

SECONDED BY: Maria Topalovic

THAT the agenda be approved, as amended.

CARRIED

4. Delegations

There were none.

5. Consent Items for Applications, Minutes and Correspondence

The following consent items were adopted:

- 5.1. Applications – Development, Interference with Wetlands, Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses
- 5.2. Approval of Board of Directors Minutes – December 3, 2020
- 5.3. Emails from Lisa Burnside regarding Amendments to Bill 229 and related Conservation Ontario Media Release, dated December 6th, and December 8th, 2020, respectively.
- 5.4. Email from Minister Jeff Yurek in response to HCA's letter regarding legislative changes to the Conservation Authorities Act, dated December 23, 2020 and email from Lisa Burnside regarding regional transition into Grey/Lockdown Zone for Covid-19 restrictions, dated December 24, 2020.
- 5.5. Email from Lisa Burnside regarding the Provincial Conservation Authorities Working Group, dated January 12, 2021.
- 5.6. Email from Lisa Burnside regarding HCA Operations and Provincial Covid-19 Announcement, dated January 14, 2021.
- 5.7. Letter from Carol Town and Catherine Weir regarding McCormack Trail Access, dated January 25, 2021

Dan Bowman thanked the Chair and Lisa Burnside for keeping the Board members well apprised of developments from the Province regarding Bill 229. Cynthia Janzen inquired about opportunities to share HCA's thoughts and concerns with Hassaan Basit, the Chair of the newly formed provincial working group for development of regulations to implement the legislative changes. Lisa responded that yes, she has contacted the Chair to offer support as needed. She further added that all regulations

the working group will be putting forward will be open for public consultation, where HCA, other stakeholders, and the public will be able to provide comments.

6. Member Briefing

6.1. Overview of Bill 229 - Protect, Support and Recover from COVID 19 Act (Budget Measures Act) - Schedule 6 - Conservation Authorities Act

Lisa Burnside provided a presentation outlining key legislative changes as well as amendments to some initially proposed changes. Lisa answered specific questions about processes and appeals, noting many details will not be known until the subsequent regulations are released.

Susan Fielding inquired about the provincial appointment of agricultural representatives to Conservation Authority Boards of Directors. Lisa confirmed, that the Minister may appoint an agricultural representative at their discretion, however, the details of this process are not available at this time.

Susan Fielding also inquired about the working group meetings being closed to the public. Lisa advised the members have been asked to sign confidentiality agreements and cannot speak about the nature of the discussions until the regulations are released.

Jim Cimba sought clarification on indemnification for Conservation Authorities required to issue mandatory permits contrary to our regulations and policies. Lisa stated that yes, clarification is required as to liability should there be natural hazards-related impacts to people or property. Conservation Ontario has submitted a request to Minister Yurek for more information and an indemnification clause in this regard.

Jim Cimba further inquired about staff consultation with HCA's liability insurers. Neil McDougall indicated he recently attended a meeting with the Conservation Ontario Insurance Subcommittee where this was a topic of discussion. Our insurer and Conservation Ontario will return with responses. Staff will return with an update on the results of the insurance discussion to the March Board meeting.

Cynthia Janzen inquired about the process for negotiating with municipalities for non-standard activities moving forward. Lisa responded that yes, staff are seeking details on which activities are mandatory that we can levy our partners for and if non-mandatory, HCA may need to obtain agreements with its member municipalities for these activities or support them with self-generated revenues. Cynthia Janzen further inquired about the frequency with which these agreements would need to be negotiated. Lisa commented that these details

may be included in the regulations. Staff are hopeful for mutli-year agreements as annual agreements would create administrative burden.

BD12, 2845

**MOVED BY: Jim Cimba
SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding**

THAT be received for information

CARRIED

7. Business Arising from the Minutes

7.1. Government Relations Policy

Lisa Burnside presented a summary of the report and answered the members' questions.

Cynthia Janzen inquired about staff plans to operationalize the policy. Lisa commented that yes, the policy provided clarity on the scope of government and staff will invest more time and have additional touch points with the various government members, including sharing annual reports, strategic plans, and invitations to events.

Cynthia suggested the roles and responsibilities section be amended to state Marketing and Communications staff's role will include undertaking environmental scanning to monitor and flag issues being posted on traditional and social media channels.

Brad Clark commented that the document is excellent and comprehensive and that government relations has expanded to include scanning media and social media to develop strategies.

Neil McDougall added that HCA has an internal marketing steering committee where government relations will now be discussed regularly.

Tom Jackson inquired about costs for external assistance and the process for seeking approval from the Board or Budget & Administration Committee. Lisa advised that Pathways undertook the development of the policy pro bono. Staff are confident we would have great support with them if we need assistance. Any significant costs would be brought forward for approval.

BD12, 2846

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

THAT the Government Relations Policy as outlined in the February 4, 2021 report, and amended to state the Marketing and Communications staff role will include undertaking environmental scanning to monitor and flag issues being posted on traditional and social media channels, be approved.

CARRIED

7.2. Natural Heritage Offsetting Policy Development Framework and Timing

Scott Peck presented a summary of the memorandum. Brad Clark commented that the discussion paper format is prudent and valuable as it will allow for understanding different stakeholder opinions and any future policy would be based on that feedback.

BD12, 2847

**MOVED BY: Brad Clark
SECONDED BY: Maria Topalovic**

THAT the memorandum entitled Natural Heritage Offsetting Policy Development Framework and Timing be received for information.

CARRIED

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

8.1. Foundation Chairman's Remarks

Margaret Reid presented the following:

Donations

We received a total of **\$50,085** in donations from December 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021. They break down as follows:

- \$18,570 for the Area of Greatest Need Fund
- \$12,048 for Westfield Heritage Village
- \$5,823 for Land Securement
- \$4,025 for Environmental Education
- \$4,000 for Tree and Shrub Plantings
- \$3,219 for the Dundas Valley Trails Fund

- \$1,125 for the Dundas Valley Fund
- The remaining \$1,275 was donated to Stewardship, Bench Maintenance and Trail Development

Virtual Equestrian Campout Fundraiser

Back in December, the Dundas Valley Equestrian Association held a virtual fundraiser in lieu of the annual Equestrian Campout Fundraiser that is held in August of each year. Approximately \$1,900 was raised for the Foundation to support the installation of horse friendly bridges across the Dundas Valley CA. Over the past 15 years, the equestrian community has raised nearly \$300,000 for the Dundas Valley trail system.

The Chair congratulated Margaret and the Foundation Board of Directors on the great work they are doing.

Cynthia Janzen inquired about any strategies the Foundation has developed to address the second year of the pandemic. Margaret responded they are fundraising for projects identified in the newly completed master plans, are undertaking more one on one outreach, and are working with HCA staff to identify other funding opportunities. Grace Correia added that the Foundation is adapting based on lessons learned last year, using examples from other charities, and reaching out to more donors by phone. Cynthia suggested the proposed changes to the Conservation Authorities Act and the pandemic have brought to light the importance of green space and conservation areas and might provide an opportunity to attract new donors. Grace confirmed that yes staff are finding donors are commenting on their appreciation of the areas. Grace also noted the environmental education program has also developed great virtual programming that donors may want to support.

BD12, 2848

**MOVED BY: Esther Pauls
SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding**

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

CARRIED

9. Other Staff Reports/Memoranda

9.1. 2021 Meeting Schedule and 2021 Annual General Meeting

Lisa Burnside presented a summary of the report, noting the July meeting falls on Canada Day and suggesting the members may wish to amend the date to the following Thursday.

BD12, 2849**MOVED BY: Jim Cimba
SECONDED BY: Chad Collins****THAT the Board of Directors approve the following:**

- 1. THAT the 2021 meeting dates for the Board of Directors as noted in this report, as amended to change the July 1 meeting to July 8, be approved; and further**
- 2. THAT the HCA Annual General Meeting (AGM) be rescheduled for June of 2021; and further**
- 3. THAT elections for the position of Board Chair and Vice Chair of the Board normally conducted at the Annual General Meeting be deferred until June of 2021 with the current Board Chair and Vice Chair remaining in place until that time; and further**
- 4. THAT the current term of Board Members appointed to the Budget and Administration Committee as well as the Conservation Advisory Board, along with the term of each respective HCA Committee Chair and Vice Chair be extended until the June 2021 AGM; and further**
- 5. THAT the appointments to Conservation Ontario Council be extended and formally reconfirmed at the June 2021 AGM.**

CARRIED**9.2. Permit Application – 41 Edgewater Drive, Stoney Creek**

Scott Peck presented a summary of the report and answered the members' questions. Maria Topalovic thanked Scott for the review and comments, and for exploring this additional option, demonstrating that HCA is trying to make the process as easy for the applicant as possible.

Tom Jackson inquired that in light of legislative changes in Bill 229, as an example, if HCA had recommended denial, would the applicant be able to petition the Minister directly for approval. Scott confirmed that would be possible.

BD12, 2850**MOVED BY: Maria Topalovic
SECONDED BY: Tom Jackson**

THAT the HCA Board of Directors approve the issuance of a permit under *Ontario Regulation 161/06* (HCA's Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses) for the construction of a swimming pool with associated deck and equipment shed within the regulated area associated with Lake Ontario at 41 Edgewater Drive, Stoney Creek, City of Hamilton.

CARRIED

9.3. Watershed Conditions Report

Scott Peck presented a summary of the memorandum, highlighting the new format of the report, moving the synopsis to the front page. Scott noted there was a storm warning, however the wind direction was favourable for the Lake Ontario shoreline in our jurisdiction. There are currently no flooding issues in our watershed. Our watershed is out of drought conditions and watercourse base flows and reservoirs are at typical levels.

BD12, 2851**MOVED BY: Esther Pauls
SECONDED BY: Dan Bowman**

THAT the memorandum entitled Watershed Conditions Report be received as information.

CARRIED

9.4. Conservation Areas Experiences Update

Gord Costie provided a verbal update, highlighting that all of our Conservation Areas are open. Visitor attendance continues to be higher than normal for this time of year. HCA is providing access to outdoor recreational areas in accordance with all provincial guidance and direction. It is anticipated that we will experience similar conditions in 2021 as we did in 2020 and staff are preparing based on last year's experiences.

With regard to the letter on the consent agenda, sent by Carol Town, Cynthia Janzen inquired about the process for staff to follow up with delegates to the Board of Directors. Gord responded that due to the technical difficulties at the meeting at

the time, the delegates may not have heard the discussion following their presentation and that the board did not direct staff to undertake any action at the time. He has since contacted the delegates to provide a summary of the discussion and the minutes of the meeting. He has offered to reconnect and serve as a point of contact for them. The Chair added that he has also visited the site in follow up from the delegation and reaffirmed that it is not appropriate to create additional parking at the McCormack Trail at this time.

Esther Pauls advised staff of visitor reports of garbage on the trail between Dundana and Little John Roads. Gord advised he would review the mapping and contact the appropriate HCA or City staff. Lisa Burnside added that we have struggled with garbage during the pandemic. HCA has started very targeted media to request people pack out what they bring. Cynthia thanked staff for the work undertaken to maintain the trails.

Dan Bowman inquired about winter camping and if HCA has started taking reservations for summer camping. Gord responded that winter campers were permitted to stay if they had pre-registered. Nightly winter camping is not permitted. HCA, similar to Ontario Parks, is accepting summer reservations in anticipation that campgrounds will be permitted to operate, possibly with restrictive services. Reservations are being taken to avoid a surge should we open reservations closer to the season.

BD12, 2852

**MOVED BY: Esther Pauls
SECONDED BY: Santina Moccio**

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

CARRIED

10. New Business

There was none.

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

BD12, 2853

**MOVED BY: Maria Topalovic
SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding**

THAT the Board of Directors moves *in camera* for matters of law, personnel and property.

CARRIED

During the *in camera* session, one personnel matter was discussed.

11.1. Confidential Report – BD/Feb 01-2021

Nancy Watts provided a summary of the report regarding a personnel matter.

BD12, 2854

**MOVED BY: Jim Cimba
SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding**

THAT the confidential report entitled BD/Feb 01-2021 be approved and remain in camera.

CARRIED

BD12, 2855

**MOVED BY: Dan Bowman
SECONDED BY: Esther Pauls**

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

CARRIED

12. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Thursday, March 4, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. by WebEx videoconference.

13. Adjournment

On motion, the meeting adjourned.



Neil McDougall
Secretary-Treasurer