

Hamilton Region Conservation Authority

Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, July 3, 2025

Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on Thursday, July 3, 2025 at 6:00 p.m., at the HCA main office, 838 Mineral Springs Road, in Ancaster, and livestreamed on YouTube.

PRESENT:

Brad Clark – in the Chair	
Jeff Beattie	Craig Cassar
Lisa DiCesare	Susan Fielding
Brian McHattie	Wayne Terryberry
Maureen Wilson	

André Chabot – Foundation Chair

REGRETS: Matt Francis, Mike Spadafora and, Alex Wilson

STAFF PRESENT: Melanie Annan, Madolyn Armstrong, Lisa Burnside, Lindsay Davidson, Marlene Ferreira, Scott Fleming, Liam Fletcher, Brandon Good, Rob Gray, Abby Janssen, Ben Laing, Amanda Martin, Lesley McDonell, Scott Peck, Mike Stone, Jaime Tellier, Sandra Winninger

OTHERS: Joey Coleman, media

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present. HCA's Indigenous Land Acknowledgement was read.

2. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

The Chair asked members to declare any conflicts under the Board's Governance Policy. There were none.

3. Approval of Agenda

The Chair requested any additions or deletions to the agenda; there was none.

BD12, 3499

MOVED BY: Craig Cassar

SECONDED BY: Maureen Wilson

THAT the agenda be approved.

CARRIED

4. Delegations

There were none.

5. Consent Items for Applications, Minutes and Correspondence

The following consent items were adopted:

- 5.1. Permit Applications Summary Report
- 5.2. Approval of Board of Directors Minutes – April 3, 2025
- 5.3. Approved – April 10, 2025, Conservation Advisory Board Minutes – for receipt only
- 5.4. Approved – May 15, 2025, Budget & Administration Committee Meeting Minutes – for receipt only
- 5.5. Correspondence for Township of Puslinch with respect to Bill 5: Protecting Ontario by Unleashing Our Economy Act 2025

6. Foundation Briefing

André Chabot, Chair of the Conservation Foundation, reported that the Foundation held its election of officers at the June Board Meeting; he was elected as the new Chair of Hamilton Conservation Foundation Board of Directors. It was noted that he joined the Foundation Board two years ago and is excited to take on this new role.

Other officers include Graham Reid who will be continuing in his role as Vice-Chair, as well as Paul Keast who will continue as Secretary-Treasurer. The Board will be on hiatus from meetings until September, but the Foundation's committees will remain active throughout the summer.

The Foundation received a total of **\$9,588** in new donations from June 1st to June 30th, 2025. This includes a \$5,000 gift from the Rotary Club of Ancaster AM in support of the Dundas Valley trails. This brings our fiscal year-to-date fundraising

total to **\$805,894** which is 95% of the annual goal. Our Annual Donor Impact Report was recently published and shared with our community of supporters.

BD12, 3500

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

THAT the Foundation Briefing be received.

CARRIED

7. Member Briefing

7.1. Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database – HCA Lands

Scott Peck provided a slide presentation regarding the Canadian Protected and Conserved Areas Database, (CPCAD), noting that is a collaborative effort between federal, provincial and territorial jurisdictions to protect at least 30% of lands and waters by 2030 as outlined in Target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Diversity Framework. It was noted that HCA has worked with Ontario Nature to add 3,914.6 hectares of HCA's conservation lands (83% of it's holdings), including Dundas Valley, Beverly Swamp, Fletcher Creek, Valens and Christie Conservation areas. The natural areas are selected for their ecological significance and biodiversity value.

Members expressed interest in this initiative and requested the link to the CPCAD website be forwarded to them.

BD12, 3501

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

THAT the Member Briefing be received.

CARRIED

7.2 Basadinaa Experience Video

Lindsay Davidson provided an overview of the Basadinaa interpretive trail sign project that was recently installed in the Dundas Valley. It was noted that this was a collaborative process, between First Nations' partners and HCA staff. The final aspect of the project was the creation of a video, allowing participating partners the opportunity to provide personal insight. The video is on the HCA's YouTube Channel.

Members expressed appreciation for the efforts by staff and First Nations' partners put toward this project.

BD12, 3502

MOVED BY: Brian McHattie

SECONDED BY: Wayne Terryberry

THAT the Member Briefing be received.

CARRIED

8. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was none.

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

9.1. Budget & Administration Committee – June 23, 2025 (Recommendations)

9.1.1 BA 2518 Legislative Minimum Wage Increase to HCA Casual Wage Rates

Susan Fielding brought forward the staff report highlighting that the increase to the minimum wage in October necessitates an adjustment to the HCA's Casual Wage Grid in order to remain compliant. Staff also recommended that Level 1, Step 2 of the Wage Grid be increased to help with staff retention.

BD12, 3503

MOVED BY: Susan Fielding

SECONDED BY: Maureen Wilson

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

THAT the revised Casual/Seasonal wage grids for Hamilton Conservation Authority and Confederation Beach Park, Lakeland Pool and Wild Waterworks be approved, which provides for the following:

- a) The provincially mandated minimum wage rate of \$17.60, effective October 1, 2025, be applied to Level 1, Step 1 positions; and**

- b) **An additional increase be applied to Level 1, Step 2 positions as outlined in this report for the 2026 hiring year to maintain step progression for returning students.**

CARRIED

9.1.2 BA 2519 Fleet Management Policy and Decarbonization Guideline

Susan Fielding brought forward the staff report, indicating that the Fleet Policy formalizes HCA's fleet management practices. The policy also introduces a renewal strategy to support the planned replacement of aging vehicles. The Decarbonization Guideline sets a path for transitioning to more fuel-efficient vehicles: 27% of HCA's passenger vehicles are expected to be replaced with alternatively fuelled models by 2029; this number rises to 47% by 2034.

BD12, 3504

**MOVED BY: Susan Fielding
SECONDED BY: Jeff Beattie**

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

THAT the Fleet Management Policy and Fleet Decarbonization Guideline, dated May 2025, as appended to this report, be approved.

CARRIED

9.1.3 BA 2520 Year 2 Strategic Plan Initiatives

Susan Fielding brought forward the staff report indicating that 14 Initiatives were developed by the senior leadership team, aligning with the four priority areas of the 2025 – 2029 Strategic Plan. The Year 2 priorities include a blend of operational and capital items. External funding opportunities—through grants and the Hamilton Conservation Foundation—will be pursued, and some use of reserves is anticipated.

BD12, 3505

**MOVED BY: Susan Fielding
SECONDED BY: Craig Cassar**

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

THAT this report be received for information; and further,

THAT the Year 2 initiatives identified in the report that support all four priority areas in the 2025–2029 Strategic Plan be approved and incorporated into 2026 and future year budgeting.

CARRIED

9.1.4 BA 2521 Amendment to the Purchasing Policy – Authorized Purchasing Limits

Susan Fielding brought forward the staff report in indicating that updates to the Purchasing Policy were recommended to reflect the introduction of the role of Senior Managers; the policy does not account for this new staff level.

BD12, 3506

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

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

That the Purchasing Policy be amended to update the authorized purchasing limits, as outlined in Appendix A, to reflect the inclusion of the newly introduced Senior Manager role. Specifically, it is recommended that:

- **Senior Managers be granted authorized signing authority up to \$35,000**
- **Directors have their signing authority increased to \$70,000.**

CARRIED

9.1.5 BA 2522 HCA Fee Development Framework

Susan Fielding brought forward the staff report, noting the document was created in response to the Board's request for an overview of the principles, objectives and methodology behind the development of the HCA's annual fee guide. The report outlines how this Framework will guide fee development across all programs and services moving forward and builds on the existing fee policy.

BD12, 3507

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

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

THAT the document entitled HCA Fee Development Framework be approved; and further

THAT HCA's 2026 Fee Guide be developed following the principles, objectives and methodologies as outlined in the framework.

9.2 Reports from the Conservation Advisory Board

9.2.1 CA2515 Tiffany Falls Visitor Use Management Plan

Wayne Terryberry brought forward the staff report, which responds to the Board's March 2024 direction to develop a Visitor Use Management Plan for the Tiffany Falls Conservation Area; the area is facing increasing challenges related to access, visitor experience, day-to-day management, and ecological health.

Five strategies were evaluated with the preferred option being to expand visitor use to the area north of Wilson Street by adding a new parking lot on Lower Lions' Club Road and restricting the Wilson Street lot to accessible parking, emergency access and staff operational purposes only.

Discussion regarding aspects of the plan occurred. It was noted that the approach of adding a new parking lot enables the implementation of measures that cannot currently be achieved at the Wilson Street location, such as a reservation system, a longer trail system to space visitors and education opportunities. These elements are critical tools to better regulate both visitor numbers and behaviour, not just accommodate them.

BD12, 3508

MOVED BY: Wayne Terryberry

SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding

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

THAT the Tiffany Falls Visitor Use Management Plan be approved; and further

THAT staff be directed to implement Visitor Use Management Strategy #5 as recommended in Section 9.1 of the Plan as well as its associated Action Items outlined in Section 9.2.

CARRIED

9.2.2 CA 2516 HCA's Planning and Regulations Policies Update

Wayne Terryberry reviewed the staff report indicating the update is needed to reflect recent legislative changes to the Conservation Authorities Act that took effect April 1, 2024, and to support implementation of HCA's new Shoreline Management Plan. These policies are essential to the effective delivery of HCA's planning and regulatory programs.

BD12, 3509**MOVED BY: Wayne Terryberry****SECONDED BY: Jeff Beattie**

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

THAT the *Policies for Land Use Planning & Regulation in the Watersheds of the Hamilton Conservation Authority (Draft, June 2025)* be received as information;

THAT staff be directed to make the Draft policy document available for public and stakeholder review and comment; and further

THAT the final version of the policy document based on the public input received then be returned to the Board for adoption.

CARRIED**9.2.3 CA 2517 HCA Conservation Areas Program – Proposed Visitor Engagement Opportunities**

Wayne Terryberry brought forward the staff report indicating the report outlines a five-year, phased program to expand visitor experiences at Conservation Areas, with the goal to connect more people to nature through engaging, educational, and healthy outdoor activities.

BD12, 3510**MOVED BY: Wayne Terryberry****SECONDED BY: Lisa DiCesare**

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

THAT the HCA Conservation Area Program – Visitor Engagement Opportunities report be received for information; and further

THAT HCA implement the Year 1 (2025) and Year 2 (2026) proposed new offerings as detailed in the report.

CARRIED

9.2.4 CA 2518 HCA Conservation Areas Program – Access and Amenities Review and Proposed Initiatives

Wayne Terryberry brought forward the staff report highlighting the review focused on identifying and addressing barriers: physical, cultural, and informational, to help make HCA's Conservation Areas more inclusive and welcoming for all visitors. Staff recommended two actions for 2026. Additional access and amenity improvements identified through the review in the report appendix are operational in nature and will be addressed through departmental workplans over the next five years.

BD12, 3511

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

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

THAT the Conservation Areas Access and Amenities Review report be received for information; and further

THAT HCA adopt the following two initiatives:

1. Expand participation in the Easter Seals Canada Access 2 Program to include all HCA Conservation Areas, promoting free entry for support persons of individuals with disabilities; and

2. Partner with the Parks Prescription (PaRx) program for a one-year pilot, providing patients with a 30-day membership pass to HCA Conservation Areas, with a \$10 administrative fee for processing through the HCA membership system.

CARRIED

10. Other Staff Reports/Memoranda
Reports to be Approved

10.1. Fifty Point West Road Rehabilitation – Tender Results

Rob Gray provided an overview of the report and answered members' questions.

BD12, 3512

**MOVED BY: Craig Cassar
SECONDED BY: Lisa DiCesare**

HCA Staff recommends to the Board of Directors:

THAT the construction tender for Fifty Point Conservation Area's West Road Rehabilitation project, be awarded to Palm Enterprises Inc. for a total cost of \$207,271.61 which includes a contingency sum and HST.

CARRIED

Memorandums to be Received

10.2. Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Detection

Lesley McDonell provided members with an overview of the invasive insect which has now been detected in the Dundas Valley. It was noted that the HCA is working with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency to gather more information as well as to continue monitoring. A management plan will be created, outlining more detailed background, presence and treatment information.

BD12, 3513

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

THAT the memorandum entitled Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Detection be received.

CARRIED

10.3. Watershed Conditions Memorandum

Scott Peck presented a summary of the memorandum, highlighting that since the memorandum was written, that water levels at both Valens and Christie reservoirs are higher than normal due to a recent rain event.

BD12, 3514

**MOVED BY: Susan Fielding
SECONDED BY: Craig Cassar**

THAT the memorandum entitled Watershed Conditions be received.

CARRIED**10.4. Conservation Areas Services Update**

Liam Fletcher provided a summary of the memorandum, highlighting the summer activities available in HCA's conservation areas.

BD12, 3515**MOVED BY: Craig Cassar
SECONDED BY: Wayne Terryberry****THAT the memorandum entitled Conservation Areas Services Update be received.****CARRIED****11. New Business**

There was none.

12. In-Camera Items**BD12, 3516****MOVED BY: Craig Cassar
SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding****THAT the Board of Directors moves *in camera* for matters of law, personnel and property.****CARRIED**

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

**12.1. Confidential Report – BD/July 01-2025
(Land Matter)**

Scott Peck provided a summary of the report regarding a land matter and answered the members' questions.

BD12, 3517**MOVED BY: Jeff Beattie
SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding**

THAT the confidential memorandum entitled BD/July 01-2025 be approved/received and remain in camera.

CARRIED

BD12, 3518

**MOVED BY: Maureen Wilson
SECONDED BY: Craig Cassar**

THAT the Board of Directors moves out of closed session.

CARRIED

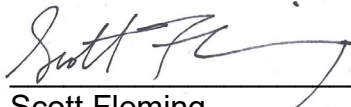
13. Next Meeting

A special virtual meeting will be held in a few weeks to receive the presentation by the auditors and approve the 2024 Financial Statements.

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Thursday, September 4, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the HCA Main Administration Office – Woodend Auditorium, 838 Mineral Springs Road, Ancaster, Ontario.

14. Adjournment

On motion, the meeting adjourned.



Scott Fleming
Secretary-Treasurer