

THAT the agenda be approved.

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 – February 4, 2021
- 5.3. Approved October 10, 2020 Conservation Advisory Board Minutes – for receipt only
- 5.4. Email from MECP re Proclamation of Provisions of the Conservation Authorities Act, February 5, 2021
- 5.5. News Release ‘Ontario Takes Steps to Grow the Greenbelt’, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, February 21, 2021

Brad Clark requested item 5.5 be brought out of the consent agenda to ask questions of staff. Brad asked Scott Peck if there is any opportunity to include the Saltfleet Conservation Area in the expansion of the Greenbelt Plan area.

Scott advised that the Saltfleet Conservation Area and other lands to the east of Centennial Parkway are largely already included in the Greenbelt Plan area. The direction of the proposal from the province is primarily to add urban river valleys, to connect them to the existing Greenbelt Plan Area. With respect to the Saltfleet Conservation Area, staff would be supportive of the Stoney and Battlefield Creeks systems being included in the Greenbelt Plan.

Brad further inquired about the process for submitting this request. Scott noted the discussion paper is high level at this time and does not include details of the process. He added that he understands City of Hamilton staff will be bringing a report on the proposed expansion to City Council in the coming weeks. HCA staff will bring a report to the Board of Directors in April regarding the proposed expansion as it relates to HCA lands and will include these connections to the Saltfleet Conservation Area in the report.

Brad also inquired about the potential to include the Eramosa Karst feeder lands in this expansion to preserve the lands in perpetuity. Scott indicated that these lands could also be included in the forthcoming staff report.

6. Member Briefing

There was none.

7. Business Arising from the Minutes

7.1. Proclamation of Governance Provisions of the Conservation Authorities Act

Lisa Burnside gave a presentation summarizing the report and answered the members' questions related to exception application requirements for a board resolution, recorded vote, meeting minutes and the timeframe the Ministry staff are striving to respond to for all exception requests. It was also noted that it is not possible for HCA to follow the provision for the rotation amongst participating municipalities for the position of Chair and Vice-Chair with only one member from a second participating municipality to succeed the two City of Hamilton members. Lisa further added that all 36 Conservation Authorities have different board memberships and composition and the province has provided the exception process to consider local circumstances.

The members expressed their strong support for the staff recommendations and made note of how citizen representatives on the Board have made valuable contributions. All six recommendations reinforce our current process which operates effectively.

BD12, 2857

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

WHEREAS some specific provisions in the Conservation Authorities Act were recently proclaimed to initiate changes to conservation authority governance; and

WHEREAS the June 3, 2021, HCA Annual General Meeting is affected by the changes as it relates to the rotation of the Chair and Vice Chair positions amongst participating municipalities unless the Authority applies to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks requesting an exception and

WHEREAS the June 3, 2021, HCA Annual General Meeting is also impacted by term limits for the positions

of Chair and Vice Chair unless the Authority applies to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks requesting an exception; and

WHEREAS the future citizen appointments to the HCA Board of Directors would be impacted by the requirement to have 70% of board members to be elected officials unless HCA's participating municipalities, the City of Hamilton and Township of Puslinch, apply to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks requesting an exception;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

THAT the Board of Directors approve the following:

- 1. THAT the Hamilton Conservation Authority apply to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks requesting an exception to the rotation of the Chair and Vice Chair position to rotate amongst participating municipalities given HCA's unique board composition with only two participating municipalities and just one member from the second participating municipality; and further**
- 2. THAT the rotation be based on annual democratic election by board members who wish to stand for these positions and further;**
- 3. THAT an exception also be requested to the maximum two consecutive term limits for the position of Chair and Vice Chair to a maximum of four consecutive terms to align with the appointment terms from the participating municipalities and further;**
- 4. THAT the maximum four consecutive terms be based on annual democratic election by board members who wish to stand for these positions and further;**
- 5. THAT the Board endorse the current complement of five elected officials and five citizen appointments from the City of Hamilton and the**

option of the Township of Puslinch to appoint either a citizen or elected official and further;

6. THAT HCA request the City of Hamilton and Township of Puslinch make application to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks to request exceptions to maintain the current complement of citizen appointments on the HCA Board.

RECORDED VOTE:

For:	Dan Bowman	Opposed:	None
	Brad Clark		
	Jim Cimba		
	Chad Collins		
	Lloyd Ferguson		
	Tom Jackson		
	Cynthia Janzen		
	Santina Moccio		
	Maria Topalovic		

CARRIED

7.2. Mandatory Permit Insurance Indemnification – Verbal Update

Neil McDougall advised the Board that he contacted the General Manager of Conservation Ontario to obtain any status updates on indemnity from the Province when conservation authorities are required to issue permits without staff and Board approval. Conservation Ontario advised that a request was submitted to the Province and a response has not yet been received. Conservation Ontario has submitted a request for a save harmless statement from the Province on behalf of all Conservation Authorities.

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

8.1. Conservation Advisory Board – February 11, 2021
(Recommendations)

8.1.1. CA 2103 2021 Reservation Service –
Spencer Gorge Conservation Area

Gord Costie provided a summary of the report, highlighting the success of the pilot project in managing visitation and traffic in the vicinity of the conservation area. Gord noted there was good discussion at the Conservation Advisory Board meeting about the reservation system.

BD12, 2858

**MOVED BY: Maria Topalovic
SECONDED BY: Dan Bowman**

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

WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic continues to drive and reshape HCA Conservation Area operations, visitor attendance levels, and visitor management strategies;

WHEREAS the former Shuttle Bus service based out of Christie Lake was effectively removed as a visitor management measure for the Spencer Gorge Conservation Area due to the COVID-19 pandemic measures and operational challenges;

WHEREAS the pilot 2020 reservation system for Dundas Peak, Tew Falls, and Webster Falls operations for the fall colour season, was highly successful in controlling and regulating the number of visitors, reducing vehicle traffic and congestion within the nearby community;

WHEREAS staff were directed to evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot reservation system and report back regarding its ongoing potential during the regular operation system in 2021;

**THEREFORE, be it resolved
THAT staff be directed to implement the following recommendations outlined in the report titled “2021 Reservation Service – Spencer Gorge Conservation Area”;**

Recommendation #1 - THAT the reservation system continue as an extension of the 2020 fall pilot program during the main operating season allowing staff the opportunity to further evaluate the effectiveness of a longer reservation service period; and further

Recommendation #2 – THAT the 2021 reservation system for Spencer Gorge Conservation Area continue to

- The remaining \$680 was donated to Tree and Shrub Planting, Environmental Education and Land Securement

This brings our fiscal year-to-date (Dec 2020 to Feb 2021) fundraising total to **\$66,343**

Margaret thanked Cynthia Janzen for her advice on marketing and outreach. The Foundation Board of Directors is currently developing a communications plan.

BD12, 2860

**MOVED BY: Santina Moccio
SECONDED BY: Maria Topalovic**

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

CARRIED

9. Other Staff Reports/Memoranda

9.1. Permit Timelines – Conservation Ontario Client Service Initiative

Mike Stone presented a summary of the memorandum and answered the members' questions.

Brad Clark inquired about ramifications for not meeting the prescribed timeframes, given the complexity of some large applications. Mike Stone commented that the standards are intended as best practices rather than prescribed in legislation. He added that staff are committed to providing the best service possible.

BD12, 2861

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

THAT the memorandum entitled Annual Reporting on CA Permit Review Timelines – January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020 be received as information.

CARRIED

9.2. Tender for Lawn Mower Equipment

Neil McDougall presented a summary of the report, highlighting that the units have been tested by staff and are replacing existing older units. He further noted that the staff recommendation is to award the contract to the lowest bidder.

BD12, 2862**MOVED BY: Chad Collins
SECONDED BY: Santina Moccio****THAT the Board of Directors award the purchase of nine (9) Zero Turn lawn mowers to Galer Farm Equipment LTD for the amount totaling \$124,845.12 (includes applicable taxes).****CARRIED****9.3. Watershed Conditions Report**

Scott Peck presented a summary of the memorandum, stating that current water levels in some of our major watercourses are well below the long-term averages, consistent with a level 2 low water condition. This is unusual for this time of year. Staff will continue to monitor the watercourses according to our low water protocols.

Scott also noted the Lake Ontario water levels are 9 cm below average for this time of year and 74 cm below the highest level ever recorded for this time of year.

The Chair inquired about issues with flooding associated with snow melt. Scott responded that there are no specific concerns with snow melt flooding at this time.

BD12, 2863**MOVED BY: Santina Moccio
SECONDED BY: Maria Topalovic****THAT the memorandum entitled Watershed Conditions Report be received as information.****CARRIED****9.4. Conservation Areas Experiences Update**

Gord Costie provided a verbal update advising that the Westfield Heritage Village Maple Syrup Festival and Spring Christie Lake Antique and Vintage Show are both cancelled due to the pandemic.

Gord further shared that high visitation to the Conservation Areas continues. Staff have responded with early staffing of gate houses and maintenance to meet the visitation demands. The larger areas are holding well as they have substantial parking and acreage. However, the smaller parkette conservations areas, such as Tiffany Falls, Artaban Road, the Hermitage, Webster Falls, Tew Falls, and Devil's Punchbowl are overwhelmed at times. In response, staff have deployed weekend private security, road way pylons and barricades have been installed, and social

media updates are sent out. Staff are also reviewing other visitor management measures and will be brought to the City Waterfalls Working Group.

Lloyd Ferguson added that he will be bringing a motion to an upcoming City of Hamilton General Issues Committee for Tiffany Falls to be designated as a Special Enforcement Area as well as working with City by-law enforcement staff to manage the parking issues.

Lloyd also inquired about the status of the road right of way used by visitors last summer to access the beach at Fifty Point. Lisa Burnside responded that staff continue to work with the Town of Grimsby staff and review our files to confirm property boundaries.

Chad Collins requested safety signage and social media messaging be deployed to discourage visitors from going out on the Lake Ontario ice mounds at Confederation Beach Park. Gord responded that staff will follow up on this request.

BD12, 2864

**MOVED BY: Dan Bowman
SECONDED BY: Maria Topalovic**

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, 2865

**MOVED BY: Santina Moccio
SECONDED BY: Maria Topalovic**

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

CARRIED

Brad Clark left the meeting.

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

11.1. Confidential Report – BD/Mar 01-2021

Lisa Burnside and Neil McDougall provided a joint summary of the memorandum and answered the members' questions.

BD12, 2866

**MOVED BY: Chad Collins
SECONDED BY: Tom Jackson**

THAT the confidential memorandum entitled BD/Mar 01-2021 be received and remain in camera.

CARRIED

BD12, 2867

**MOVED BY: Jim Cimba
SECONDED BY: Santina Moccio**

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, April 1, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

13. Adjournment

On motion, the meeting adjourned.



Neil McDougall
Secretary-Treasurer