



Budget & Administration Committee Meeting Agenda

Thursday September 26, 2024

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Budget & Administration Committee Meeting

Thursday, September 26, 2024 at 10:00 A.M.

This meeting will be held fully virtual via WebEx

All hybrid meetings can be viewed live on HCA's You Tube Channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/HamiltonConservation>

1. **Welcome** – Susan Fielding

2. **Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

3. **Approval of Agenda**

4. **Delegations**

5. **Consent Items**

5.1. Approval of Budget & Administration Committee Minutes – August 15, 2024

Page 1

6. **Business Arising from the Minutes**

7. **Staff Reports/Memorandums**

Reports for Recommendation

7.1 Draft 2025 Operating and Capital Budgets

– Scott Fleming

8. **New Business**

9. **In-Camera Items**

10. **Next Meeting – Thursday, October 17, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.**

11. **Adjournment**

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Hamilton Conservation Authority

Minutes

Budget & Administration Committee

August 15, 2024

Minutes of the Budget & Administration Committee meeting held on Thursday, August 17, 2024 at 6:00 p.m., via Webex, and livestreamed on YouTube.

Present: Susan Fielding, in the Chair
Brad Clark
Lisa DiCesare
Maureen Wilson

Regrets: Alex Wilson

Staff Present: Lisa Burnside, Gord Costie, Marlene Ferreira, Scott Fleming, Liam Fletcher, Matt Hall, Amanda Martin, Scott Peck, Jaime Tellier, and Sandra Winninger

Others Present: None

1. Welcome

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 HCA Administrative By-law. There were none.

3. Approval of Agenda

The Chair requested any additions or deletions to the agenda; there weren't any additions.

BA 2418**MOVED BY: Maureen Wilson
SECONDED BY: Lisa DiCesare****THAT the agenda be approved.****CARRIED****4. Delegations**

There were none.

5. Consent Items

The following consent items were adopted:

5.1. Approval of Budget & Administration Committee Minutes – June 17, 2024

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was none.

7. Staff Reports/Memoranda

Reports for recommendation

7.1. Application to Renew Governance Exceptions

Lisa Burnside provided a summary of the report, advising that HCA has traditionally conducted its Annual General Meeting (AGM) through democratic elections for Chair and Vice Chair positions. Provincial governance changes in 2020 introduced term limits and rotation requirements among participating municipalities unless exceptions were granted. HCA has previously obtained exceptions, which are set to expire at the end of this year, necessitating reapplication to continue these democratic elections. Without reapplying, the Act's provisions will apply to the AGM in February 2025

BA 2419**MOVED BY: Lisa DiCesare
SECONDED BY: Maureen Wilson****THAT the Budget & Administration Committee
recommends to the Board of Directors:****WHEREAS the governance exceptions that HCA has**

Been granted from the Minister will be expiring at the end of 2024,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

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

THAT HCA reapply to the Minister of Natural Resources requesting an exception to the rotation of the Chair and Vice Chair position to rotate amongst participating municipalities; and further

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; and further

THAT the exceptions be based on the rationale as provided in the last exception that was approved by the Minister noting HCA's unique board composition, alignment with four-year municipal appointment terms and process of annual democratic election.

CARRIED

Brad Clark joined the meeting

7.2. 2025 Budget Assumptions and Processes

Scott Fleming provided a presentation on the report noting that the revenue and expense assumptions provided will assist staff in developing a draft budget for 2025. Key expense highlights include a 2.25% COLA increase for full-time staff wages and 3% grid step increases for eligible staff following the recent job evaluation, hiring of some new staff to support strategic plan initiatives and internal structure changes for talent retention and to support service delivery. Key revenue highlights include projected municipal levy increase in the 3% range, with a continued \$2.0M capital funding stream from the City of Hamilton. Additional revenue from inflationary planning, permit fee increases, and fee adjustments at conservation areas were also noted. Scott advised that the draft budget will be reviewed by the Budget and Administration Committee and the Board of Directors prior to being shared with City of Hamilton and Township of Puslinch, in accordance to with the *Conservation Authorities Act*. It was noted that the Board of Directors approve the final budget at the December meeting.

BA 2420

**MOVED BY: Brad Clark
SECONDED BY: Maureen Wilson**

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

THAT this report be received for information and further;

THAT the budget assumptions for the 2025 Operating and Capital Budgets as identified be approved for use in the development of the 2025 budgets and further;

THAT the 2025 draft budget be reviewed by the Budget and Administration Committee at their September 2024 meeting and brought to the Board of Directors at the October 2024 meeting for approval; and further;

THAT the City of Hamilton and Township of Puslinch be advised 30 days in advance of the of the final budget vote in accordance with the *Conservation Authorities Act* and Ontario Regulation 402/22.

CARRIED

7.3. HCA 2025 Fee Schedule

Scott Fleming reviewed the report, with key highlights that the increases proposed overall are modest. For 2025, HCA proposes minor increases across all conservation areas, including a \$0.50 rise in entrance fees and a slight hike in camping and rental fees to offset inflation and operational costs.

The HCA Membership Pass will see a \$5 increase from \$120 to \$125, maintaining competitive pricing compared to other Conservation Authorities.

The Watershed Management Services division recommends a 2.25% inflationary increase in plan review service fees, assuming no extension of the current rate freeze beyond 2024. Additionally, staff will be engaging with Watson & Associates Economists Inc. to review cost recovery of WMS fees to reflect regulatory changes in the Conservation Authorities Act.

Discussion occurred regarding the proposed increase to the Annual Pass. It was noted that the HCA Annual Pass is priced competitively compared to neighbouring conservation authorities, providing good value.

BA 2421

MOVED BY: Brad Clark

SECONDED BY: Lisa DiCesare

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

THAT effective January 1, 2025, HCA staff be directed to implement the revised fee schedule contained in this report and further;

THAT the updated Fee Policy contained in Appendix A be included with the 2025 Fee Schedule

CARRIED

Further discussion occurred on the processes used to inform the fee guide, including, comparison of fees, and benefits offered by neighbouring conservation authorities, to help ensure the HCA remains competitive. Members requested the staff provide, prior to the creation of the 2026 fee guide, additional information used to inform the suggested fee increases.

BA 2422

**MOVED BY: Maureen Wilson
SECONDED BY: Brad Clark**

THAT HCA staff be requested to report in advance of the 2026 budget year on the methodology, principles and objectives used to inform the next fee structure with a comparison to neighbouring conservation authorities.

CARRIED

Memorandums to be Received

7.4. HCA Six-Month Financial Results (Q2) – Operating

Scott Fleming reviewed the memorandum and answered members' questions

BA 2423

**MOVED BY: Lisa DiCesare
SECONDED BY: Brad Clark**

THAT the memorandum entitled HCA Six-Month Financial Results (Q2) – Operating be received.

CARRIED

7.5. HCA Six-Month Financial Results – Capital & Major Maintenance

Scott Fleming reviewed the memorandum and answered members' questions.

BA 2424

**MOVED BY: Maureen Wilson
SECONDED BY: Lisa DiCesare**

THAT the memorandum HCA Six-Month Financial Results – Capital & Major Maintenance be received

CARRIED

7.6. HCA 2nd Quarter Vendor Report

Scott Fleming reviewed the memorandum and answered members' questions.

BA 2425

**MOVED BY: Lisa DiCesare
SECONDED BY: Brad Clark**

THAT the memorandum entitled HCA 2nd Quarter Vendor Report be received

CARRIED

8. New Business

There was none.

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

There was none.

10. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee will be held on Thursday, September 19, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at the HCA Main Administration Office – Woodend Auditorium, 838 Mineral Springs Road, Ancaster, Ontario.

11. Next Meeting Adjournment

On motion, the meeting adjourned.