

BD12,2706**MOVED BY: Jim Cimba
SECONDED BY: Brad Clark****THAT the agenda be approved.****CARRIED****4. Delegations**

There were none.

5. Consent Items for Applications, Minutes, and Correspondence

- 5.1. Applications – Development, Interference with Wetlands, Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses
- 5.2. Approval of Board of Directors Minutes – October 3, 2019
- 5.3. Approved August 8, 2019 Conservation Advisory Board Minutes – for receipt only
- 5.4. Email from Mark Osborne, received October 16, 2019, and HCA response email, dated October 21, 2019

BD12,2707**MOVED BY: Brad Clark
SECONDED BY: Cynthia Janzen****THAT the Consent Agenda be approved.****CARRIED****6. Member Briefing****6.1. Ecological Monitoring**

Lesley McDonnell and Colin Oaks provided the members with a briefing on HCA's aquatic and terrestrial ecological monitoring programs, highlighting the monitoring of fish, aquatic insects, plant biodiversity and distribution, and invasive species as indicators of the health of the natural features of our watershed. They shared that monitoring also helps with evaluating past ecological restoration projects and planning for future projects.

Colin highlighted the progression of the restored Christie Ponds into watercourses and wetlands, results of Lower Spencer Creek in-stream habitat improvements, as well as planning for habitat improvements to the pond at Fifty Point Conservation Area.

Lesley presented results of forest regeneration surveys in harvested plantation areas and Ecological Monitoring and Assessment Network (EMAN) plots, as well as deer browse surveys and deer exclosures. Results of note included that invasive species may need to be managed in some of the harvested plantation areas and a more even distribution of forest understory regeneration in the Dundas Valley and at Iroquoia Heights Conservation Area. Details of the method and results of deer population surveys for these areas, completed by helicopter in partnership with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, were also shared. Lesley commented on a correlation between the regenerating forest understory and changes in the deer population between 2015 and 2019. Lesley also reviewed the monitoring program and results of Gypsy moth surveys conducted to monitor impacts to mature trees in the Dundas Valley. A bio-pesticide spray program has been successful in mitigating impacts of gypsy moths where applied in severely infested areas.

The members thanked Colin and Lesley for their informative presentation.

BD12,2708

**MOVED BY: Cynthia Janzen
SECONDED BY: Chad Collins**

THAT the presentation on Ecological Monitoring be received as information.

CARRIED

7. Business Arising from the Minutes

7.1. Verbal Update on Meeting with MECP

Santina Moccio provided the members with an update on the October 22nd meeting with Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) staff, attended by the Chair, Vice-Chair, CAO and Deputy CAO, related to provincial direction regarding Conservation Authorities' Core Programming. She shared with the members that HCA's strategic plan was used to highlight its programs and services. HCA's need to generate revenues was conveyed. It was stressed that funding for our conservation areas is self-sustaining. HCA's conservation areas were highlighted as unique local greenspaces that help the city and watershed thrive and connect people to nature.

The Saltfleet Conservation Area wetland projects were also highlighted as major projects that will mitigate flooding, erosion and drought, while also providing recreational greenspace for the community. It was noted that HCA's programs are broadly supported by the municipality.

HCA's board composition and governance were also reviewed at the meeting. The 1960 Conservation Report, prepared by the Province, was shared with MECP staff. In addition, HCA's strategic plan, Board of Directors Member Information Handbook, and administrative by-law were left with MECP for their reference.

Santina further added that the meeting tone was encouraging. MECP staff listened and made inquiries and were complimentary. Definitive timelines for next steps were not provided, however, it was advised that consultation with all stakeholders will be undertaken in the new year.

The members inquired about sharing the results of the meeting with MPP Donna Skelly. Staff advised that the MPP was unavailable to attend, however, that staff are working to coordinate with her office to meet and review the same material as presented at the meeting.

8. Other Correspondence

There was none.

9. Reports from Budget & Administration Committee, Conservation Advisory Board, and the Foundation

9.1. Conservation Advisory Board – October 10, 2019

Cynthia Janzen reported on the following recommendations from the Conservation Advisory Board.

Resolution Number CA1935 from Conservation Advisory Board Minutes October 10, 2019 - Westfield Christmas 2020 Ticket Purchase Pilot

BD12, 2709

**MOVED BY: Cynthia Janzen
SECONDED BY: Tom Jackson**

THAT the Conservation Advisory Board recommends to the Board of Directors:

THAT Westfield initiate a pilot program for date specific ticket sales for the 2020 Christmas evening program and further,

THAT staff evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot and report back to CAB regarding its ongoing potential.

CARRIED

Resolution Number CA1936 from Conservation Advisory Board Minutes October 10, 2019 - Visitor Management & Vehicle Parking Review

BD12,2710

**MOVED BY: Cynthia Janzen
SECONDED BY: Dan Bowman**

THAT the Conservation Advisory Board recommend to the Board of Directors:

THAT Staff be directed to implement the following directions outlined in the report titled “HCA Conservation Area - Visitor Management & Vehicle Parking Review”;

Recommendation #1 – HCA staff implement immediate parking enhancement opportunities at Artaban Road, Tiffany Falls, Devil’s Punchbowl, Tew Falls and Westfield Heritage Village to optimize number of parking spaces, traffic flow and signage;

Recommendation #2- HCA staff undertake steps to consider expansion of the Artaban road parking lot through a Niagara Escarpment development permit;

Recommendation #3 – HCA staff undertake steps to establish an interim parking lot and trail connection to the Dofasco Trail for the Devil’s Punchbowl at the Saltfleet Conservation Area;

Recommendation #4 – HCA staff further examine and explore additional options for safe visitor access to Tiffany Falls;

Recommendation #5 – HCA staff work with various agencies and partners such as City of Hamilton, Tourism Hamilton, Hamilton/Burlington Trails Council etc. to encourage transportation alternatives;

Recommendation #6 – HCA develop a marketing campaign and website enhancements to increase turnover and shorter term stays at areas with limited parking and encourage visitation to less frequented areas and when there is capacity;

Recommendation #7 – HCA staff ensure that the approved 10-year Masterplan Strategy incorporates detailed review of parking at all areas through the Master planning process.

CARRIED

9.2. Foundation Chairman's Report

Margaret Reid presented the report.

Donations

We received a total of **\$89,350** in donations in October. They break down as follows:

- \$50,390 for the Dobson-McKee Outdoor Education Endowment Fund
- \$25,520 for Outdoor Environmental Education
- \$9,650 for the Dundas Valley Trail System
- \$2,125 for our new Tribute Tree Fund which will help fund HCA plantings throughout the watershed.
- The remaining \$1,665 came in donations for Westfield Heritage Village, Tribute Benches, Land Securement, Stewardship and our Area of Greatest Need Fund.

This brings our total for the current fiscal year (Dec 2018 to Oct 31) to **\$572,974**

Events

The Foundation has a fundraiser planned for November 13th

- Adam Shoalts: Modern Day Explorer - Wednesday, November 13, 7:30pm – Westdale Theatre. More information available on the Foundation website and tickets can be purchased online via The Westdale or at the door.

BD12,2711

**MOVED BY: Esther Pauls
SECONDED BY: Cynthia Janzen**

THAT the Foundation Chairman's Report be received as information.

10. Other Staff Reports/Memorandums

10.1. 2020 Fee Schedule

Bruce Harschnitz presented a summary of the report, highlighting changes to the fee schedule from 2019. It was noted that the proposed fees for conservation areas consider the increasing costs of operating properties while providing excellent customer service with competitive offerings. The HCA member pass and conservation area day use passes remained unchanged.

No changes to the fee schedule were proposed for Watershed Planning and Engineering programs and services, beyond the 2% COLA increase, as a comprehensive review of their fees was completed in 2017. In addition, WP&E staff noted regulations are still pending regarding fees and fee policy flowing from the recent changes to the Conservation Authorities Act.

Brad Clark inquired about the rationale for the increased fee for admission to the Eramosa Karst Conservation Area. Bruce advised that maintenance of infrastructure which include washrooms, interpretive signage and greater amount of trails were primary considerations. Bruce further added that the typical length of customer stay was also considered. The potential for decreased visitors was discussed if visitors park on the street and walk in. Staff indicated that due to the increasing population, there were no concerns with decreased visitation.

The potential to increase revenues through marketing for weddings was discussed. Staff advised that marketing staff have completed a small campaign for the Hermitage venue in the Dundas Valley and that HCA is on a wedding related social media/marketing website.

Tom Jackson requested clarification on the aggregate resources act application fee. Scott Peck indicated the fee is for large quarry operations/expansions and that it is an infrequent application type.

The members expressed appreciation for the report.

BD12,2712

**MOVED BY: Tom Jackson
SECONDED BY: Dan Bowman**

THAT the 2020 Fee Schedule as presented be approved.

Brad Clark was recorded as opposed to the increase on the admission fee for the Eramosa Karst Conservation Area.

CARRIED

10.2. 2020 Operating Budget

Neil McDougall presented a summary of the report and answered the members' questions. Neil noted that the budget was developed to move forward with mandated programs and services and strategic plan initiatives in 2020 and that the budget provides sufficient combined revenues to meet expenses.

The members thanked Neil for the presentation. Tom Jackson thanked staff for honouring the City of Hamilton levy target and objective.

The sale of HCA branded "swag" was discussed as a potential method of revenue generation with consideration for undertaking this online. Staff received the direction to explore this opportunity and return to a future Board meeting with an information report. It was noted that clothes for members of the public would need to be differentiated from HCA logo branded uniforms for staff.

BD12,2713

**MOVED BY: Jim Cimba
SECONDED BY: Dan Bowman**

THAT the 2020 Operating Budget as presented herein be approved.

CARRIED

10.3. Bulk Lumber Order

Matt Hall presented a summary of the report and answered the members' questions. The majority of funds for the bulk lumber purchase were a donation from Arcelor Mittal. The funds will largely be allocated to continued boardwalk improvements on the Dofasco Trail.

Brad Clark commended staff for the trail improvements to-date.

BD12,2714

**MOVED BY: Brad Clark
SECONDED BY: Cynthia Janzen**

THAT the 2019 HCA Bulk Lumber Order be awarded to Goodfellow Inc. for a total cost of \$ 112,475.68, which includes HST.

CARRIED

10.4. Appointment of Enforcement Officer

Scott Peck presented a summary of the report, introducing Elizabeth Reimer, a new Watershed Officer within the Watershed Planning and Engineering Department.

The Chair thanked Scott for his presentation.

BD12,2715

**MOVED BY: Chad Collins
SECONDED BY: Esther Pauls**

THAT the HCA Board of Directors appoint Elizabeth Reimer, Watershed Officer, as an Enforcement Officer for the purpose of enforcement of *Ontario Regulation 161/06* (HCA's Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses) made under the *Conservation Authorities Act, R.S.O. 1990*.

CARRIED

10.5. Current Watershed Conditions as of October 28, 2019

Scott Peck presented a summary of the report, indicating that local watercourses are flowing above average at this time but there are no flooding concerns. The Lake Ontario water levels continue to decline. Watershed conditions are average for this time of year. HCA's reservoirs are halfway between their summer and winter levels. The Christie dam winter draw down is being adjusted as needed for repairs being done to the dam gates.

BD12,2716

**MOVED BY: Jim Cimba
SECONDED BY: Brad Clark**

THAT the memorandum entitled *Current Watershed Conditions as of October 28, 2019* be received as information.

CARRIED

10.6. Upcoming HCA and Partner Events

Bruce Harschnitz presented a summary of the memorandum, providing an overview of upcoming events. He also highlighted the Road2Hope race recently held at Confederation Beach Park. Esther Pauls praised staff on their contributions to the event, sharing that many participants comment on how much they enjoy the venue. Bruce also provided photos and a video of the new boat lift at Fifty Point Conservation Area and Marina in operation.

BD12,2717

**MOVED BY: Chad Collins
SECONDED BY: Dan Bowman**

THAT the memorandum entitled Upcoming HCA and Partner Events be received as information.

CARRIED

11. **New Business**

There was none.

12. **In-Camera Items for Matters of Law, Personnel and Property**

There was none.

13. **Next Meeting – Thursday, December 12, 2019**

14. **Adjournment**

On motion, the meeting adjourned.



Neil McDougall
Secretary-Treasurer