

June 26, 2014

The Board of Directors Meeting of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority was held on the above date, at the A.W. Campbell Conservation Area, Alvinston at approximately 1:30 p.m.

Present: Steve Arnold, Chair; Terry Burrell, Vice Chair; Bill Bilton, David Boushy, Tony Bruinink, Elizabeth Davis-Dagg, Joe Faas, Norm Giffen, Anne Gilbert, Anne Marie Gillis, Rod Glen, Betty Ann MacKinnon, Kevin Marriott, Don McCallum, Netty McEwen, Steve Miller, Frank Nemcek, John Romlewski

Absent: John McCharles, Ben Phay

Also Present for all or part of Meeting: Brian McDougall, General Manager; Rick Battson, Director of Communication; Dallas Cundick, Environment Planner/Regs Officer; Muriel Andreae; Senior Biologist; Girish Sankar, Water Resources Engineer; Kevan Baker, Director of Conservation Areas; Tracy Prince, Director of Financial Services; Marlene Dorrestyn, Administrative Assistant

The Chair requested that each Director declare a conflict of interest at the appropriate time, on any item within this agenda in that a Director may have pecuniary interest.

BD-14-077

Bruinink - Glen

“That the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting, held April 17, 2014, be approved as distributed.”

CARRIED

The General Manager’s Report was presented:

- 6 Job Creation Partnerships (employment program) positions have been filled to date and the new staff are fitting in well and contributing to our progress on multiple projects
 - 1 position has yet to be filled due to no qualified candidates
- as part of the Foundation Memorial Tree Program, the dedication ceremony for Denning’s Memorial Forest in Strathroy was held on June 1st
 - the event attracted a crowd in excess of 250
- Administrative Office accessibility renovation has been delayed to fall construction
 - website, local newspaper and direct email advertising of the project and a mandatory site meeting produced only three contractor representatives
 - all three contractors have recommended that final drawings be created prior to closing quotations for the project
 - as a result, staff have contacted the consultants that provide the draft designs for the Accessibility Grant Application and we will be working with them to create the necessary drawings to narrow the scope of the quotations and obtain the necessary permits
 - based on current discussions, drawings should be available next month and construction should commence in September

BD-14-078
Romlewski – Miller

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the General Manager’s report, dated June 16, 2014.”

CARRIED

Conservation Ontario minutes of the March 31, 2014 meeting were reviewed.

BD-14-079
McEwen - Bilton

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Conservation Ontario’s minutes of March 31, 2014 as well as a verbal report from the Conservation Ontario Board Meeting of June 23, 2014.”

CARRIED

A report on the business arising from the last meeting was discussed.

- fees for planning services should be developed in conjunction with the appropriate planning authority and are set to recover but not exceed the costs associated with administering and delivering the services on a program basis –
 - would like to have time for the municipalities to incorporate the costs into their annual budgets – *will be included in the fall budget information.*
 - a PPS Executive Summary was requested – *emailed to directors on April 22nd*
- Special Events – director requested that some take place on days other than Sunday – *will take into consideration when planning the 2015 special events.*
- directors requested that a permit/floodplain issue presentation – *will take place later in meeting.*

BD-14-080
Bruinink - MacKinnon

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the updates on business arising from the April 7, 2014 Board of Director’s meeting.”

CARRIED

Directors Comments:

- send planning services fees to all municipalities as soon as possible so they can incorporate the information into their 2015 budgets.

A Conservation Lands Update was reviewed:

- Conservation Areas:
 - Warwick Conservation Area:
 - access roadway project is ongoing; currently negotiations are proceeding for land securement; designs and surveys are currently being prepared for road construction (anticipated for fall)
 - 4’ extensions have been installed on the main trail bridge
 - a new property identification sign has been installed
 - 15 new picnic tables and 3 new benches have been constructed and distributed
 - roadways have be resurfaced with gravel and been treated with dust control
 - a new 300 meter bike cross trail has been constructed (funded through Foundation bingo)

- main gatehouse interior walls and trim have been repainted
- L.C. Henderson Conservation Area:
 - new property identification sign has been installed
 - 15 new picnic tables and 2 benches have been constructed and distributed
 - a campsite reservation system has been purchased (Campground Master); it will be used on an experimental basis this year at LC Henderson and then implemented at the other campgrounds in 2015 if successful
 - 5 new folding tables have been purchased for the visitor centre (funded through Foundation bingo)
 - main reservoir weir to be improved with new cable concrete surfacing
 - a number of dead ash trees have been removed
- A.W. Campbell Conservation Area:
 - new counter tops and sinks have been installed in the women's pool washroom
 - 15 new picnic tables have been constructed and distributed
 - a new property identification sign has been installed
 - new campsite indicators have been installed on 20 campsites
 - a number of dead ash trees have been removed in the day use and camping areas
 - new carpet has been installed on the mini golf course (funded through Foundation bingo)
 - 5 new tables have been purchased for the visitor centre (funded through Foundation bingo)
- Wawanosh Conservation Area:
 - a new property identification sign has been installed
- Strathroy Conservation Area:
 - Bonduelle Foods donated \$10,000 to improve trails and picnic tables within the conservation area; this donation will include 4 new picnic tables with concrete pads (one accessible table) and 375 meters of new trail surfacing
 - a number of dead ash trees have been removed and 6 new board walks have been installed along the trails
 - 2 new trail signs have been installed
 - water trail paddle day was a big success this year with 108 people participating in the event (best ever); authority staff are assisted by volunteers and the 1st Strathroy Scouts
- C.J McEwen & Highland Glen Conservation Areas:
 - Highland Glen - a new property identification sign has been installed; boat ramp and harbour area has been dredged
 - C.J. McEwen – renovations to the washrooms have been completed, they included new washroom partitions and ceilings; and floors and walls have been painted.
- McKeough Upstream Lands:
 - property 79/80 – a wetland has been developed (Conservation Services department)
 - property 97 – wildlife shrubs have been planted around the wetland (Conservation Services)
 - properties 38, 39, 40, 83 north, 95 north – grass buffers strips have been planted along drains and natural water courses

- property management plans for each parcel are ongoing, it is anticipated that plans will be completed for most properties by end of year
- consent (severance) applications were heard by St. Clair Township's Committee of Adjustment for the Authority owned homes at 1323 and 1327 Wilkesport Line; the applications were denied.
- Foundation Lands:
 - Keith McLean Conservation Lands:
 - this property is still with the McLean Estate, however the Foundation (through the Authority) has signed a management agreement with the estate
 - renovations to the home on the property have been completed; Matt Caron and Kelly Johnson have moved into the home and have assumed the property overseer position
- Lambton County Lands:
 - Lambton County Heritage Forest:
 - staff regularly inspect and perform maintenance on the 8 kms of trail
 - Forestry staff have inventoried, marked and tendered a section of the woodlot for commercial thinning; two proposals have been received and thinning operations will be scheduled for this fall
 - Marthaville:
 - a new trail sign has been installed
 - 200 feet of property line fencing to be installed along the north side of the property
 - staff regularly inspect and perform maintenance
 - Bowens Creek:
 - 8,100 seedlings were planted and 43,000 previously planted seedlings to be sprayed with herbicide to control grass and weeds
 - Perch Creek
 - trail improvements to include widening and extending the existing trail; and developing a plan for future trails
 - 1,000 seedlings have been planted to replace ash trees affected by the Emerald Ash borer
 - staff regularly inspect and perform maintenance

BD-14-081

Faas - Giffen

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Conservation Lands Update, dated June 4, 2014 on Conservation Areas, McKeough Upstream lands and Lambton County properties.”

CARRIED

A staff report on McKeough Upstream Lands was considered.

- Conservation Authority currently owns 3 residential properties which are rented to individuals on a month to month basis
- they are located at 1323 & 1327 Wilkesport Line and 3238 Mill St. (all are located in or around the Village of Wilkesport).
- the residence on Mill St. has been recently renovated by the tenant and is in good condition

- the homes at 1323 and 1327 Wilkesport Line were purchased by the Authority around 1980 and have been rented for more than 30 years
 - 1323 Wilkesport Line, Lot 13 Concession XII (Property 38):
 - 1½ story, framed vinyl sided dwelling
 - serviced with a private well and septic system but has municipal water and natural gas available
 - septic system is in poor working order - this past winter it froze requiring significant cost to repair
 - presently has 3 outbuildings on the property, one used as detached garage and the others considered surplus
 - the current tenant has lived in the home for approximately 25 years and pays \$608 per month
 - 1327 Wilkesport Line, Lot 14 Concession XII (Property 39):
 - 1 story, framed vinyl sided dwelling
 - connected to municipal sewer, water, and natural gas
 - presently has 3 outbuildings on the property - one used as a detached garage and the others are considered surplus
 - the current tenant has lived in the home for approximately 12 years and pays \$512 per month
 - Building Condition Status:
 - both homes have many upgrades required from new windows and doors, decks, flooring foundations, etc; both are considered in poor condition
 - the home at 1327 Wilkesport line has foundation problems (foundation has shifted)
 - the home at 1323 Wilkesport Line has a septic system which will require replacement in the near future and exterior siding, roof and many of the windows will soon require replacement
 - Authority staff continue to repair small items in the homes
 - the cost to repair all the deficiencies in the homes would be substantial and may not be justified given the rents which are obtained in the area.
 - Severance Status:
 - the consent applications (severances) were reviewed by the Committee of Adjustment for St. Clair Township on May 26th
 - both applications were denied by the Committee with several issues brought forth by Committee members including “the Conservation Authority is not considered a bona-fide farmer as per the Provincial Policy Statement and local planning policies”
 - Recommendation:
 - although the current tenants appear to be somewhat satisfied with the condition of the homes, there are liability issues and rental standards which the Authority may be required to meet if either of the tenants decide to pursue rent standards under the Residential Tenancy Act
 - both homes are in poor condition and will require significant funds to repair to meet current building codes
 - staff recommends to proceed with demolition of homes and outbuildings on these properties

BD-14-082

Marriott – Davis-Dagg

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report, dated June 11, 2014, regarding the status of residential rental properties on McKeough Upstream Lands and further instruct staff to provide the current tenants with a 90 day notice to vacate the properties and subsequently demolish the houses and outbuilding and develop a naturalization plan to be commenced in the spring of 2015.”

CARRIED

A status report regarding the Czech Hall in Dresden was presented.

- in late May, staff were contacted by staff from Chatham-Kent and were requested to attend a meeting regarding the Czech Hall in Dresden
- as part of a review of areas of liability, Chatham-Kent is reviewing agreements that have been entered into where they have little control over the potential liabilities
- Chatham-Kent has an agreement with a local community committee who have been working to maintain the building as an event / occasion rental facility with mixed success
- currently, the structure requires an infusion of capital funds to upgrade washrooms, etc. and due to limited cash flow over the past couple of years, tax arrears on the property exceed \$6,000
- the Dresden Rotary Club has come forward to discuss options to assist with the required capital works and possibly the operating costs of the building if several conditions are met, including long term viability of the building
- we have drifted from the specifics of the existing agreement in several areas but, in most areas, have maintained the intent of the original agreement
- representatives of the community continue to support the existence of the Czech Hall as it provides an economical event location for smaller events
- in general, the current proposal would be for the existing agreement between the Authority and Chatham-Kent to be dissolved and a new agreement to be developed between the Old Czech Hall Committee, the Rotary Club of Dresden (possibly) and the Authority
- in principle, the Authority has supported the use of Authority owned properties for as many opportunities as possible in support of our member municipalities and communities
- several issues will have to be conquered to move forward with the proposal, but three are of specific concern:
 - currently, the Authority maintains salvage insurance on the building in the order of \$114,075 – as outlined in the agreement the municipality is to be carrying \$1 million of insurance on the building
 - each of these will be of issue to the Committee and the Rotary Club
 - renovations will have to adhere to Authority Regulations as there will be an increase in the value of a building located in the floodway
 - removal of the building from the site at the conclusion of tenancy

BD-14-083

Faas – Davis-Dagg

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report, dated June 16, 2014 regarding the Czech Hall in Dresden and further that the General Manager and representatives of the Czech Hall Committee and the Rotary Club meet to develop a new agreement, suitable for all involved.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding the permit to hunt program on McKeough properties was reviewed.

- 52 hunters on the 2012-2013 McKeough Floodway Upstream Properties Conservation hunting list
- received 27 mandatory hunting reports. Just over 50%, late reports will be accepted until June 30, 2014.
- staff reviewed and revised the old hunter permit agreement with input and assistance from OMNR Conservation Officers, as well as some respected hunters in the area, the language has been modified to eliminate possible misunderstandings.
- the hunting package has been placed on our website to provide access easier for hunters.
- membership with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters as a prerequisite requirement to hunt the upstream lands, as OFAH carries \$3 million liability insurance on its members, was viewed as a positive by most hunters with a handful complaining about the added cost.
- the increase in the hunting fee from \$50.00 - \$70.00 was met with some resistance however many hunters expressed understanding for the increase in fees, as others chose not to hunt our lands as reflected in the decreased hunters.
- the controlled deer hunt zone draws were not required this year as the number of hunters applying for each zone were within our allowable numbers, which allowed every hunter to hunt their first zone choice.
- the hunting list was emailed to enforcement agencies once the list was finalized and complete.
- CA Staff installed property marker signs at the property boundaries along roadways to assist hunters, enforcement staff as well as CA staff with property locations.
- this is the first year that CA staff have not had any complaint from other hunters or neighbors regarding hunting issues on CA Lands.
- all hunters who have returned the mandatory hunting report and supplied an email address have been emailed the 2014-2015 hunting permit request form. Hunters who returned the mandatory report but did not supply an email address, will receive the permit request form in the mail by end of June 2014.
- Controlled Deer Hunt
 - November 5 – 11, 2013 – 5 hunters on the controlled deer hunt list
 - December 3 – 9, 2013 – 10 hunters on the controlled deer hunt list
- McKeough staff patrolled the channel and upstream properties at random times throughout the week during the controlled deer hunt.
- there were no hunting related problems or violations found during this controlled deer hunt
- animals Harvested during the 2013-2014 hunting/trapping season: Deer – 7, Doves – 20, Ducks – 16, Mink – 3, Muskrats – 13, Rabbits – 37, Squirrels – 11, Turkeys – 5, Woodcock – 16

BD -14-084

MacKinnon - Faas

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated June 19, 2014 regarding the permit to hunt program on McKeough properties.”

CARRIED

A staff report on water levels, current and flood conditions was presented.

- Highlights:
 - higher flows throughout the spring season
 - gradual warming trend in March and April retained winter snow cover longer into spring
 - lake levels continue improving slightly over 2013

- Watershed Precipitation and Streamflow Conditions
 - seasonal flows remained higher and over an extended period throughout the spring of 2014 when compared with 2013. While no significant flood events were experienced during the spring freshet this year, several flow peaks were noted resulting in a Watershed Conditions Statement being issued in March as well as an extended Flood Watch period in mid to late May. With weather conditions moderating into the summer months, flows are anticipated to fall to seasonal levels but as in the previous years may be impacted by sudden rain events. Precipitation statistics indicate lower than average rainfall over the last three months at 83% of the normal with Sarnia receiving only 63%. Six month numbers however are almost 100% of normal likely as a result of a return to average snowfalls this winter and the yearly average continues to be above average at 110%. Year to date trends indicate a slower warming trend into spring of 2014 compared to 2013 and the year to date precipitation figures identify less total precipitation reported at all stations in 2014 with the exception of Windsor.
- Flood Threat
 - with the trend toward seasonal flows throughout the watershed, the overall flood threat is again limited to the incidence of sudden and extreme rainfall events. Normal flows typically react to these events with a one to two day delay moving into the watercourses as well as contingent on the intensity and relative location in the watershed (as noted in lower Sarnia area precipitation figures to date). As is the trend in the past few years, many events tend to develop in smaller pockets or thunderstorm cells which are often not evenly distributed across the region resulting in impact on flows in smaller sections of the system. This pattern tends creating potential sudden localized overbank conditions which are, in most cases, easily accommodated by the system downstream.
 - these changing conditions are carefully monitored to assess potential localized flood situations as we move into summer.
 - June – slightly below average temperature and precipitation
 - Summer – will be slightly warmer than normal, with the hottest temperatures in early to mid-July, mid to late July and early to mid August. Rainfall will be near normal in southeast Ontario, but below normal elsewhere.
- Great Lakes Levels (Canadian Hydrometric Service – May 2014 data - Lake levels in 2014 continue to improve compared to 2013 in both Lake St. Clair and Lake Huron. Lake Huron levels are now much closer but still below the 10 year long term average. In addition, 10 year levels remain low when compared to the Period of Record (95 years) due to the continuing below average years experienced over the past decade. Factors such as significant ice coverage and reflected sunlight have limited excessive evaporation over the winter months and spring levels reflect this impact into summer months.

BD-14-085

Miller - Romlewski

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated June 10, 2014 on the current watershed conditions and Great Lakes water levels.”

CARRIED

A staff report on Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure Projects submitted for funding in 2014-2015.

- applications have been reviewed by a committee of provincial and conservation authority staff representatives last month and the projects have been ranked in comparison to all submitted projects from across the Province
- Authority projects have scored between 90 and 115 points in Repair Projects and between 20 and 70 points for Safety Projects.
- Authority has secured funding of WECI funding of \$40,000 for repair work along the floodway
- projects with emphasis on flood control has secured most of the funding
- SCRCA has been successful in adding \$110,000 from Environment Canada towards St. Clair River shoreline restoration. A portion will be used towards Cathcart Park Phase IV work.

Other WECI Projects		
Structure	Project Name	Status
Cathcart Park	Erosion Protection Revitalization	Completed in May 2014
Petrolia Dam	Minor crack repair	Scheduled to complete in July 2014
Coldstream Dam	Shrub and tree removal	completed in June 2013
Running Creek Dyke	Erosion Control	Completed in June 2014

BD-14-086

Marriott – Davis-Dagg

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated June 13, 2014 on the ongoing Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure projects across the watershed and further acknowledges the project updates on the previously funding projects and projects submitted for 2014-2015 funding.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding the Running Creek on Forhan Street was explained.

- erosion on Running Creek has been an ongoing issue
- staff have been monitoring the site from 2010
- a new bio engineering approach using Envirolok bags was selected to control the erosion
- CA staff met with Envirolok to review the site on June 4, 2014
- construction work started on June 5, 2014
- erosion work completed on June 6, 2014
- minor clean-up work to be completed by end of June 214.

BD-14-087

Glen - MacKinnon

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated June 13, 2014 on the Running Creek on Forhan Street Erosion Project.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding the Healthy Watersheds Programs was reviewed.

- Lambton Shores Healthy Lake Huron Program
 - Lambton Shores Tributaries (LST) Watershed received funding from Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Environment Canada as part of the Healthy Lake Huron – Clean Water, Clean Beaches campaign, for immediate action to improve beach and inland surface water quality.
 - Water Quality Monitoring: ongoing on a monthly and storm event basis to contribute to long-term data sets
 - Outreach and Education: with funding from TD Friends of the Environment, we cohosted a wetland restoration planting day (May 31) at the retired Forest Sewage Lagoons. Fifteen volunteers from Communities In Bloom, CH2M Hill, the local TD branch, Municipality of Lambton Shores, and the Lambton Shores Nature Trails Committee planted over 380 wetland plants and nearly 60 native trees in an hour. These volunteers work fast! The purpose of the planting day was to create shoreline habitat for waterfowl as well as provide the lagoons with natural water purifiers.
- Healthy Sydenham Headwaters Initiative (HSHI)
 - SCRCA and Middlesex Stewardship Council have partnered on this Initiative to guide conservation and restoration efforts in the Headwaters of the Sydenham River.
 - Water quality monitoring: ongoing on a monthly basis to contribute to long-term data sets
 - Outreach and Education: with funding from Environment Canada, Ontario Trillium Foundation and Middlesex Stewardship Council, SCRCA mailed nearly 1800 reminder postcards to landowners in the focus region highlighting available stewardship grants. Response has been positive with nearly 40 landowners contacting the office for more information. Staff are currently setting up site visits to determine project feasibility.
- Upcoming events:
 - *June 12, 2014*: Lambton Shores Steering Committee Meeting
 - *June 26, 2014*: SCRCA Bus Tour
 - *July 17, 2014*: Middlesex Stewardship Council Bus Tour
 - *July 21, 2014*: Forest Sewage Lagoon Wetland Tour with Communities in Bloom Judges
- Stewardship projects – **Grants available** In both programs, SCRCA secures funding from many sources to support landowner implemented stewardship projects including riparian buffers, block tree planting, windbreaks, wetlands, and erosion control measures. Staff meet with landowners and offer expert advice and project design and where applicable, support individual projects with grants.

BD-14-088

Boushy - Nemcek

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated June 12, 2014 on the Healthy Watershed Stewardship programs, including various outreach events to encourage implementation of best management practices in the Sydenham Headwaters and Lambton Shores watersheds.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding Municipal Drain Review activities was explained.

- since January, 2014, 67 drain files have been submitted to SCRCA for review. 29 files have been reviewed under the DART protocol and proponents have received Standard Compliance Requirements permissions. 21 files have been reviewed by staff and have received Letters of Review. Letters of Review are issued when the project does not fall under the DART protocol. In

most cases these are engineer's reports under section 78 of the Drainage Act for improvements, and advice is provided to further the conservation and management of the existing natural heritage features of the designated watershed. The remaining 11 files are under review.

Categories of Drain Review	January – April 2014	April – June 2014	Total
DART Protocol – SCR issued	16	13	29
Letter of Review Issued	17	4	21
Requires Letter of Review	4	7	11
Other Types of Files (e.g., Environmental Assessment, sign-off, Assessment changes)	5	1	6
Total Files from January to June 2014	42	25	67

- other ways the SCRCA works with Municipal Drain Projects
 - in some cases St. Clair Conservation is able to offer grant money towards measures that are above and beyond the legal requirements. A newly launched *Municipal Drain Habitat Enhancement Program* funded by the federal Great Lakes Sustainability Fund supports drain projects that increase fish habitat and mitigate sediment and erosion in agricultural watercourses of the St. Clair River Area of Concern. Projects that qualify include buffers, fish refuge pools, and two-stage (“benched”) drainage ditches.
 - for the 2013/14 round of funding 7 projects have been funded through the *Municipal Drain Habitat Enhancement Program*. These projects include the Wray Drain (Sombra), Clark Drain (Sarnia), Townline Drain (Dover), McDonald Drain (Moore), Hind Pump Works Drain (Dover), 12-13 Concession Drain (Sombra) and the Whitebread Drain (Dover). A total of \$24,000 has been awarded to these projects for habitat enhancements on these drains. Additional funding for habitat enhancements is available for drains located within the St. Clair River Area of Concern for the 2014/15 fiscal year, applications are now being accepted.

Drain	Enhancements	Amount of funding granted
Wray Drain	Enhance existing low flow channel, grassed buffers, fish refuge/sediment pool	\$1,900
Clark Drain	Sediment pool, low flow channel, buffer strips along north and south banks	\$5,800
Townline Drain	Construction of benches and enhancing the low flow channel	\$5,000
McDonald Drain	Refuge pool, 1m buffer along bank	\$4,100
Hind Pump Works Drain	2m grassed buffer strip	\$2,000
12-13 Concession Drain	3m grassed buffer strips	\$200
Whitebread Drainage Scheme	2m buffer strips along Main Drain	\$5,000

BD-14-089

Bruinink - Marriott

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated June 12, 2014 summarizing Municipal Drain Review activities, and the Municipal Drain Habitat Enhancement Program and funding opportunities.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding the Aquatic Inventory and Education Outreach Program in the Lake Huron watersheds was reviewed.

- Benthic Diversity of the Middle East Sydenham
 - the Middle East Sydenham station at Mawlam Road, south of Florence had better than average benthic scores in 2013. Previous Report Card averages were 6.35 and 5.33 for 2001-2005 and 2006-2010 respectively. In 2013, the benthic score for the site is 4.69. A lower benthic score is a good thing, indicating that the biota are less impacted by organic pollution.
 - when benthic scores are low, we typically find a greater species diversity. This year, a total of 18 different families were found at the Mawlam Road site, including mayflies, riffle beetles, caddisflies, fishflies, stoneflies and clams. We typically see anywhere between 5 and 19 different families at sites across the St. Clair Region. The Mawlam Road site had the greatest diversity in 2013.
 - a conservative approach is taken in interpreting water quality results. One year good benthic sample is not enough to conclude that water quality is improving. Instead, a bigger picture which includes an analysis of water chemistry, including nutrients and *E. coli* in combination with biological indicators such as benthic or fish sampling, is required to give a more complete picture of water quality. Nonetheless, it is always a good sign to see such an assortment of pollution intolerant animals.
- Road Salt and Freshwater Mussels on the Sydenham
 - surface water in the Sydenham River has been monitored by St. Clair Conservation since 1967. The station where the East Branch Sydenham intersects Shiloh Road near Alvinston, upstream of the richest freshwater mussel beds in Canada, shows an upward trend in chloride (see table below). The slope is increasing at a rate of 0.9 mg/L/year from 1975 to 2009. In 2007, a maximum chloride concentration of 58 mg/L was recorded at the station. Research indicates that chloride can become toxic to mussel larvae (glochidia) at levels as low as 153 mg/L.
 - increasing concentration of chloride is not unique to the Sydenham. There is an increasing trend in many of the southern Ontario streams where freshwater mussels inhabit. A recent study of 24 long-term water quality stations shows a link between road density and chloride concentration. The exposure of sensitive glochidia to increasing chloride concentrations may negatively affect mussel populations.
 - many Ontario road authorities have developed plans to better manage road salt use to reduce the environmental impacts of chloride while maintaining road safety; however, less attention has been paid to identifying areas that are vulnerable to salt loading. Recognizing the biological uniqueness of Sydenham River, extra precaution might be considered to protect the unique biodiversity of the river. Intersections of salted roads and these critical stream habitats represent potentially vulnerable areas where the road authority might consider additional salt management measures.

- Phosphorus in Surface Water
 - Phosphorus is a common constituent of agricultural fertilizers, manure, and organic wastes in sewage and industrial effluent. Phosphorus values were lower in 2013 than average at most of the monitoring stations in the St. Clair Region. Although phosphorus averages were lower, values were still about 2-4 times the provincial standard for phosphorus in surface water (0.03mg/L).

BD-14-090

Boushy - Bilton

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated June 12, 2014 on the Aquatic Inventory and Education Outreach Program in our Lake Huron watersheds that will provide information on the watershed health and engage residents in stewardship actions.”

CARRIED

A report on the Reptiles at Risk program was discussed.

- have had great success with proposals again this year, with active grants totaling \$923,000 for projects valued at approximately \$5,000,000. There are a number of new grants for 2014:
 - funding from Ontario Trillium Foundation to conduct fish and mussel inventories in Lake Huron Tributaries with a complementary education and outreach program that builds on the program delivered at Kettle Stony Point First Nation. \$58,000 over two years was awarded.
 - Wildlife Habitat Canada awarded \$22,000 for wetland and riparian buffer projects on McKeough Lands.
 - a three year, \$75,900 grant from the Ministry of Natural Resources Species at Risk Stewardship Fund to continue to deliver Reptiles-at-Risk Program. The grant will help pay for snake and turtle monitoring, and related outreach and education activities.
 - Ontario Land Trust Alliance Program grant \$10,000 to support restoration of Bowens Creek Habitat Management Area and \$2,000 to support erosion protection on McKeough Lands.
 - \$1000 from Friends of the St. Clair River for Water Quality Monitoring in St. Clair River Tributaries.
 - about \$70,000 from Trees Canada towards planting about 40,000 trees.
 - \$8,000 from Ministry of Natural Resources for Phragmites treatment at Stag Island.
 - \$17,800 from Ministry of Natural Resources for Lambton Shores Coastal Wetland Restoration and riparian buffer restoration.
- There are also many ongoing projects:
 - 2014 is the third year of a three year, \$117,500 grant from the Environment Canada’s Great Lakes Sustainability Fund for wetlands creation and tree planting at Bowen’s Creek Habitat Management Area.
 - 2014 is the third year of a 3 year \$173,400 grant from Ontario Trillium Foundation for landowner/community engagement, headwater wetland construction and other wildlife BMPS in the Upper Sydenham Watershed.
 - 2014 is the third year of a three year, \$38,000 grant from Showcasing Water Innovation towards Rural Stormwater Management in the Lambton Shores Priority Watershed

- 2014 is the second year of a three year \$244,050 grant from Environment Canada to implement best management projects through the Sydenham River Habitat Stewardship Program.
- 2014 is the second year of a two year \$85,000 grant for Sediment and Erosion Mitigation and Fish Habitat Enhancement of Agricultural Watercourses of the St. Clair River Area of Concern (AOC).
- a number of projects were completed in the first part of 2014:
 - \$40,000 grant from Ministry of Natural Resources Species at Risk Stewardship Fund to benefit Reptiles-at-Risk in the region. The grant helped pay for snake and turtle monitoring, and related outreach and education activities over the last two years.
 - Ministry of Environment’s Great Lakes Guardian fund allocated \$22,000 toward five education events coordinated with Aamjiwnaang First Nation Environment Committee, and pre and post restoration benthic monitoring at Talfourd Creek.
 - Wildlife Habitat Canada allocated \$28,000 to landowner/community engagement, headwater wetland construction and other wildlife BMPS in the Upper Sydenham Watershed.
 - Great Lakes Sustainability Fund allocated \$45,000 towards the second stage of Peers Wetland Restoration.
 - Environment Canada allocated \$8,500 to implementation of workshops and landowner engagement in the Lambton Shores Tributary area.
 - Ministry of the Environment allocated \$50,000 to a study and project to look at improving water quality in Lambton Shores including BMPs.
 - OMAFRA-COA allocated \$58,000 to drafting soil and erosion nutrient management programs for 500 acres of SCRCA-owned cropland, design and implementation of erosion berms on the McKeough Properties 82, 83, 95 and 97, collection of water quality and soil sample analysis.
 - Ministry of Natural Resources allotted \$17,800 for Lambton Shores Coastal Wetland Restoration / Phragmites Control Watershed Wetland Riparian Buffer Restoration
- We are still waiting to hear on a few grants:
 - an application to the Ontario Community Environment Fund for \$20,000 to support surface water sampling including water chemistry and benthic organism analysis.
 - applications to the Land Stewardship and Habitat Restoration Program: \$20,000 for wetland creation and erosion control projects in the Black Creek watershed and \$5,640 for wetland creation and Tallgrass Prairie Restoration in the Upper Sydenham Headwaters.

BD-14-091
Romlewski - Faas

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated June 12, 2014 on the Reptiles at Risk program, including an outreach workshop with the Lambton County Roads Crew, and reptile habitat enhancements and recent site surveys for turtles, snakes and lizards on properties owned or managed by St. Clair Conservation.”

CARRIED

A staff report on spring 2014 tree planting was discussed.

- Seedling/Reforestation program
 - despite the cold and wet spring, this year’s tree seedlings arrived on April 25th, which is the normal spring delivery time.

- the eastern portion of the watershed was targeted for planting this year and fortunately, this resulted in most of the tree planting uptake being located the Middlesex County area which has lighter and better drained soils than the western part of the watershed.
- SCRCA staff planted 75,000 trees this spring on 27 individual properties. A five man hand planting crew planted approximately 10,000 trees in the first 2 weeks. Once the land was dry enough later in May we ran three tractor-mounted mechanical tree planters to plant another 65,000 trees. Approximately 35 landowners ordered and planted a total of 8,500 trees on their own, for a total of 83,500 trees planted between April 24th and June 5th.
- most planting projects were on private land this year due to the financial incentives through 8 available grant programs. More than \$180,000 in federal, provincial and local grant dollars was secured through 8 separate funding programs and was used to offset planting costs for the majority of the 75,000 trees planted this spring.
- all trees were sprayed with a pre-emergent herbicide soon after planting
- spraying continues into June for reapplication on sites planted 1, 2 and 3 years ago.
- Large Stock/ Municipal tree program
 - approximately 750 large stock potted and bare root trees were purchased by landowners this spring at a cost of more than \$14,000.
 - Brooke-Alvinston purchased the bulk of the trees for its municipal residents and provided a \$2.00/tree subsidy for landowners interested in purchasing and planting their own trees. More than 500 large stock trees were purchased and planted in Brooke-Alvinston
 - price quotes were obtained from 6 separate tree nurseries and trees were purchased from 3 nurseries with the best prices and delivery costs.

BD-14-092

Miller - Nemcek

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated June 12, 2014 regarding spring 2014 tree planting on private, corporate and public lands.”

CARRIED

A staff report on the Authority’ agreement with Lambton County to undertake the application of Larvicide was reviewed.

- wet spring days, warm nights and humid conditions have put mosquito activity almost 2 weeks ahead of normal. Lambton Public Health as well as SCRCA has been receiving many phone calls inquiring about the start-up of the mosquito control program.
- larvae sampling was carried out on June 10th using two SCRCA summer crews and results of the samples were sent to Lambton Public Health. Activity was very high for this time of the year so the MOH for Lambton County has approved treatment of catch basins to commence as soon as SCRCA has permits and supplies in place.
- applications for permits were submitted to the London M.O.E. office and we are currently awaiting approval for 3 permits (Sarnia-Lambton, Aamjiwnaang-Sarnia First Nation, Dupont plant located in Corunna).
- three treatments of methoprene pellets will be applied to approximately 13,000 catch basins throughout the summer and another 3,000 catch basins will receive a single methoprene briquette application for season long control. A fourth permit is also requested for using Bti in an emergency request situation from Lambton Public Health.

- a contract to provide larvicide application services for Lambton County has been received and will be signed and return to Lambton Public Health. Costs to the County will remain the same as last year.
- catch basin larvicide treatment will be conducted by 3 separate, 2 person crews. Crews will have 14 days to treat 16,000 catch basins for the first round. There will be 3000 catch basins treated one time only which a long term residual briquette. The remaining 13,000 catch basins will be treated at 21 day intervals with 3 treatments of methoprene pellets between June 20th and the end of August.
- public notification for pesticide application is scheduled for the Sarnia Observer for June 14th and further notifications will be posted in the Petrolia, Watford and Forest papers.
- efficacy testing is planned again this year to monitor how well pellets and briquettes are controlling mosquito populations.

BD-14-093

Gillis - McEwen

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated June 12, 2014 regarding the Authority’s agreement with Lambton County to undertake the application of Larvicide to catch basins as part of Lambton County Community Health Services West Nile Virus Program.”

CARRIED

The directors have requested a presentation on Ontario Regulation 171/06 and how staff implement those regulations, so they could better understanding of the process involved. A River and Stream Systems Flood Hazard Standard presentation was explained by the Director of Planning.

BD-14-094

Gillis - Glen

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the River & Stream Systems Flood Hazard Standard presentation.”

CARRIED

Regulations Summary Reports dated April 30 and May 31, 2014 were reviewed.

BD-14-095

Boushy - Burrell

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges and concurs with the Regulations Committee Reports on “Development, Interference with Wetlands & Alterations to Shorelines & Watercourses” Regulations (Ontario Regulation 171/06), dated April 30, 2014 and May 31, 2014.”

CARRIED

Planning Activity Summary Report for February and April and May 2014 were reviewed.

BD-14-096

Nemcek - MacKinnon

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority’s monthly Planning Activity Summary Reports for April and May 2014.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding the April – June 2014 municipal drain activity report associated with the Drainage Act and Conservation Authorities Act Protocol (DART) was reviewed.

BD-14-097

Faas - Burrell

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report, dated June 12, 2014 on Drainage Act and Conservation Authority Act Protocol (DART) Municipal drain activities and drain Letters of Review for April and to date June 2014.”

CARRIED

A draft Memorandum of Agreement for planning services was explained.

- the 2014 Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) is now in effect. The PPS provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. In respect of the exercise of any authority that affects a planning matter, Section 3 of the *Planning Act* requires that decisions affecting planning matters “shall be consistent with” policy statements issued under the Act. Information on the new PPS was provided in April. CAs are delegated the responsibility in providing natural hazard comments which the SCRCA is obligated to provide. It is also in the best interest of the SCRCA, as natural hazard areas are also regulated under the *Conservation Authorities Act*, Section 28, “Development, Interference with Wetlands & Alterations to Shorelines & Watercourses”.
- the update to the PPS makes it timely for Conservation Authorities to discuss and update their municipal Memorandum of Agreements for CA planning advisory services.
- Policies and Procedures for Conservation Authority Plan Review and Permitting Activities
 - relevant sections of the provincially approved “Policies and Procedures for Conservation Authority Plan Review and Permitting Activities”, 2010 states:
 - p. 3 Background section - Service Provides” – Individual CAs may enter into service agreements with federal/provincial ministries and municipalities to undertake regulatory or approval responsibilities and/or reviews. CAs may also perform a technical advisory role to municipalities, as determined under the terms of service agreements. These services may include, matters related to policy input and advice, the assessment or analysis of water quality and quantity, environmental impacts, watershed science and technical expertise associated with activities near or in the vicinity of sensitive natural features, hydrogeology and storm water studies”.
 - p. 12 Policy 3.5 - “Where CAs have entered into an agreement with municipalities or other levels of government for any technical services, CAs should provide the technical services (ie. providing natural heritage advice), as prescribed by the agreement...
 - p. 17 Policy 6 - “If involved in providing a technical advisory role, CAs and municipalities should establish formal technical service agreements. CAs should ensure that the service agreement includes:
 - obligations of the CA to participate in pre-consultation (i.e. Development Review Teams) and other meetings;
 - how the CA may participate in OMB hearings or other tribunals;
 - How the parties or participants may be represented at hearings for the purpose of legal representation; and

- limits on the CA’s ability to represent the municipality’s interests at OMB hearings.
 - should specify that regular reviews by the parties of the agreement are required
 - should be publicly accessible (i.e. posted on the respective CA and municipal website)
- next steps and recommendation
 - the existing SCRCA Memorandum of Agreements for Planning Services beyond delegated natural hazard plan review commenting, needs updating relevant to PPS 2014 and is an important discussion tool for reviewing planning services important to our member municipalities.
 - the agreements also outlined a method of streamlining the circulation of planning applications which has proven to be very effective from an efficiency standpoint.
 - the draft 2014 agreement is attached followed by the original 1998 agreement. Note that Board approved CA fees have been adjusted every several years, following our fee policy and consultation process. Final approved fee adjustments form part of Appendix B when adjustments occur.
- it is recommended the draft Memorandum of Agreement be initially forwarded to Dave Posliff, Lambton County Planning Manager, for initial feedback, as the County is an upper tier planning municipality and the largest in our watershed. Comments and input will be reported back to the Board of Directors and a plan for further municipal/Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority circulation will be provided.

BD-14-098

Burrell - Romlewski

“That the Board of Directors recommends the draft Memorandum of Agreement for SCRCA Planning Services be forwarded to the Lambton County Planning Department for initial feedback with a reporting back to the Board on feedback received.”

CARRIED

Authority revenue and expenditures to April 30, 2014, were reviewed.

BD-14-099

Boushy - Bruinink

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the revenue and expenditure report to April 30, 2014, as it relates to the budget.”

CARRIED

April and May 2014 disbursements totaling \$1,612,360.46 were considered.

BD-14-100

Gilbert – Gillis

“That the list of disbursements no longer be included in future Board packages.”

DEFEATED

BD-14-101

Romlewski - Burrell

“That the Board of Directors approves the April and May 2014 disbursements as presented in the amount of \$1,612,360.46.”

CARRIED

A status report on general levy received to date was discussed.

BD-14-102

Miller - Boushy

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the status report on the 2014 general levy receipts to June 10, 2014.”

CARRIED

A staff report regarding releasing Director’s Information to third parties was reviewed.

Directors Comments:

- two directors have similar information with different amounts paid out. Please review. (Error identified and revised chart will be provided at the next meeting.)

BD-14-103

McEwen - Bilton

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Status Summary report, dated June 10, 2014 on directors’ expenses from January 1 to December 31, 2013.”

CARRIED

Draft meeting minutes of the Health and Safety Committee were presented.

BD-14-104

Romlewski - Nemcek

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the March 20, 2014 draft meeting minutes of Health and Safety Committee.”

CARRIED

A report regarding renovations to the Authority’s Administrative Offices for accessibility improvements was explained.

- on May 23, 2014 we posted the Request for Proposal documents and notification of mandatory meeting on our website. Also sent the notification to 2 construction databases. An advertisement was also placed in the Strathroy Age Dispatch.
- June 2nd was the date of the mandatory meeting and walk through of the designs, to clarify any questions. We had 2 contractors attend and a third who had the wrong date for the meeting, for a total of 3 interested contractors.
- within 1 week we received withdrawals from 2 of the contractors. We have learned that as a result of the school boards moving to full day kindergarten, this has caused constraints on the construction industry, therefore there is very little interest nor is there the trades available at this time.

- based on discussion with contractors, we have decided that to keep the project moving and to take advantage of the warmer weather that it would be prudent to break this project down into smaller pieces, still remaining within the total approved budget.
- the total project cost approved by the Board in April 2014 was \$230,000.
- the cost estimate for outside concrete work of the project below provides a total cost of \$54,498 plus contingencies and taxes.
- the quote we have received was \$55,000 plus HST. This is in line with the original cost estimates.
- if this work is delayed and maintained as part of the whole contract there is a potential for the cost to increase based on the weather conditions, having to tarp and heat concrete. Also a delay in construction of the interior waiting for curing time.
- this part of the work is proposed to be completed this summer, which would improve access into the building allowing proper stairs and ramping from the parking lot.
- quotations for the remaining work will be requested from the three interested contractors upon completion of final drawings by the accessibility architect in August
- by then Contractors will have time available to complete the works and the additional information provided will allow them to refine and improve the competitiveness of their quotations
- delays in the construction timeline are expected to impact the September Board of Directors meeting and possibly the November meeting as well – meetings will be held in Strathroy with the exact locations to be confirmed with your receipt of the meeting packages

BD-14-105

Boushy - Bruinink

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report, dated June 20, 2014 regarding the renovation to the Authority’s Administrative Offices for accessibility improvements and further accepts the quotation for the exterior portion of the accessibility improvements and accepts the proposed action to request for quotations based on finalized project drawings with the Chair and General Manager to accept proposals and sign contracts subject to the project costs being within the approved budget for the project.”

CARRIED

Only one proposal for auditing services for the period 2014 – 2018 was reviewed.

- Background
 - a Request for Proposal was drafted to include separate fees to audit the Authority and the Foundation for a period of 5 years.
 - proposals were requested from three firms with Conservation Authority or public administration experience with offices located within the Authority watersheds.
 - one proposal was received by the due date of June 20, 2014.
 - Woods Pearson and Associates in Strathroy submitted the proposal bid of \$12,500 (plus HST) for the Authority audit and \$3,000 (plus HST) for the Foundation audit for the fiscal year of 2014. The proposal includes a 3% inflationary increase per year for the next four years thereafter. The proposal also offered a \$500.00 discount if both audits were awarded to their firm.
- Background
 - Woods Pearson has completed the Authority and Foundation audits for the last five years and is familiar with our organization and staff.
 - Audit fees for the Conservation Authority for 2013 were \$7,316.00 and in 2012 were \$7,102.00.

- Audit fees for the Conservation Foundation for 2013 were \$1,908.04 and in 2012 were \$1,753.61 (net of charitable donation).
- The increase in fees could be attributed to the diverse programs of the Authority as well as the underestimation of costs to complete the audit in previous years.

BD-14-106

Gillis - Bilton

“That the Board accept the proposal from Woods Pearson as the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority auditors for the period of 2014 – 2018 and further that a similar recommendation be made to the Board of Directors of the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation.”

CARRIED

A staff report on Conservation Education was discussed.

- Canoe Race
 - With Easter falling on the traditional canoe race weekend, the Sydenham River Canoe Race was held on earlier on Sunday April 13th. Over 40 boats were navigated down the river by enthusiastic paddlers and \$1,838.00 was raised for Conservation Education.
- Spring Education Programs
 - Conservation Education continues to be a popular field trip focus for area schools. Programs are booked daily from early April through to the end of the school year. To date this year, 2,545 participants have been involved in our programs. There are still over 1,000 students to visit Henderson C.A. before the end of June.
 - Alternative Energy Program: Thanks to a donation from Enbridge, a new Alternative Energy program is now being offered at Henderson C.A. to students from Gr 4-12. Program is receiving interest from teachers in many grades, including the high-school level.
- Community Outreach
 - Art Walk: June 7 and 8, 2014 – our campgrounds were the focus of this year’s display. Close to 25,000 people attended Art Walk.
 - Kids Fun Fest: June 7th, 2014 - upon request, SCRCA participated in this day-long annual event. At our booth, children were invited to play our ‘maple key toss’ game; if they could successfully land their maple key on one of the tree stumps they could win a fabulous prize! The prizes were rocks & the children loved them! Children were also invited to play with a host of nature ‘touchable’s, allowing them to get up close & personal with nature at the event! Parents were invited to peruse our information table where literature on camping and other CA projects was displayed.
 - Circles Program: this County initiative helps to cycle people out of poverty. Families are matched with community members who provide assistance in some form (babysitting, tuition fees, loan of a vehicle to get to interviews etc.). It has been recognized nationally. Lambton County organizers of the program are going across the country to teach other communities about this program. They have monthly gatherings and our geocaching program is one of their requested events which we provide.
 - LWI Young Naturalist Groups, Ongoing: Continue to run outdoor meetings for both the Young Naturalist Group (ages 7-11) & the Jr. Conservationist Group (ages 12 +). Our final meeting for the season was held May 24-25 at LC Henderson CA. This meeting was an overnight camping experience that the students thoroughly enjoyed! Some highlights of the trip: playing the ‘Instincts for Survival Game’; hookless fishing at the pond; and

- time for family kayaking & canoeing.
- Return the Landscape, Ongoing : one staff person continues to sit on the Return the Landscape Committee. This Group aims to rescue native flora from development sites and replant them within native landscapes within Lambton County.
- Sarnia-Lambton Harbour Week Committee: representatives from local groups organize and participate in an annual Tree Planting project. This year, Lansdowne Public School was the recipient of the tree planting, funded through Union Gas/Spectrum Energy.
- Program Development & Expansion
 - High School Programs Spring 2014: continue to run programs for the high school grades. New partnership formed with the Science department of Strathroy High School. Will be teaching 2 days of programming at Strathroy CA & have plans to expand the partnership further next fall. Also, the new 'Introduction to Entomology' program has been delivered to a Gr. 12 class at Perch Creek Habitat Management Area. The students found the program engaging, interesting and even exciting. The outdoor education staff have received positive feedback from the teacher involved.

BD-14-107

Davis-Dagg - Burrell

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the education staff report dated June 12, 2014, including the canoe race, spring education programs, and community outreach.”

CARRIED

The meeting went In camera to discuss identifiable individuals.

BD-14-108

Faas - Gillis

“That the Board of Directors go in camera at 2:57 p.m. to discuss personal information, with all staff remaining.”

CARRIED

BD-14-109

Burrell - MacKinnon

“That the Board of Directors rise and report at 3:00 p.m.”

CARRIED

BD-14-110

Bruinink – McEwen

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated, June 13, 2014 on the Conservation Foundation Scholarships and approves the recommendations of the Scholarship Committee to award four scholarships for 2014.”

CARRIED

BD-14-111
Glen - Boushy
“That the meeting be adjourned.”



Steve Arnold
Chair

Brian McDougall
General Manager