

Hamilton Region Conservation Authority

Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting

December 7, 2023

Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 6:00 p.m., at the HCA main office, 838 Mineral Springs Road, in Ancaster, and livestreamed on YouTube.

PRESENT: **Brad Clark – in the Chair**
 Jeff Beattie (Webex) **Lisa DiCesare**
 Susan Fielding **Brian McHattie (Webex)**
 Wayne Terryberry **Alex Wilson (Webex)**
 Maureen Wilson (Webex)

Jennifer Stebbing – Foundation Chair (Webex)

REGRETS: **Craig Cassar, Matt Francis, Mike Spadafora**

STAFF PRESENT: **Jonathan Bastien, Lisa Burnside, Grace Correia, Scott Fleming, Matt Hall, Colin Oaks, Scott Peck, Karen Phong, Cathy Plosz, Mike Stone, Jaime Tellier, Nancy Watts, Sandra Winner**

OTHERS: **None**

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present. The Board of Directors observed a moment of silence for Bruce Harschnitz and viewed a photo tribute of Bruce over his many years at HCA.

The Chair shared with the members, details of the official public opening of the expanded trail system at Westfield Heritage Village and dedication of the Chinmaya Trail. Representatives of the Chakraborty family, who sold the property to HCA, joined staff and Board members to cut the ribbon and explain the dedication of the trail name. In addition, 50 people from the family and Chinmaya mission were also present.

The Chair also advised of his attendance at the staff Annual General Meeting and the opportunity to hear about all of the work and achievements from the past year and to recognize staff who had reached employment service milestones. He expressed his deep appreciation on behalf of the Board for the commitment and extraordinary work of staff.

The Board welcomed Marlene Ferreira, the new Director of Human Resources and Wellness, to HCA. They also congratulated Nancy Watts and wished her well for her retirement.

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. Lisa Burnside advised of two addendums to the agenda, an item of correspondence from the Niagara Biosphere Reserve to be added as item 5.6, and the Interim Feedback on HCA Strategic Plan Renewal, to be added as item 7.1. Additionally, a legal matter to be discussed in camera was added as item 12.3.

BD12, 3275

**MOVED BY: Wayne Terryberry
SECONDED BY: Lisa DiCesare**

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 – November 2, 2023

- 5.3. Letter from Township of Puslinch re. Hamilton Conservation Authority Resolution Regarding Reverse Changes to the Conservation Authorities Act and Ontario Wetland Evaluation System, dated November 10, 2023
- 5.4. Letter from The Corporation of the County of Prince Edward re. motion regarding support for the Province to stop the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) proposal to expand the use of the permit-by-rule to waste Management systems, stormwater management systems, and certain water taking Activities, dated November 17, 2023
- 5.5. Letter from the Honourable Graydon Smith, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry re. Hamilton Conservation Authority Resolution Regarding Reverse Changes to the Conservation Authorities Act and Ontario Wetland Evaluation System, dated November 22, 2023.
- 5.6. Letter from the Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Network Request for Support, dated December 5, 2023

6. Foundation Briefing

Jennifer Stebbing reported on the following:

The Foundation received a total of **\$151,664** in new donations from November 1st to November 30th 2023. They break down as follows:

- **\$103,005** to the Dobson-McKee Family Environment Education Fund
- **\$26,000** from the Friends of Westfield directed to priority projects at Westfield
- **\$14,984** to the Area of Greatest Need Fund, largely in response to our Fall Appeal

The remaining **\$7,675** was directed to various projects, including Westfield 103 Locomotive, Saltfleet CA Fund, and Tribute Benches.

This brings the unofficial fundraising total for the fiscal year to **\$946,680**, which exceeds their fundraising goal of \$827,849 by 14%.

2023 Highlights

The second instalment on the \$2 million pledge from Heritage Green Community Trust, as well as \$100,000 toward the Dobson-McKee Environmental Education Fund, contributed greatly to the Foundation's fundraising success for the year.

As a result of fundraising efforts and the generosity of our donors, the Foundation contributed approximately \$870,000 toward various HCA priority projects, including the Saltfleet wetland construction, the Outdoor Environmental Education program,

trail improvements at Westfield and Dundas Valley, interpretive signage, and plantings coordinated through the Stewardship Department. The Foundation also funded a consultant-led feasibility study to determine their internal fundraising capacity to grow the Environmental Education Fund.

Looking Ahead

Fundraising focuses for 2024 will include continuing to fully fund the Environmental Education Program, and contributions to various other projects throughout the watershed.

In addition, the Foundation will be reviewing the feasibility study report and recommendations and initiating work on a new strategic plan.

BD12, 3276

MOVED BY: Wayne Terryberry

SECONDED BY: Jeff Beattie

THAT the Foundation Briefing be received.

CARRIED

7. Member Briefing

7.1. Interim Feedback on HCA Strategic Plan Renewal

Anne Bermingham and Michael Howes of 2WA Consulting presented a summary of input collected through interviews and focus groups during the data gathering phase of the strategic plan development process. The consultants lead the members through the main themes in each section of the interim report and sought feedback on inclusion and prioritization for the next phase of the plan development process. Members noted that from the listed strategies several can be amalgamated given some cross over.

No changes to the vision or mission were noted and it was also felt that the current five strategic priority areas remain broadly relevant and can be updated as part of the renewal. Members did indicate their wish to have the new draft strategic plan return to the Board for review before it is taken for further input.

8. Business Arising from the Minutes

8.1. Status of Municipal Agreements for Programs and Services – Verbal Update

Lisa advised the members that both the City of Hamilton and Township of Puslinch have approved and signed their Agreements with HCA for Category 2

There was discussion regarding the potential to incorporate citizen science in this project. There will be a review of available citizen science and consideration for its use in the project.

BD12, 3281

**MOVED BY: Brian McHattie
SECONDED BY: Alex Wilson**

THAT the Board of Directors endorse the Draft Collaborative Agreement, attached as Appendix A;

THAT staff be directed to continue to work with the City of Hamilton and Hamilton Naturalists' Club to guide the Natural Areas Inventory and provide staff representatives on the Project Steering Committee and Technical Steering Committee;

THAT staff be directed to initiate the recruitment and hiring process for a NAI Project Coordinator; and

THAT the Board of Directors allocate the funds held in reserve (\$95,000) from the previous Natural Areas Inventory to this project.

CARRIED

10.2. Request for Quotation – Watercourse 11 Realignment and Fifty Point Wetland Construction

Karen Phong presented a summary of the report and answered the members' questions.

BD12, 3282

**MOVED BY: Lisa DiCesare
SECONDED BY: Wayne Terryberry**

THAT the quotation for the Watershed 11 Realignment and Fifty Point Wetland Construction submitted by Anthony's Excavation Central Inc. be accepted at a cost not to exceed \$593,841.31 including HST.

CARRIED

10.3. Environmental Registry of Ontario Comments - Proposed Amendment to the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act and Proposal to Return Lands to the Greenbelt

Scott Peck presented a summary of the memorandum and answered the members' questions.

BD12, 3283

**MOVED BY: Susan Fielding
SECONDED BY: Lisa DiCesare**

THAT the memorandum entitled Environmental Registry of Ontario Comments - Proposed Amendment to the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act and Proposal to Return Lands to the Greenbelt be received.

CARRIED

10.4. Watershed Conditions Report

Jonathan Bastien presented a summary of the memorandum and answered the members' questions. Since the writing of the report, a Low Water Response assessment indicated a blend of normal and level 1 low water conditions for the watershed. Given the time of year and decreased pressures on watercourses, such as water takings, staff continue to monitor the situation at this time.

BD12, 3284

**MOVED BY: Wayne Terryberry
SECONDED BY: Alex Wilson**

THAT the memorandum entitled Watershed Conditions Report be received.

CARRIED

10.5. Conservation Areas Experiences Update

Scott Peck provided a summary of the memorandum.

BD12, 3285

**MOVED BY: Wayne Terryberry
SECONDED BY: Lisa DiCesare**

THAT the memorandum entitled Conservation Areas Experiences Update be received.

CARRIED

11. New Business

There was none.

12. In-Camera Items

BD12, 3286

**MOVED BY: Susan Fielding
SECONDED BY: Wayne Terryberry**

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

CARRIED

During the *in camera* session, one property matter, one personnel matter, and one legal matter were discussed.

12.1. Confidential Verbal Update – BD/Dec 01-2023 (Property Matter)

Lisa Burnside provided a verbal update regarding a property matter and answered the members' questions.

BD12, 3287

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

THAT the confidential verbal update entitled BD/Dec 01-2023 be received and remain in camera.

CARRIED

12.2. Confidential Report – BD/Dec 02-2023 (Personnel Matter)

Lisa Burnside provided a summary of the report regarding a personnel matter and answered the members' questions.

BD12, 3288

**MOVED BY: Wayne Terryberry
SECONDED BY: Jeff Beattie**

THAT the confidential report entitled BD/Dec 02-2023 be approved and remain in camera.

CARRIED

12.3. Confidential Verbal Report – BD/Dec 03-2023
(Personnel Matter)

Lisa Burnside provided a verbal report regarding a legal matter and answered the members' questions.

BD12, 3289

MOVED BY: Lisa DiCesare
SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding

THAT the confidential verbal report entitled BD/Dec 03-2023 be approved and remain in camera.

CARRIED

BD12, 3290

MOVED BY: Lisa DiCesare
SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding

THAT the Board of Directors moves out of closed session.

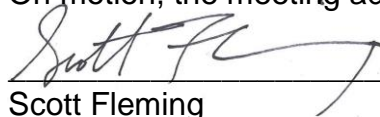
CARRIED

13. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Thursday, February 1, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at the HCA Main Administration Office – Woodend Auditorium, 838 Mineral Springs Road, Ancaster, Ontario. This will be the Annual General Meeting of the Board of Directors.

14. Adjournment

On motion, the meeting adjourned.



Scott Fleming
Secretary-Treasurer