



Grand River Conservation Authority Minutes - General Membership Meeting

Date: May 28, 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, Kevin Davis, Cathy Downer, Jim Erb, Susan Foxtan, Guy Gardhouse, Joan Gatward, Michael Harris, Helen Jowett, Daniel Lawrence, Geoff Lorentz, Ian MacRae, Joe Nowak, Jerry Smith, Warren Stauch, Bruce Whale, Chris White

Regrets Kathryn McGarry, Jane Mitchell
Staff Samantha Lawson, Karen Armstrong, Dwight Boyd, Beth Brown, Krista Bunn, Nancy Davy, Brandon Heyer, Sonja Radoja, Lisa Stocco, Pam Walther-Mabee, Eowyn Spencer, Sonja Strynaska

1. Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order by the Chair at 9:31 a.m.

2. Certification of Quorum

The Secretary-Treasurer certified quorum with 23 Members present. A total of 24 Members attended the meeting.

3. Chair's Remarks

The Chair welcomed the Members and made the following remarks:

- On May 13, the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks posted their Regulatory Proposal Consultation Guide: Regulation Defining Core Mandate and improving governance, oversight and accountability of Conservation Authorities on the Environmental Registry of Ontario for 45 days to solicit public comments. You will recall that this is Phase 1 of the new regulations that the province is proposing in order to implement the changes to the Conservation Authorities Act that were passed through Bill 229 in December of 2020. Staff will be presenting later on in the

meeting to provide us with a high level overview of the guide, seeking preliminary feedback from the Board, and talking about next steps. A meeting of the ad-hoc committee appointed in January will be held on June 17 to further discuss the proposed regulations

- On May 18, Samantha and I attended a Chair's Meeting hosted by Conservation Ontario. The intent of this meeting was to discuss any preliminary concerns or questions CAs had in relation to the ERO posting by the MECP and to discuss messaging of the collective Conservation Authority press response.
- The GRCA was successful in obtaining funding from the National Disaster Mitigation Program (NDMP) for two projects. The first relating to updating hydraulic models and floodplain mapping for the Conestogo and Speed Rivers (downstream of dams) and the second project will be to support flood damage assessments in the communities of Grand Valley/Waldemar and Drayton
- Gypsy moth emergence has started across much of the watershed. The first aerial treatments at Brant and Pinehurst Conservation Areas occurred on May 25. Staff are anticipating that the second treatment will likely happen between May 31 and June 2. GRCA is only spraying GRCA properties.
- Seasonal camping may open on June 3, following provincial direction on the current stay-at-home order. Overnight camping, also subject to provincial restrictions, may be allowed to open on June 14.

4. Review of Agenda

21-73

Moved By Susan Foxton

Seconded By Bernie Corbett

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

21-74

Moved By John Challinor II

Seconded By Jerry Smith

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

There were no Delegations.

9. Presentations

K.Davis joined the meeting at 9:38

9.1 Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks ERO Posting - Phase 1 Regulatory Proposals

- S.Lawson presented an overview of the MECPs Environmental Registry posting for Phase 1 Regulatory proposals for changes to the Conservation Authorities Act.
- In December 2020, Bill 229 was passed by the Province, and included changes to the CA Act to address governance, transparency, accountability and consistency for Ontario conservation authorities. The Province announced that regulatory changes would be released in two phases, the first to include updates for mandatory programming and services, transition plans for complying with updated regulations, creation of advisory boards, and implementation of Section 29. The second phase, to be released at a later date, will include information on levy allocations and standards for the delivery of non-mandatory programs and services.
- S.Lawson advised that GRCA staff would be reviewing the guidelines in detail, and will be holding a meeting of the GRCA ad-hoc committee to gain further input to guide appropriate input to the province on the proposed regulatory changes. A detailed report will be brought to the June Board meeting for approval, prior to submitting comments to the Province.
- Board members discussed the potential impacts of the proposed changes in terms of mandatory and non-mandatory programming and requirements for municipal agreements, and provided input for consideration when drafting GRCA comments.
- C.White advised that if Board members have any additional feedback following the meeting that they can provide it to or discuss it with S.Lawson or himself for discussion at the Ad Hoc Committee meeting.

10. Correspondence

21-75

Moved By Les Armstrong

Seconded By Guy Gardhouse

THAT Correspondence from Kerry Game regarding a request for a permit fee refund be received as information.

Carried

10.1 Kerry Game - Permit fee refund request

- B.Coleman noted that the Board should consider granting the refund requested by Kerry Game.
- Board members discussed the request, and the Chair noted that permits for development in regulated areas are governed by legislation.
- In response to questions from the Board, S.Lawson reiterated that development regulations specify permit areas, and as such the permit is required for development within 120 metres of a watercourse or wetland. The GRCA has not refunded a permit in the past in this type of scenario, as these are legislated by the province.

21-76

Moved By Brian Coleman

Seconded By Richard Carpenter

THAT the General Membership grant a permit fee refund as requested in correspondence received from Kerry Game.

Defeated

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

None.

12. Reports:

12.1 GM-05-21-36 - Cash and Investment Status

21-77

Moved By Cathy Downer

Seconded By Ian MacRae

THAT Report Number GM-05-21-36 Cash and Investment Status – April 2021 be received as information.

Carried

12.2 GM-05-21-39 - Financial Summary

- B.Corbett inquired about grant funding for tree planting through the 2 Billion Trees program, and S.Lawson advised that Conservation Ontario is coordinating an application on behalf of Conservation Authorities, and the GRCA is supporting the application
- J.Challinor inquired about the forecast year-end surplus. S.Radoja highlighted that the forecast is currently based on actual savings from vacant staffing positions and may be adjusted based on the timing of positions being filled. Conservation Areas will be impacted by restrictions under the stay-at-home order. Planning may realize strong revenues as well, and other programs are currently on track to meet estimated targets.
- S.Lawson added that with the current restrictions in place the GRCA looks forward to the province entering phase 1 of the roadmap to reopen, so that camping can re-open for the season. Opportunities to open additional recreational activities with the Conservation Areas will be reviewed as provincial restrictions ease.

21-78

Moved By Joan Gatward

Seconded By John Challinor II

THAT the Financial Summary for the period ending April 30, 2021 be approved.

Carried

12.3 GM-05-21-38 - Provincial Offences Act Officer Appointments

21-79

Moved By Marcus Adili

Seconded By Richard Carpenter

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority appoints Spencer Roberts, Matt Beauvais, and Jacob Benham as Provincial Offences Act Officers to enforce section 29 of the Conservation Authorities Act.

Carried

12.4 GM-05-21-37 - Groundwater Monitoring in the Grand River Watershed

- Sonja Strynatka presented an overview of the Groundwater monitoring program in the Grand River watershed, highlighting the diverse and complex geology of the watershed, aquifer systems, and the importance of groundwater as an essential resource
- The presentation also provided information on changing quality and quantities of groundwater, with change being driven by climate change, land-use and increased population.
- S.Strynatka discussed the long-term monitoring of groundwater, which began in 2002 in partnership with the province. The data compiled from years of monitoring supports a proactive approach to water management, and helps inform resource management decisions.
- Board members thanked staff for the presentation, and discussed potential impacts of changes in groundwater levels, specific moraines and aquifers in the watershed, and municipalities that rely on groundwater for clean drinking water.
- There was further discussion about low water response in the watershed, and D.Boyd noted that the province is responsible for low water response in partnership with other stakeholders, and highlighted that the province has recently updated legislation relating to water-taking. The province looks more at the broad impact of permitted water-taking, while Source Water Protection looks more specifically at the impact of municipal water supply and viability. Groundwater research helps inform the source water program.
- W.Stauch added that the information presented today could be more widely shared with the public to increase knowledge and awareness of the importance of this program.

21-80

Moved By Richard Carpenter

Seconded By Marcus Adili

THAT Report Number GM-05-21-37 – Groundwater Monitoring in the Grand River Watershed be received as information.

Carried

12.5 GM-05-21-40 - Current Watershed Conditions

- D.Boyd provided a brief overview of current conditions, noting significantly dryer conditions than normal across the watershed but to lack of precipitation, and no appreciable rain during the spring snowmelt. Conditions are being carefully monitored. Reservoirs are currently lower than normal for this time of year, and will be carefully managed to maintain and augment flows throughout the season.
- J.Gatward inquired about criteria used to determine low water alerts, and D.Boyd noted that the team looks at a combination of precipitation, stream flow, and reservoir conditions. The low water response team is led by the province, and engages municipal stakeholders, landowners, and high-water use sectors to determine required responses.

21-81

Moved By Helen Jowett

Seconded By Bernie Corbett

THAT Report Number GM-05-21-40 – Current Watershed Conditions as of May 19, 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

None

17. Closed Meeting

21-82

Moved By Cathy Downer

Seconded By Warren Stauch

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

Carried

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

21-84

Moved By Les Armstrong

Seconded By John Challinor II

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

Moved By Jerry Smith

Seconded By Susan Foxton

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

Carried

17.2 GM-05-21-C04 - Easement - Region of Waterloo

Moved By Warren Stauch

Seconded By Bruce Whale

IN ORDER TO FURTHER THE OBJECTS of the Grand River Conservation Authority by assisting a member municipality in providing municipal services;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Grand River Conservation Authority grant an easement over a portion of lands municipally known as 131 Grand Avenue South AND 170 Water Street South in the City of Cambridge, described as Part of Lots 1-7, Plan 462 AND Part of Lots 8 to 12 Plan D11 formerly in the City of Galt, now in the City of Cambridge, Region of Waterloo, to be more particularly described on a Reference Plan to be deposited, for the installation and maintenance of an underground watermain, for the nominal consideration of \$2.00.

Carried

17.3 GM-05-21-C05 - Easement - City of Cambridge

Moved By Susan Foxton

Seconded By Marcus Adili

IN ORDER TO FURTHER THE OBJECTS of the Grand River Conservation Authority by assisting a member municipality in providing municipal services;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Grand River Conservation Authority grant an easement over a portion of lands described as Part of Lot 1, Concession 1, Beasley's Lower Block, in the Town of Preston, formerly in the Township of Waterloo, now in the City of Cambridge, Region of Waterloo, to be more particularly described on a Reference Plan to be deposited, for the installation and maintenance of a multi-use trail, for the nominal consideration of \$2.00.

Carried

17.4 GM-05-21-C06 - Snyder's Flats Conservation Area Update

Moved By Joe Nowak

Seconded By Marcus Adili

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority Board receive GM-05-21-C06 – Snyder's Flats Conservation Area Update as information.

Carried

17.5 Litigation or Potential Litigation

Motion 21-83 passed in closed session in accordance with *the Municipal Act* Section 239.6.

17.6 Security of Property - Verbal Report

No motion required.

18. Next Meetings

- Ad-Hoc Committee - CA Act Regulations - June 17, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. Following the May 28 meeting of the General Membership, the Ad-Hoc committee meeting was rescheduled to June 15.
- GRCA General Membership - June 25, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.

19. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 11:38 a.m.

21-89

Moved By Bernie Corbett

Seconded By Cathy Downer

THAT the meeting of the General Membership be adjourned.

Carried

Chair

Secretary-Treasurer