA Lake Erie webpage that is available to the public in real time and highlights floodzones and shows predicted water levels of the lake, and noted that the Lake Erie water level does appear to declining. The lake level is affected by runoff in the upper lakes and precipitation in those areas

21-59

Moved By Bruce Whale

Seconded By Michael Harris

THAT Report Number GM-03-21-28 – Current Watershed Conditions as of March 17, 2021 be received as information.

Carried

13. Committee of the Whole

Not required.

C.White was temporarily disconnected from the meeting at 11:41 a.m. S.Foxton assumed the Chair until C.White rejoined the meeting at 11:43 a.m.

14. General Business

There was no General Business.

15. 3rd Reading of By-Laws

Completed at agenda item 12.a.

16. Other Business

- W.Stauch acknowledged Norah Chaloner, a long-time environmental advocate, who won this year's Hugh Whiteley Lifetime Achievement Award. Norah has been a valued member of the Heritage Working Group and was the Chair of the 2015 Heritage Day workshop
- L.Armstrong wished to share appreciation on behalf of Wilmot Township of Trevor Heywood and GRCA staff for their work on a wetlands project in New Hamburg. The Chair thanked L.Armstrong for the kind words
- G.Gardhouse inquired about the status of the Provincial working group for feedback related to changes to the CA Act, and S.Lawson responded that the group is meeting biweekly, and a smaller group meets weekly. The groups are very active and hopeful that regulations will be released soon. S.Lawson will keep the Board informed of pertinent updates as they occur

17. Closed Meeting

- The Chair asked if there were questions related to the Minutes of the previous closed session. Seeing that there were none, the Board did not enter a closed session and the Chair continued the meeting

17.1 Minutes of the Previous Closed Session

21-60

Moved By Richard Carpenter

Seconded By Guy Gardhouse

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

Carried

18. Next Meeting - April 23, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.

19. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:51 a.m.

21-61

Moved By Richard Carpenter

Seconded By Guy Gardhouse

THAT the meeting of the General Membership be adjourned.

Carried

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer