

# Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority

## Board of Directors' Meeting

Board of Directors' Meeting No. BOD-06-25

Friday, December 5, 2025

120 Bayview Parkway, Newmarket

### Meeting Minutes

#### Members Present

Councillor C. Riepma (Chair), Mayor R. Greenlaw (Vice Chair), Councillor P. Ferragine, Regional Councillor B. Garrod, Councillor S. Harrison-McIntyre, Regional Chairman E. Jolliffe, Councillor C. Pettingill, Mayor M. Quirk, Councillor Roy-DiClemente, Councillor M. Thompson, Deputy Mayor and Regional Councillor T. Vegh

#### Members Absent

Councillor A. Courser, Councillor F. Drodge, Councillor A. Eek, Councillor J. Gough, Councillor D. Le Roy, Mayor I. Lovatt, Councillor E. Yeo

#### Staff Present

L. Aspden, R. Baldwin, T. Barnett, S. Connor, M. Critch, A. Cullen, P. Davies, R. Doyle, B. Ginn, D. Goodyear, N. Hamley, D. Lembcke, G. MacMillan, S. Moin, G. Peat, K. Toffan, M. Touws, K. Yemm

#### Guests Present

C. Cassin, R. McGowan

### I. Land Acknowledgement

Councillor Pettingill 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: T. Roy-DiClemente

Seconded by: M. Thompson

BOD-097-25 **Resolved That** the content of the Agenda for the December 5, 2025 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: C. Pettingill

BOD-098-25 **Resolved That** the minutes of the Board of Directors' Meeting, No. BOD-05-25, held on Friday, September 26, 2025 be approved as circulated. **Carried**

## V. Announcements

- a) CAO Rob Baldwin thanked everyone for their indulgence as the November 28<sup>th</sup> meeting was moved to this day due to the large amount of snow that fell across the watershed.
- b) CAO Baldwin was pleased to advise that new, high-tech audio-visual equipment is being installed in the Newmarket Boardroom in the coming week, making for more efficient virtual meetings.

## VI. Deputations

### a) Responding to Water Soldier in Lake Simcoe

Mr. Colin Cassin, Executive Director, Invasive Species Centre, made a deputation on behalf of the Lake Simcoe Water Soldier Working Group regarding Water Soldier in Lake Simcoe. The Working Group is a collaborative effort to support water soldier surveillance, monitoring and response in Lake Simcoe, and to explore options to reduce impacts of this new plant. Water soldier, he noted, is an aquatic invasive species native to Europe and Northwest Asia first detected in North America in the Trent-Severn Waterway in 2008. In 2024, approximately 40 floating plants were detected in Lake Simcoe around Young's Harbour. The initial shoreline survey at that time determined it was a large, well-established mass limited to Cook's Bay.

Monitoring efforts in 2025 found 450 hectares of water soldier in Cook's Bay, and while it's currently contained to Cook's Bay, the risk of spreading is increasing, and action is essential to prevent further expansion. Mr. Cassin went on to note that for 2026, an integrated management plan is needed that includes prevention, detection, monitoring, management options and funding. In closing, he noted that new members to the Working Group are encouraged and welcome. Continued outreach with the public, key stakeholders, and rights holders is necessary, and anyone interested in joining this Working Group may email Katie Church

[Kchurch@invasivespeciescentre.ca](mailto:Kchurch@invasivespeciescentre.ca)

To view this presentation, please click this link: [Responding to Water Soldier in Lake Simcoe](#)

Moved by: T. Vegh

Seconded by: M. Quirk

BOD-099-25 **Resolved That** the deputation by Mr. Colin Cassin, Executive Director, Invasive Species Centre, on behalf of the Lake Simcoe Water Soldier Working Group, regarding Responding to Water Soldier in Lake Simcoe be received for information. **Carried**

## VII. Presentations

### a) Third Quarter 2025 Financial Report and Year-end Forecast

Director, Finance, Katherine Toffan, provided an overview of the Third Quarter 2025 Financial Report and Year-end Forecast, noting highlights include an overall operational surplus of \$185K, about 1.2% of the overall operating budget. This is down from the second quarter surplus of 300K, and it's expecting this surplus will continue to narrow towards the end of the year. Main drivers are in Corporate Services related to gapping and lower expenses. A variance in Development Services reflects what is seen in the market. The volume of new planning applications and permits is down, and a decrease in applications of 30-40% overall by end of year is forecasted. This variance in fees is being offset with deferral of expenses and a pause on filling open positions. Lower than budgeted consulting expenses for the review of stormwater guidelines and offsetting policies are the result of staff determining that some of this work can be completed internally rather than engaging external support. Legal expenses are also down in 2025 as there are fewer open cases.

Ms. Toffan noted that most projects are on track. The largest variance is in offsetting projects; however, it is anticipated that an additional \$1.7M will be spent by year-end on offsetting projects. Highlights of the year-end Forecast include an overall operational deficit of approximately \$50K, down from \$186K at the second quarter.

To view this presentation, please click this link: [Third Quarter 2025 Financial Update and Forecast](#)

Moved by: B. Garrod

Seconded by: E. Jolliffe

BOD-100-25 **Resolved That** the presentation by Director, Finance, Katherine Toffan on the Third Quarter 2025 Financial Report and Year-end Forecast be received for information. **Carried**

Included in the agenda was Staff Report No. 35-25-BOD regarding Third Quarter 2025 Financial Report and Year-end Forecast.

Moved by: B. Garrod

Seconded by: E. Jolliffe

BOD-101-25 **Resolved That** Staff Report No. 35-25-BOD regarding the Conservation Authority's Third Quarter 2025 Financial Report and Year-end Forecast be received for information. **Carried**

**b) Phosphorus Loads to Lake Simcoe Update - 2021-2023**

Director, Watershed Science and Monitoring, David Lembcke, provided an overview of the 2021-2023 Phosphorus Loads Report, noting the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan is focused on restoring a healthy and sustainable cold-water fish community in Lake Simcoe, and to help achieve this goal, the target of 7 mg/L dissolved oxygen at the end of summer was set. He explained the connection between phosphorus loads and dissolved oxygen in a lake, where decomposing plants and algae use up dissolved oxygen, and the amount of algae present in the lake is controlled to some extent by in-lake phosphorus levels. Phosphorus levels are in-turn controlled by phosphorus loading. Accordingly, the target 7 mg/L of dissolved oxygen is linked to an ideal phosphorus loading goal of 44 tonnes per year. Phosphorus loads have been monitored since the 1990s to track the total amount of phosphorus entering Lake Simcoe from all sources. The three most recently calculated hydrologic years are 2021 to 2023.

He went on to explain that a hydrologic year runs from June 1 of one year to May 31 of the next, and accordingly the newly calculated phosphorus loads cover the three hydrologic years of June 1, 2021 to May 31, 2024. The phosphorus load for these hydrologic years is 70 tonnes in 2021, 66.7 tonnes in 2022 and 77.3 tonnes in 2023, which are lower than the previous three-year period, where there was an average tonne of 83.2. The latest period represents a return to more typical loading conditions, although they still exceeded the 44 tonne/year goal established in the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan. For comparison, the long-term average total phosphorus load is 81.6 tonnes. Total tributary flows, which are a key component of the total phosphorus loads, were also typical throughout this period.

He also noted that climate change is altering when and how much phosphorus flows from tributaries. Staff are seeing higher phosphorus loads – and higher flows – during winter months due to increased snowmelt and rain-on-snow events, as well as during summer due to intense rainstorms.

To view this presentation, please click this link: [Phosphorus Loads to Lake Simcoe 2021-2023](#)

Moved by: S. Harrison-McIntyre

Seconded by: P. Ferragine

BOD-102-25 **Resolved That** the presentation by Director, Watershed Science and Monitoring, David Lembcke, regarding the 2021-2023 Phosphorus Loads Report be received for information. **Carried**

Included in the agenda was Staff Report No. 36-25-BOD regarding the 2021-2023 Phosphorus Loads.

Moved by: S. Harrison-McIntyre

Seconded by: P. Ferragine

BOD-103-25 **Resolved That** Staff Report No. 36-25-BOD regarding the 2021-2023 Phosphorus Loads Report be received for information. **Carried**

**c) Bill 68 and the Proposed Consolidation of Conservation Authorities**

Chief Administrative Officer, Rob Baldwin, provided an overview of the Province's proposed consolidation of 36 conservation authorities into seven regional conservation authorities, noting the proposal includes amending the *Conservation Authorities Act* to create a provincial board-governed agency. This agency, the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, will provide province-wide coordination, shared digital and technical resources, and consistent practices to strengthen the work of conservation authorities. Also proposed are boundaries for the consolidation of the existing 36 conservation authorities into seven regional conservation authorities. Some of the reasons cited for these changes include a patchwork of standards and service delivery; outdated and fragmented systems; administrative duplication, as well as the need for more accountability and transparency.

CAO Baldwin reviewed the list of what the Province has advised will not be changing, noting the local operations of each conservation authority will not be changing; current programs and services, as well as areas served, will remain unchanged. CAO Baldwin overviewed the objects of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, which has received Royal Assent. He reviewed the proposed boundaries, noting that Lake Simcoe will be consolidated with Nottawasaga Valley, Grey Sauble, Saugeen Vally, Maitland Valley, Ausable Bayfield, and Lakehead conservation authorities to form the Huron-Superior Regional Conservation Authority. More information may be found on the Environmental Registry of Ontario through <https://ero.ontario.ca/notice/025-1257>

To view this presentation, please click this link: [Bill 68 and the Proposed Consolidation of Conservation Authorities](#)

Moved by: C. Pettingill

Seconded by: B. Garrod

BOD-104-25 **Resolved That** the presentation by Chief Administrative Officer, Rob Baldwin, regarding an overview of the Province's proposed consolidation of 36 conservation authorities into seven regional conservation authorities be received for information.

**Carried**

## VIII. Hearings

There were no Hearings at this meeting.

## IX. Determination of Items Requiring Separate Discussion

Items 1 and 2 were identified as requiring separate discussion.

## X. Adoption of Items not Requiring Separate Discussion

No items were identified as not requiring separate discussion.

## XI. Consideration of Items Requiring Separate Discussion

### 1. Scanlon Creek Nature Centre Construction and Project Budget Update

Councillor Ferragine noted he is pleased that the project is ahead of schedule but asked for an explanation on the increase costs of 2%. GM Critch explained that some permit and consulting fees are higher due to additional permits being required for construction, which required the support of consultants, including the larger fire tank required for the building permit, normal change orders, and re-designs to secure construction efficiencies and Ministry requirements, as well as an extension of time provided to see certain elements of the project through to completion. GM Critch also advised that insurance was missed as a cost in the 2024 report, and while it is showing as an increase of \$137,500, this is actually lower than the cost that insurance would have been had it been provided in the construction envelope.

Moved by: T. Roy-DiClemente

Seconded by: E. Jolliffe

BOD-105-25 **Resolved That** Staff Report No. 37-25-BOD regarding an update on the construction progress and project budget for the Scanlon Creek Nature Centre be received for information. **Carried**

### 2. Projected Operating Costs for the new Nature Centre at Scanlon Creek Conservation Area

In response to Councillor Ferragine's question regarding operating costs for the new Nature Centre, GM Critch explained that the draft budget being presented at the next meeting will show an overall increase of 2.66% to municipalities, which is in line with the Board approved budget assumptions and includes a phased-in approach of operating and program costs over 2-3 years, and a little longer for the asset management contribution. GM Critch advised that the

increase in the report is net of the increase in education fees. Education programming is not full cost recovery, and the Board has supported its Category 3 funding to ensure access for all students to be able to attend.

GM Critch also noted that while additional uses for the new Nature Centre are being explored for revenue generation, this is not a funding issue solver as these other uses come with additional costs, such as security, cleaning, staffing, etc. With regards to the current nature centre operating expenses versus operating expenses for the new Nature Centre, the new Nature Centre is double the size, going from two classrooms to four, and therefore operating costs will be roughly double what they previously were.

Moved by: R. Greenlaw

Seconded by: B. Garrod

BOD-106-25 **Resolved That** Staff Report No. 38-25-BOD regarding the projected operating costs for the new Nature Centre be received and incorporated into the draft 2026 Budget. **Carried**

## XII. Closed Session

There were no Closed Session items for this meeting.

## XIII. Other Business

- a) Chair Riepma advised that the next meeting of the Board of Directors will take place on Friday, December 19, 2025. This meeting will be held in the Conservation Authority's Administrative Offices.

## XIV. Adjournment

Moved by: C. Pettingill

Seconded by: T. Roy-DiClemente

BOD-107-25 **Resolved That** the meeting be adjourned at 11:35 a.m. **Carried**



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Councillor Clare Riepma  
Chair



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Rob Baldwin  
Chief Administrative Officer