



## **Grand River Conservation Authority Minutes - General Membership Meeting**

Date: December 17, 2021  
Time: 9:30 am  
Location: GRCA Zoom Virtual Meeting

Members Present Les Armstrong, Bruce Banbury, Robert Bell, Richard Carpenter, John Challinor II, Brian Coleman, Bernie Corbett, Kevin Davis, Cathy Downer, Jim Erb, Susan Foxton, Guy Gardhouse, Joan Gatward, Helen Jowett, Daniel Lawrence, Ian MacRae, Kathryn McGarry, Joe Nowak, Jerry Smith, Warren Stauch, Bruce Whale, Chris White

Regrets Marcus Adili, Michael Harris, Geoff Lorentz, 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, Mark Anderson, Greg Meredith, Ron Wu-Winter, Tim Patterson, Stephanie Shifflett

### **1. Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

### **2. Certification of Quorum**

The Secretary-Treasurer confirmed quorum with more than half of the Members present. A total of 22 Members attended the meeting.

### **3. Chair's Remarks**

The Chair welcomed the Members and made the following remarks:

- On December 13, staff presented the draft 2022 budget to Wellington-North Council with Bruce Whale in attendance for the meeting.
- Also on December 13, Samantha and the Chair attended Conservation Ontario held a regular Council meeting. Key agenda items included the regulatory changes under the CA Act and best practices and plans for implementing the new regulations.
- The Chair thanked the Board and GRCA staff for their continued support and dedication in 2021, and provided best wishes for a happy holiday season.

### **4. Review of Agenda**

21-184

**Moved By** Bernie Corbett

**Seconded By** Brian Coleman

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

**Carried**

**5. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest made in relation to the matters to be dealt with.

**6. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

21-185

**Moved By** Warren Stauch

**Seconded By** Cathy Downer

THAT the minutes of the General Membership Meeting of November 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**

There were no Delegations.

**9. Presentations**

K.McGarry joined the meeting at 9:34 a.m.

**9.1 Outdoor Environmental Education Update - Opportunities and Challenges in Adapting to COVID-19**

- Lisa Stocco and Greg Meredith provided a presentation which highlighted how GRCA's outdoor environmental program adapted to changes in programming throughout the pandemic.
- L.Stocco provided a brief overview of the program, noting that the pandemic created opportunities to rethink the program while keeping it aligned with the GRCA's strategic priority of connecting people with the environment through outdoor experiences.
- G. Meredith continued the presentation, providing a detailed overview of the outdoor education program in a virtual setting. The presentation highlighted that pandemic related closures impacted GRCA Nature Centres as students shifted to virtual learning. Staff developed virtual curriculum-based programming that enabled providing environmental education to students in a meaningful way. The program provides a variety of synchronous and asynchronous programming, including live-streamed nature walks and tours, interactive presentations of wildlife and natural areas, and outdoor scavenger hunts and nature applications.

- While COVID restrictions and school closures created challenges, opportunities were created to create new ways of getting people out in nature. The pandemic highlighted the importance of nature and its positive impact on the overall health and well-being of students and individuals.
- Board Members thanked staff for the presentation, and discussed the positive role the Nature Centres and the environmental education program has on watershed communities and future environmental stewardship.
- Following a question from the Board, L.Stocco noted future programming will be impacted by regulatory changes under the CA Act, which will drive discussions on creating financially sustainable education programs and continued partnerships with watershed school boards.

21-186

**Moved By** Cathy Downer

**Seconded By** John Challinor II

THAT the Outdoor Environmental Education Program presentation be received as information.

**Carried**

## **10. Correspondence**

### **10.1 Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks - Chair and Vice Chair Term Limits and Rotations**

- Board Members briefly discussed the impact of the Minister's decision to deny the GRCA's request for exceptions to the term limits and rotation requirement of the Chair and Vice-Chair positions.
- The Chair noted that staff will seek clarification from the Province, and that a request can be submitted in future years as well, if determined advisable by the Board.
- Staff will bring additional information to the Board as it arises.

21-187

**Moved By** Les Armstrong

**Seconded By** Bruce Banbury

THAT Correspondence from the Honorable David Puccini, Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks regarding Chair and Vice Chair Term Limits and Rotations be received as information.

**Carried**

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

None.

## **12. Reports:**

### **12.1 Minutes of the Ad-Hoc Conservation Authorities Act Committee - December 3, 2021**

21-188

**Moved By** Bernie Corbett

**Seconded By** Jerry Smith

THAT the Minutes of the Ad-hoc Conservation Authorities Act Committee meeting of December 3, 2021 be received as information.

**Carried**

**12.2 GM-12-21-100 - Transition Plan - Requirement under Ontario Regulation 687/21**

- The Chair thanked staff for their work on putting the transition plan together.

21-189

**Moved By** Guy Gardhouse

**Seconded By** Ian MacRae

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority Transition Plan be approved;

AND THAT the Transition Plan be circulated to all participating municipalities and the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks.

**Carried**

**12.3 GM-12-21-89 - Chair's Report of the Audit Committee**

21-190

**Moved By** Susan Foxton

**Seconded By** Daniel Lawrence

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

**Carried**

**12.4 GM-12-21-90 - Budget 2022 Levy Notifications to Member Municipalities**

21-191

**Moved By** John Challinor II

**Seconded By** Joan Gatward

THAT a letter be sent to participating municipalities on January 24, 2022 advising them of the General Membership meeting to be held on February 25, 2022 to approve the 2022 Budget and the municipal levy;

AND THAT the GRCA 2022 Budget Draft #2, which will be presented at the General Membership meeting on January 28, 2022 be included with the letter.

**Carried**

**12.5 GM-12-21-95 - Labour Relations Steering Committee**

21-192

**Moved By** Warren Stauch

**Seconded By** Ian MacRae

THAT John Challinor be appointed as a Member of the ad-hoc Labour Relations Steering Committee.

**Carried**

21-193

**Moved By** Ian MacRae

**Seconded By** Susan Foxton

THAT an ad-hoc committee be formed, called the Labour Relations Steering Committee, comprised of the Chair, the Vice-Chair and one other to be named by the General Membership, and the Chief Administrative Officer;

AND THAT the role of this steering committee will be to provide direction to the management negotiating team, regarding the negotiation of a new Collective Agreement effective January 1, 2022.

**Carried**

**12.6 GM-12-21-93 - Per Diems and Honorariums for 2022**

21-194

**Moved By** Joe Nowak

**Seconded By** Daniel Lawrence

THAT Report Number GM-12-21-93 – Per Diems and Honorariums for 2022 be received as information.

**Carried**

**12.7 GM-12-21-97 - Cash and Investment Status**

21-195

**Moved By** Joan Gatward

**Seconded By** Bruce Whale

THAT Report Number GM-12-21-97 Cash and Investment Status – November 2021 be received as information.

**Carried**

**12.8 GM-12-21-98 - Financial Summary**

- B.Whale inquired as to whether staff have considered electrical or hybrid vehicles for fleets. S.Lawson noted that an environmental policy from an operational perspective will be developed as part of the future strategic plan update. K.Armstrong added that this consideration has been included in draft RFPs for upcoming vehicle purchases and that staff will be looking to incorporate this going forward.

21-196

**Moved By** John Challinor II

**Seconded By** Cathy Downer

THAT the Financial Summary for the period ending November 30, 2021 be approved;

AND THAT \$100,000 be transferred to the Personnel reserve;

AND THAT \$100,000 be transferred to the Forestry reserve.

**Carried**

**12.9 GM-12-21-94 - Firewood Supply Tender Results**

- B.Corbett inquired about why there was only one bid, and P.Walther-Mabee responded that no particular reason was readily evident. Past bidders were engaged and the required open bid process was followed in accordance with GRCA's purchasing policy.

21-197

**Moved By** Susan Foxton

**Seconded By** Richard Carpenter

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority award the tender for the supply of firewood for the 2022, 2023 and 2024 camping seasons to Gerber's Firewood for the estimated sum of \$481,380.00 over a three year period (excluding HST).

**Carried**

**12.10 GM-12-21-101 - Guelph Lake City Link Trail Improvements**

- B.Bell highlighted that this project was originally initiated by the Rotary Club of Guelph as part of their centennial projects, and noted that the full project was unable to be completed at that time. The overall project costs have increased over time and previously allocated funding is insufficient to complete the portion of the trail as noted in the staff report. B.Bell added that alternative funding sources are being investigated.
- Board Members discussed the project and inquired about original budget estimates. K.Armstrong shared that the original agreement with the Rotary Club was based on estimates as opposed to a full understanding of the scope and challenges specific to the location of the project.
- S.Lawson confirmed that the Rotary Club is aware of the shortfall, and is in agreement with proceeding with the recommendation of GRCA staff.

21-198

**Moved By** Brian Coleman

**Seconded By** Bob Bell

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority award the tender for the City Link Trail in Guelph to Roubos Farm Service Ltd. of Moorefield, Ontario for the amount of \$206,498.63 excluding HST;

AND THAT a total budget of \$230,000.00 excluding HST be approved.

**Carried**

**12.11 GM-12-21-92 - New Guelph Lake Nature Centre Update and Preliminary Redesign**

- L.Stocco and B.Heyer provided a presentation on the New Guelph Lake Nature Centre project.

- L.Stocco provided a brief overview of the history of the Nature Centre and work completed thus far on the learning grounds for the new Nature Centre.
- B.Heyer continued the presentation, highlighting details of the preliminary redesign of the new Nature Centre building and the overall project budget.
- Considerations for the redesign included available funding, maintaining accessible outdoor spaces, incorporating the importance of new technology and future program needs, appropriate ventilation as a pandemic precaution and general health and safety, as well as allowing for possible future expansion projects.
- Next steps for the project include moving forward with detailed drawings, seeking permit approvals, and prequalifying general contractors. It is estimated that the project will be ready to go to tender in late summer of 2022.

21-199

**Moved By** Bob Bell

**Seconded By** Cathy Downer

WHEREAS the GRCA remains committed to supporting the construction of a new Guelph Lake Nature Centre;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT staff proceed with obtaining revised detailed design plans, and seeking planning and permit approvals.

**Carried**

#### **12.12 GM-12-21-96 - LDD Moth Update**

- R.Wu-Winter provided a presentation on the LDD Moth, formerly known as the Gypsy Moth.
- The introduced invasive species are an aggressive species that have been found across the watershed for several years, and can cause significant damage to tree populations.
- The presentation highlighted the cyclical nature and trend activity of the moth, showing a spike in populations in 2020 and 2021. Typically, outbreak cycles are followed by a population crash due to biological factors and natural trends.
- In 2020 and 2021, some GRCA properties were sprayed to mitigate the damage caused by the moth, and information with respect to mitigating damage on private properties has been provided to the Board and is available on the GRCA's website.
- Board Members thanked R.Wu-Winter for the presentation and discussed the impact of the moth on trees throughout the watershed and inquired about anticipated trends for 2022.
- R.Wu-Winter responded to questions, highlighting that experts expect that populations will decrease in the near future due to the natural cycle of the moth.

21-200

**Moved By** Kathryn McGarry

**Seconded By** Cathy Downer

THAT Report Number GM-12-21-96 – LDD Moth Update be received as information.

**Carried**

**12.13 GM-12-21-91 - Grand River Watershed Flood Warning System**

21-201

**Moved By** Brian Coleman

**Seconded By** John Challinor II

THAT Report Number GM-12-21-91 – Grand River Watershed Flood Warning System be received as information.

**Carried**

J.Erb exited the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

**12.14 GM-12-21-99 - Current Watershed Conditions**

- S.Shifflett presented an overview of watershed conditions throughout 2021, highlighting flood events, water levels, overall precipitation, climate trends, GRCA reservoir levels and flow augmentation procedures over the past year
- B.Corbett inquired about high winds on Lake Erie, and S.Shifflett responded that high wind events are predicted to increase in frequency.

21-202

**Moved By** Richard Carpenter

**Seconded By** Jerry Smith

THAT Report Number GM-12-21-99 – Current Watershed Conditions as of December 8, 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**

**17. Closed Meeting**

21-203

**Moved By** Bernie Corbett

**Seconded By** Kathryn McGarry

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

**Carried**

21-204

**Moved By** Susan Foxton

**Seconded By** Bruce Banbury

THAT the General Membership return to open session.

**Carried**

#### **17.1 Minutes of the previous closed session**

21-205

**Moved By** Les Armstrong

**Seconded By** Kathryn McGarry

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

#### **17.2 Proposed or pending disposition or acquisition - Town of Erin**

21-206

**Moved By** Brian Coleman

**Seconded By** Cathy Downer

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 11 Concession 1 Erin being Part 2 Plan 61R21799 Town of Erin, municipally known as 5319 Eramosa-Erin Townline, Erin, comprised of 2.12 acres (0.86 hectares), to Holly Elizabeth Fischer and Benjamin James Stocker Fischer, at the offered price of \$1,107,000.00.

**Carried**

#### **18. Next Meetings**

General Membership & Election of Officers - January 28, 2022 at 9:30 a.m. - Election of Officers

#### **19. Adjourn**

Board Members wished Mayor Armstrong a Happy Birthday.

21-207

**Moved By** Kathryn McGarry

**Seconded By** Guy Gardhouse

THAT the meeting of the General Membership be adjourned.

**Carried**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

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Chair

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Secretary-Treasurer