



# Board of Directors Meeting Agenda

Thursday, May 4, 2023

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# Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, May 4, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

This meeting will be held in person for the Board of Directors and designated, limited staff only.

The public may view the meeting live on HCA's You Tube Channel:  
<https://www.youtube.com/user/HamiltonConservation>

1. **Call to Order** – Santina Moccio
2. **Declarations of Conflict of Interest**
3. **Approval of Agenda**
4. **Delegations**
5. **Consent Items for Applications, Minutes and Correspondence**
  - 5.1. Applications – Development, Interference with Wetlands, Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Page 1
  - 5.2. Approval of Board of Directors Minutes – April 6, 2023 Page 5
  - 5.3. Approved February 9, 2023 Conservation Advisory Board Minutes – for receipt only Page 17
  - 5.4. Approved March 16, 2023 Budget & Administration Committee Minutes – for receipt only Page 25
6. **Foundation Briefing** Foundation Chair – Jennifer Stebbing
7. **Member Briefing**
8. **Business Arising from the Minutes**
9. **Reports from Budget & Administration Committee and Conservation Advisory Board**
  - 9.1. Conservation Advisory Board – April 13, 2023 (Recommendations) – Dan Bowman
    - 9.1.1. CA 2311 Watershed-based Resource & Conservation

Area Management Strategies Development Page 31

9.1.2. CA 2312 Project Technical Advisory Committee –  
Responsibilities & Member Approval for Insurance Requirements Page 37

9.2. Budget & Administration Committee – April 20, 2023 – Santina Moccio  
(Recommendations)

9.2.1. BA 2308 Information Technology (IT) Modernization Strategy Page 47

9.2.2. BA 2309 Section 28 Hearings Schedule Page 53

## **10. Other Staff Reports/Memorandums**

### Reports to be approved

10.1. Tar & Chip Road Resurfacing Project – Tender Results – Matt Hall Page 55

### Memorandums to be received

10.2. Watershed Conditions Report – Jonathan Bastien Page 59

10.3. Conservation Areas Experiences – Gord Costie Page 65

## **11. New Business**

## **12. In-Camera Items**

## **13. Next Meeting – Thursday, June 1, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.**

## **14. Adjournment**

# Memorandum

**TO:** Board of Directors

**FROM:** Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer

**RECOMMENDED  
& PREPARED BY:** T. Scott Peck, MCIP, RPP, Deputy Chief Administrative  
Officer/Director, Watershed Planning and Engineering

Mike Stone, MCIP, RPP, Manager, Watershed Planning,  
Stewardship & Ecological Services

**DATE:** May 4, 2023

**RE:** Summary Enforcement Report  
Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to  
Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation 161/06

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HCA Regulation applications approved by staff between the dates of March 25, 2023 and April 26, 2023 are summarized in the following Summary Enforcement Report (SER-5/23).

## RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board of Directors receive this Summary Enforcement Report SER-5/23 as information.

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**HAMILTON REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**

**DEVELOPMENT, INTERFERENCE WITH WETLANDS, AND ALTERATIONS TO SHORELINES AND WATERCOURSES APPLICATIONS**

April 26, 2023

Development, Interference with Wetlands, and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Applications Report to the Board of Directors of the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority, May 04, 2023

The proposed works are subject to Ontario Regulation 161/06, and in particular Section 2, Subsection (1).

**SUMMARY ENFORCEMENT REPORT SER 5/23**

File Number	Date Received	Date Permit Issued	Review Days	Applicant Name	Location	Application Description	Recommendation / Conditions
SC/F,C,A/23/07	08-Feb-23	28-Mar-23	25		497 Third Rd E Lot 18, 19, Concession 5 Stoney Creek	Rehabilitation of Bridge 050, in a regulated area of Stoney Creek.	Approved subject to standard conditions.
SC/F,C,A/23/21	21-Feb-23	29-Mar-23	40		32 Trillium Ave Lot 7, Concession 1 Stoney Creek	Construction of a new two-storey dwelling in a regulated area of Lake Ontario.	Approved subject to standard conditions.
D/F,C/23/23	10-Mar-23	11-Apr-23	29		83 Bridlewood Dr Lot 47, Concession 1 Dundas	Construction of a pool, in a regulated area of Spring Creek.	Approved subject to standard conditions.
A/F,C,A/21/96	17-Nov-21	14-Apr-23	27		955 Old Mohawk Rd Lot 51, Concession 2 Ancaster	Installation of natural gas pipeline, in a regulated area of Tiffany Creek.	Approved subject to standard conditions.

**HAMILTON REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY**

**DEVELOPMENT, INTERFERENCE WITH WETLANDS, AND ALTERATIONS TO SHORELINES AND WATERCOURSES APPLICATIONS**

April 26, 2023

Development, Interference with Wetlands, and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Applications Report to the Board of Directors of the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority, May 04, 2023

The proposed works are subject to Ontario Regulation 161/06, and in particular Section 2, Subsection (1).

**SUMMARY ENFORCEMENT REPORT SER 5/23**

F/F,A/22/89	24-Nov-22	23-Apr-23	98		1488 Gore Rd Lot 27, Concession 10 Flamborough	Grading for a septic bed and dry stormwater management pond to support the expansion of an existing campground and construction of a pavilion, in a regulated area of Fletcher's Creek.	Approved subject to standard conditions.



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. The Chair advised the delegation has been withdrawn. The Foundation Chair's report was moved prior to the section 28 hearing on the agenda, as some members were held in traffic.

**BD12, 3167**

**MOVED BY: Maria Topalovic**

**SECONDED BY: Matt Francis**

**THAT the agenda be approved, as amended.**

**CARRIED**

### 4. Delegations

#### 4.1. Patrice Valeriano, Dundas Resident Access to Waterfalls

The request to delegate was withdrawn prior to the meeting.

### 5. Section 28 Hearing

#### 5.1. 46 Seabreeze Crescent, City of Hamilton Permit Application No. SC/F,C,A/23/06

**BD12, 3168**

**MOVED BY: Jim Cimba**

**SECONDED BY: Maria Topalovic**

**THAT the Board of Directors sit as the Hearing Board.**

**CARRIED**

Elizabeth Reimer presented the staff report. Chris Gibbons of Dillon Consulting, presented the supplied materials on behalf of the applicant. The development proposal was for two residential dwellings in a regulated area of Lake Ontario. Staff were unable to support the application as the proposed dwellings would partially be within the erosion hazard limit of Lake Ontario which does not conform to HCA policy. The applicant advised they were not aware of HCA's development regulation at the time of purchase. They have not yet applied for an application to sever the property into two, wanting to understand the development potential through HCA

first. Staff, the applicant, and Mr. Gibbons answered a number of the members' questions.

**BD12, 3169**

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

**THAT the Hearing Board move in camera to deliberate.**

**CARRIED**

During in camera the members deliberated on the presented material.

**BD12, 3170**

**MOVED BY: Alex Wilson  
SECONDED BY: Maureen Wilson**

**THAT the Hearing Board move out of closed session.**

**CARRIED**

The meeting reconvened in open session and the following decision on the application was announced:

**BD12, 3171**

The hearing board decision is to refuse the application. The applicant has not satisfied the applicable statutory, regulatory, and policy requirements for granting permission.

**CARRIED**

**BD12, 3172**

**MOVED BY: Maria Topalovic  
SECONDED BY: Alex Wilson**

**THAT the membership move out of the Hearing Board and return to the Board of Directors.**

**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 – March 2, 2023
- 6.3. Approved December 15, 2022 Budget & Administration Committee Minutes – for receipt only
- 6.4. Letter from Minister of Natural Resources & Forestry to City of Hamilton Mayor Andrea Horwath re. exception to Conservation Authorities Act requirement for 70% elected official appointments to HCA Board of Directors, dated March 9, 2023
- 6.5. Five emails regarding federal government recourse for wetland protection, received between March 9 and March 20, 2023
- 6.6. City of Hamilton Notice of Motion re. Reconsideration of Ministry’s Decision respecting HCA Board of Directors composition, Council Meeting date March 29, 2023

Item 6.4 was brought out of consent for discussion to understand if any other exception applications have been denied. Lisa Burnside advised that only municipalities can make a request for this particular exception and while Township of Puslinch submitted a request and it was approved, per the Association of Municipalities of Ontario, some other municipal requests have been declined. Per a recent Council motion, the City of Hamilton will ask the Province to reconsider the decision.

The change to 70% elected representation was part of Bill 229, as part of a transparency initiative. The province did not provide a reason for the decision beyond the intent of the legislation.

Item 6.5 was also brought out of consent for discussion. Lisa Burnside advised HCA has undertaken a focused approach by providing feedback directly to the provincial government about these changes as these items all fall under Provincial jurisdiction, including any changes to the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System (OWES). Scott Peck advised that federal and provincial Species and Risk (SAR) legislation has not changed, however the presence of SAR and their breeding habitat is no longer considered in OWES scoring. Following discussion, no motion was made to send correspondence to the Federal government.

## **7. Foundation Briefing**

Jennifer Stebbing reported on the following:

The Foundation received a total of \$2,404 in new donations from March 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> 2023, directed to the Area of Greatest Need, Dundas Valley Trails, Westfield Heritage Village, Outdoor Education, Land Securement and Tribute Tree Fund.

This brings the fiscal year-to-date fundraising total to \$107,143, and still continuing ahead of the same time last year.

The Foundation has have started planning for their Annual General Meeting of members to take place in May which will be held in person for the first time since 2020. Individuals who met the membership donation level for the past fiscal year have been invited to opt-in to membership and participate in the AGM.

**BD12, 3173**

**MOVED BY: Jim Cimba**

**SECONDED BY: Maria Topalovic**

**THAT the Foundation Briefing be received.**

**CARRIED**

## **8. Member Briefing**

### **8.1. HCA 2022 Annual Report**

Lisa Burnside presented an overview of the 2022 Annual Report, highlighting key activities under each strategic area. The report marks the fourth year of progress for HCA's current strategic plan and demonstrates HCA's important work toward our vision of a healthy watershed for our communities and the shared natural environment. The Board members congratulated staff on all of the work undertaken. Staff were also thanked for their efforts to facilitate the public engagement.

It was noted that the annual report will be posted on our website and our Marketing and Communications staff will implement a communications plan to distribute the report on social media, to HCA membership pass holders, Foundation donors, and the public in general, in a variety of ways. The report will also be sent to local Federal and Provincial Members of Parliament as part of our government relations efforts.

### **8.2. Watershed Report Card**

Scott Peck presented the Watershed Report Card (WRC) and answered member questions. The WRC is an initiative of Conservation Ontario, undertaken every five years. The report card includes analyses of groundwater quality, surface water quality, forest conditions, and wetland conditions across the HCA watershed. The report card guides staff on where to undertake work, and illustrates the benefits of restoration work when projects like the Saltfleet CA wetlands are undertaken. It was

noted that some grades for surface water quality have decreased compared with the previous report card, however, this is attributed to a change in the amount of data available and parameters tested, and not a change in actual water quality. The report cards were released on World Water Day. Conservation Ontario has a storyboard of all participating Conservation Authorities. Locally, the report card is being distributed electronically via HCA's website and social media.

Craig Cassar requested a copy of the data analyses between the 2018 and 2023 report cards. Scott to forward to Councillor Cassar.

**BD12, 3174**

**MOVED BY: Alex Wilson  
SECONDED BY: Matt Francis**

**THAT the Hamilton Conservation Authority 2023  
Watershed Report Card be received.**

**CARRIED**

## **9. Business Arising from the Minutes**

### **9.1. HCA Quarterly Report #4 to MNRF**

Lisa Burnside presented a summary of the memorandum, noting that as a result Bill 23 whereby Conservation Authorities are no longer permitted to undertake planning review for natural heritage matters, HCA's programs and services inventory was amended to remove this activity and replace it with ecological monitoring as a category 2 and/or 3 program.

**BD12, 3175**

**MOVED BY: Jim Cimba  
SECONDED BY: Craig Cassar**

**THAT the HCA Quarterly Report #4 to MNRF be received.**

**CARRIED**

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

### **10.1. Budget & Administration Committee – March 16, 2023**

#### **10.1.1. BA 2303 Casual Staff Eligibility for "other holidays"**

Santina Moccio brought forward a staff report recommending that casual staff be eligible for the three "other holidays", Easter Monday, Civic Holiday, and Remembrance Day, moving forward. The policy change will help HCA remain

competitive in the job market, provides equity among staff, and reduces administrative workload.

**BD12, 3176**

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

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

**THAT casual staff eligibility for the three “other holidays” provided by HCA be effective immediately upon commencement of employment as of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.**

**CARRIED**

## **11. Other Staff Reports/Memoranda**

### **11.1. Indigenous Land Acknowledgement**

Lisa Burnside presented a summary of the report, providing an overview of the facilitated process undertaken to identify purposes and priorities for the land acknowledgement. A summary was given on key messaging HCA wanted to convey and that discussion with the Haudenosaunee was undertaken to gain further perspectives. The proposed Land Acknowledgment incorporates shared knowledge to support and represent best thinking, intent and action with a focus on creating and maintaining long-term relationships, rather than focusing on distinct treaty events.

Approval of the land acknowledgement was postponed with staff directed to contact the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to share HCA’s land acknowledgement and receive and consider any feedback.

**BD12, 3177**

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

**THAT staff be directed to contact the Mississaugas of the Credit to share HCA’s land acknowledgement and receive and consider any feedback.**

**CARRIED**

### **11.2. Water Quality Program Funding**

Scott Peck presented a summary of the report advising that MECP is not able to provide funding for water quality monitoring for the Cootes Paradise tributaries this

year and therefore requested that staff be able to draw from the Watershed Management Services reserve to fund the water quality monitoring program for the remainder of 2023. This water quality monitoring program provides critical water quality data that is utilized by the HCA, City of Hamilton and other Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan partners.

The members expressed concern that the Province will not be providing funding for this program this year. Staff will continue to seek funding from MECP in future years, however, will also consider funding the program through the HCA 2024 budget process and amendment to HCA Inventory of Programs and Services, as needed as a category 2 and/or 3.

**BD12, 3178**

**MOVED BY: Cynthia Janzen  
SECONDED BY: Maria Topalovic**

**THAT HCA staff be authorized to draw from Watershed Management Services reserve as needed to fund the Tributary Watercourses to Cootes Paradise (Spencer Creek, Ancaster Creek, Borer's Creek, Sulphur Creek and Chedoke Creek) Water Quality Monitoring Program for the remainder of 2023;**

**THAT staff be directed to continue efforts to obtain funding for this project from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks; and,**

**THAT funding requirements and allocations for this program continue be considered as part of the 2024 Watershed Management Services program for the HCA and the HCA Inventory of Programs and Services be amended as required to reflect 2024 funding sources.**

**CARRIED**

### 11.3. Watershed Conditions Report

Jonathan Bastien presented a summary of the memorandum, highlighting elevated creek flows due to the ongoing Spring melt. There were also a few days of significant rain during the reporting period. A water safety message was upgraded to a flood watch and further updated to include potential Lake Ontario shoreline flooding, but all were also subsequently downgraded. There have been no reports of flooding during this Spring melt, with only some localized flooding in low lying areas that typically flood at this time of year.

The Lake Ontario mean daily water level averaged across the entire lake is currently about 23 cm above average for this time of year. Current Christie Lake and Valens

Lake levels are above the preferred winter operating levels, however there are no flooding concerns at this time.

The Hamilton Low Water Response Team will release a notice terminating the Level 1 and Level 2 Low Water Conditions that have now been resolved.

**BD12, 3179**

**MOVED BY: Jim Cimba  
SECONDED BY: Craig Cassar**

**THAT the memorandum entitled Watershed Conditions Report be received.**

**CARRIED**

#### 11.4. Conservation Areas Experiences Update

Lisa spoke to the amendment to the agenda with regard to the withdrawal of the request to delegate. Following a discussion with Gord Costie regarding recent changes to increase the flexibility of the Spencer Gorge reservation system, the delegate withdrew their request to address the Board, as they were satisfied with the changes. They were very complimentary of HCA and staff for continuing to adapt to balance facilitating access while still managing visitation pressures.

Gord Costie presented a summary of the memorandum, sharing highlights from the Maple Syrup season at Westfield and an update on the status of reservations for the Valens Lake cabins. So far, 800 nights have been reserved through September. All Conservation Areas are busy as recruitment of Summer staff and Spring maintenance are underway.

**BD12, 3180**

**MOVED BY: Alex Wilson  
SECONDED BY: Maria Topalovic**

**THAT the memorandum entitled Conservation Areas Experiences Update be received.**

**CARRIED**

## **12. New Business**

The Chair thanked the City of Hamilton Council for their unanimous support of a motion brought forward by Councillors Tom Jackson and Mark Tadeson recognizing the value of citizen appointees to local boards.

**13. In-Camera Items****BD12, 3181****MOVED BY: Alex Wilson  
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 property / legal matter was discussed.****13.1. Confidential Report – BD/Apr 01-2023  
(property/legal matter)**

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

**BD12, 3182****MOVED BY: Alex Wilson  
SECONDED BY: Maureen Wilson****THAT the Board of Directors moves out of closed session.****CARRIED**

The meeting reconvened in open session and the following motion was announced.

**BD12, 3183****MOVED BY: Alex Wilson  
SECONDED BY: Maria Topalovic****THAT motion BD 12, 3165 come out of camera:****THAT the HCA Board of Directors direct staff to enter into discussion regarding a long-term lease agreement with the City of Hamilton on HCA lands in the Grant Blvd. area to support the community desire to design, construct and maintain a staircase structure with the city leading and funding the project;**

**THAT the City of Hamilton be responsible for all associated costs;**

**THAT City of Hamilton legal and real estate lead in the preparation of a suitable lease agreement for the HCA's Board of Directors review and endorsement; and further**

**That HCA's legal counsel review any draft agreement to be brought forward to the Board of Directors, and that the review address prospective liability issues.**

**CARRIED**

#### **14. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Thursday, May 4, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the HCA Main Administration Office – Woodend Auditorium, 838 Mineral Springs Road, Ancaster, Ontario.

#### **15. Adjournment**

On motion, the meeting adjourned.

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Scott Fleming  
Secretary-Treasurer

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## HAMILTON CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

### Conservation Advisory Board

#### MINUTES

February 9, 2023

Minutes of the Conservation Advisory Board meeting held on Thursday, February 9, 2023 at the HCA Main Administration Office – Woodend Auditorium and livestreamed to YouTube, commencing at 4:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:**

<b>Dan Bowman – in the Chair</b>	
<b>Helena Cousins</b>	<b>Tyler Cunningham</b>
<b>Joanne Di Maio – Webex</b>	<b>Natalie Faught</b>
<b>Cynthia Janzen</b>	<b>Haley McRae</b>
<b>Sherry O’Connor</b>	<b>Cortney Oliver – Webex</b>
<b>Duke O’Sullivan – Webex</b>	<b>Wayne Terryberry</b>
<b>Santina Moccio – (Ex-officio)</b>	

**REGRETS:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Rondalyn Brown, Lisa Burnside, Grace Correia, Gord Costie, Lindsay Davidson, Scott Fleming, Diana Gora, Matt Hall, Bruce, Harschnitz, Jyoti Kasav, Peter Lloyd, Scott Peck, Mike Stone, Jaime Tellier, and Nancy Watts

**OTHERS:** None

#### 1. Welcome

The Chair called the meeting to order, welcomed the new members, and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

#### 2. Declaration 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 were none.

**CA 2301            MOVED BY: Joanne DiMaio  
                          SECONDED BY: Duke O’Sullivan**

**THAT the agenda be approved.**

**CARRIED**

### 4. Delegations

There were none.

### 5. Member Briefing

#### 5.1. Valens Lookout Platform Project

Matt Hall presented three design concepts for replacement of an existing lookout tower at Valens Lake Conservation Area. Design considerations included utilizing a similar footprint to the existing platform, accessibility, lifespan of construction materials, maximizing viewing opportunities, weather protection, style, and budget. Concepts A, B and C were shown and described as Like-for-Like, Balanced Approach, and Showpiece, respectively. Concept C was noted as preferred by staff as it met all design considerations.

Matt answered a number of questions regarding the design features, accessibility and equity of experience for all users. The two storey concepts were designed to allow for wheelchair access, while also maintaining the footprint of the structure to minimize environmental impacts to the surrounding area. Staff will try to maximize the viewing experience while also maintaining the appropriate slope for accessibility. It was also suggested to consider including a design component on the lower level that is unique. Staff will take the suggestions back for consideration on design and cost.

Funding for Concept C was also discussed. Should the costs exceed the budget, there are options to consider that may include efficiencies in other capital projects, accessing the capital reserve, and/or approaching the Hamilton Conservation Foundation for funds. Staff are also investigating grants for the accessible aspects of the project.

**CA 2302            MOVED BY: Cynthia Janzen  
                          SECONDED BY: Tyler Cunningham**

**THAT the presentation entitled Valens Lookout Platform Project be received.**

**CARRIED**

**6. Chair's Report on Board of Directors Actions**

There were no items brought forward from the past meeting.

**7. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting**

7.1. Minutes – Conservation Advisory Board (November 10, 2022)

**CA 2303            MOVED BY: Joanne Di Maio  
                          SECONDED BY: Duke O'Sullivan**

**THAT the minutes of the November 10, 2022 Conservation Areas Advisory Board meeting be approved.**

**CARRIED**

**8. Business Arising from the Minutes**

There was none.

**9. Staff Information/Presentation for Facilitated Input**

9.1. Spencer Gorge 2023 Operations / Reservation Service

Gord Costie and Bruce Harschnitz presented a summary of the proposed operational plan for 2023 as HCA continues to evolve the reservation service.

The proposed service for 2023 includes:

- Reduce reservation requirements from every weekend to long weekends only from May to September:

Victoria Day – Sat/Sun/Mon	Canada Day – Fri/Sat/Sun/Mon
Civic Holiday – Sat/Sun/Mon	Labour Day – Sat/Sun/Mon

- Continue with daily advanced reservation requirement for the Fall Colour Period from the fourth Saturday in September to the second weekend in November

Questions for facilitated input were posed to CAB members to review strengths, weakness, and opportunities.

### **Benefits/Strengths**

The revised service will provide users with the opportunity to visit without the added reservation fee, will provide greater access for visitors not comfortable with technology, and allow more flexible scheduling for users. The system will also allow visitors to take advantage of available capacity observed at both Tew Falls and Webster Falls. It was noted the proposed changes will allow for a natural rhythm for local users while also continuing to manage visitation to the area when high visitation is expected.

The revised operations will continue to resolve the issues that initially necessitated the reservation system; local resident concerns regarding high visitation will continue to be addressed, parking and traffic congestion will continue to be mitigated, and visitor experience will continue to be improved.

It was felt that overall, most people will be supportive of the changes.

### **Challenges**

Greensville residents may become concerned that visitation pressures will rebound. Staff advised that if an uptick in visitation is observed, HCA can pivot back to a reservation system, if needed.

### **Opportunities**

A communications plan will help to avoid confusion resulting from changes to the system, including keeping signage, google references, websites, social media, etc. up-to-date.

It was recommended that the communication plan include residents, Bruce Trail, passholders and those with memorial benches advising of the specific days when they will have access to the area with and without reservation. It was suggested that the communication explain the change which strives to balance greater visitor and pass holder access while controlling visitation when high visitation levels can be expected; and that this an evidence-based change based on parking lot capacity and supported by comments received.

There was discussion regarding consideration for a hybrid model of a reservation system with walk-ins allowed. In this regard, staff determined that the hybrid model would be too challenging to be able to predict consistent visitation levels for the community. There would also be an inconsistency in cost between those that paid the reservation fee and those that arrived as walk-ins.

It was suggested to consider offering day-of reservations by changing the closing of the reservation booking time. It was noted that the public has become familiar with

how reservations work and have come to expect them. This may be an adjustment to the operational adjustment in the future following staff consideration and review of reservation service capabilities.

It was clarified that the Spencer Gorge Reservation System was previously approved by the Board of Directors to be an ongoing operational matter and therefore was brought to the Conservation Advisory Board for input on the changes rather than a recommendation to the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will be made aware of the changes to the reservation system at the upcoming meeting on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023.

**CA 2304            MOVED BY: Cynthia Janzen  
                          SECONDED BY: Wayne Terryberry**

**THAT the memorandum entitled Spencer Gorge 2023  
Operations / Reservation Service be received.**

**CARRIED**

## **10. Staff Reports/Memorandums**

### **10.1.     Westfield Heritage Village Accession List**

Peter Lloyd presented a summary of the report, providing additional details on the items recommended for accession, including photos linking one of the items, a receipt from the Hugh Moore & Son hardware and dry goods store, to local history in Dundas.

**CA 2305            MOVED BY: Natalie Faught  
                          SECONDED BY: Sherry O'Connor**

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

**THAT the Westfield 2022 Artifact Accessions List as noted in  
the February 9, 2023 Accessions report be accepted as the  
artifacts to be added to the Westfield Heritage Village  
Conservation Area and the Hamilton Conservation Authority  
collection.**

**CARRIED**

### **10.2.     Advanced Day Pass Program Pilot**

Lindsay Davidson presented a summary of the report and answered the members questions.

Staff brought forward the concept for a pilot advance purchase day use pass at select HCA conservation areas in 2023 to help address visitor management at our main gate entry areas to help reduce line-ups and congestion during peak operating season. HCA is able to provide a bar code that can be scanned from a phone or printed paper to facilitate entry into the Conservation Areas.

**CA 2306**            **MOVED BY: Cynthia Janzen**  
**SECONDED BY: Tyler Cunningham**

**WHEREAS HCA continues to identify and act upon investment in visitor services opportunities in our conservation areas;**

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the report entitled "Advanced Purchase Day Use Passes – 2023 Pilot Program" be received and further;**

**THAT the Conservation Advisory Board (CAB) recommend to the Board of Directors that staff be authorized to initiate the 2023 pilot program as outlined in the report at Christie Lake, Valens Lake, Fifty Point and Westfield Heritage Village Conservation Areas; and further**

**THAT staff report back to CAB on the outcome and success of the 2023 pilot program.**

**CARRIED**

10.3.    Invasive Species Program Plan 2023

Mike Stone provided an overview of the invasive species strategy and associated program. He introduced HCA's Invasive Species Technicians, Diana Gora and Jyoti Kasav. Diana and Jyoti presented a summary of the report and answered the members' questions.

HCA staff are planning to continue with the invasive species program in 2023 through invasive species removal work in priority areas, support to HCA's Conservation Areas through removals and completion of Prioritization Plans, and private landowner outreach and education initiatives.

**CA 2307**            **MOVED BY: Sherry O'Connor**  
**SECONDED BY: Haley McRae**

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

**THAT the Invasive Species Program Plan for 2023 be adopted.**

**CARRIED**

**11. New Business**

There was none.

**12. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the CAB is scheduled for Thursday, April 13, 2023 at 4:00 p.m.

**13. Adjournment**

On motion, the meeting was adjourned.

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# Hamilton Conservation Authority

## Minutes

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### Budget & Administration Committee

**March 16, 2023**

Minutes of the Budget & Administration Committee meeting held on Thursday, March 16, 2023 at 6:00 p.m., at the HCA main office, 838 Mineral Springs Road, in Ancaster, and livestreamed on YouTube.

**Present:**                **Santina Moccio, in the Chair**  
                                 **Dan Bowman**  
                                 **Jim Cimba**

**Regrets:**                **Maria Topalovic**

**Staff Present:**        **Lisa Burnside, Gord Costie, Scott Fleming, Matt Hall, Scott Peck, Jaime Tellier, and Nancy Watts**

**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 were none.

**BA 2301**

**MOVED BY: Dan Bowman  
SECONDED BY: Jim Cimba**

**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  
– December 15, 2022
- 5.2. 12 Month WSIB Injury Statistics
- 5.3. Annual Information Statistics re: 2022 Freedom of Information Requests

#### **6. Business Arising from the Minutes**

There was none.

#### **7. Staff Reports/Memorandums**

##### **7.1. 12 Month Financial Results – Operating**

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

HCA completed the year with an operating surplus of \$1.5M, the year ending December 31<sup>st</sup> 2022. This positive outcome is predominantly a result of strong admissions, marina, and camping revenue within the Conservation Areas with excellent summer weather conditions.

##### **7.2. 12 Month Financial Results – Capital & Major Maintenance**

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

\$3.5M was spent in 2022, with 73% percent having been spent on projects and 27% on major maintenance. There were no unexpected expenses, all were budgeted items.

### 7.3. 12 Month Vendor Report

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

Vendors are listed from largest spend during the quarter to smallest, with vendors under \$10K omitted. The majority of the large spends relate to ongoing large projects, with some day-to-day operating vendors as well.

Staff were requested to provide descriptions in future vendor reports where the services provided are not apparent by the vendor name.

**BA 2302**

**MOVED BY: Dan Bowman  
SECONDED BY: Jim Cimba**

**THAT the memorandums entitled 12 Month Financial Results – Operating, 12 Month Financial Results – Capital & Major Maintenance, and 12 Month Vendor Report be received.**

**CARRIED**

### 7.4. Casual Staff Eligibility for “other holidays”

Nancy Watts presented a summary of the report and answered the members' questions.

The policy change to extend immediate eligibility for the three ‘other holidays’ to casual staff ensures HCA remains competitive in the summer and casual staff market, provides equity, and streamlines the administrative workload.

**BA 2303**

**MOVED BY: Jim Cimba  
SECONDED BY: Dan Bowman**

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

**THAT casual staff eligibility for the three “other holidays” provided by HCA be effective immediately upon commencement of employment as of April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023.**

**CARRIED**

**8. New Business**

There was none.

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

**BA 2304**

**MOVED BY: Dan Bowman  
SECONDED BY: Jim Cimba**

**THAT the Budget and Administration Committee moves  
*in camera* for matters of law, personnel and property.**

**CARRIED**

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

**9.1. Confidential Memorandum – BA/Mar 01-2023  
(Legal Matter)**

Scott Fleming provided a summary of the memorandum regarding a legal matter and answered the members' questions.

**BA 2305**

**MOVED BY: Dan Bowman  
SECONDED BY: Jim Cimba**

**THAT the confidential memorandum entitled BA/Mar 01-  
2022 be received and remain in camera.**

**CARRIED**

**BA 2306**

**MOVED BY: Jim Cimba  
SECONDED BY: Dan Bowman**

**THAT the Budget and Administration Committee moves  
out of closed session.**

**CARRIED**

**10. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee will be held on Thursday, April 20, 2023 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.

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# Report

**TO:** Conservation Advisory Board

**FROM:** Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

**RECOMMENDED  
PREPARED BY:** T. Scott Peck, MCIP, RPP, Deputy CAO/Director,  
Watershed Management Services

**MEETING DATE:** April 13, 2023

**RE:** Ontario Regulation 686/21 – Required Strategies and  
Plans

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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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

**THAT the Board of Directors endorse the approach for the completion of the strategies and plans required in Ontario Regulation 686/21 as detailed in the report titled “Ontario Regulation 686/21 – Required Strategies and Plans”, dated April 13, 2023.**

## BACKGROUND

Bill 229, the Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020 received Royal Assent on December 8, 2020. Schedule 6 of Bill 229 details several revisions to the Conservation Authorities Act. Ontario Regulation 686/21 under the revised Conservation Authorities Act was subsequently approved and serves to implement the changes made to the Conservation Authorities Act. Ontario Regulation 686/21 provides direction regarding mandatory programs and services for conservation authorities. The regulation provides direction over several program areas however, this report will focus on the required strategies and plans detailed in the regulation.

Ontario Regulation 686/21 requires that a Conservation Authority prepare the following plans and strategies by December 31, 2024.

1. A conservation area strategy for all lands owned or controlled by the HCA
2. A land inventory for every parcel of land the authority owns or controls

3. A watershed-based resource management strategy
4. The development and implementation of an operational plan related to the HCA's water and erosion control infrastructure (Valens Lake and Christie Lake dams).
5. The development and implementation of an asset management plan related to the HCA's water and erosion control infrastructure.

Ontario Regulation 686/21 provides specific requirements for the conservation area strategy, the land inventory and the watershed-based resource management strategy. The regulation also details that the conservation area strategy and the watershed-based resource management strategy should involve public and stakeholder consultation and both the conservation area strategy and the watershed-based resource management strategy are required to be posted on the HCA website. The periodic review and updating of the strategies and plans are also required. The specific requirements for each strategy is outlined in Appendix "A". There are no specific requirements outlined in the regulation related to the operational plan and asset management plan for the HCA's water and erosion control infrastructure.

## **STAFF COMMENT**

Staff have developed an approach to complete the required strategies and plans by December 31, 2024. The development of the strategies and plans will be led by Watershed Management Services with the assistance of a working group for the strategies. The following working groups have been established:

1. Conservation Area Strategy and Land Inventory - Scott Peck (WMS), Scott Fleming (Finance), Matt Hall (CAPSS), Gord Costie and Bruce Harschnitz (CAS), Jaime Tellier (CAO's Office) and Lisa Burnside (CAO)
2. Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy – Scott Peck, Mike Stone and Jonathan Bastien (WMS), Scott Fleming (Finance) and Lisa Burnside (CAO)

The Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy working group will also provide assistance in the development and review of the water and erosion control infrastructure operational and asset management plans.

The requirements for each plan and strategy will be reviewed with each working group. The intent is to complete a background review to determine existing information available and to determine whether this is current and what additional information may be required. From this, a draft issues list will be developed that will be used to develop the specific draft strategies. It is noted that the bulk of this work will relate to the conservation area strategy and the watershed-based resource management strategy. The Land Inventory and the Conservation Area Strategy are inter-related and the strategy needs to be completed concurrently with the Land Inventory. As noted, the regulation provides no specific direction regarding the operational plan and the asset management plan. The operational plan relates to the operation of the

HCA's 2 dams. The HCA already has operational plans and directives, dam safety and public safety documents in place. The intent is to review these existing documents, identify any gaps, update the information as required and use this existing and updated information to finalize the operational plan. Further, the operational information will be used to inventory the HCA's infrastructure. With assistance from the HCA's finance department and utilizing sample asset management plans from other conservation authorities, the draft asset management plan will be developed.

Lastly, Conservation Ontario has developed best management practices for the development of the strategies as well as consultation guidelines. HCA staff have been involved in the development of the strategy guidelines. These guidelines will also be used to assist staff in the development of the strategies. As the strategies and plans are developed, HCA staff will provide updates to the Conservation Advisory Board and the Board of Directors and will consult with stakeholders and the public. It is anticipated that the final versions of the strategies and plans will be brought to the Conservation Advisory Board in October 2024 with final approval of the documents by the Board of Directors in November 2024. This timing will allow the HCA to meet the deadline for completion of the strategies and plans of December 31, 2024.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE**

HCA's Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023 outlines its major strategic priority areas and related initiatives for advancing HCA's Vision to provide a healthy watershed for everyone. HCA implements a wide variety of programs to fulfill this mandate. The completion of the noted strategies and plans will provide information that will assist in the achievement of these program objectives and HCA's Strategic Plan more generally.

## **AGENCY COMMENTS**

N/A

## **LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The strategies and plans are noted in the HCA Program Inventory as Category 1. Staff time required to develop the strategies and plans is anticipated to be covered within existing budget allocations as staff do not envision including additional money to the HCA levy request to complete the required strategies and plans.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The development and approval of the noted strategies and plans is a legislated requirement. HCA staff will implement the direction for the completion of the strategies and plans as detailed in this report to meet the legislated requirements while consulting with stakeholders and the public and will have this work completed to meet the December 31, 2024 deadline as detailed in the regulation.

## Appendix "A"

### Strategy Requirements

#### **Conservation Area Strategy**

A conservation area strategy shall include the following components:

1. Objectives established by the authority that will inform the authority's decision-making related to the lands it owns and controls, including decisions related to policies governing the acquisition and disposition of such lands.
2. Identification of the mandatory and non-mandatory programs and services that are provided on land owned and controlled by the authority, including the sources of financing for these programs and services.
3. Where the authority considers it advisable to achieve the objectives referred to in point 1, an assessment of how the lands owned and controlled by the authority may,
  - i. augment any natural heritage located within the authority's area of jurisdiction, and
  - ii. integrate with other provincially or municipally owned lands or other publicly accessible lands and trails within the authority's area of jurisdiction.
4. The establishment of land use categories for the purpose of classifying lands in the land inventory based on the types of activities that are engaged in on each parcel of land or other matters of significance related to the parcel.
5. A process for the periodic review and updating of the conservation area strategy by the authority, including procedures to ensure stakeholders and the public are consulted during the review and update process
6. The authority shall ensure stakeholders and the public are consulted during the preparation of the conservation area strategy in a manner that the authority considers advisable.
7. The authority shall ensure that the conservation area strategy is made public on the authority's website, or by such other means as the authority considers advisable.

#### **Land Inventory**

The land inventory shall include the following information for every parcel of land the authority owns or controls:

1. The location of the parcel.

2. The identification of any information the authority has in its possession in respect of the parcel, including any surveys, site plans or other maps.
3. When the authority acquired the parcel.
4. Whether the parcel was acquired using a grant made under section 39 of the Act.
5. Whether the parcel was acquired through an expropriation.
6. Whether the authority owns the parcel or has a registered legal interest in the parcel, including an easement.
7. Identification of the land use categories mentioned in paragraph 4 of subsection 10 (1) that apply to the parcel.
8. For the purpose of ensuring a program or service is not included as a mandatory program or service, identification of whether,
  - i. a recreational activity is provided on the parcel that requires the direct support or supervision of staff employed by the authority or by another person or body, or
  - ii. commercial logging is carried out on the parcel.
9. Whether or not the parcel or a portion of the parcel is suitable for the purposes of housing and housing infrastructure development, including identifying,
  - i. any applicable zoning by-law passed under section 34 or 38 of the *Planning Act* or any predecessor of them,
  - ii. if the parcel or a portion of the parcel augments any natural heritage located within the authority's area of jurisdiction, and
  - iii. if the parcel or a portion of the parcel integrates with other provincially or municipally owned lands or other publicly accessible lands and trails within the authority's area of jurisdiction. O. Reg. 686/21, s. 11 (1); O. Reg. 594/22, s. 2.
10. The land inventory shall include a process for the periodic review and updating of the inventory by the authority. O. Reg. 686/21, s. 11 (2).

### **Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy**

The watershed-based resource management strategy shall include the following components:

1. Guiding principles and objectives that inform the design and delivery of the programs and services that the authority is required to provide under section 21.1 of the Act.
2. A summary of existing technical studies, monitoring programs and other information on the natural resources the authority relies on within its area of

jurisdiction or in specific watersheds that directly informs and supports the delivery of programs and services under section 21.1 of the Act.

3. A review of the authority's programs and services provided under section 21.1 of the Act for the purposes of,

i. determining if the programs and services comply with the regulations made under clause 40 (1) (b) of the Act,

ii. identifying and analyzing issues and risks that limit the effectiveness of the delivery of these programs and services, and

iii. identifying actions to address the issues and mitigate the risks identified by the review, and providing a cost estimate for the implementation of those actions.

4. A process for the periodic review and updating of the watershed-based resource management strategy by the authority that includes procedures to ensure stakeholders and the public are consulted during the review and update process.

5. The authority shall ensure stakeholders and the public are consulted during the preparation of the watershed-based resource management strategy in a manner that the authority considers advisable.

6. The authority shall ensure that the watershed-based resource management strategy is made public on the authority's website, or by such other means as the authority considers advisable.

# Report

**TO:** Conservation Advisory Board  
**FROM:** Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

**RECOMMENDED BY:** T. Scott Peck, MCIP, RPP, Deputy COA and Director,  
Watershed Management Services

**PREPARED BY:** Jeff Stock, Watershed Stewardship Technician,  
Cherish Gamble, Watershed Stewardship Technician,  
Mike Stone, MCIP, RPP, Manager, Watershed Planning,  
Stewardship & Ecological Services

**MEETING DATE:** April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**RE:** Project Technical Advisory Committee –Responsibilities  
and Member approval for Insurance Requirements

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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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

**THAT to meet annual insurance coverage requirements, the responsibilities of the Project Technical Advisory Committee for the Hamilton and Halton Watershed Stewardship Programs be approved as identified in this report; and further**

**THAT the members on the Project Technical Advisory Committee be appointed for a three-year term, from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 to March 31, 2026.**

## BACKGROUND

Since 1994, the Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA) and Conservation Halton (CH) have worked collaboratively to administer the Hamilton-Halton Watershed Stewardship Program (HHWSP). Through the HHWSP, HCA and CH work strategically and cooperatively to undertake stewardship activities within the Hamilton Harbour watershed and Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System, while also maintaining independent programs to deliver stewardship services within their respective watersheds. The shared program has been highly successful over the years and has

resulted in the contact of over 4,000 landowners with at least half of these being in the Hamilton Conservation Authority's watershed.

While both HCA and CH contribute funding to the program for staffing and landowner contact, funds for stewardship projects on private lands have typically been raised through different sources, including the HCA capital funding program and application to various grant programs.

The Project Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC) was formally established by the Advisory Boards and the full Boards of Directors of the two conservation authorities in 2009. PTAC acts as a review and approval committee for funding applications under the HHWSP's Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Projects grant program. Attached is the terms of reference that has been established for PTAC and a list of the individuals who have volunteered to sit on the committee for the next term. HCA and CH staff are in the process of reviewing the terms of reference and committee representation to determine if updates to the terms and/or additional committee members may be warranted.

## **STAFF COMMENT**

Staff of the HHWSP appreciate the commitment that Project Technical Advisory Committee members have made to date, to assist in the delivery of the HHWSP to watershed landowners. This report serves to formally recognize their work, as well as to identify committee membership for the next three years. The term of appointment for PTAC members will extend from April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2026, which coincides with the typical fiscal year of the majority of the granting organizations. This report and the identification of the PTAC membership also provides the basis for extending insurance coverage to members, as discussed further below.

## **STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE**

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2019-2023:

- **Water Management**
  - Invest in programs to address the impacts of nutrient and sediment loading on watershed streams, creeks, rivers and receiving water bodies.
  - Work with the City of Hamilton, and our partners on the Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan to address nutrient and sediment loading within the Hamilton Harbour Watershed.
  - Continue the HCA's Watershed Stewardship Program and work with landowners to increase environmental awareness and restoration projects.

- **Natural Heritage Conservation**
  - Work with our partners on stewardship initiatives for the Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program and the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System
  
- **Education and Environmental Awareness**
  - Enhance stewardship programs for both urban and rural areas.
  - Identify and support outreach opportunities within all of our program areas.
  - Promote the connection between environmental health and human wellness.

## **AGENCY COMMENTS**

N/A

## **LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The members on the committee are not paid for their services but they are undertaking work on behalf of Hamilton Conservation Authority. By formally recognizing the committee, the volunteer committee members can be provided with insurance for their decisions through the Conservation Authority's insurer. Adding the members as volunteers to our insurance does not affect the Hamilton Conservation Authority's premiums.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The Hamilton and Halton Watershed Stewardship Programs have been successfully utilizing this volunteer committee for the review of projects that are undertaken on private lands. Annual endorsement of PTAC members is required for insurance purposes.

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## **TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE PROJECT TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **GOAL**

To assist the Hamilton Conservation Authority and Conservation Halton in the implementation of their Water Quality/Habitat Improvement Programs (WQHIP) which serve to provide landowners with the technical and grant assistance necessary to improve water quality and habitat in the watersheds of Hamilton and Halton Conservation Authorities.

### **MANDATE**

The Project Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC) is a voluntary advisory committee that approves grants for water quality and habitat improvement projects. PTAC has been established by the conservation authorities in accordance with these adopted Terms of Reference. PTAC members are bound by these Terms of Reference and are ultimately responsible to the Hamilton Conservation Authority and Conservation Halton.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of PTAC is to:

1. Sit as the grant approvals committee when it may:
  - a) recommend eligible items under the WQHIP including grant rates and grant ceilings;
  - b) ensure that the WQHIP is administered on a priority basis;
  - c) review landowners' grant applications submitted to the conservation authorities;
  - d) approve eligible grant applications under the WQHIP; and
  - e) review WQHIP effectiveness as required.
2. Provide a forum for the exchange of information on agricultural, rural and urban issues and initiatives and to advise on potential concerns; and
3. Encourage public awareness and education of agricultural, rural and urban issues.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

PTAC consists of the following volunteer members which are appointed for a term of three years with an option for a second term.

- Agricultural Organizations
- City of Hamilton
- Conservation Halton
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada
- Halton Region
- Hamilton Conservation Authority
- Individual Landowners
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
- Royal Botanical Gardens

PTAC members represent a variety of natural resources management, agricultural organizations and landowners. The representatives of organizations or agencies should have special urban, rural and agricultural qualifications, water quality and habitat interests and abilities, as well as the ability and willingness to devote the necessary time to PTAC.

## **MEETINGS**

PTAC meets, annually, or as required. Agendas for meetings will be made available to PTAC one week in advance of meeting. Flexibility will allow meetings to be held in various locations throughout the communities that are most convenient for PTAC members. Meetings will be used to review Water Quality and/or Habitat Improvement Funding Application and Agreement forms, WQHIP program success, WQHIP Terms of Reference, and other determined topics.

## **SUPPORT STAFF**

Conservation authority staff will be assigned to provide secretariat and research support to PTAC.

PTAC meeting minutes will be provided to PTAC members following each meeting.



## **PROJECT TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

### **Ontario Federation of Agriculture**

**Nadine Gill-Aarts**, Member Service Representative (Currently on leave)

Member for the following terms:

First Term: 2020, 2021, 2022 (Janice Janiec filled in 2022)

Second Term: April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2026

**Charlene Yungblut** (filling in for Nadine temporarily)

Member Service Representative

Halton, Hamilton-Wentworth, Niagara

### **City of Hamilton**

**Kara Bunn**, Manager, Parks and Cemeteries, Environmental Services, Public Works

Member for the following term:

First Term: 2018, 2019

Second Term: 2020, 2021, 2022

Third Term: April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2026,

### **Fisheries and Oceans Canada**

**Sarah Matchett**

Member for the following Term:

First Term: 2020, 2021, 2022

Second Term: April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2026



## **Watershed Resident Members**

### **Paul Smith**

Member for the following terms:

First Term: 2012, 2013, 2014

Paul participated on the committee in 2015 and 2016.

Second Term: 2017, 2018, 2019

Third Term: 2020, 2021, 2022

Fourth Term: April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2026

### **Sheila O’Neil**

Member for the following terms:

First Term: 2020, 2021, 2022

Second Term: April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2026

### **Alba Dicenso**

First Term: 2022

Second Term: April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2026

### **Graham Buck**

First Term: 2022

Second Term: April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2026



## **CONSERVATION AUTHORITY STAFF RESPONSIBLE FOR PRESENTING GRANT APPLICATIONS TO PROJECT TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **Hamilton Conservation Authority Stewardship Staff**

Phone: 905-525-2181; Fax: 905-6484622

Cherish Gamble, Watershed Stewardship Technician

Phone: Extension 181

Email: [Cherish.Gamble@conservationhamilton.ca](mailto:Cherish.Gamble@conservationhamilton.ca)

Jeff Stock, Watershed Stewardship Technician

Phone: Extension 196

Email: [Jeff.Stock@conservationhamilton.ca](mailto:Jeff.Stock@conservationhamilton.ca)

Mike Stone, Manager, Watershed Planning, Stewardship & Ecological Services

Phone: Extension 133

Email: [Mike.Stone@conservationhamilton.ca](mailto:Mike.Stone@conservationhamilton.ca)

### **Conservation Halton Stewardship Staff**

Phone: 905-336-1158; Fax: 905-336-6684

Beth Anne Fischer, Acting Coordinator – Landowner Outreach and Restoration

Phone: Ext. 2304

Email: [bafischer@hrca.on.ca](mailto:bafischer@hrca.on.ca)

Carolyn Zanchetta, Restoration, Monitoring, Reporting and Events Technician

Phone: Ext. 2285

Email: [czanchetta@hrca.on.ca](mailto:czanchetta@hrca.on.ca)

Christine Bowen, Landowner Outreach Technician

Email: [cbowen@hrca.on.ca](mailto:cbowen@hrca.on.ca)

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# Report

**TO:** Budget & Administration Committee

**FROM:** Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

**RECOMMENDED BY:** Scott Fleming, Director of Finance and Central Support Services

**PREPARED BY:** Andrew Pargauskas, Manager of Budget and Business Systems  
Jaime Tellier, Executive Assistant / Records Management Coordinator

**MEETING DATE:** April 20, 2023

**RE:** HCA Information Technology (IT) Modernization Strategy

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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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

**THAT the IT Modernization Strategy in Appendix A of this report dated April 20, 2023 be approved and further;**

**THAT funds from the 2022 budget surplus be allocated to IT infrastructure improvements in the amount \$212,000.00 to fund and expediate additional 2023 IT enhancements that have been identified.**

## BACKGROUND

HCA has complex Information Technology (IT) needs. Its unique operations and many remote locations necessitate careful design considerations. In the past, HCA has taken a conservative approach to the allocation of funds toward IT infrastructure, while also seeking out best available solutions for our unique circumstances.

In 2022, HCA engaged an Information and Communications Technology solutions provider to undertake a comprehensive Network Assessment to identify priorities for

modernization of our IT Program. The assessment included a review of the overall IT network, security, systems, and software; assessments of supportability, security concerns, and infrastructure; and resulting recommendations. This assessment has provided staff the basis to develop an IT Modernization strategy for HCA and identified additional priority enhancements that would be beneficial to undertake in 2023.

## **STAFF COMMENT**

Based on the results of the network assessment, HCA's infrastructure is now aging beyond functionality and supportability. In addition, advancements in the availability of internet servicing to some of HCA's facilities provide an opportunity to greatly improve the speed, quality, and reliability of internet service at these areas. In the modern work environment, reliable internet service is now a fundamental part of all business operations.

In consultation with HCA's IT Managed Services Provider (MSP), HCA staff have developed an IT Modernization Strategy, (Appendix A). This strategy outlines a plan to upgrade our technology infrastructure and systems over a three-year period to bring HCA's IT infrastructure and program up to industry standards and improve the way we use technology to support our business objectives. The proposed improvements are important for the function and security of HCA's IT infrastructure.

Modernization of HCA's IT infrastructure will now include monitoring and tracking of equipment lifecycles to enable predictable work planning and budgeting, moving forward, and to ensure industry standards for equipment and configurations are maintained.

The key goals of our IT modernization strategy are as follows:

1. Enhance network security
2. Review and refresh server infrastructure
3. Establish best practice policies and procedures
4. Refresh and replace desktop workstations
5. Plan for business continuity and disaster recovery

## **STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE**

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2019 - 2023:

- **Strategic Priority Area – Organizational Excellence**
  - Initiative – Continue to update and streamline operational policies and leverage emerging technology to enhance business service delivery.

## **AGENCY COMMENTS**

N/A

## **LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Board approved \$123,000.00 within the 2023 Operating Budget for Computer Hardware upgrades, as IT improvements were identified as one of the pillars in the creation of the budget. The network assessment was not completed at the time the operating budget was compiled, however, it is now known that an additional \$212,000.00 is required to implement all of the IT improvements recommended for 2023. This amount includes a \$25,000.00 contingency fund. There are funds available in the 2022 budget surplus that can be allocated to these improvements in order to fund Year 1 of the Modernization Strategy. Year 2 and 3 of the Modernization Strategy will be funded via the Operating Budget for those years.

There will be some annual costs savings following the network upgrades and harmonization of our IT infrastructure as efficiencies have been found. These savings will contribute to recovering some of the initial investments of the upgrades over time.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Information Technology is a fundamental aspect of all contemporary organizations. Modernization of HCA's IT program will give staff the tools necessary to succeed along with enhancing the customer experience. This strategy will ensure HCA meets current industry standards and is able to maintain these standards on a long-term horizon. Staff recommend that the Budget & Administration Committee endorse this strategy as well as the use of resources from the 2022 operating surplus to implement it in a timely and effective manner.

## Appendix A

### HCA Information Technology (IT) Modernization Strategy

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#### Background

Hamilton Conservation Authority has challenging IT requirements given the operational needs of the organization and the remote nature of its facilities. To-date, we have worked to establish IT infrastructure at our various sites, however, there are opportunities to improve and develop a more comprehensive and robust IT program which achieves industry best practice standards.

HCA's current strategic plan (2019-2023) includes a strategic initiative to continue to update and streamline operational policies and leverage emerging technology to enhance business service delivery.

In 2022, HCA engaged an Information and Communications Technology solutions provider to undertake a comprehensive Network Assessment to identify priorities for modernization of our IT program. The assessment included a review of the overall IT network, security, systems, and software; assessments of supportability, security concerns, and infrastructure; and resulting recommendations.

Staff have worked co-operatively with our IT Managed Services Provider (MSP) to develop a plan to implement the recommendations from the assessment. It is anticipated that all recommendations can be addressed over a three-year period, subject to budget approvals. The proposed actions will harmonize and fortify our IT infrastructure across all of our areas. Priority will be given to recommendations related to improving the overall security of HCA's IT infrastructure. The majority of these recommended actions will be undertaken as part of HCA's managed services contract with our MSP. In addition, the Main Administration Office (Woodend) and Fifty Point Conservation Area & Marina will be prioritized for network upgrades as these areas will have the greatest impact with regard to the number of staff and customers affected.

#### HCA Proposed IT Modernization Strategy

Focus will be on HCA Security & Operational Capability

Year	Project	Estimated Cost
Year 1	Network Security	\$260,000
Year 1 & 2	Establishment of IT Policies	\$0
Year 1, 2, 3	PC Replacement Program over 3 Years	\$75,000/Year
Year 2 & 3	Server Upgrade	\$75,000/Year
Year 3	Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery	\$5,000

The above is a 3-year plan to implement recommended actions that will ensure HCA has reliable and secure IT infrastructure, now and in the future:

## Appendix A

### HCA Information Technology (IT) Modernization Strategy

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1. Network Security Strategy – Year 1 \$260K
    - a. Network security review, standardization of network devices and remedial action steps to bring HCA to best practice security standards
      - i. Cabling review, upgrades and replacement of aging or underperforming network devices – includes firewall and router security
    - b. Network upgrades
      - i. The Main Administration Office will be transitioned to fibre optic cable, increasing the speed, quality, and reliability of internet service
      - ii. Fifty Point Conservation Area & Marina requires a completely new network that will reliably facilitate staff operations and provide wi-fi access to the marina and campground. Phase 2 of this work will include connection to fibreoptic cable in 2024 when it can be coordinated with capital road reconstruction work.
      - iii. Minor upgrades at remaining facilities not upgraded in 2022
    - b. Network Security Awareness Training Program for all Staff
      - i. Online awareness training and special seminar lunch and learns
    - c. Remote Access
      - i. Establish a policy and procedure to securely access HCA systems remotely using VPN technology
  2. Server Infrastructure Plan – Review and Refresh – Year 2 and 3 \$75K and \$75K
    - a. Ensure a suitable backup policy is in place and restoration tests performed
    - b. Data Management – Ensure data is stored centrally and securely, as well as recommendations for the insurance of adequate data storage
    - c. Centralized Server Upgrade/Replacement – Ensure data can be processed in a timely fashion
    - d. Email Review, Collaboration Updates & Fortifications
  3. Establishment of Best Practice Policies and Procedures – Year 1 & 2 (included in MSP)
    - a. Development and delivery of a series of IT policies and procedures, including those related to applications, passwords, security, computer use, media disposal, mobile device use, and user on-boarding and off-boarding, etc.
  4. Desktop Computing Refreshment Policy & Replacement – \$75K per year over 3 years
    - a. Adopt a hardware lifecycle management approach to replacing work stations, through development of a hardware replacement policy
      1. Desktop Computers – 5 to 7 years (with 5-year warranty)
      2. Laptop Computers – 5 years (with 5-year warranty)
      3. Cell phones – 4 years (Manufacturer supported)
    - b. Employ new equipment standards for end-user work stations
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## **Appendix A**

### **HCA Information Technology (IT) Modernization Strategy**

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- c. Migrate staff to Windows 11 with Microsoft licensing, as new computers are deployed
- 5. Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Policy: Year 3 - Under \$5K
  - a. Ensure HCA has a plan in place of what to do in the event of a business interruption
  - b. Rehearse the plan, make revisions, if necessary.

#### **Conclusion**

The Manager of Budget and Business Systems and HCA's internal IT Project Management Review Team will oversee the work planning and budgeting for the implementation of the recommended improvements.

Modernization of HCA's IT infrastructure will now include monitoring and tracking of equipment lifecycles to enable predictable work planning and budgeting moving forward, and to ensure industry standards for equipment and configurations are perpetually maintained.

Information Technology is a fundamental aspect of all contemporary organizations. Modernization of HCA's IT program will give staff the tools necessary to succeed along with enhancing customer experience. This plan will ensure HCA meets current industry standards and is able to maintain these standards on a long-term horizon.

# Report

**TO:** Budget & Administration Committee

**FROM:** Lisa Burnside, CAO

**MEETING DATE:** April 20, 2023

**RE:** Section 28 Hearings Schedule

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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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

**THAT Section 28 hearings be scheduled on a day separate from regular board meetings and further;**

**THAT Section 28 hearing dates for the remainder of 2023 be designated on alternate months from the Conservation Advisory Board, those dates being Thursday May 11, Thursday July 13, Thursday September 14, and Thursday November 9, 2023, beginning at 6pm.**

## BACKGROUND

The *Conservation Authorities Act* requires that an applicant be provided with an opportunity for a hearing by the Conservation Authority Board, (sitting as a Hearing Committee) for an application to be refused or approved with conditions.

HCA has taken the approach of scheduling hearings on the same day as a regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting. However, this has generally resulted in lengthy meetings extending later into the evening, making it more difficult to maintain focus. Additionally, it takes greater time for members to prepare for the board meeting when a hearing is also part of the agenda.

One way to address this issue is by scheduling hearing on a separate day from regular board meetings.

## **STAFF COMMENT**

By scheduling hearings on a separate day, the Board can focus solely on one topic without the added complexity of other agenda items allowing for a more effective and productive discussion. Additionally, scheduling hearing on a separate day will allow the board to manage their time more efficiently. Lastly, scheduling the hearing on a separate day does not compel other staff and Foundation members not involved in the Section 28 matter, to attend and be required to wait (potentially for hours) until the regular Board meeting agenda begins that they are a part of.

Staff are recommending that for consistency with all other HCA board and advisory board meetings, that a Thursday evening be maintained for hearings. The HCA Conservation Advisory Board meets every other month, providing the availability to schedule the alternate months for Section 28 hearings as needed.

For the remainder of 2023, the following would be designated for Section 28 hearings starting at 6pm (and canceled if there is no hearing):

- Thursday May 11
- Thursday July 13
- Thursday September 14
- Thursday November 9

## **STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE**

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2019 - 2023:

- **Strategic Priority Area – Organizational Excellence**

## **AGENCY COMMENTS**

None

## **LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

HCA's Administrative bylaws do not require that Section 28 hearings be scheduled as part of the Board of Directors regular meeting. The Board of Directors annually approves a schedule for regular meetings and may also approve a schedule for Section 28 hearing dates. Other conservation authorities such as Rideau Valley, have designated and approved a schedule specific to Section 28 hearings.

Alternatively, the Chair at their pleasure, may call a special meeting as necessary on seven calendar days' notice in writing or email, however, this presents timing challenges and additional consultation with the applicant to determine if the date and time is agreeable.

# Report

**TO:** Board of Directors

**FROM:** Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

**PREPARED & RECOMMENDED BY:** Matt Hall, C.E.T., Director; Capital Projects & Strategic Services

**MEETING DATE:** May 4, 2023

**RE:** Tar & Chip Road Resurfacing Project – Tender Results

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## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

**THAT the construction tender for the 2023 Tar & Chip Road Resurfacing project, be awarded to Cornell Construction Ltd. for a total cost of \$202,179.95 which includes a contingency sum and HST.**

## BACKGROUND

This project covers Tar & Chip Road Surface Treatment for various Conservation Area roads and parking lots that totals approximately 13,240 m<sup>2</sup>, to help maintain and enhance our parks. Previous HCA Tar & Chip road treatment work was most recently completed in 2022 within Valens Lake C.A., Spencer Gorge C.A., and Confederation Beach Park. The planned areas that will be improved this year include locations within; Christie Lake C.A. and Fifty Point C.A. The priority areas selected were based upon annual road inspections conducted over 2022 and 2023.

In March 2023, HCA CaPSS staff developed and issued tender contract and specification documents for firms to consider. This Public Tender was issued on March 23, 2022 through the HCA's Bidding Tender website and issued directly to firms that have previously conducted this work for the HCA.

Tenders closed on April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. A summary of bid results received is as follows:

<b>Company Name</b>	<b>Necessary Bonding</b>	<b>Total Price (including tax and contingency)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Cornell Construction Limited	yes	\$202,468.88	Low Bid meeting tender spec
Dufferin Construction Company	yes	\$209,179.95	
Walker Construction Limited	yes	\$287,285.55	

### **STAFF COMMENT**

This project is part of the HCA’s standard maintenance program for Conservation Area road upkeep.

The anticipated schedule for this project is as follows:

April 18, 2023 - 1:00pm	Public Tenders closed
May 4, 2023	Recommendation Report to HCA Board of Directors
May 5, 2023	Contract awarded
May 9, 2023	Contract work period commencement
June 30, 2023	Project Substantial Completion Date

It is anticipated that the scope of work will be substantially completed on or before June 30, 2023. HCA CaPSS staff will be actively involved in site review as the project progresses.

### **STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE**

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2019 – 2023:

- **Strategic Priority Areas – Organizational Excellence**
  - Initiatives – support the capital development and major maintenance program to enhance our facilities and ensure they are safe, functional and current

### **AGENCY COMMENTS**

N/A

## **LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Sufficient funding for this work has been allocated within the HCA Capital and Major Maintenance Budget. A contingency sum of \$15,000 for unforeseen issues during construction works has also been allocated for this project. This has been included in the prices listed above.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

It is recommended that this contract be awarded to Cornell Construction Ltd. located in Brantford, Ont. They are a fully qualified and bonded, contracting firm that specializes in tar & chip and road maintenance projects. Recent, similar completed projects of theirs include tar & chip surface treatment projects with the Grand River Conservation Authority, the City of Hamilton, as well as numerous contracts previously with the HCA.

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# Memorandum

**TO:** Board of Directors

**FROM:** Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

**RECOMMENDED BY:** T. Scott Peck, MCIP, RPP, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer / Director, Watershed Management Services

**PREPARED BY:** Jonathan Bastien, Water Resources Engineer

**DATE:** April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023

**RE:** Watershed Conditions Report

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## SYNOPSIS

During the period of March 28<sup>th</sup> 2023 to April 24<sup>th</sup> 2023, there were no observations or reports of significant watercourse flooding events or Lake Ontario shoreline flooding events. However, the recent spring melt event resulted in elevated watercourse levels and significant public safety concerns, as well as warranted issuing messages and additional monitoring of watercourse conditions.

Currently, there are no significant watercourse flooding, public safety concerns, or Lake Ontario shoreline flooding. Current flows ranged from slightly elevated above baseflow conditions to elevated and just below the adopted thresholds for significant public safety concerns.

Current flows are slightly below to near long-term average monthly flows for April at most gauges. The exception is Red Hill Creek at Barton Street gauge, where flows currently are considered below average.

The average monthly flows for April so far have been slightly above to above long-term averages.

The Lake Ontario mean daily water level averaged across the entire lake is currently about 28 cm above average for this time of year.

Current Christie Lake levels are above the preferred winter operating levels and below the preferred summer operating levels. Reservoir levels will start being raised towards summer operating levels within the next week.

Current Valens Lake levels are slightly below the preferred summer operating levels. Reservoir levels are currently being raised towards summer operating levels.

There are currently no significant rainfall events (+20 mm in a day) forecasted for the watershed over the next 2 weeks. Resultant water levels and flows from currently anticipated rain are not expected to result in significant watercourse flooding.

The Hamilton Low Water Response Team terminated the Level 2 & Level 1 Low Water Conditions for the HCA watershed on April 12.

The most recent drought assessment indicated that normal conditions are an appropriate overall characterization of the watershed.

HCA staff will continue to undertake monthly drought assessments, and coordinate with the Hamilton Low Water Response Team as required if drought conditions are identified.

## **CURRENT WATERSHED CONDITIONS – April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

### Current Flows in Major Area Watercourses

There are no observations, reports, or expectations of significant watercourse flooding or significant public safety concerns at this time. Current flows are slightly elevated above baseflow conditions in Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street and in Red Hill Creek at Barton Street. Flows are elevated but below adopted thresholds for significant public safety concerns in Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road and in Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5. Current flows are elevated and just below the adopted thresholds for significant public safety concerns in Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street.

Current flows are slightly below to near long-term average monthly flows for April at most gauges. Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road flows are currently 73% of the long-term average for April (considered slightly below average). Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 flows are 95% (considered near average). Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street flows are currently 88% (considered slightly below average). Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street flows are 80% (considered slightly below average). The exception is Red Hill Creek at Barton Street gauge, where flows currently are 57% (considered below average).

The average monthly flows for April so far have been slightly above to above long-term averages at the four available gauges. Flows in Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road have been 123% (considered slightly above average). Flows in Middle Spencer Creek

at Highway 5, Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street, and Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street have been 131 to 141% (considered above average). Monthly average flows are not available for Red Hill Creek at Barton Street.

March 2023 flows were near long-term averages at most gauges. Average monthly flows at most gauges ranged from 91% to 108%. The exception was in Red Hill Creek at Barton Street, where flows were 155% (considered well above average).

February 2023 flows were near long-term averages at most gauges. Average monthly flows at most gauges ranged from 89% to 103%. The exception was in Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street, where flows were 75% (considered slightly below average).

Below average flow trends were found in many of the previous months. January 2023 flows were slightly below to below long-term averages at most gauges. Average monthly flows in Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road were 83% (considered slightly below average). Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 and Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street flows were 55% and 57%, respectively (considered below average). Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street flows were 76% (considered slightly below average). The exception was in Red Hill Creek at Barton Street, where flows were 102% (considered near average).

December 2022 flows were significantly below long-term averages, at the three Spencer Creek gauges. Average monthly flows in Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road were 35%. Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 and Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street flows were 23% and 32%, respectively. Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street and Red Hill Creek at Barton Street flows were 59% and 63%, respectively (considered below average).

November 2022 flows were below to significantly below long-term averages. Average monthly flows in Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road were 61% (considered below average). Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 and Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street flows were 12% and 18%, respectively (considered significantly below average). Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street flows were 52% (considered well below average). Red Hill Creek at Barton Street flows were 30% (considered significantly below average).

October 2022 flows were significantly below long-term averages, at most gauges. Average monthly flows in Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 and Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street were 13% and 10%, respectively. Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street and Red Hill Creek at Barton Street flows were 37% and 29%, respectively. The exception was in Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road, where flows were 93% (considered near average).

September 2022 flows were well below to significantly below long-term averages, at most gauges. Average monthly flows in Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 were predominantly lower than recordable limits during September, while Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street flows were 22% (considered significantly below average). Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street and Red Hill Creek at Barton Street flows were 47 and

42%, respectively (considered well below average). The exception was in Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road, where flows were 76% (considered slightly below average).

August 2022 flows were well below to significantly below long-term averages at all gauges. Average monthly flows in Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 were predominantly lower than recordable limits during August, while Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road and Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street flows were 38 to 39%, respectively (considered significantly below average). Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street and Red Hill Creek at Barton Street flows were 55 and 45%, respectively (considered well below average).

July 2022 average monthly flows were significantly below long-term averages in Spencer Creek (10 to 35%), and below average in Ancaster Creek and Red Hill Creek (66 and 65%, respectively).

June 2022 average monthly flows were well below long-term averages in Spencer Creek (41 to 55%), and slightly below average in Ancaster Creek and Red Hill Creek (74 and 75%, respectively).

Furthermore, May 2022 average monthly flows were slightly below long-term averages at all available gauges (69 to 89%), and in April 2022 were below to well below average (47 to 68%).

### Current Lake Ontario Water Levels

At this time, there are no observations, reports or expectations of significant Lake Ontario shoreline flooding. The Lake Ontario mean daily water level in the Hamilton area was 75.19 to 75.21 m IGLD85 as of yesterday. The Lake Ontario mean daily water level averaged across the entire lake (75.18 m IGLD85 as of yesterday) is about 28 cm above average for this time of year.

### Current Storages in HCA Reservoirs

Current Christie Lake levels (766.77 ft) are above the preferred winter operating levels (765.3 to 765.8 ft), and below the preferred summer operating levels (771.0 to 771.5 ft). Reservoir levels will start being raised towards summer operating levels within the next week.

Current Valens Lake levels (275.14 m) are slightly below the preferred summer operating levels (275.25 to 275.45m). Reservoir levels are currently being raised towards summer operating levels.

## Current Soil Conditions

The surface and root-zone soils are currently considered moist to wet, and fully thawed.

## **RECENT STORM EVENTS**

During the period of March 28<sup>th</sup> 2023 to April 24<sup>th</sup> 2023, there were no observations or reports of significant watercourse flooding events or Lake Ontario shoreline flooding events.

However, the recent spring melt event warranted issuing messages and additional monitoring of watercourse conditions.

### Potential for Watercourse Flooding During Spring Melt

#### *March 24<sup>th</sup> to April 12<sup>th</sup>*

During the spring melt, there were significant public safety concerns given elevated water levels and flows in area watercourses. In addition, there were periods with potential for significant flooding, due to a number of forecasted rainfall events while watercourses continued to be elevated due to the spring melt.

However, there were no received reports or observations of significant watercourse flooding.

HCA staff continued to regularly monitor weather forecasts, watercourse conditions, and reassess the potential for flooding.

HCA engineering staff issued the following messages related to this spring melt event, to communicate the potential watercourse flooding and public safety risks to the City and public:

- Flood Watch - Watercourse Flooding on March 24<sup>th</sup>
- Active Flood Watch Downgraded to Watershed Conditions Statement (Water Safety) on March 27<sup>th</sup>
- Active Watershed Conditions Statement (Water Safety) Upgraded to Flood Watch on March 30<sup>th</sup>
- Updated Flood Watch on April 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Active Flood Watch Downgraded to Watershed Conditions Statement (Water Safety) on April 6<sup>th</sup>
- Termination of Watershed Conditions Statement (Water Safety) on April 12<sup>th</sup>

## **RECENT WATERSHED LOW WATER CONDITIONS**

The Hamilton Low Water Response Team terminated the Level 2 & Level 1 Low Water Conditions for the HCA watershed on April 12.

The most recent drought assessment (including data up to March 31) indicated that normal conditions are an appropriate overall characterization of the watershed. This was the third consecutive recent monthly assessment that indicated normal conditions.

The Hamilton Low Water Response Team had declared a Level 2 Low Water Condition for the entire HCA watershed on October 20<sup>th</sup>. This includes Spencer Creek, Chedoke Creek, Redhill Creek, Stoney Creek and Battlefield Creek, Stoney Creek Numbered Watercourses, as well as all of their tributaries and other minor watercourses. The HCA watershed had been in a Level 1 Low Water Condition since July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

## **FORECASTED WATERSHED CONDITIONS**

### Watercourse Flooding

There are currently no significant rainfall events (+20 mm in a day) forecasted for the watershed over the next 2 weeks. HCA staff continue to monitor conditions and forecasts routinely. Resultant water levels and flows from currently anticipated rain are not expected to result in significant watercourse flooding.

### Lake Ontario Shoreline Flooding

In the next 9 days, no significant Lake Ontario shoreline flooding is expected. According to International Lake Ontario – St. Lawrence River Board information, weather conditions, including temperatures and precipitation, will primarily determine the rate and magnitude of water level fluctuations over the coming weeks.

### Watershed Low Water Conditions

HCA staff will continue to undertake monthly drought assessments, and coordinate with the Hamilton Low Water Response Team as required if drought conditions are identified.

# Memorandum

**TO:** Board of Directors

**FROM:** Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

**PREPARED BY:** Gordon R. Costie, Director, Conservation Area Services

**MEETING DATE:** May 4, 2023

**RE:** Conservation Areas Experiences Update

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## BACKGROUND:

HCA provides high quality, diverse conservation areas that promote outdoor recreation, health and well being and strengthen public awareness of the importance of being in or near our conservation areas.

## STAFF COMMENTS

- Victoria Day Long Weekend – All Conservation Areas will be busy for this long weekend traditionally known to kick off the Canadian summer pastimes. Gatehouses and maintenance staff will be on duty throughout the watershed. Expect high visitation levels for all of our Conservation Areas and Confederation Beach Park.
- Fifty Point Conservation Area – HCA’s major operation in the eastern end of our watershed, has some of the most intensive outdoor recreation on this 240-acre Conservation Area. Spring is a very busy time for staff with the marina boat lift where over 275 power and sail boats will be transported from storage to dockside. In addition, the popular 70 site campground is sold out for the long weekend for seasonal and nightly camping. Not to be outdone, the day use and beach waterfront areas will be a sought-after refuge on a spectacular Lake Ontario shoreline once the weather conditions heat up.

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