

Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority

Board of Directors' Meeting

Board of Directors' Meeting No. BOD-07-24

Friday, July 26, 2024

120 Bayview Parkway, Newmarket

Meeting Minutes

Members Present

Councillor C. Riepma (Chair), Mayor R. Greenlaw (Vice Chair), Councillor A. Courser, Councillor A. Eek, Regional Chairman W. Emmerson, Councillor P. Ferragine, Regional Councillor B. Garrod, Mayor V. Hackson, Councillor S. Harrison-McIntyre, Councillor D. Le Roy, Mayor I. Lovatt, Mayor M. Quirk, Deputy Mayor and Regional Councillor T. Vegh

Members Absent

Councillor F. Drodge, Councillor C. Pettingill, Councillor M. Thompson, Councillor E. Yeo

Staff Present

D. Andrews, R. Baldwin, T. Barnett, R. Bolton, A. Brown, D. Campbell, M. Critch, A. Cullen, E. Daechsel, P. Davies, B. Ginn, L. Grzywniak, D. Goodyear, D. Lembcke, G. MacMillan, E. Green, P. Strong, C. Taylor, K. Toffan, T. Vukovic, K. Yemm

I. Land Acknowledgement

Chair Riepma acknowledged the Lake Simcoe watershed as traditional Indigenous territory and thanked all generations of Indigenous peoples for their enduring and unwavering care for this land and water.

II. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest or Conflict of Interest

None noted for the meeting.

III. Approval of Agenda

Moved by: S. Harrison-McIntyre

Seconded by: M. Quirk

BOD-098-24 **Resolved That** the content of the Agenda for the July 26, 2024 meeting of the Board of Directors be approved as presented. **Carried**

IV. Adoption of Minutes

a) Board of Directors' Meeting

Moved by: R. Greenlaw

Seconded by: D. Le Roy

BOD-099-24 **Resolved That** the minutes of the Board of Directors' Meeting, No. BOD-06-24, held on Friday, June 21, 2024 be approved as circulated. **Carried**

V. Announcements

- a) Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation Executive Director, Cheryl Taylor was pleased to announce that Kumi Canada has generously donated \$100K to the Connect Campaign to build a new Nature Centre at Scanlon Creek Conservation Area. She went on to note that not only has Kumi Canada made this incredible donation to the Connect Campaign, but Kumi has also very generously sponsored the new food pantry at the Nature Centre with \$2K for the 2024 summer camp season. This donation ensures summer camp participants have access to fruit, healthy snacks and drinks to keep them fuelled throughout the day.
- b) CAO Baldwin advised that notice was recently received from the Township of Ramara that Councillor Joe Gough would be replacing Councillor Sherri Bell as their representative on the Board of Directors. Due to the timing of this notification, there was insufficient time for staff to advise Councillor Gough of the July meeting. Accordingly, Councillor Gough will be invited to the next meeting in September.

VI. Presentations

a) Blue-Green Algal Blooms on Lake Simcoe

Dr. Brian Ginn, the Conservation Authority's Limnologist, delivered a presentation on the blue-green algal bloom reported in Lake Simcoe in July 2024. He noted that although there have been reports of isolated surface scums of blue-green algae in the past, these were of small size (3-4 feet in diameter) and usually occurred later in the year. This year's bloom was the earliest and most widespread algal bloom recently reported on Lake Simcoe, occurring in early July and being found lake-wide with the exception of Kempenfelt Bay. Conservation Authority staff reported the bloom to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks' Spills Action Centre, then monitored the bloom size and locations throughout July, working closely with partners at the provincial, regional, and municipal levels. Conservation Authority staff will continue to monitor lake conditions for a return of the bloom during the rest of the ice-free season and will research the causative conditions that led to this bloom.

Dr. Ginn went on to note that an invasive aquatic plant species, water soldier, has also been reported in the shallow waters of southern Cook's Bay.

To view this presentation, please click this link: [Blue-green-Algal-Blooms-on-Lake-Simcoe-Update](#)

Moved by: W. Emmerson

Seconded by: A. Courser

BOD-100-24 **Resolved That** the presentation by Limnologist, Dr. Brian Ginn, regarding an overview of the recent blue-green algal blooms found on Lake Simcoe be received for information. **Carried**

b) Second Quarter 2024 Financial Report and Year-End Forecast

General Manager, Corporate and Financial Services/CFO, Mark Critch, provided a presentation on the Second Quarter 2024 Financial Report and Year-End Forecast, advising there was an operational surplus in the amount of \$1,010K as of June 30th, made up mostly in Corporate Services and Planning and Development. He advised that the 2024 Annual Priorities and projects are progressing well and within budget, with many carrying over into 2025. Reserve activity is expected to be in line with the 2024 budget, and a surplus is forecast for year-end.

To view this presentation, please click this link: [Second-Quarter-2024-Financial-Report](#)

Moved by: P. Ferragine

Seconded by: T. Vegh

BOD-101-24 **Resolved That** the presentation by General Manager, Corporate and Financial Services/CFO, Mark Critch, regarding the Second Quarter 2024 Financial Report and Year-End Forecast be received for information. **Carried**

Included in the agenda was Staff Report No. 37-24-BOD regarding the Second Quarter 2024 Financial Report and Year-End Forecast.

Moved by: P. Ferragine

Seconded by: T. Vegh

BOD-102-24 **Resolved That** Staff Report No. 37-24-BOD regarding the Conservation Authority's Second Quarter 2024 Financial Report and Year-End Forecast be received for information. **Carried**

c) New Online Platform to Support Subwatershed Planning

Integrated Watershed Management Specialist, Pam Strong, provided an overview of the new Subwatershed Plans Online Platform, noting that subwatershed plans summarize watershed conditions, identify issues, outline solutions, and provide recommendations, all of which are critical to growth management and adhering to provincial legislation.

The Conservation Authority's existing plans were static, outdated documents. Staff sought input from subwatershed plan users and found that users would prefer an easy to navigate virtual platform with more concise information, with the ability to keep information current.

Conservation Authority staff then developed a framework for a web-based platform that includes information regarding water quality, water quantity, aquatic habitat, terrestrial natural heritage, lake health, climate change, and land use change on a watershed basis.

Working with Conservation Authority GIS staff to develop the platform and associated dashboards and maps, a soft launch in March 2024 allowed for review and input. The full platform launch took place in early July, with the expected framework completion by the end of 2024 with the development of plans and associated recommendations occurring through 2025 and 2026. Ms. Strong provided a demonstration of the [Subwatershed Plans Online Platform](#) for Board members.

To view this presentation, please click this link: [Subwatershed-Plans-Online-Platform Presentation](#)

Moved by: D. Le Roy

Seconded by: P. Ferragine

BOD-103-24 **Resolved That** the presentation by Integrated Watershed Management Specialist, Pam Strong regarding the new Subwatershed Plans Online Platform be received for information. **Carried**

Included in the agenda was Staff Report No. 38-24-BOD regarding the new Subwatershed Plans Online Platform.

Moved by: D. Le Roy

Seconded by: P. Ferragine

BOD-104-24 **Resolved That** Staff Report No. 38-24-BOD regarding the Conservation Authority's new subwatershed plans online platform be received for information. **Carried**

d) Updated Asset Management Plan for 2024

General Manager, Corporate and Financial Services/CFO, Mark Critch, provided an update to the Conservation Authority's Asset Management Plan for 2024. He explained that with the use of a Federal grant in 2020, staff contracted AW Hooker for a building condition assessment which identified an infrastructure gap of \$29.4M. Staff have worked diligently since that time to increase contribution levels and stabilize long-term replacement costs, without immediately seeking municipal funding support through the tax levy. Some basic principles and assumptions

used to evaluate the current state and develop a short- and long-term financial strategy included:

- a) 100% Long-term funding is not currently required;
- b) Inflation of 3% was used for this report;
- c) A dedicated Asset Management reserve with \$2.1M (December 2023) available for use through the rate stabilization fund as an option;
- d) Asset management planning typically assumes “like for like” replacements, meaning that the replacement asset cost is based on a similar quality asset being purchased;
- e) No new capital requests included in this asset management update, with the exception of the new Nature Centre at Scanlon Creek Conservation Area; and
- f) Natural ecological assets such as forests, wetlands, ecological land holdings are not covered in this analysis.

Staff then reviewed the following areas as options to decrease the previously identified infrastructure deficit of \$29.4 million:

- a) Asset Rationalization;
- b) Examine options around deferred revenue;
- c) Review and adjust useful life of assets to better align with industry best standards;
- d) Make progress on Land Disposition Strategy;
- e) Examine all external funding options, relying on increasing tax levy only as a last resort; and
- f) Revisit all lease vs buy options.

The outcome of these mitigation strategies enabled:

1. Reducing asset replacements (no longer needed): \$1.3M;
2. Changes to deferred revenue (revenue recognition) at 2023 year-end has made \$1.0M available in reserves;
3. Adjusting useful life of assets to better align with industry best practices: \$1.0M;
4. Disposing of asset obligations on land outside the Acquisition/Disposition Strategy: \$2.3M; and
5. Increasing reserves, establishing priority annual levy funding, contribution agreements and 0.5% infrastructure levy: \$17.7M.

Staff recommendations and next steps include:

1. Developing the 2025 Budget with the 0.5% infrastructure levy as a priority;
2. Continuing to build asset management funding into all new funding agreements;

3. Actively pursuing disposition of land and other assets, in line with the Acquisition and Disposition Strategy;
4. Focusing on assumptions, due to high degree of sensitivity to changes in contribution, inflation and interest rates; and
5. Bring the next full review to the Board of Directors in 2029, unless there is a significant change to financial projections.

To view this presentation, please click this link: [Asset-Management-Financial-Strategy-Update](#)

Moved by: B. Garrod

Seconded by: T. Vegh

BOD-105-24 **Resolved That** the presentation by General Manager, Corporate and Financial Services/CFO, Mark Critch, regarding an update to the Conservation Authority's Asset Management Plan for 2024 be received for information. **Carried**

Included in the agenda was Staff Report No. 39-24-BOD regarding an update to the Conservation Authority's Asset Management Plan for 2024.

Moved by: B. Garrod

Seconded by: T. Vegh

BOD-106-24 **Resolved That** Staff Report No. 39-24-BOD regarding an update to the Conservation Authority's Asset Management Plan be received; and

Further That staff's recommendation to continue with a 0.5% increase for the Infrastructure Levy in developing the 2025 Budget, subject to meeting the municipal funding targets, be approved. **Carried**

VII. Hearings

There were no Hearings at this meeting.

VIII. Deputations

There were no Deputations at this meeting.

IX. Determination of Items Requiring Separate Discussion

No items were identified under items requiring separate discussion.

X. Adoption of Items not Requiring Separate Discussion

Items No. 1, 2, and 4 were identified under items not requiring separate discussion.

Moved by: A. Eek

Seconded by: M. Quirk

BOD-107-24 **Resolved That** the following recommendations respecting the matters listed as "Items Not Requiring Separate Discussion" be adopted as submitted to the Board, and staff be authorized to take all necessary action required to give effect to same. **Carried**

1. 2024 Budget Restatement

BOD-108-24 **Resolved That** Staff Report No. 40-24-BOD regarding the restatement of the approved 2024 Budget be received; and

Further that the request to allocate deferred funds to be used for support of ongoing projects be approved. **Carried**

2. Mid-year Planning and Development Statistics

BOD-109-24 **Resolved That** Staff Report No. 41-24-BOD regarding monitoring of development services applications for the period January 1 through June 30, 2024 be received for information. **Carried**

4. Conservation Areas Strategy

BOD-110-24 **Resolved That** Staff Report No. 43-24-BOD regarding the Conservation Authority's Conservation Areas Strategy be received for information. **Carried**

XI. Consideration of Items Requiring Separate Discussion

Items No. 3 and 5 remained for separate discussion.

3. 2024 Annual Priorities Status Update

Mayor Quirk asked, on behalf of a constituent, when public consultation on the Lake Simcoe Conservation Preserve property will begin. CAO Baldwin advised that the traditional ecological assessment and knowledge takes all seasons, so the earliest consultation will begin will be sometime in 2025. He noted this very large property has lots of trails, and it is a long-term initiative that will not be rushed.

Moved by: M. Quirk

Seconded by: A. Eek

BOD-111-24 **Resolved That** Staff Report No. 42-24-BOD regarding the second quarter status of the Conservation Authority's 2024 Annual Priorities be received for information. **Carried**

5. **Appointment of a new Environmental Compliance Officer under Section 30.1 of the Conservation Authorities Act**

The Conservation Authority's newest Environmental Compliance Officer, Tatyana Vukovic, was in attendance to meet the Board of Directors. Board members welcomed Tatyana and approved her appointment.

Moved by: B. Garrod

Seconded by: T. Vegh

BOD-112-24 **Resolved That** Staff Report No. 44-24-BOD regarding the designation of Ms. Tatyana Vukovic as an Environmental Compliance Officer under Section 30.1 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* be received; and

Further That Ms. Tatyana Vukovic's appointment by the Board as an Environmental Compliance Officer under Section 30.1 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* be approved.

Carried

XII. **Closed Session**

The Board moved to Closed Session to deal with confidential legal matters.

Moved by: R. Greenlaw

Seconded by: D. Le Roy

BOD-113-24 **Resolved That** the Board move to Closed Session to deal with confidential legal matters; and

Further that the Chief Administrative Officer, members of the Executive Leadership Team and the Director, Development Services remain in the meeting for the discussion. **Carried**

The Board rose from Closed Session to report findings.

Moved by: S. Harrison-McIntyre

Seconded by: R. Greenlaw

BOD-114-24 **Resolved That** the Board rise from Closed Session and report findings.

Carried

a) **Confidential Legal Matter**

Moved by: P. Ferragine

Seconded by: B. Garrod

BOD-115-24 **Resolved That** Confidential Staff Report No. 45-24-BOD regarding a confidential legal matter be received for information. **Carried**

b) Confidential Legal Matter

Moved by: P. Ferragine

Seconded by: B. Garrod

BOD-116-24 **Resolved That** Confidential Staff Report No. 46-24-BOD regarding a confidential legal matter be received for information. **Carried**

XIII. Other Business

- a) Chair Riepma advised that the next meeting will be held on Friday, September 27, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. in the Conservation Authority's Administrative Offices.

XIV. Adjournment

Moved by: V. Hackson

Seconded by: W. Emmerson

BOD-117-24 **Resolved That** the meeting be adjourned at 11:22 a.m. **Carried**



Councillor Clare Riepma
Chair



Rob Baldwin
Chief Administrative Officer