



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: February 28, 2019 Time: 10:00 am
The Clubhouse at Baldoon, Wallaceburg

Directors Present: Steve Arnold, Chair; Andy Bruziewicz, Vice Chair; Diane Brewer, Alan Broad, Tony Bruinink, Joe Faas, Norm Giffen, Larry Gordon, Betty Ann MacKinnon, Kevin Marriott, John McCharles, Steve Miller, Frank Nemcek, Cindy Scholten, Jerry Westgate, Muriel Wright.

Regrets: Mike Kelch, Dan McMillan, Gerry Rupke, Jeff Wesley

Staff Present: Brian McDougall, General Manager; Donna Blue, Manager of Communications; Erin Carroll, Director of Biology; Dallas Cundick, Manager of Planning and Regulations; Steve Clark, Water Resources Specialist; Melissa Deisley, Regulations Coordinator; Marlene Dorrestyn, Administrative Assistant; Nicole Drumm, Communication Technician; Chris Durand, Manager of GIS and IT; Ashley Fletcher, Administrative Assistant/ Board Coordinator; Melissa Levi, Conservation Education/ Community Partnership Technician; Sharon Nethercott, Conservation Education Coordinator; Tim Payne, Manager of Forestry; Tracy Prince, Director of Finance; Girish Sankar, Director of Water Resources; Steve Shaw, Manager of Conservation Services; Shane White, McKeough Dam Operations

Special Guests Present: Rose Atkins, St. Clair Township; John Fraser, Lambton-Kent-Middlesex; Tracy Kingston, St. Clair Township; Jake Lozon, Rural Lambton Stewardship Network; Bill Myers, St. Clair Township; Nancy Randall; Kurtis Smith, Warden, Middlesex County; Bill Weber, Warden, Lambton County; Ken Williams, MPW Chartered Professional Accountants LLP; Bob Woolvett, Town of Plympton-Wyoming

Media Present: David Gough, Wallaceburg Courier Press; Bonnie Stevenson, St. Clair Township Beacon

Conservation Award Winners Present: Ray Horban, Sandra Marshall, Nette Pachlarz, Derek Scott and Nancy Vidler on behalf of the Lambton Shores Phragmites Community Group; Darrell Randall.

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Steve Arnold, who on behalf of the directors and staff of the Conservation Authority welcomed everyone to the 2018 annual meeting and went on to present some of the Authority's many accomplishments.

For over 50 years, the SCRCA has established strong partnerships with local organizations and government agencies to protect and enhance the local environment. In 2018, the Authority:

- Published the 3rd iteration of Watershed Report Cards that summarize the state of forests, wetlands and water resources in the St. Clair Region.
- Planted over 54,000 seedlings and 180 large-stock trees throughout the

watershed.

- Collaborated with the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority in organizing a successful soil health conference – over 180 people, including local farmers and soil health experts from across North America attended the conference.
- Secured over \$200,000 to support 43 stewardship projects on private property.
- Saw the re-designation of three Beneficial Use Impairments (BUIs) to “Not Impaired” in the St. Clair River Area of Concern, bringing the River another step closer to delisting.
- Continued the Authority’s Species at Risk and fish monitoring programs. Biologists studied fish communities, recording over 3,000 individual fish in 2018. In addition, at-risk turtle eggs were rescued, incubated and hatched, resulting in over 750 turtle hatchlings being released into the environment. This included more than 250 endangered Eastern Spiny Softshell turtles.
- Operated the W. Darcy McKeough Floodway for the first time in nine years to help protect the Town of Wallaceburg from February floodwaters.
- Engaged over 11,000 local students through Conservation Education classes that foster environmental awareness and an appreciation for the natural treasures of the region.

Greetings were given by: MPP Monte McNaughton on behalf of Lambton-Kent-Middlesex, Warden Bill Weber on behalf of Lambton County, Warden Kurtis Smith on behalf of Middlesex County, Past Warden and Deputy-Mayor Marigay Wilkins on behalf of Southwest Middlesex.

The Chair gave his thanks to St. Clair Region Conservation staff and Board and commended their adaptability to change.

BD-19-01

Scholten-Bruziewicz

“That the agenda for the Annual General Meeting be adopted.”

CARRIED

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.

Minutes of the December 13, 2018 Board of Director’s meeting were reviewed.

BD-19-02

Wright-Bruinink

“That the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held December 13, 2018, be approved as distributed.”

CARRIED

Minutes of the February 14, 2019 Executive Committee meeting were reviewed.

BD-19-03

Gordon-Faas

“That the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held February 14, 2019, be approved as distributed.”

CARRIED

A presentation was given by Sharon Nethercott, Conservation Education Coordinator and Melissa Levi, Conservation Education/ Community Partnership Technician regarding Conservation Education Programs in the St. Clair Region.

BD-19-04

Faas-MacKinnon

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the presentation regarding Conservation Education Programs in the St. Clair Region given by Sharon Nethercott, Conservation Education Coordinator and Melissa Levi, Conservation Education/ Community Partnership Technician.”

CARRIED

The 2018 Audited Financial Statements were distributed.

BD-19-05

Bruinink-Miller

“That the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority accepts the recommendation of the Executive Committee and report from the Authority’s auditors, MPW Chartered Professional Accountants LLP, and further approves the 2018 Audited Financial Statements.”

CARRIED

Conservation Award Presentations

Lambton Shores Phragmites Community Group

The Lambton Shores Phragmites Community Group (LSPCG) was established in 2012 with the goal of working with other organizations and landowners to restore wetland and beach habitat by controlling the spread of the invasive grass Phragmites. Since their inception, the LSPCG has successfully implemented Phragmites control measures over 120 hectares (300 acres) of land in the Municipality of Lambton Shores.

The group has partnered with numerous local organizations including the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority and have spearheaded a number of outreach initiatives including workshops and the development and distribution of educational brochures and factsheets.

The impact of the LSPCG spreads beyond the borders of Lambton Shores and members are eager to share their experiences and expertise within other jurisdictions. Most recently, Nancy Vidler, chair of the LSPCG and others from the community group attended the Lambton County Phragmites Partnership Workshop. Their expertise and

passion for the management of Phragmites was evident and they will most certainly be a tremendous resource for the County and the SCRCA as this initiative moves forward.

The Lambton Shores Phragmites Community Group is very deserving of the Conservation Award for the tremendous impact they have had in managing and educating others on the invasive species Phragmites.

Darrell Randall

Darrell Randell has been involved in numerous environmental initiatives through both his professional and municipal careers. As a municipal counsellor at St. Clair Township over the last 24 years, Darrell has advocated for many projects that have resulted in improved environmental quality in the St. Clair Region. In his role as Conservation Specialist with Ducks Unlimited Canada, Darrell assists local landowners in creating and/or restoring wetlands in Southwestern Ontario. Many partnerships have been forged between the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority and Ducks Unlimited Canada because of his involvement and passion for wetland projects.

Darrell has also been a long standing member of the Binational Public Advisory Council for the St. Clair River Area of Concern (AOC) and has been essential in the progress made to delist the River as an AOC through his involvement with the Canadian Remedial Action Plan Implementation Committee (CRIC). He also founded the Friends of the St. Clair River community group which has provided an additional source of project funding and educational opportunities benefitting the St. Clair River Area of Concern Remedial Action Plan.

Darrell was the recipient of an SCRCA Conservation Award in 1997. With his municipal career coming to an end in 2018, it is only fitting that Darrell be honoured for a second time by the Authority for his commitment to conservation and the work he has done and will continue to do to improve the environmental health of the St. Clair Region.

BD-19-06

Marriott-Broad

“That the Board of Directors congratulates the 2018 Conservation Award Winners and thanks them for their contributions to conservation.”

CARRIED

2018 service awards were presented:

- 5 years of service: Melissa Deisley
- 10 years of service: Steve Clark
- 15 years of service: Shane White, Joe Faas, Kevin Marriott
- 20 years of service: Chris Durand
- 30 years of service: Steve Shaw

BD-19-07

MacKinnon-Nemcek

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the service awards presented to the directors and staff and further that they be thanked for their years of dedicated service.”

CARRIED

The Chair announced the conclusion of 2018 business and called for a break. The meeting resumed for 2019 business at 11:30 a.m. and the 2019 Board of Directors were welcomed to the table. The 2018 Authority Vice-Chair, Andy Bruziewicz assumed the role of acting Chair for the start of 2019 business.

Directors Present: John Brennan, Alan Broad, Pat Brown, Andy Bruziewicz, Terry Burrell, Joe Faas, Larry Gordon, Frank Kennes, Betty Ann MacKinnon, Kevin Marriott, Steve Miller, Frank Nemcek, Ron Schenk, Lorie Scott, Mike Stark, Jerry Westgate, Marigay Wilkins.

Regrets: Brad Loosley, Carmen McGregor, Dan McMillan,

An acknowledgment of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority Code of Conduct and Administrative By-laws was reviewed and signed by the 2019 Board of Directors.

BD-19-08

Miller-Nemcek

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges and complies with the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority’s Code of Conduct and Administrative By-laws.”

CARRIED

BD-19-08

Scott-Broad

“That Norm Giffen be appointed chair for the election of the 2019 Chair and Vice Chair.”

CARRIED

BD-19-09

MacKinnon-Burrell

“That Ken Williams and Jake Lozon be appointed scrutineers in the event of an election.”

CARRIED

The positions of Chair and Vice Chair were declared vacant and nominations were called for the office of Chairman for 2019.

Lorie Scott nominated Andy Bruziewicz for position of Chair.
Steve Miller nominated Joe Faas for position of Chair.

Andy Bruziewicz and Joe Faas agreed to stand.

Statements to the Board were made by Andy Bruziewicz and Joe Faas

BD-19-10

MacKinnon-Burrell

“That nominations for the position of Chair be closed.”

CARRIED

Joe Faas advised that he would stand and was declared Chair of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority for 2019.

Mike Stark nominated Andy Bruziewicz for Vice Chair.

Al Broad nominated Larry Gordon for Vice Chair.

BD-19-11

Burrell-Scott

“That nominations for the position of Vice Chair be closed.”

CARRIED

Larry Gordon advised that he would stand and was declared Vice Chair of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority for 2019.

BD-19-12

Wilkins-Stark

“That the ballots be destroyed.”

CARRIED

Additional nominations were taken from the floor to complete the memberships of the Low Water Response, Executive, Watershed Management Plan and Planning Policy Procedural Manual and Technical Guidelines Committees.

BD-19-13

Schenk-Brown

“That the 2019 Low Water Response Committee for the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority be: Joe Faas, Chair; Larry Gordon, Vice Chair; Andy Bruziewicz, Terry Burrell, Carmen McGregor, Lorie Scott.”

CARRIED

BD-19-14

Nemcek-MacKinnon

“That the 2019 Executive Committee for the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority be: Joe Faas, Chair; Larry Gordon, Vice Chair; Andy Bruziewicz, Terry Burrell, Brad Loosley, Betty Ann MacKinnon, Mark McGill, Steve Miller, Lorie Scott.”

CARRIED

BD-19-15

MacKinnon-Bruziewicz

“That Terry Burrell and Steve Miller be the Board appointment to the Watershed Management Committee.”

CARRIED

BD-19-16

Scott-Miller

“That John Brennan, Pat Brown, Terry Burrell and Betty Ann MacKinnon be the Board appointment to the Planning Policy Procedural Manual and Technical Guidelines Committee.”

CARRIED

BD-19-17

Nemcek-MacKinnon

“That the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority adopts the 2019 Nominating Committee’s Report as amended.”

CARRIED

Municipal Funding Summary		2019	2019		
	Budget	Budget		y/n	
Municipality	Total CVA	CVA	Representative	Vote	
	Apport.%	Apport.%			
Adelaide Metcalfe Tp	1.8398%	1.8398%	Betty Ann MacKinnon	Yes	
Brooke-Alvinston Tp	1.6837%	1.6837%	Frank Nemcek	Yes	
Chatham-Kent M		6.4916%	Joe Faas	Yes	
Chatham-Kent M	12.9832%	6.4916%	Carmen McGregor		Absent
Dawn-Euphemia Tp	2.5580%	2.5580%	Alan Broad	No	
Enniskillen Tp	1.8518%	1.8518%	Kevin Marriott	Yes	
Lambton Shores M	4.9499%	4.9499%	Lorie Scott	Yes	
Middlesex Centre M	2.1334%	2.1334%	Dan McMillan		Absent
Newbury V	0.1528%	0.1528%	Marigay Wilkins	Yes	
Oil Springs V	0.1983%	0.1983%	Kevin Marriott	Yes	
Petrolia T	2.5214%	2.5214%	Brad Loosley		Absent
Plympton-Wyoming T	5.2871%	5.2871%	Ron Schenk	Yes	
Point Edward V	2.2756%	2.2756%	Larry Gordon	Yes	
Sarnia C		12.9002%	Mike Stark	Yes	
Sarnia C		12.9002%	Terry Burrell	Yes	
Sarnia C	38.7005%	12.9002%	Andy Bruziewicz	Yes	
Southwest Middlesex M	1.1532%	1.1532%	Marigay Wilkins	Yes	
		5.5568%	Pat Brown	Yes	
St. Clair Tp	11.1136%	5.5568%	Steve Miller	Yes	
		4.2181%	John Brennan	Yes	
Strathroy - Caradoc Tp	8.4361%	4.2181%	Frank Kennes	Yes	
Warwick Tp	2.1616%	2.1616%	Jerry Westgate	Yes	
	100%	100%			
				86.296%	Yes
				2.558%	No
Total of CVA Levy Apportionment Present					88.854%
					Total
	Vote Passed By			97.121%	
	Vote for			18	
	Vote				
	Against			1	

BD-19-18

Marriott-MacKinnon

“That the Board of Directors approves the 2019 budget of \$6,333,732 with a non-matching general levy of \$603,751 with all member municipalities deemed as benefitting and further that the levy be apportioned using the Modified Current Value Assessment of each Municipality within the Authority’s area of jurisdiction.”

CARRIED

BD-19-19

Burrell-Miller

“That the Board of Directors approves the 2019 budget of \$6,333,732 with a municipal matching general levy of \$310,000 including finalized Modified Current Value Assessment values, updates to specific projects and municipal comments received to date.”

CARRIED

BD-19-20

Burrell-Schenk

“That the Authority Chair or the Vice Chair and the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer or Director of Finance be authorized to borrow from the Libro Credit Union, Strathroy for the general operations and capital program of the Authority, a sum not to exceed \$1,223,751 to be repaid from grants received from the Province of Ontario, Government of Canada, levies assessed to the member municipalities and general revenue.”

CARRIED

BD-19-21

Scott-Wilkins

“That the Board of Directors recommends the request for proposals for audit services for the Authority for the period of 2019 – 2023.”

CARRIED

BD-19-22

Brown-Stark

“That the Authority's 2019 representative to Conservation Ontario will be the Authority Chair, the Vice Chair will be the first alternate and the General Manager be the second alternate.”

CARRIED

Forestry Reserve:

- Questions regarding the intent of the restricted Forestry Reserve have been raised over the last year at multiple Board meetings
- As stated in the Audited Financial Statements - This reserve has been set aside to assist the Authority's forestry program with certain restrictions for its use
- The Reserve predates digital records and we will be reviewing hard copy files stored off site and will provide a report to the April meeting of the Board of Directors

Transition to Ministry of Environment, Conservation & Parks:

- Conservation Authorities and Conservation Ontario continue to communicate with Ministers and staff in both the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) and the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks
- At this point there are few questions being answered and no real engagement with us regarding the transition
- It is anticipated that the Provincial Government will be bringing forward their 2019 budget over the next few weeks and that channels of communication may flow more readily as we move toward spring

Staffing / Organization Update:

- With four retirements over the last 18 months and two more staff that have moved to pre-retirement part time, several staffing changes have occurred
- Further, at this opportune time we have made some changes to the organization structure to better reflect the division of responsibilities and, as per our Succession Plan, we are continuing to challenge staff to fulfill leadership roles as we look toward the future
- The following page provides Organizational Structure for staff of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority as of February 15, 2019

BD-19-23

Kennes-MacKinnon

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the General Manager’s report dated February 18, 2019.”

CARRIED

Current Watershed Conditions:

- The mid-winter months have been influenced significantly by major swings in temperature and precipitation due to the movement of the “Polar Vortex” bringing periods of extreme cold temperatures with extensive lake effect snow often followed by periods of thaw notably in late January and the first and second weeks of February
- River levels rose considerably during a warmer temperature period melting snowpack in conjunction with a rain resulting in a Water Safety bulletin (Feb 4th); a Flood Outlook (Feb 5); and a Flood Watch (Feb 6th). As levels increased large amounts of ice on the watercourses were released increasing flows over several days.
- While moving ice restricted some outflow, no major ice jamming was experienced on the Sydenham at this time however, colder temperatures may again freeze ice in place into the month of February
- As mentioned, warmer periods brought precipitation in the form of rain and freezing rain conditions. Total accumulations for January remained at or in some cases below normal. (Note: all types of precipitation are identified and converted to a total volume for the purpose of monthly comparison regardless of season)
- Subsequently the three and six month averages were down and while the annual numbers remain slightly above average 104.7%

Weather Conditions and Forecast:

(Note: Some meteorological data not available due to the US government shut down and the lack of NOAA information, so other models were used to formulate the forecast)

ENSO (El Nino Southern Oscillation)

- El Nino peak came around November/December, since then it has been dropping but is expected to stop dropping soon, possibly close to a positive neutral
- However, ENSO predictions forecasting a recovery back into deeper El Nino conditions, bringing possibly warmer than normal conditions

Comparative Years (years with similar ENSO conditions)

- February: 2010, 1969; Overall Winter Conditions: 2018/2019 2009/2010, 2004/2005; Spring: 1969, 2010, 1990

February

- Temperatures expected to be normal, with slight colder than normal areas (confidence not high on this forecast)
- American forecasts indicate everywhere is colder than normal but other models, including Canadian model, say warmer than normal everywhere (but this model has warmer than normal bias all the time);
- Expect storm tracks to bring precipitation into the province with southwestern Ontario getting higher than normal precipitation.

March

- Seasonal to cooler than normal temperatures, but other models saying warmer than normal
- Precipitation expected to be seasonal to above normal precipitation
- March basically expected to be a 'typical' March

April

- American model calling for warmer than seasonal, but only by 0.5 a degree
- Precipitation forecasted to be seasonal (American model), but Canadian model saying drier than normal.

Current Snow Conditions

Significant amounts of snowpack has been released in SW Ontario in first part of February but may be replaced considering it is still the winter season. By comparison, reported figures by MNRF for the first part of February 2018 compared to the same period in 2019 illustrate the change from year to year.

Lake Ice Conditions

- Lake ice conditions are very similar to last year with varied amounts of thickness across Lake Huron with some central areas of open water. This condition

continues to result in some lake effect snow but less than earlier in January with reduced open water.

Flood Threat

With several bulletins issued and the potential high water conditions prevailing, any significant rainfall or snowmelt may result in over-bank conditions throughout the watershed. Since we are moving into the freshet period, we continue to monitor water levels carefully. Advisories will be issued as needed from our Flood Management Office.

Great Lakes Levels:

December Lake Huron lake level data (latest available as of this report) indicates a slight increase in overall monthly levels compared to last year by 4cm over December 2017. Lake St Clair and Lake Erie also show higher increases. Current levels remain substantially above the 10 year average as well as above the all-time average (100 years). While it is difficult to establish a trend, lake levels remain high consistent with the overall trend for the past few years however they do not exceed the all-time highest monthly values established in 1986.

Flood Action Committee

Every December staff review and update the St.Clair Flood and Ice Management Plan to ensure that meets the current standard criteria for risk management and emergency response for the coming year.

The water resources department held its annual meeting with the Flood Action Committee on January 10th, 2019, at the Wallaceburg municipal office. These meetings are an opportunity for staff from the Conservation Authority to sit with Wallaceburg representatives and discuss the Flood Warning and Ice Breaking Plans. This entails ensuring contact information is accurate, briefing members on emergency protocols and improvements to flood forecasting and management, and updating the committee on current watershed conditions and the winter outlook. The outcome of the meeting is revised editions of both Plans that would be used during a flood emergency, as well an agreement that that the Conservation Authority will provide continued collaborative coordinating of ice breaking operations.

BD-19-24

Marriott-Scott

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated February 11, 2019 regarding current watershed conditions and Great Lakes water levels.”

CARRIED

- A budget of \$350,000 has been confirmed for the project (St. Clair Township \$250,000; Carry forward - \$80,000, GLCGF-\$20,000.

- Tenders were advertised for this phase of the project during the week of January 8, 2019
- Tenders closed on 22 January, 2019
- Staff have obtained MNRF and DFO for permits
- Construction is expected to start February 2019
- Errors were noticed in the Tender submitted by DiCocco Contractors and the corrected final price was \$316,779.36
- The lowest bid was submitted by Murray Mills Excavating and Trucking at a total price of \$290,945.72 +H.S.T
- Tender has been awarded to Murray Mills Excavating and Trucking

Tender Results are provided below:

Courtright Waterfront Park Shoreline Improvements – Phase 2

January 22, 2019

2:05 p.m.

St. Clair Region Conservation Authority Administrative Offices

Firm's Name	Tender Deposit	Agree to Bond	Tender Price
Murray Mills Excavating & Trucking (Sarnia) Ltd.	✓	✓	\$290,245.62
St. Clair Mechanical	✓	✓	\$487,467.31
Dicocco Contractors and Engineers	✓	✓	\$223,067.90
Brandon Contractors	✓	✓	\$396,770.12
R. Russell Construction	-	-	-

BD-19-25

Miller-Schenk

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated February 16, 2018 on Phase 2 of the Courtright Park Shoreline Revitalization Project.”

CARRIED

The Planning Activity Summary Report dated February 11, 2019 for the period from November 1, 2018 to January 31, 2019 was reviewed.

BD-19-26

Nemcek-Westgate

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority’s monthly Planning Activity Summary Report, dated February 11, 2019 for the period from November 1, 2018 to January 31, 2019.”

CARRIED

The Regulations Activity Summary Report dated February 7, 2019 on “Development, Interference with Wetlands & Alterations to Shorelines & Watercourses” Regulations (Ontario Regulation 171/06) from November 1, 2018 to January 31, 2019 were reviewed.

BD-19-27

Stark-Burrell

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges and concurs with the Regulations Activity Summary Report dated February 7, 2019 on "Development, Interference with Wetlands & Alterations to Shorelines & Watercourses” Regulations (Ontario Regulation 171/06) from November 1, 2018 to January 31, 2019.”

CARRIED

A.W. Campbell Maple Syrup Festival

Date: Saturday, March 16 to Sunday, March 17, 2019

Time: 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Location: A.W. Campbell Conservation Area

Sydenham River Canoe and Kayak Race

Date: Sunday, April 28, 2019

Registration: 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Start Location: Mossie Line at Sydenham River

End Location: Shetland Conservation Area

Denning’s Strathroy Memorial Forest Dedication

Date: Sunday, May 26, 2019 (Tentative)

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: Centennial Park, Strathroy

Project Tour

Date: Thursday, June 27, 2019

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Location: Warwick Conservation Area

Great Canadian Shoreline Clean-up – Ipperwash Beach

Date: To be determined

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Location: Centre Ipperwash Beach Boat Launch

Denning’s Chatham-Kent and West Elgin Memorial

Date: Sunday, September 15, 2019 (Tentative)

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: Keith McLean Conservation Lands

A Geocaching Adventure

Date: Sunday, September 15, 2019

Time: 9:00 a.m.

Location: Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area

Foundation Memorial Forest Dedication

Date: Sunday, September 22, 2019

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area

BD-19-28

Miller-Brown

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the schedule of Special Events outlined in the attached flyer.”

CARRIED

Staff have applied for the following grants:

Department of Fisheries and Oceans – Aquatic Habitat Stewardship Program - \$140,000/year for 3 years

EcoAction - \$78,000 for stewardship and educational outreach in the St. Clair Region.

Habitat Stewardship Program 2018-2019

Over \$200,000 in grants were provided this fiscal year to landowners in our region for stewardship projects including tree planting (nearly 45,000 and over 18 ha land retired to trees) and 9.5 ha wetlands.

Lambton Soil & Crop Improvement Association Annual General Meeting January 11, 2019

SCRCA Chair Steve Arnold presented David Williams with this year's Outstanding Farmer of the Year Award. The CA booth was at the front of the room and just below the new presenting screen (at the Brooke-Alvinston-Inwood Community Centre), so every participant had a good view of our booth all day! Staff spoke in front of the crowd of 150 farmers and agriculture reps encouraging uptake of BMPs, including signing up for our Tree Planting Program.

Upcoming events:

Ducks Unlimited Canada Strathroy Chapter Fundraising Event – March 30, staff will attend, network and provide a short presentation highlighting the great partnership SCRCA has with DUC and past wetland projects in the Headwaters of the East Branch of the Sydenham River.

BD-19-29**MacKinnon-Burrell**

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the status report dated February 6, 2019, regarding Healthy Watersheds Program updates.”

CARRIED

The goal of the “St. Clair Recovery Project” was to restore 20 acres of wetlands and uplands along Hardy Creek, in the St Clair Region, to help enhance habitat for at risk, reptile species and engage local students on related issues.

Strategic Objectives(s):

This project relates to SCRCA’s goal to “Protect, manage, and restore our natural systems”

Financial Impact:

Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund provided \$25,000 to SCRCA to complete this project.

As part of Ontario’s Great Lakes Strategy and to support the Great Lakes Protection Act, the Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund (GLGCF) was set up to help people take action to protect and restore their corner of the Great Lakes.

Since it launched in 2012, the Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund has awarded \$7.5 million to 375 community-based projects, which supported more than 37,000 volunteers to plant over 285,000 trees and shrubs, release over 800,000 fish, create or enhance 760 kilometres of trail and collect over 2,800 bags of garbage.

In 2018/19, “St. Clair Recovery Project” was one of the two SCRCA projects supported by Great Lake Guardian Fund. The Fund has supported a number of projects coordinated by SCRCA and its partners. Other projects of note include:

- 2018/19 - \$25,000 Courtright Shoreline Restoration
- 2016/17 - \$24,995 Lambton Shores Coastal Wetland Restoration
- 2015/16 - \$24,725 Lambton Shores Coastal Wetland Restoration
- 2012/13 - \$21,915 Talfourd Creek Restoration Monitoring and Education Program

Outdoor Education and Outreach

One of the objectives of “St. Clair Recovery Project” was to provide education and outreach relating to Great Lakes restoration. This component of the project included a handful of outdoor education programs delivered by Educators and Biologists who worked together to develop age appropriate hands-on material with linkages to school curriculum. Some students got into the creek and learn about how these habitats

support sensitive species. They also helped evaluate stream health by investigating the benthic macro-invertebrates, fish and mussels.

In October 2018, about 150 elementary school students participated in “River Day”. The whole school visited the river where they learned about aquatic monitoring including fish identification, monitoring gear, freshwater mussel identification, and monitoring techniques. Students learned about the importance of the Great Lakes as a freshwater resource which provides drinking water, recreation opportunities, tourism, and supports a fishery. Water cycle, wetlands, lakes and rivers were also a focus of the day.

Hardy Creek Habitat Restoration

A stewardship project at the Ikert’s property involved the retirement of 23.86 acres (9.66 ha) of a 57-acre (23 ha) pasture on Hardy Creek. This area has had wetlands created and lands allocated for 2,180 seedlings this spring. The landowner has fenced the areas where restoration work has taken place to ensure cattle do not impact the wetlands and treed areas. Excited with these developments, the landowner agreed to retire an additional 2.1 ac (0.85 ha) of active farmland to trees. This land retirement will see an additional 1,700 trees planted.

The “St. Clair Recovery Project” also supported components of SCRCA reptile at risk program which has been featured in the September Board Package, Item 10.3.

BD-19-30

Wilkins-Scott

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the summary report dated January 11, 2019, on the Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund ‘St. Clair Recovery Project’.”
CARRIED

Phosphorus loading into local waterways by municipal, commercial, industrial, and agricultural sources is of concern in the Great Lakes basin as excessive levels of this nutrient severely degrade the health of the aquatic environment. Through funding from Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA) is coordinating the creation of a Phosphorus Management Plan for the Sydenham River Watershed by engaging and seeking input from local stakeholders. ECCC recognizes the Sydenham River Watershed as a Tertiary Watershed of Lake Erie. Under this classification, both the North and East branch of the Sydenham River, Lake St. Clair Tributaries and the St. Clair River Tributaries are all classified into the “Sydenham River Watershed (02GG)”. This will be the classification used in the Management Plan. The objective of the Management Plan is to better understand the sources, movement, and loads of phosphorus in the Sydenham River Watershed and determine measures that can be taken to lessen the impacts of these sources to the receiving water bodies.

ECCC has provided funding to the SCRCA for 2018-2019 with possibility of extension for three more years (April 2019 to March 2022).

Objectives:

The anticipated outcomes of developing the Management Plan are:

- A summary of the water quality and quantity, natural heritage, soils, land uses, and nutrient sources in the Sydenham River Watershed;
- A summary of gaps in knowledge and data that need to be addressed as well as steps to address those gaps (e.g., identify areas that require monitoring);
- An evaluation of rural and urban Best Management Practices (BMPs) and areas in the watershed where implementation will have the greatest impact to water quality;
- Engagement and outreach strategies based on an assessment of awareness among stakeholders, strategies to increase uptake of BMP implementation.

Year 1 (2018-2019) Goals:

- Determine stakeholders and host a stakeholder meeting to encourage early support of the Plan and obtain data from appropriate sources;
- Outline Phosphorus sources as a team of stakeholders;
- Develop a Steering Committee and Project Team;
- Develop a Project Charter;
- Develop a draft Plan Outline to submit to ECCC based on input from stakeholders and available data;
- Commence literature reviews on Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Although the focus is on the Sydenham Watershed, staff plan to involve all 17 of our member municipalities (through technical staff like drainage superintendents, wastewater treatment operators, etc.) from the beginning. Fourteen of 17 member municipalities have jurisdiction in the Sydenham River Watershed.

Through early engagement in the process, stakeholders will direct the development of the Management Plan by providing input on the potential sources of phosphorus, contributing factors, and solutions. By taking this communal approach, the goal is stakeholder buy-in that will lead to a collective effort to address local phosphorus issues and engagement of the larger community.

November 2018 Stakeholder Meeting:

On November 27, 2018, staff hosted an introductory stakeholder meeting at the Warwick Community Centre and invited an array of people from of governments, First Nations, private sectors, community groups, and interested landowners to participate – 65 people attended the meeting. Participants that day represented:

- **Municipalities/First Nations:** City of Sarnia, Dover Township; Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston; Municipality of Chatham-Kent; Municipality of Lambton Shores; Municipality of Southwest Middlesex; Town of Plympton-Wyoming; Township of Adelaide-Metcalf; Township of Dawn-Euphemia; Township of Enniskillen; Township of Middlesex Centre; Township of Strathroy-Caradoc; Township of St. Clair; Township of Warwick; Village of Newbury; Aamjiwnaang First Nation;
- **Counties:** County of Lambton; Middlesex County; **Provincial/Federal**

Government: Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada; Environment and Climate Change Canada; Ministry of Agriculture, Food, & Rural Affairs; Ministry of Environment, Conservation & Parks;

- **Non-profit organizations:** Ontario Soil & Crop Improvement Association – St. Clair Region; Rural Lambton Stewardship Network; Ontario NativeScape; Thames River Phosphorus Reduction Collaborative; Ducks Unlimited Canada;
- **Agricultural Sector:** AGRIS Co-operative; Wanstead Farmers Co-operative; Beef Farmers of Ontario – Kent Chapter;
- **Wastewater Sector:** Jacobs CH2M;
- **Educational Institutions:** Lambton College;
- **Community Groups:** Sydenham Field Naturalists; Lambton Wildlife;
- **Conservation Authorities:** Grand River Conservation Authority; Upper Thames River Conservation Authority; Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority; and St. Clair Conservation Authority.

The day began with a welcome and introduction from Brian McDougall (General Manager, SCRCA) and Steve Arnold, (Mayor of St. Clair Township, SCRCA Board Chair).

Brad Bass (Researcher, Environment and Climate Change Canada) shared information on the nutrient status of Lake Erie. Erin Carroll (Director of Biology, SCRCA) updated stakeholders on the known status of the Sydenham River Watershed. The SCRCA invited Sandra Cooke, the Senior Water Quality Supervisor from Grand River Conservation Authority to highlight opportunities and lessons learned from their recently completed *Grand River Watershed Water Management Plan*. Jessica Van Zwol (Healthy Watershed Specialist, SCRCA), Darrell Randell (Project Coordinator, Ducks Unlimited), and Dale Cowan (Senior Agronomist, AGRIS Co-op Ltd), highlighted phosphorus mitigation programs and actions rural landowners and farmers are implementing to reduce phosphorus losses on their properties. Imtiaz Shah (Environmental Engineer, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority) and Pamela Josse (Senior Soil and Nutrient Management Specialist, Science and Technology Branch, Agriculture and Agri-food Canada) shared information regarding recent phosphorus loading modelling projects and results of watershed characterizations using remote sensing and sustainability metrics to document agriculture's contributions to phosphorus losses and reductions.

After lunch, participants were led by Sarah Hodgkiss (Planning Ecologist, SCRCA) through a brainstorming discussion that enabled participants to contribute ideas on potential threats and stresses impacting the Sydenham River Watershed related to phosphorus. Over 260 ideas were recorded concerning contributing factors/indirect threats, stressors, potential threats, and potential actions – these ideas will be used as the basis for forming the Plan Outline.

Finally, meeting participants were requested to fill in a survey seeking available data and commitment to future Working Groups.

Working Groups and the Advisory Committee:

Staff are currently assembling the Working Groups under the categories: Non-Point Source and Point Source. The Working Groups will be made up of different levels of government, First Nations, sectors, community groups, and interested landowners. The Groups will discuss and investigate potential threats, contributing factors, and solutions that will be used in the development of the Plan. The Working Groups will receive guidance from an Advisory Committee and a small Water Quality Technical Team of specialists will also be formed to complete the data analysis required for the Management Plan.

The Working Groups will have their initial meetings on March 7th. The goal is for each Working Group to meet 3-4 times a year within the watershed.

Board Member Involvement:

The two Working Groups will each need one SCRCA Board Member to contribute to the development of the Management Plan. The two Members will also sit on the Advisory Committee.

BD-19-31

Kennes-Burrell

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the update on the Sydenham River Phosphorus Management Plan dated February, 2019.”

CARRIED

Under New Business, a matter was brought forth by Kevin Marriott regarding Petrolia resident Heather Sharp at 426 Chestnut Street, who was issued notice of violation by SCRCA for works undertaken without a permit. SCRCA staff have given the option to apply for the required permit after the fact with an imposed doubled fee penalty for the violation and have noted additional repairs required under the conditions of the permit.

The resident expressed that they were not aware of the need for a permit and states they were visited by SCRCA staff who confirmed this. SCRCA staff do not have record of the said visit. The resident is requesting that the penalty fee be waived.

BD-19-32

Marriott-Burrell

“That the Board of Directors accepts the request for a reduction of fees regarding the application from Heather Sharp at the property located at 426 Chestnut Street in Petrolia.”

DEFEATED

BD-19-33

Brennan-MacKinnon

“That the Board of Directors directs staff to impose the penalty fee in reference to the application from Heather Sharp at the property located at 426 Chestnut Street and agrees to grant a rebate of the penalty portion of the fees upon the completion of all required work under the conditions of the permit. “

CARRIED

BD-19-34

Scott-MacKinnon

“That the meeting be adjourned.”

CARRIED



Joe Faas
Chair



Brian McDougall
General Manager