

Hamilton Region Conservation Authority

Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting

March 3, 2022

Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on Thursday, March 3, 2022 at 7.p.m., by videoconference and livestreamed via YouTube.

PRESENT: **Lloyd Ferguson – in the Chair**
 Dan Bowman **Brad Clark**
 Jim Cimba **Susan Fielding**
 Tom Jackson **Cynthia Janzen**
 Santina Moccio

Jennifer Stebbing – Foundation Chair

REGRETS: **Esther Pauls, Russ Powers, Maria Topalovic**

STAFF PRESENT: **Jonathan Bastien, Rondalyn Brown, Lisa Burnside, Grace Correia, Lindsay Davidson, Matt Hall, Lesley McDonell, Neil McDougall, Scott Peck, Elizabeth Reimer, Mike Stone, Jaime Tellier, and Nancy Watts**

OTHERS: **None**

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present.

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 requested any additions or deletions to the agenda.

BD12, 3006**MOVED BY: Cynthia Janzen
SECONDED BY: Dan Bowman****THAT the agenda be approved.****CARRIED****4. Delegations**

There were none.

5. Section 28 Hearing

5.1. 15 Oakwood Place, City of Hamilton – Permit Application No. H/F,C/21/97

BD12, 3007**MOVED BY: Santina Moccio
SECONDED BY: Jim Cimba****THAT the Board of Directors sit as the Hearing Board.****CARRIED**

Mike Stone presented a summary of the staff report, indicating staff were unable to support the application as HCA and provincial policy generally direct new development beyond hazardous lands in order to protect people and property.

Douglas and Sarah Kinzie presented a summary of their development proposal, noting their intent for this to be their long term home, within their existing neighbourhood. Their central reasons for the proposal are to renovate existing areas that are currently hard-scaped and to mitigate erosion. It was suggested the helical piers of the balcony would improve the load on the slope. In addition, native plantings would be added to further stabilize the area. Another noted improvement would be to redirect roof runoff further down the slope. Mr. Kinzie indicated the intent is not to increase the size of the patio, but to replace what is in place, while also meeting City requirements for pools. A geotechnical consultant recommended sinking the pool in-ground to reduce the load on the slope.

The development proposal in relation to erosion hazards associated with a ravine slope on the property and possible hazard mitigation measures were discussed. It was clarified the existing house is within the long term erosion hazard limit of the slope. The house was built in 1991. Construction of the house would not be supportable through HCA's current policies. It was noted that it is possible that construction techniques such as helical piers, could stabilize slope and mitigate the erosion risk, however a geotechnical assessment would be required to determine the

THAT the application by Douglas Kinzie for development of a hydropool, patio, raised deck and associated grading and landscaping accessory to an existing single residence in a regulated area of Lower Spencer Creek at 15 Oakwood Place, City of Hamilton, be approved subject to standard conditions, completion of a geotechnical assessment, and entrance into a save harmless agreement with the Hamilton Conservation Authority.

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 – February 3, 2022
- 6.3. Approved December 9, 2021 Conservation Advisory Board Minutes – for receipt only
- 6.4. Approved January 20, 2021 Budget & Administration Committee Minutes – for receipt only
- 6.5. 16 Items of correspondence respecting the 2022 Election of Officers, labelled a) to p)
- 6.6. Email from MECP dated February 8, 2022 re: Conservation Authority Agricultural Sector Representatives

7. Foundation Briefing

Donations

Jennifer Stebbing reported the Foundation received a total of **\$7,300** in new donations from February 1, 2022 to February 28, 2022, with \$5,082 of that for the *Step Into Nature* Education Fund. The remaining donations were directed to the Area of Greatest Need Fund, Westfield Heritage Village, Dundas Valley Trails, and the Land Securement Fund.

The Westfield locomotive tender restoration continues to build steam with great media coverage, which we are working to capitalize on and raise the necessary funds for the project, in partnership with the Friends of Westfield.

Other fundraising efforts for the Foundation in 2022 will focus on continuing to fully fund the Environmental Education Program, funding future work at Saltfleet Conservation Area, and starting to build our Education Endowment to a level where it will generate sufficient income to fully fund the annual operating needs of the education program.

BD12, 3011

MOVED BY: Santina Moccio

SECONDED BY: Jim Cimba

THAT the Foundation Briefing be received.

CARRIED

8. Member Briefing

8.1. 2021 HCA Annual Report

Lisa Burnside presented the annual report, noting the report marks the third year of progress for HCA's 5-year strategic plan. It demonstrates HCA's important work toward our vision of a healthy watershed for our communities and the shared natural environment. Lisa shared she is very proud of the significant progress HCA made in all areas through the continuing pandemic, and that it is the result of the hard work and dedication of all staff, our board of directors, our many volunteers and the ongoing support of our municipal partners, the City of Hamilton and Township of Puslinch.

Some examples of highlights from the report shared under each of the strategic program areas include:

Organizational Excellence

- Successful piloting of a new online stakeholder engagement tool to facilitate community comments on HCA projects
- HCA's website reached a new milestone with over 2 million page views
- Sustained increased gate admissions, marina operations and camping fees offset pandemic-related reductions in other HCA program areas

Water Management

- 99 permits issued for development projects to ensure protection of people and property
- Undertook public safety assessments for the Christie and Valens dams
- Continued to invest in our water quality monitoring programs

Natural Heritage Conservation

- Awarded the first contract for construction of the first Saltfleet CA wetland, which is now underway and fully funded by a tremendous grant from the Heritage Green Community Trust.
- Continued with mapping and removal of invasive species on our lands with over 17 different species managed
- Enhanced natural heritage features across our watershed with over 4,700 native species planted
- Hosted 12 volunteer events in 2021 with 308 garbage bags of trash collected

Conservation Areas Experience

- Welcomed over 1.2 million visitors to our owned or managed properties
- Reached record annual pass sales with over 12,000 passes sold, doubling 2019 numbers
- Added 177 acres to expand our landholdings

Education and Environmental Awareness

- Hosted over 20 public and volunteer events with plantings, invasive species removal and garbage removal.
- Expanded our suite of virtual education programs and booked over 100 virtual education sessions with the Hamilton public school board

Lisa also added that Foundation donors contributed over \$285K to support many projects and were instrumental in our ask to Heritage Green Community Trust for the grant request to fund the first wetland at Saltfleet.

The members congratulated staff on the report and all of the work undertaken over the past year.

BD12, 3012

**MOVED BY: Dan Bowman
SECONDED BY: Santina Moccio**

THAT the 2021 HCA Annual Report be received.

CARRIED

9. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was none.

10. Reports from Budget & Administration Committee and Conservation Advisory Board

10.1. Conservation Advisory Board – February 10, 2022

(Recommendations)

10.1.1. CA 2203 Westfield Heritage Village Accession and Deaccession Lists

Dan Bowman, the Chair of CAB, introduced the report, highlighting an Ideal Lever spinning wheel, a very rare and significant acquisition for the collection, as well as other items recommended for accession. He also described the criteria used to select items for deaccession, often due to poor condition or lack of interpretive value.

BD12, 3013 **MOVED BY: Dan Bowman**
 SECONDED BY: Jim Cimba

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

THAT the Westfield 2021 Artifact Accessions and Deaccessions List as noted in the February 10, 2022 Accessions/Deaccessions report be accepted as the artifacts to be added to, or removed from, the Westfield Heritage Village Conservation Area and the Hamilton Conservation Authority collection.

CARRIED

10.1.2. CA 2204 2022 Annual Membership Pass Program Renewal Strategy

Dan Bowman brought forward the staff report, noting the significant increase in pass sales since the pandemic began. While staff already undertake some initiatives to engage and connect with members and encourage them to renew, the report outlines a 6-point strategy of additional member engagement tools to retain and attract new pass holders. The strategy includes a postal code analysis to better understand pass holder demographics, improving platforms for online pass sales and tracking pass holders for renewal, as well as ensuring staff have the appropriate training and tools to market and sell the pass.

BD12, 3014 **MOVED BY: Dan Bowman**
 SECONDED BY: Cynthia Janzen

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

THAT the 2022 Annual Membership Program Renewal Strategy Report be received for information regarding our Annual Membership Pass Program; further;

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

THAT this report be received for information regarding our LDD moth surveys and results; and further;

THAT the HCA not undertake a spray program to control LDD Moths in 2022, and;

THAT the HCA undertake a targeted approach (banding, egg mass scraping) that focuses on high value oak trees in our forests for 2022.

CARRIED

11. Other Staff Reports/Memoranda

11.1. Wild Waterworks Waterslide Refurbishment Tender Results

Matt Hall presented a summary of the staff report and answered the members' questions. A previous tender resulted in only one bid being received and that exceeded the allowable project budget. For this second tendering, the scope and nature of work was refined to reduce costs. In addition, the specifications were refined to consider alternative companies with similar or related specialities. No bids were received by the deadline.

Limiting factors for contractors to submit bids was discussed. When surveyed, one contractor cited other commitments, and another expressed concern that the attraction has reached the end of its serviceable lifespan and recommended replacement instead of refurbishment. It was clarified that the proposed work was cosmetic in nature and that all slides are required to be assessed by HCA's licenced slide mechanics, and TSSA for safety standards each year before opening. Cancellation of this project will not affect the ability of Wild Waterworks to open for the 2022 season.

The members expressed regret that the project could not move forward this year. It was noted that the City of Hamilton is currently undertaking a master plan for Wild Waterworks to evaluate the feasibility of a number of scenarios for the future of facility and HCA staff are involved in the process.

BD12, 3017

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

THAT HCA staff recommends to the Board of Directors:

That the West Slide Refurbishment project at Wild Waterworks be closed given that no bids were received for this second tender attempt.

CARRIED

11.2. Watershed Conditions Report

Jonathan Bastien presented a summary of the memorandum, highlighting that staff have been active in the past weeks releasing Flood Watch and Warning bulletins. Localized road flooding occurred at four known locations in HCA's watershed and in low-lying areas prone to flooding, due to a rain and snowmelt event on February 17th. An updated Flood Watch was issued February 22nd due to the ongoing event.

Significant watercourse flooding and significant public safety concerns were possible in all area watercourses due to the storm event. Potential public safety concerns in particular areas were noted. Christie Lake and Valens Lake levels were noted as above typical winter levels, but significant flood storage was available.

There were no current or recent observations or reports of Lake Ontario shoreline flooding. However, shore-bound wave heights of up to 2.1 m were forecasted for Friday, February 25. The waves had potential to result in localized shoreline flooding and staff continued to monitor the situation closely and were prepared to issue flood messages as appropriate.

BD12, 3018

**MOVED BY: Dan Bowman
SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding**

THAT the memorandum entitled Watershed Conditions Report be received.

CARRIED

11.3. Conservation Areas Experiences Update

Gord Costie provided the members with a verbal update, highlighting that winter attendance is steady, with areas containing waterfalls continuing with higher visitation. He also noted the record number of HCA membership pass holders are observable at the Conservation Areas, and that Westfield Heritage Village is excited to host a modified maple syrup festival on Sundays in March as well as two other days during March break, using a reservation system to enhance visitor experience.

BD12, 3019

MOVED BY: Tom Jackson

SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding

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

CARRIED

12. New Business

There was none.

13. In-Camera Items

BD12, 3020

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

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

CARRIED

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

13.1. Confidential Verbal Update – BA/Feb 02-2022

Brad Clark declared a conflict of interest on this item when the specific topic of the verbal update on a legal matter was shared and left the meeting.

Scott Peck then provided a verbal update regarding a legal matter and answered the members' questions.

BD12, 3021

**MOVED BY: Cynthia Janzen
SECONDED BY: Santina Moccio**

THAT the confidential verbal update entitled BA/Feb 02-2022 be received and remain in camera.

CARRIED

BD12, 3022

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

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

CARRIED

14. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Thursday, April 7, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

15. Adjournment

On motion, the meeting adjourned.



Neil McDougall
Secretary-Treasurer