



Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority

Minutes – Board of Directors Meeting

Date: Thursday January 19, 2024, 1:00 p.m.

Location: Administration Office, Formosa, ON

Chair: Barbara Dobreen

Members present: Paul Allen, Larry Allison, Kevin Eccles, Tom Hutchinson, Steve McCabe, Greg McLean, Dave Myette, Mike Niesen, Sue Paterson, Moiken Penner, Jennifer Prenger, Bill Stewart, Peter Whitten

Members absent: Bud Halpin

Staff present: Erik Downing, Janice Hagan, Donna Lacey, Elise MacLeod, Madeline McFadden, Laura Molson, Michael Oberle

Others present: Special guests and members of the public.

1. Land Acknowledgement

The Land Acknowledgement was read by Moiken Penner

We begin our meeting today by respectfully acknowledging the Anishinaabeg Nation, the Haudensaunee, the Neutral, and the Petun peoples as the traditional keepers of this land. We are committed to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples.

2. Adoption of Agenda

Motion #G24-01

Moved by Sue Paterson

Seconded by Steve McCabe

THAT the agenda for the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority meeting, January 19, 2024, be adopted as circulated.

Carried

3. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest relative to any item on the agenda.

4. Adoption of Minutes

4.1 Authority meeting – November 30, 2023

Motion #G24-02

Moved by Tom Hutchinson

Seconded by Paul Allen

THAT the minutes of the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority meeting, November 30, 2023, be adopted as presented.

Carried

5. Introduction of guests

Greetings were brought to SVCA from the following dignitaries and special guests:

Lisa Thompson, MPP, Huron Bruce Riding
Pat O'Connor, on behalf of Ben Lobb, MP, Huron-Bruce Riding
Alex Ruff, MP, Bruce-Grey-Owen Sound (in absentia, via correspondence)
Glen McNiel, Warden, Huron County
Paul McQueen, Mayor, Grey Highlands (via Zoom)
Mark Goetz, Mayor, Municipality of South Bruce
Ed McGugan, Vice Chair, Maitland Valley CA, Municipality of Huron-Kinloss
Angela Coleman, Conservation Ontario
Tim Lanthier, CAO, Grey Sauble Conservation Authority
Phil Beard, GM/S-T, Maitland Valley Conservation Authority
Moiken Penner, Councillor, on behalf of Municipality of Arran-Elderslie
Katie Langdon, NWMO
Andrew Beumer, Bruce County Transportation
Coreena Smith, Bruce County Planning

6. Presentation: Staff Recognition

Barbara Dobreen and Erik Downing presented service awards to the following staff:

- 5-Year Service Award: Cheryl Skingley, Campground Superintendent (*in absentia*)
- 10-Year Service Award: Rick Rowbotham, Field Operations Coordinator (*in absentia*)
- 20-Year Service Award: Laura Molson, Manager, Corporate Services
- 25-Year Service Award: Donna Lacey, Manager, Forestry and Lands

7. Chair's Address

The following address was given by Chair Dobreen:

As we convene today for Saugeen Conservation's Annual Meeting, I reflect on a year marked by both challenge and significant progress. Like so many conservation authorities, our journey through this period has been one of adaptation and resilience.

In the realm of Corporate Services, strides have been taken to enhance our operational accessibility. Our forward-looking vision is captured in the completion of a 10-year strategic plan that will guide our path to a sustainable future. We have reinforced the fabric of our organization through policies, job performance evaluations, and training programs.

Innovation in our meeting structure has been realized with the implementation of OWL and hybrid meetings, reflecting our ability to adapt in changing times. We've seen the Agricultural Advisory Committee take root once again, and our staff have broadened their expertise through micro-credentials in accessibility, fundraising, and grant writing.

Environmental Planning and Regulations managed an impressive number of new inquiries, and for the fifth consecutive year, issued over 300 permits, underlining the department's excellence amidst transition. Our presence on the international stage was noted at the Coastal Zone Canada Conference in Victoria, BC, with our influential presentation on conservation authorities in the coastal zone. We've also upheld our regulatory mandate and commitment to environmental stewardship by establishing a violation strategy designed to work with landowners where possible, and successful litigation where necessary.

Our Forestry and Lands department has not only maintained but has enhanced the green spaces under our care, with significant efforts in conservation and recreation, hosting events that connect the community to our mission.

Water Resources has been a beacon of success, with a substantial grant and external funding obtained to bolster our initiatives. Our flood warning program has been retooled for efficiency, and we've embraced transparency with the final stages of public data accessibility for flood and water quality data. Through diligent negotiations, we have established agreements with member municipalities that align with the changes in the CA Act. Unanimous municipal support was received for the Water Quality Program, and Category 2 Agreements are underway. Funding for three municipal floodplain mapping projects was secured and work initiated in 2023 that will ensure the momentum continues in 2024.

This year has indeed been one of the most challenging years for the SVCA. Our success and achievements in 2023 are a testament to Saugeen Conservation's collective ability to adjust and thrive. The Conservation Authorities Act changes included the province removing SVCA's ability to attempt cost recovery through fees and charges rather than municipal levies. Thus, removing our autonomy; overriding Board directives; and compromising our ability to govern ourselves as a representative agency for our member municipalities. Concurrently, new deadlines and deliverables arose alongside staffing challenges. Each department rose to the occasion, showing remarkable time management and fulsome collaboration to build and strengthen relationships with municipal partners, all while still executing unwavering dedication to our shared goals.

Member municipalities in 2023 showed significant support for the SVCA and renewed their belief in SVCA as a vital local organization associated with mandated and non-mandated programs alike.

As we look to the future, we will carry forward the spirit of ingenuity and commitment that has characterized the past year.

Thank you.

8. Presentation: 2023- A look back

The Management team reflected on the various departmental projects, accomplishments, and changes that transpired at SVCA in 2023.

9. Election of Officers

9.1 Appointment of Chair Pro Tem

Motion #G24-03

Moved by Larry Allison

Seconded by Greg McLean

THAT Ed McGugan be appointed as Chair Pro Tem for the purposes of conducting the election of officers for 2024.

Carried

Chair Pro Tem McGugan declared all offices vacant and called for a motion to appoint two scrutineers, in the event of an election count.

9.2 Appointment of Scrutineers

Motion #G24-04

Moved by Barbara Dobreen

Seconded by Steve McCabe

THAT Tim Lanthier and Phil Beard be appointed as scrutineers for the purposes of conducting the election of officers for 2024.

Carried

9.3 Election of Chair

Chair McGugan called for nominations for the position of Chair for 2024. Tom Hutchinson nominated Barbara Dobreen. No further nominations were received.

Motion #G24-05

Moved by Sue Paterson

Seconded by Greg McLean

THAT the nominations for the position of Chair of the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority for 2024 be closed.

Carried

Barbara Dobreen accepted her nomination and was acclaimed Chair for 2024.

9.4 Election of Vice Chair

Chair McGugan called for nominations for the position of Vice Chair for 2024. Steve McCabe nominated Tom Hutchinson. No further nominations were received.

Motion #G24-06

Moved by Dave Myette

Seconded by Tom Hutchinson

THAT the nominations for the position of Chair of the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority for 2024 be closed.

Carried

Tom Hutchinson accepted his nomination and was acclaimed as Vice Chair for 2024.

9.5 Election of 2nd Vice Chair

Chair McGugan called for nominations for the position of 2nd Vice Chair for 2024. Tom Hutchinson nominated Paul Allen. Kevin Eccles nominated Dave Myette. There were no further nominations.

Motion #G24-07

Moved by Bill Stewart

Seconded by Kevin Eccles

THAT the nominations for the position of 2nd Vice Chair of the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority for 2024 be closed.

Carried

Dave Myette declined his nomination. Paul Allen accepted his nomination and was acclaimed as 2nd Vice Chair for 2024.

9.6 Election of Member-at-Large

Chair McGugan called for nominations for the position of Member-at-Large for 2024. Steve McCabe nominated Greg McLean. There were no other nominations.

Motion #G24-08

Moved by Tom Hutchinson

Seconded by Larry Allison

THAT the nominations for the position of Member-at-Large of the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority for 2024 be closed.

Carried

Greg McLean accepted the nomination and was acclaimed Member-at-large for 2024.

10. Committee Appointments

10.1 Appointments to the Forestry Committee

Motion #G24-09

Moved by Bill Stewart

Seconded by Paul Allen

THAT the following Directors be appointed as members to the Forestry Committee for 2024: Tom Hutchinson, Moiken Penner, Bud Halpin, and Dave Myette.

Carried

10.2 Appointments to the Property and Parks Committee

Motion #G24-10

Moved by Tom Hutchinson

Seconded by Greg McLean

THAT the following Directors be appointed as members to the Property and Parks Committee for 2024: Paul Allen, Larry Allison, Moiken Penner, Jennifer Prenger, and Bill Stewart.

Carried

10.3 Appointments to the Water Resources Committee

Motion #G24-11

Moved by Steve McCabe

Seconded by Jennifer Prenger

THAT the following Directors be appointed as members to the Water Resources Committee for 2024: Tom Hutchinson, Greg McLean, Dave Myette, and Bill Stewart.

Carried

10.4 Appointments to the Agricultural Advisory Committee

Motion #G24-12

Moved by Tom Hutchinson

Seconded by Bill Stewart

THAT the following Directors be appointed as members to the Agricultural Advisory Committee for 2024: Steve McCabe, Dave Myette, Kevin Eccles, and Mike Myette; and further

THAT Chris Cossitt, Les Nichols, Paul Wettlaufer, Karen Gorman, Allan Willits, and Meg Roberts be appointed to the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority Agricultural Advisory Committee for the 2024 calendar year.

Carried

11. Delegation request

Chair Dobreen reminded the Board of Directors that as per the SVCA Bylaws, there is to be no debate during the delegate's presentation and that only questions for clarification can be asked. She also informed the Board that since the file to be discussed is on-going, staff are unable to comment publicly, and no decision or action is to be taken at this meeting.

Robert Scriven requested that a violation be commenced, and the restoration of an environmentally protected land and watercourse be undertaken under the supervision of SVCA. He informed the Board that unauthorized drainage works had been executed at a property adjacent to Skunk Creek, and in his opinion were completed without environmental studies or engineering plans, and work had not been performed by properly qualified contractors. Since this is an open file with SVCA, the Board did not discuss the presentation.

12. Reports for information

12.1 GM-2024-01: General Manager's report

The GM/S-T highlighted the fee freeze notice from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

12.2 GM-2024-02: Program report

There was no discussion.

12.3 Correspondence

Correspondence was received from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, December 13, 2023, with notice of extension of the Minister's Direction regarding the freezing of EPR fees. The Board discussed this notice and the effect it has on the 2024 budget.

12.4 News report

There was no discussion.

13. New business

13.1 COR-2024-03: 2024 Budget update

Due to the fee freeze enacted by the province and direction to review the 2024 budget, Staff have proposed changes which will not affect the General Levy and recommend that the shortfall be funded through reserves. The Directors discussed the changes and agreed to adopt the amended budget.

Motion #G24-13

Moved by Tom Hutchinson

Seconded by Steve McCabe

Whereas the Authority adopted the 2024 Budget in the amount of \$5,993,275 at the November 30th meeting (G23-111); and

Whereas the Province has extended their December 28, 2022, direction to not change fees related to reviewing and commenting on planning and development related proposals, applications, or land use planning policies or for Conservation Authority permitting, through December 2024;

THAT the Authority rescind motion G23-111; and further

THAT the amended budget in the amount of \$5,784,425 be adopted; and further

THAT the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer is hereby authorized to notify the member municipalities of the cost apportioning amounts owing; and further

THAT cost apportioning payments shall be due from member municipalities in two equal instalments on March 31 and June 30, 2024, and that late payments shall be subject to the Authority's standard late payment charge of 1.50% per month thereafter.

Motion #G24-14

Moved by Kevin Eccles

Seconded by Bill Stewart

THAT the recommended motion be separated into two parts to rescind motion G23-111 before discussion of the amended budget.

Carried

Motion #G24-15

Moved by Tom Hutchinson

Seconded by Steve McCabe

Whereas the Authority adopted the 2024 Budget in the amount of \$5,993,275 at the November 30th meeting (G23-111); and

Whereas the Province has extended their December 28, 2022, direction to not change fees related to reviewing and commenting on planning and development related proposals, applications, or land use planning policies or for Conservation Authority permitting, through December 2024;

THAT the Authority rescind motion G23-111.

Carried

Motion #G24-16

Moved by Tom Hutchinson
Seconded by Steve McCabe

THAT the amended budget in the amount of \$5,784,425 be adopted; and further
THAT the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer is hereby authorized to notify the member municipalities of the cost apportioning amounts owing; and further
THAT cost apportioning payments shall be due from member municipalities in two equal instalments on March 31 and June 30, 2024, and that late payments shall be subject to the Authority's standard late payment charge of 1.50% per month thereafter.

Carried

13.2 EPR-2024-01: Request for endorsement: Permits issued

Motion # G24-17

Moved by Paul Allen
Seconded by Larry Allison

THAT the Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourse applications (#23-287 to 23-310), pursuant to Ontario Regulation 169/06, as approved by staff, be endorsed.

Carried

13.3 Appointment of Auditor

Motion #G24-18

Moved by Dave Myette
Seconded by Tom Hutchinson

THAT Baker Tilly SGB LLP be confirmed as the auditor to the Authority for the year 2024.

Carried

13.4 Appointment of Solicitor

Motion #G24-19

Moved by Dave Myette
Seconded by Tom Hutchinson

THAT Beard Winter LLP, and Mathews, Dinsdale & Clark LLP be appointed solicitors to the Authority for the year 2024 for general operations, with the option to engage the services of other local solicitors, as necessary.

Carried

13.5 COR-2024-04: Statutory Administrative Approvals

Motion #G24-20

Moved by Jennifer Prenger

Seconded by Greg McLean

THAT the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority Board of Directors re-affirm for 2024 the Health and Safety Policy; and further

THAT the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority Board of Directors Re-Affirm for 2024 the Workplace Violence, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment Policy.

Carried

14. Committee meeting schedule

Motion #G24-21

Moved by Bill Stewart

Seconded by Steve McCabe

THAT the Committee meeting schedules be adopted as presented.

Carried

15. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:27 p.m. on the motion of Peter Whitten and Moiken Penner.

Barbara Dobreen
Chair

Janice Hagan
Recording Secretary