

Hamilton Region Conservation Authority

Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting

October 1, 2020

Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on Thursday, October 1, 2020, at Woodend Auditorium, 838 Mineral Springs Road, Ancaster, Ontario, and by teleconference, at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: **Lloyd Ferguson – in the Chair**
 Dan Bowman (by telephone) **Jim Cimba**
 Susan Fielding (by telephone) **Tom Jackson (by telephone)**
 Cynthia Janzen **Santina Moccio**
 Esther Pauls (by telephone) **Maria Topalovic (by telephone)**

Margaret Reid – Foundation Chair (by telephone)

REGRETS: **Brad Clark, Chad Collins**

STAFF PRESENT: **Lisa Burnside, Gord Costie, Matt Hall, Scott Peck, Kathy Smith, and Jaime Tellier**
Grace Correia, Bruce Harschnitz, and Laura Stinson (by telephone)

OTHERS: **Sergio Manchia, Stefan Savelli and Le'Ann Seely**
 Ken Glasbergen (by telephone)
 Richard Leitner – Media (by telephone)

NOTE: For clarity, the minutes are reported in the original agenda order.

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present. The Chair conveyed regrets for Brad Clark and Chad Collins for the evening.

2. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

The Chair asked members to declare any conflicts under the Board's Governance Policy. There were none.

3. Approval of Agenda

The Chair indicated the delegation under item 5.1 will be presented prior to the hearing under item 4.1. The Chair advised of an item of correspondence recognizing staff at Fifty Point Conservation Area to be added to the consent agenda as item 6.6 and a walk-on staff report regarding a Specific Agreement with the Haudenosaunee Wildlife and Habitat Authority for the annual deer harvest to be added as item 10.3. The Chair requested any further additions or deletions to the agenda.

BD12, 2802 **MOVED BY: Jim Cimba**
 SECONDED BY: Cynthia Janzen

THAT the agenda be approved, as amended.

CARRIED

4. Section 28 Hearing

4.1. 195 Highway 5 West, Flamborough

The Chair instructed the Board that it would conduct a hearing under Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act in respect of an application by Steve Manych for permission to construct a 14' x 16' (224ft²) addition to the existing 12'19" x 16' (205ft²) wood frame shed for the purpose of tool and vehicle storage at 195 Highway 5 West, City of Hamilton. The Chair requested a motion to sit as the hearing board.

BD12, 2803 **MOVED BY: Jim Cimba**
 SECONDED BY: Santina Moccio

THAT the Board of Directors sit as the Hearing Board.

CARRIED

Scott Peck provided a summary of the staff report.

L. Ferguson introduced Steve and Rebecca Manych who provided a summary of their application.

The Chair thanked staff and the applicants for their presentations.

Both Scott and the applicants answered the members questions. The members inquired about alternatives to the siting of the building in the requested location, floodproofing requirements and the history of flooding in the area.

The applicants responded the non-flood prone area of the property is the existing driveway and other alternatives were cost prohibitive.

Scott advised the floodplain of the watercourse is regulated to the Hurricane Hazel storm event. There has not been a history of flooding in this area. The nearby main channel of Borer's Creek was channelized in the 1980's to accommodate the Regulatory floodplain.

**BD12, 2804 MOVED BY: Cynthia Janzen
 SECONDED BY: Santina Moccio**

THAT Hearing Board moves *in camera*.

CARRIED

During the *in-camera* session, the hearing board deliberated on the application.

**BD12, 2805 MOVED BY: Jim Cimba
 SECONDED BY: Santina Moccio**

THAT the Board of Directors moves out of *in camera*.

CARRIED

The meeting reconvened in open session and the following resolution was passed:

**BD12, 2806 MOVED BY: Tom Jackson
 SECONDED BY: Esther Pauls**

THAT the application by Steve Manych for permission to construct a 14' x 16' (224ft²) addition to the existing 12'19" x 16' (205ft²) wood frame shed for the purpose of tool and vehicle storage at 195 Highway 5 West, City of Hamilton, be approved.

CARRIED

5. Delegations

5.1. Formal Consultation Application – 140 Garner Road East, Ancaster

Sergio Manchia, Ken Glasbergen and Le'Ann Seely presented an industrial development proposal in Ancaster, on behalf of the owner Stefan Savelli, that would include the relocation of a wetland and answered the members questions. The delegates asked the Board of Directors for consideration for the proposal.

Scott Peck advised the Board that HCA's current planning and regulations policies do not support the proposal. The Board members directed staff to review policies of other Conservation Authorities with regard to wetland relocation or compensation and report back at the next meeting.

BD12, 2807

MOVED BY: Jim Cimba

SECONDED BY: Santina Moccio

THAT staff be directed to review neighbouring Conservation Authority policies on a last resort option for the relocation of wetlands.

CARRIED

6. Consent Items for Applications, Minutes and Correspondence

The following consent items were adopted:

- 6.1. Applications – Development, Interference with Wetlands, Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses
- 6.2. Approval of Board of Directors Minutes – September 3, 2020
- 6.3. Thank you email and Reflections on the Bruce Trail Re-opening on Old Dundas Road, from Elham Farah, dated September 7, 2020
- 6.4. Media Release – Spencer Gorge Reopening and Advance Reservation System, dated September 8, 2020
- 6.5. Email and City of Hamilton News Release – E. coli outbreak at Valens Lake Conservation Area, dated September 18, 2020

- 6.6. Email from Hans van Wijk recognizing staff at Fifty Point Conservation Area, dated September 30, 2020

The Chair highlighted the reopening of the Bruce Trail to Sherman Falls and expressed gratitude to the owners for reinstating the public access. Lisa Burnside added that staff are working with the owners and BTC to update and install new signage on-site

Lisa Burnside provided an update on the E. coli outbreak at Valens Lake Conservation Area. The beach closure order remains in place while representatives from Ontario Public Health and the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks complete an investigation into potential sources of the E. coli. Agricultural activities surrounding Valens will be assessed. Further updates throughout the month are anticipated.

The Chair asked that the Board's appreciation be passed on to Fifty Point Conservation Area staff for their efforts.

7. Member Briefing

There was none.

8. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was none.

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

- 9.1. Conservation Advisory Board – March 12, 2020
(Recommendations)

9.1.1. CA 2014 Valens Lake Conservation Area Master Plan

Kathy Smith presented a summary of the report and thanked the members for the opportunity on behalf of all staff involved in the project. The presentation highlighted key points from the master plan and how the document will guide the work of staff over the next ten years.

L. Ferguson thanked Kathy for her presentation and inquired about design details for the cabins currently under construction. Matt Hall provided a summary of the layouts and amenities for the 2 large cabins, resulting from the retrofit of an existing pavilion, and the 6 small cabins.

BD12, 2808**MOVED BY: Maria Topalovic
SECONDED BY: Santina Moccio****THAT the Conservation Advisory Board recommends to the Board of Directors:****THAT this report and accompanying master plan of March 2020 be received as information for project background and general understanding; and further;****THAT the Valens Lake Conservation Area Master Plan be approved.****CARRIED****9.2. Budget and Administration Committee – September 17, 2020
(Recommendations)****9.2.1. BA 2011 Request for Quote – Audit Services**

S. Moccio presented a summary of the report, also noting Grant Thornton's ten years of experience providing auditing services for HCA.

BD12, 2809**MOVED BY: Santina Moccio
SECONDED BY: Jim Cimba****THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommend to the Board of Directors:****THAT the proposal for Audit Services submitted by Grant Thornton be accepted at a total cost of \$234,000 plus HST for the five-year term ending with the audit of the 2024 financial statements.****CARRIED****9.2.2. BA 2012 HCA 2021 Fee Schedule**

S. Moccio presented a summary of the report. Lisa Burnside answered the members questions, noting the fees are largely experiencing a 2% increase, with some higher to harmonize pricing for consistency in grouped areas.

T. Jackson inquired about projected added operational revenues for 2021 and consideration for a full price freeze in light of challenging economic circumstances resulting from the coronavirus pandemic. Lisa advised that increased fees at

some sundry parking areas will be allocated for additional maintenance and security necessitated by significantly increased visitation. Fees for HCA's annual membership and trail access passes have not increased and remain a strong value option for visitors.

BD12, 2810 **MOVED BY: Santina Moccio**
SECONDED BY: Jim Cimba

THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommends to the Board of Directors:

THAT the 2021 Fee Schedule as presented herein be approved.

CARRIED

9.2.3. BA 2013 Capital Budget 2021

Santina Moccio presented a summary of the report. It was noted HCA's capital budget request has remained at \$2 million for many years. The capital improvements outlined in the Valens Master Plan were cited as examples of the capital improvements to come.

BD12, 2811 **MOVED BY: Maria Topalovic**
SECONDED BY: Tom Jackson

THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommends to the Board of Directors:

THAT the 2021 Capital Budget request as presented herein be submitted to the City of Hamilton for consideration and be included in their block funding budget of 2021.

CARRIED

9.3. Foundation Chairman's Remarks

Margaret Reid presented on the following:

We received a total of **\$35,280** in donations from September 1 to 30. They break down as follows:

- \$22,500 for the Saltfleet CA Wetland Project

- A boat valued at \$4,784 was donated to the Foundation to be auctioned off at Fifty Point CA
- \$3,246 to be used as needed
- \$2,500 to the Tribute Tree Fund
- \$2,000 for a volunteer cleanup event along the Hamilton to Brantford Rail Trail
- The remaining \$250 was donated to support land acquisition, Westfield Heritage Village and Outdoor Environmental Education.

This brings our **Fiscal Year-to-Date (Dec 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020) total to \$230,615.**

Our Annual General Meeting of Members took place on Tuesday, September 29, at the Westdale Theatre. The Foundation elected 3 new Board Members (Suresh Daljeet, Graham Reid and Dave Vander Ploeg). One member (Renee Bulger) stepped down from the board at the end of her first term. Election of Officers will take place at our October Board meeting.

The Foundation took advantage of a Canada Post Small Business promotion for free postage on up to 6,000 pieces of unaddressed admail. We solicited donations from Postal Codes in Dundas. To date we have received 25 donations totalling \$1,322. Of those donations, 21 were from donors who are new to the Foundation. We also received 6 complaints from Greensville residents upset about the Webster's Falls / Spencer Gorge CA in response, which is a very small percentage of the size of the mailing.

The Foundation also continues to promote the opportunity for donors to leave a gift through their estates and has partnered in the Canadian Association of Gift Planners' Will Power public education campaign. The campaign is live now and features the story of two of our donors, Chitra and Robbie Singh, who have pledged a gift to the Foundation in their Will.

BD12, 2812

MOVED BY: Susan Fielding

SECONDED BY: Maria Topalovic

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

CARRIED

10. Other Staff Reports/Memoranda

10.1. Current Watershed Conditions as of September 18, 2020

Scott Peck presented a summary of the memorandum, advising the HCA watershed continues to be in a level one drought condition, with significantly more rain required to raise the watershed out of the condition.

BD12, 2813

**MOVED BY: Santina Moccio
SECONDED BY: Tom Jackson**

THAT the memorandum entitled Current Watershed Conditions as of September 18, 2020 be received as information.

CARRIED

10.2. Conservation Areas Experiences Update

Gord Costie provided a verbal update, highlighting the reopening of Spencer Gorge, the ongoing popularity of camping at Valens and Fifty Point, sustained high visitation at Confederation Beach Park, the beginning of the boat lift at Fifty Point, and anticipated high visitation at Dundas Valley for the Fall colours. He also highlighted the surge in membership pass sales which have crested 7000 sold year-to-date, the first time HCA has reached that number.

Gord also provided a further summary on the first few weeks of the Spencer Gorge reservation system, noting HCA has dramatically reduced the number of visitors and traffic to the area compared with past years, improved visitor experience by reduced crowding, and with capital improvements, increased visitor safety. The pilot system will continue to strengthen and take hold. Visitor management measures are regularly evaluated and refined and at this time, Staff are cautiously optimistic about this system being a tool for modernizing the operation of this area.

C. Janzen commented on the number of good news stories in the update, suggesting the renewed public appreciation of our areas would be good content for a potential communications piece.

BD12, 2814

**MOVED BY: Maria Topalovic
SECONDED BY: Cynthia Janzen**

THAT the verbal update on the Conservation Areas Experiences be received as information.

CARRIED**10.3. Specific Agreement with the Haudenosaunee Wildlife and Habitat Authority**

Gord Costie presented a summary of the report recommending HCA enter into a two-year agreement with the Haudenosaunee Wildlife and Habitat Authority for the annual deer harvest.

BD12, 2815**MOVED BY: Jim Cimba****SECONDED BY: Santina Moccio**

THAT the Board of Directors approve the attached agreement allowing for a deer harvest in an area of Dundas Valley Conservation Area as identified on Schedule 'A', and generally bounded by Martin Road to the east, Jerseyville Road to the south, Paddy Green Road to the west, and Powerline Road to the north and; as identified on Schedule 'B' and generally bounded by 50 metres into HCA lands between Weir's Lane to the east, the CN rail line to the north, the lot line of private properties along the south and west only on weekdays excluding Fridays between November 9 and December 3, 2020, inclusive for 2020 and further,

THAT the agreement extends to 2021 for the same locations only on weekdays excluding Fridays between November 8 to December 2, 2021, inclusive.

CARRIED**11. New Business**

There was none.

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

There were none.

13. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Thursday, November 5, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

14. Adjournment

On motion, the meeting adjourned.



Neil McDougall
Secretary-Treasurer