



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: September 17, 2020 Time: 10:04 am
Remote via Zoom

Present: Alan Broad, John Brennan, Pat Brown, Andy Bruziewicz, Terry Burrell, Joe Faas, Chair; Larry Gordon, Vice Chair; Aaron Hall, Frank Kennes, Brad Loosley, Betty Ann MacKinnon, Kevin Marriott, Mark McGill, Netty McEwen, Dan McMillan, Steve Miller, Frank Nemcek, Lorie Scott, Mike Stark, Jerry Westgate

Staff Present: Donna Blue, Manager of Communications; Chris Durand, Manager of GIS and IT; Melissa Deisley, Regulations Officer; Ashley Fletcher, Administrative Assistant/ Board Coordinator; Sarah Hodgkiss, Planning Ecologist; Brian McDougall, General Manager; Tim Payne, Manager of Forestry; Tracy Prince, Director of Finance; Girish Sankar, Director of Water Resources; Greg Wilcox, Manager of Conservation Areas

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was 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.

Item 7.1 (k) summarizing regulation activity was removed from the consent agenda upon request from Director Mark McGill, who declared a pecuniary interest.

BD-20-66

Scott – Loosley

“That the Board of Directors adopts the agenda for the meeting as presented.

CARRIED

Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on June 18, 2020 were reviewed.

BD-20-67

Burrell – McMillan

“That the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting, held June 18, 2020, be approved as distributed.”

CARRIED

Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on August 6, 2020 were reviewed.

BD-20-68

McEwen – Nemcek

“That the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting, held August 6, 2020, be approved as distributed.”

CARRIED

COVID-19:

- The COVID-19 Return To Work Plan was updated in August to reflect direction provided by federal and provincial governments as well as the local health units
- The updates also included details on protocols in both current and future phases
- On September 8th, the Administration Offices moved into Phase II
 - Staffing at the office has been increased to have daily representation by each department – therefore roughly a minimum of 10 staff will be at the office daily with the remaining staff working in the field or from home
 - The office was fogged on September 3rd and staff continue to be diligent regarding cleaning and sanitization practices
- We continue to have straight forward objectives and we are endeavoring to be thorough but practical in our common sense actions in re-opening the office and continuing to expand field work and services in Conservation Areas
- Of our three sectors Administrative, Field Work and Campgrounds, each of them is in the penultimate phase with several additional steps as well as directives from both federal and provincial governments required before we will be able to reach the final phase for each sector

BD-20-69

Brennan – Miller

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the General Manager’s report, dated September 10, 2020.”

CARRIED

Recommendations:

- That staff be directed to create a plan to resolve concerns and complaints identified through municipal commenting and with the objective to be able to meet the objectives outlined in Conservation Ontario’s Client Service and Streamlining Initiative
- That staff be directed to build staffing to pre-COVID-19 levels

Municipal Comments Summary:

- 7 of 17 municipalities provided comments
- Although comments were limited in number, it is expected that the comments received were indicative of municipalities across the watershed
- Comments appear to fall into 3 general categories
 - Timing – complaints that permits or commenting has or appears to have been delayed
 - Scope Creep – concerns that requirements being requested are beyond that afforded under the Conservation Authorities Act

- Customer Service – complaints that staff have not been responsive or helpful when engaging with municipal staff, consultants, developers or the public
- Each of these was discussed at length during our meeting on August 6th
- Staffing levels have had a huge impact on response timing on permits and customer service response
- Two of three vacant positions have been filled and this will help to reduce delays
 - Planning & Regulations Assistant – Cassandra Sauer – September 3rd
 - Regulations Office – Jeff Vlasman – September 14th
- Customer service continues to be very important to our organization
 - New staff will be very helpful in permitting time to return calls and coordinate with all our partners
 - Staff changes are also expected to improve the cooperation with all partners
- Scope creep as discussed at our August 6th meeting is a significant concern
- As addressed at the meeting the requirements that were brought forward as concerns are all understood to be well within the range of requirements for environmental protections – however, a report regarding these specific concerns will be brought forward at the next Board meeting
- Within the concern regarding scope creep there are two components
 - Conflicts with the Drainage Act
 - Communication and Education
- We have reviewed this issue via two appeals to the Board of Directors last year and staff are working with municipal partners to reach cooperative solutions to required permits for municipal drainage works
- Last year staff worked with the Chair and Vice Chair to have discussions regarding the Authority’s Plan Input and Review
- The original report to the Board outlining the results as well as planned action was reviewed
- Consultations in these planned actions as well as consultation regarding the Drain Enclosure Policy will provide a tremendous opportunity to assist staff of both the Authority and the municipalities regarding the legislation, protocols and standards that each work within – leading to increased understanding and cooperation
- Unfortunately, COVID-19 has presented a major obstacle in completing these action and the staff shortage has made it impossible
- Correspondence sent out last week to Drainage Superintendents is our next step in improved communication and consultation

- Also further to our discussion at our August 6th meeting, a consultant was contacted to provide an estimate for a Service Delivery Review for the works undertaken by the Authority’s Planning and Regulations department
- The consultant, who has, and continues to work with several of our municipalities has provided a quote.
- Additionally, we have received correspondence attached to this report from the Sarnia-Lambton Home Builders Association outlining concerns regarding the processing of applications in a timely fashion
- Requested letters supporting SLHBA from Chatham-Kent and London Home Builders Associations have not been received to date
- An email response to SLHBA was provided on subsequent to the Board meeting outlining actions taken or being taken to resolve identified concerns

The following correspondence was also reviewed:

- Comments from the Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston
- Comments from the Town of Petrolia
- Comments from the Sarnia-Lambton Home Builders’ Association
- Proposal from Tim Dobbie Consultants Ltd.

Directors Comments: Directors are pleased to see quick resolutions to many identified concerns and that hiring has taken place. Director Brad Loosley commented regarding the proposal from Mr. Tim Dobbie and informed the Board that the quoted cost may be reduced to \$35,000.00 should consult meetings be scheduled electronically within 2 to 3 sessions.

BD-20-70

MacKinnon – Burrell

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report, dated September 10, 2020 regarding the complaints or concerns from Municipalities in regards to planning, regulations and drainage and further that staff be directed to create a plan to resolve identified concerns with the goal of meeting the objectives outlined in Conservation Ontario’s Client Service and Streamlining Initiative and that staff be directed to build staffing to pre-COVID-19 levels.”

CARRIED

Recorded Vote in Reference to BD-20-71

Director	For	Against
Brennan, John	✓	
Broad, Al		✓
Brown, Pat	✓	
Bruziewicz, Andy		✓

Burrell, Terry	✓	
Faas, Joe	✓	
Gordon, Larry	✓	
Hall, Aaron		✓
Kennes, Frank	✓	
Loosley, Brad	✓	
MacKinnon, Betty Ann		✓
Marriott, Kevin	✓	
McEwen, Netty		✓
McGill, Mark		✓
McMillan, Dan	✓	
Miller, Steve		✓
Nemcek, Frank		✓
Scott, Lorie	✓	
Stark, Mike	✓	
Westgate, Jerry		✓
Totals	11	9

Directors Comments: Directors discussed the merits of completing a service review and stated that the request for this service is not an indication of non-confidence, but a positive move to address complaints and improve overall efficiencies. Concerns arose regarding the cost and timing of a review considering the recent filling of 3 vacancies within the department, which will help to achieve greater efficiency and customer service levels. Directors deliberated and a recorded vote was requested by Director Brad Loosley.

Questions arose regarding SCRCA policy and whether an RFP should be completed prior to accepting the proposal from Tim Dobbie Consultants Ltd. Based upon the specific knowledge and experience with Conservation Authorities, as well as the positive recommendation from the Town of Petrolia, the Board of Directors may resolve to appoint this company, bypassing the RFP process.

A report is to be provided at the November Board of Directors meeting giving a list of possible reserves from which funds can be drawn to cover the cost of the consultation. Staff are directed to provide department objectives to the consultants with the request to provide solutions using our existing resources. Any recommendations to improve which incur significant costs should be included as a second option.

BD-20-71

Loosley – Gordon

“That Tim Dobbie Consultants Ltd be hired to carry out a service delivery review for the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority in the area of development application processing in the amount of \$35,000 with the money being taken from reserves.”

CARRIED

Correspondence from Conservation Chair, Wayne Emmerson to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) President, Jamie McGarvey providing an update on Conservation Ontario’s client service and streamlining Initiative and reporting on the timeliness of Section 28 reviews was reviewed.

A verbal update from General Manager, Brian McDougall was given in regards to the anticipation of a virtual Conservation Ontario Council meeting in late September. Conservation Ontario is working towards making changes to Administrative By-Laws that will allow Conservation Authorities to conduct meetings electronically outside of the State of Emergency.

It was reported that Conservation Authority General Managers met remotely last week and report vast differences in their return to work initiatives. Also discussed was the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, Jeff Yurek, who, at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) annual conference, stated that a summarization of the Conservation Authority consultations, completed in early 2020, will be released this fall. Moving forward, there will be legislative and regulatory changes that will be implemented when Provincial priorities allow, most likely when COVID-19 recedes.

BD-20-72

Marriott – Brown

“That the Board of Directors accepts the verbal update on the actions of Conservation Ontario and further acknowledges the correspondence received from Conservation Ontario Chair, Wayne Emmerson to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) President, Jamie McGarvey providing an update on Conservation Ontario’s client service and streamlining Initiative and reporting on the timeliness of Section 28 reviews.”

CARRIED

Although the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority is not considered a high-growth area as defined by Conservation Ontario, it was requested by Directors that staff post the service timeliness of our CA Section 28 permit application reviews. It was noted that this may become a requirement in the future and that in doing so now, it may assist in providing a basis for the service report from Tim Dobbie Consulting Ltd.

BD-20-73

Gordon – Kennes

“That the Board of Directors directs staff to post service timelines of the Conservation Authorities Act section 28 permit application reviews on an annual basis.”

CARRIED

Directors Comments: A welcome was given to SCRCA’s new RAP Coordinator, Natasha Pozega and staff were applauded for their efforts in producing the Aquatic Species at Risk video as seen on social media.

BD-20-74

Bruziewicz – Miller

“That the Board of Directors approves the consent agenda and endorses the recommendations accompanying Items 7.1 a - 7.1 u with the exception of item 7.1 (k)”

CARRIED

The report on Business Arising was reviewed.

(a) *That the Board of Directors acknowledges the updates on business arising from the June 18, 2020 and August 6, 2020 meetings.*

Campgrounds:

Timeline

SCRCA Media Release, April 8

- Camping Season delayed
- Overnight transient camping reservations refunded for April 24 to May 13
- Gates locked, walk-in trail access for public, seasonal campers have walk-in access only to check on property

Province allows “snowbirds” to occupy seasonal campsites, April 17

- A. campsites are made available only for trailers and recreational vehicles that are either:
 - i. used by individuals who do not have another residence in Canada and are in need of housing during the emergency period
 - ii. permitted to be there by the terms of a full season contract
- B. only campsites with electricity, water service and facilities for sewage disposal are provided for use
- C. all recreational facilities in the campground, and all other shared facilities in the campground such as washrooms, are closed

SCRCA Media Release, April 22

- Campgrounds will open April 24 to current seasonal campers that meet provincial criteria

- Washrooms and all recreational facilities remain closed
- Trails remain open
- Campers occupy AW Campbell and Warwick Conservation Areas, gates unlocked and barricaded to allow emergency vehicle access

SCRCA Media Release, May 1

- Recreational camping continues to be delayed
- Overnight transient camping reservations refunded through May 31

Province Announces Campgrounds May Open, May 14

As soon as 12:01 a.m. on Saturday, May 16, 2020:

- Private parks and campgrounds may open to enable preparation for the season and to allow access for trailers and recreational vehicles whose owners have a full season contract.

SCRCA Media Release, May 15

- Only site occupants continue to be “snowbirds”
- Gates open 8-4 daily starting May 19 providing vehicular access to seasonal campers only to check on trailers and maintain sites
- No recreational camping activities

SCRCA Media Release, May 26

- Announce phase-in of recreational camping
- Seasonal camping only to open June 5
- Overnight transient reservations refunded through June 10
- No public washrooms at this time
- No pools for the 2020 season
- Restricted activities to meet current Covid-19 guidelines

SCRCA Media Release, June 5

- Overnight transient reservations refunded through June 28

SCRCA Media Release, June 18

- Transient camping to open with restrictions June 29
- Site availability limited (no adjacent sites occupied at the same time)
- No group camping in 2020
- Customers with reservations on sites that require closing will be contacted to change reservation or refund
- Canoe/kayak rentals and pavilion rentals cancelled for 2020
- Camper events cancelled, play structures, basketball courts, and volleyball courts closed until further notice

SCRCA Camper Communication, June 23

- campground washrooms open with enhanced cleaning protocols, June 26

SCRCA Camper Communication, July 17

- additional campground facilities to open when Lambton County is approved for stage 3 reopening (July 24)
- playgrounds open, hand sanitizer provided
- basketball, volleyball, and remaining horseshoe pits will open with campers providing their own equipment
- volunteer run park events allowed with superintendent approval, must communicate how physical distancing and gathering sizes will be followed
- some benches and picnic tables available for use

SCRCA Camper Communication, July 18

- SCRCA staff will organize camper events (kid focused) that meet physical distance requirements
- Staff developed activities that can be completed with their families and those within their social circles
- Participants were encouraged to submit entries by email and prizes were drawn at random

Events:

July 19 - July 25 - Nature Bingo

July 24 - July 28 - Leaf Hunt

July 29 - August 6 - Colouring Contest

July 31 - August 13 - Fishing Derby

August 14 - August 20 - Craft Kit

August 21 - August 23 - Chalk Trail

August 1 - August 31 - Nature Picture Contest (both child and adult participants)

August 23 - September 3 - Drawing Contest

Day Use Conservation Areas:

Wawanosh Wetland Conservation Area

- New viewing deck installed in the South wetland cell to replace the old viewing tower which will be removed this fall

Wawanosh Wetland Phragmites Control and Habitat Enhancement

- Invasive phragmites has displaced much of the native vegetation around the wetlands and throughout much of the property (degrading the quality of habitat)
- A local resident, Lynn Eves (from the Bluewater Center for Raptor Rehabilitation) is interested in leading efforts to remove phragmites from the property
- Staff have met twice on site with Lynn and other partners including City of Sarnia staff and Dr. Janice Gilbert (Director of the Invasive Phragmites Control Centre)
- Cost to develop a plan for phragmites control and habitat enhancements estimated to be \$10,000 to \$12,000

- Plan would allow for long term management strategy including site maintenance to deter the re-growth of phragmites
- Friends of St. Clair River have agreed to provide \$4000 towards development of a plan
- Staff have reached out to MECP and will approach the St. Clair Conservation Foundation to try and acquire the additional funds necessary to develop the plan
- Community and corporate fundraising would be necessary to complete this project after a plan is developed and approved

Peers Wetland Conservation Area:

- On August 22 the Sydenham Field Naturalists held a phragmites removal volunteer event
- Volunteers cut phragmites below the water's surface and hauled the plants to shore where seed heads were removed for incineration
- Another day has been scheduled for September 12

Both events were sponsored by Enbridge who supplied equipment including chest waders, cane cutters, and a variety of PPE and COVID-19 related supplies

- Enbridge also provided lunch for both events

Wallaceburg Sportsman Club

- With SCRCA not renewing the lease for 2021, the club has begun to remove items from the inside and outside of the clubhouse located at Peers Wetland
- At this time the Club has not replied to our request for an update on the process
- It is not clear if the Club intends to remove the structure

Bridgeview CA

- The municipality has made upgrades to the parking lot including re-grading, new posts bordering the parking lot, and new trees
- The municipality has cut down phragmites that was sprayed by SCRCA staff last fall
- Fifteen large stock trees were planted this Spring to fill in areas where dead Walnut trees were removed last year
- Large stock tree species planted were Sycamore, Swamp White Oak, Bur Oak, and Kentucky Coffee Tree
- Wildflower and erosion control seed mixes were planted around the new wetland this Spring, germination was sparse, additional seeding will occur in the fall

Coldstream CA

- Multiple sections of boardwalk were damaged by fallen trees this summer
- Staff have repaired/replaced the damaged sections with materials supplied by Middlesex Centre

Strathroy CA

- SCRCA and Strathroy-Caradoc staff worked together to clear two log jams in the Sydenham river in Strathroy
- Two trees were removed from the first location and four trees from the second

Highland Glen CA

- The existing trail that allows users to walk from the upper parking lot down to the day use area had to be moved further from the bluff due to erosion concerns
- The bank in this location was significantly undercut and a crack has formed through the old trail

(b) *That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Conservation Areas Report dated August 31, 2020.*

In February 2020, SCRCA announced the closure of the Highland Glen boat ramp for the 2020 season due to safety concerns. Early in the spring, SCRCA staff were contacted by a number of local residents who were disappointed with the closure of the ramp. Staff were also contacted by a fisher from Kettle and Stony Point First Nation hoping the ramp could be re-opened in 2020.

One local resident, Clare Sutton, called on two occasions for updates. He also created a letter to raise awareness of the situation and posted it throughout the local communities including at residences, marinas, boat dealers, and many other locations. In response to his letter, we received 48 emails and 2 phone calls, all in support of repairing the boat launch.

Email Responses

The email responses to Mr. Sutton’s letter are summarized in the table below. Emails often contained multiple of the “main points” listed below.

Main Points in Email	# of Emails
Public lake access to this area of Lake Huron is important	8
Facility provides the only safe harbour between Sarnia and Port Franks	8
Don’t spend on the study, use money for repairs this year	10
Facility is well used	12
Facility brings business to Plympton-Wyoming	4
Inconvenient to travel to other boat ramps	13
Facility should be operating while waiting for maintenance	2
General support for repairing this facility	29

Citizens Group Supporting the Repair of Highland Glen:

On August 18, 2020, a small group of local citizens met to explore opportunities to support the repairs at Highland Glen. Staff attended the meeting to provide an update on the progress.

Topics discussed included:

- Group's purpose
- Facility damage and erosion concerns
- Brainstorming of potential ways to support/accelerate repairs
- Grant funding
- Local funding
- Partnerships
- Ways to increase property revenue

This group is still determining how/ if they can be effective in accelerating the repairs at Highland Glen.

Correspondence from Mr. Clare Sutton was reviewed.

(c) *That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated August 20, 2020 on the Community Input and Support of the Highland Glen Boat Ramp.*

Highlights:

- Flood threat is moderate due to continued high water levels on the Great Lakes, Lake St. Clair and in Wallaceburg
- Water levels on Lake Huron and Lake St. Clair are forecasted to exceed record-highs in September before dropping in October
- Regional precipitation amounts are near or above normal averages, owing to high rainfall amounts in August

Flood Threat

The current flood threat is moderate owing to continued high water levels on the Great Lakes, Lake St. Clair, St. Clair River, and the Sydenham River at Wallaceburg. The average water level in Wallaceburg for August was lower than previous months, however minimal amounts of rainfall still have the capacity to elevate water levels into natural floodplain areas, and Wallaceburg continues to be highly susceptible to wind-driven flooding.

- August 2020 mean water level in Wallaceburg was 0.4 cm higher than August 2019, and 52.8 cm higher than 2018; July 2020 was 1 cm lower than 2019
- As of this report, water levels are currently sitting 4.1 cm below the top of the bank

Great Lakes Levels

- Lake Huron exceeded its 1986 July record average water level by 6 cm, with Lake St. Clair and Lake Erie close to their 2019 records
- Upper range predicted mean water levels on Lakes Huron and St. Clair are forecasted to exceed record levels in September, falling in October
- Water levels are forecasted to have the potential to be near or exceed record-highs over the next six months

Precipitation Conditions

- High amounts of rainfall in August brought totals for the last quarter close to or above monthly normal amounts for the region
- Rainfall averages for six and twelve month periods for all regions are near or above normal amounts

(d) *That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated September 3, 2020, on the current watershed conditions, flood risk and Great Lakes water levels.*

The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA) is continuing to lead the work to develop a detailed engineering and design plan for managing the contaminated sediment in the three remaining priority areas of the St. Clair River. Funding for this project has been provided by Environment and Climate Change Canada, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and Dow Canada. The parties that provided funding are actively participating in oversight of the project work through a Sediment Management Oversight Committee.

Parsons Inc., the consulting firm that has been retained by the SCRCA to prepare the engineering and design plan, is continuing with its work on preparing the plan. Parsons subcontracted the field work component to Pollutech EnviroQuatics Limited, a firm with experience in providing environmental consulting and ecotoxicity services.

Due to inclement weather, the amount of field work that was to occur in fall 2019 had to be reduced from what was originally planned. Pollutech was able to collect surface sediment samples and measure water velocity to assist with assessing sediment stability, and was able to collect a number of deeper core sediment samples in Priority Area 1 to measure contaminant concentrations.

Project Update:

Following completion of the fall 2019 field work, the consultant shared information with the SCRCA on the preliminary results and developed a plan for conducting the next round of field work in 2020. The SCRCA reviewed and approved the consultant's plan which included further deep core sediment sampling, a survey of underwater features, and the use of an underwater camera to assess the condition of structures in the area.

Due to the implementation of measures in March 2020 by Canada and Ontario to reduce the risk of spreading the COVID-19 virus, the engineering consultant had to adjust their work schedule and reassess their procedures for conducting field work to ensure that provincial guidelines and legislative requirements were followed.

The additional field work was completed in July 2020, with additional health and safety measures incorporated to address COVID-19. The preliminary results were discussed with the Sediment Management Oversight Committee in August and September 2020. The consultant is preparing information to outline the next steps and anticipated timelines based on the feedback provided during the discussions.

The SCRCA has requested submission of a revised project schedule from Parsons to confirm how delays due to COVID-19 are going to impact the project completion date.

Finance:

Funds provided by Environment and Climate Change Canada for fiscal year 2019/20 for the engineering consultant work were fully utilized as planned. Funds made available through the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and Dow Canada, however, have not been fully utilized and were carried over into fiscal year 2020/21. The need to carry over these funds was the result of delays in the consultant being able to complete all of the planned field work in fall 2019.

The SCRCA's project manager is continuing to monitor the progress of the consultant's work closely and is tracking progress against key deliverables, costs and timelines.

(e) *That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated September 2, 2020, on the Engineering and Design plan for Management of Contaminated sediment.*

Bright's Grove, Kenwick Street to Helen Avenue – Phase 2

- Cope Construction commenced shoreline work in December 2019 and restoration works are underway
- Sod placement along the slope had failed twice due to significant rain events
- All shoreline work has been completed as of May 31, 2020
- Toe stones were inspected using a professional diver in May 2020.
- Deficiencies were identified in a few Toe stones
- Repair work will be completed from a barge and this work is scheduled for third week of September

Bright's Grove, Kenwick Street to Helen Avenue – Phase 3

- Construction work had been temporarily stopped due to the in-water timing window restrictions.
- Shoreline work has not resumed
- Requirement from MNR and DFO to build temporary platforms to keep machinery out of water
- This has added another \$400,000 to the project
- AMICO is no longer willing to provide a guarantee for the quality of shoreline work
- This has resulted in SCRCA, co-ordinating with the City of Sarnia's legal department
- Letter to terminate the contract with AMICO has been sent
- SCRCA exploring options to re-hire a contractor to complete the remainder of the shoreline work.

Bright's Grove, Old Lakeshore Road East

- Facca Incorporated Inc. started shoreline work on February 10, 2020.
- Construction work resumed second week of August.

- Requirement from MNRF and DFO to build temporary platforms to keep machinery out of water
- This has added another \$300,000 to the project
- Approximately 60 meters of in - water work has been completed
- Project progress has been slow due to weather delays and quarry unable to deliver quality rocks as per engineer specification

Staff continue to negotiate the requirements with MNRF and DFO, but, unable to make any modifications to the stringent requirements.

(f) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated September 3, 2020 on the ongoing shoreline projects across the watershed.

- Summer staff treated 16,500 catch basins in Sarnia and throughout Lambton County's towns and villages under direction from Lambton Public Health as part of their mosquito control program for public safety to help prevent West Nile Virus.
- Crews based out of Strathroy travelled to locations and applied methoprene pellets to all municipal catch basins with 3 separate applications spaced at 21 day intervals starting June 26th and ending August 20th for a total of 50,000 individual applications.
- All treated catch basins were marked with spray paint. A different colour was used for the 3 separate application rounds.
- Approximately 18,000 combined kilometers was travelled over the course of 26 application days.
- Pre-application mosquito larva sampling was conducted in mid-June and post application efficacy testing was conducted for each of the 3 scheduled applications which were timed 15 to 17 days after each application. Results showed good control averaging 80% effectiveness. A report will be sent to the Lambton Public Health later this month.
- Two permits for mosquito control were issued by the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) in June under the lead pesticide exterminator's licence and the Conservation Authority's Pesticide Operators licence and insurance. Permit 1 - Three rounds of methoprene pellets for up to 17,000 catch basins. Permit 2 - *Bacillus thuringiensis* subspecies *israelensis* (Bti) for wetlands and emergency situations (not used this year)
- Aamjiwnaang First Nation was also treated with three rounds of methoprene pellets under a separate contract. A pesticide permit was not required from MECP to treat those catch basins.

Lambton Public Health confirmed that mosquitos collected from a trap in Oil Springs on August 12th and in Petrolia on August 19th tested positive for the virus. There are no confirmed positive human cases in Lambton County so far, however two are reported in Ontario.

(g) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the status report dated September 4, 2020, regarding West Nile Virus – Lambton County Mosquito Control Program.

Tree Planting Program

- Landowner inquiries for 2021 tree planting program are slightly less than normal so far this year. Approximately 22 landowners listed for site visits this fall. Staff will meet with landowners, advise and develop tree planting plans, and seek funding to assist landowners with tree project costs.
- Some grant programs are confirmed for 2021 including the provincial SARSP and the now federally funded 50 Million Tree Program, both with reduced funds. Other funding is still necessary to make the program attractive to landowners. We are waiting for confirmation from the Ontario Community Environmental Fund. More than \$50,000 in penalties was collected in the Sarnia industrial area in 2018. Penalties collected in 2019 is unconfirmed. Money collected from these penalties was originally suppose to go toward environmental improvement projects in the watershed where the violation or environmental impact happened. The Province did not award any money to conservation organizations under this program last year.
- Tree survival assessment for 2020 projects were completed in August. Results showed 90% or better survival for most projects.

Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP)

- New managed forest tax plans on two larger woodland properties and two managed forest tax plan renewals were written and approved for years 2021 to 2030 tax adjustment. One plan renewal was for the SCRCA Clark Wright Conservation Area's 48 acre forest.
- Forested properties are taxed at residential rates. MPAC adjusts property taxes on the approved MFTIP portion of the property placing them in line with farmland tax rates.

Vegetation Management Program

- Approximately 80,000 trees received vegetation management this past spring and another 100,000 trees require vegetation control this fall.
- Fall herbicide applications on 2018, 2019 and 2020 tree planting sites are scheduled to start in the first week of October and will continue into late November after the deciduous seedlings go into dormancy and drop their leaves.

Seed Collection Program

- This year's tree seed collection should start around the end of September and last approximately three weeks into October. Some scouting for seed was completed in July by staff with disconcerting results. The oak species have particularly low to nil seed amounts this year. Reasons uncertain, however this year's gypsy moth infestation accompanied by a hot and moderately dry July could partly be the blame.
- Tree acorns, nuts, cones and keys are collected and shipped to the tree seedling nursery every year where they are planted in seedbeds, grown for 1 to 3 years and purchased as tree seedlings for our tree planting program. This ensures future high quality tree stock that is indigenous to SCRCA's watershed.

(h) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the status report dated September 4, 2020, regarding conservation services programs across the watershed including multiple funding sources, spring tree planting survival & maintenance and other vegetation control programs.

Healthy Lake Huron (HLH) is a campaign working towards maintaining and improving water quality of the Lake by taking local action from Sarnia to Tobermory. Technical team members include staff from SCRCA as well as Ausable Bayfield, Saugeen, and Maitland Valley Conservation Authorities, provincial ministries (OMAFRA, MECP), and community groups. HLH provides outreach and educational opportunities for coastal communities, rural centres, and agriculture. Team members work with farmers to implement BMPs that will build their soil health and keep nutrients on the land; with coastal communities to improve dune habitat and invasive species removal and with rural centres to promote rain gardens, trash clean ups, and naturalization projects.

Update:

As COVID-19 shuttered many opportunities for coordinating outreach activities, the HLH team pivoted to a 26-week online social media campaign that highlights local agriculture, rural, and coastal efforts to keep Lake Huron healthy and beautiful. Each week, the Facebook and Twitter accounts for Healthy Lake Huron recognize various sectors and communities as a #pieceofthepuzzle from #LandtoLake (<https://healthylakehuron.ca/post/?ID=527>). This campaign has provided the impetus to reach out to our current network as well as establishing links with other lake users such as Indigenous peoples, agricultural organizations and businesses, garden societies, municipal leaders, community group, tourists, small businesses, surfers, chefs, etc. Our goal in reaching out to the various lake users was to gain their perspective of what makes Lake Huron GREAT and determine how we could showcase their efforts of ensuring Lake Huron remains great.

SCRCA has participated by crafting posts for 3 weeks so far, including fun and interesting Lake Huron facts, Phragmites, and creating a “Coastal Corks and Pints” industry focus. Coastal Corks and Pints highlighted the environmental contributions and efforts of the craft brewery/winery industry along the Lake Huron coast from Sarnia to Tobermory. This industry focus highlighted over 25 companies. Many of these small craft breweries and wineries are going above and beyond what is necessary to minimize water loss and impacts to water quality. Many businesses are also trying to build soil health by planting cover crops, incorporating livestock and minimizing herbicides and pesticides. The initial campaign post was well-received with nearly 7,000 people reached on the HLH Facebook page (70 likes and 33 shares) and 1,185 people on the HLH Twitter page. The timing of the Coastal Corks & Pints campaign also helped advertise and support local business during a season of reduced business resulting from COVID-19. Twin Pines Orchard & Cider House and Dickenson Farms are two examples of local businesses that were highlighted because of their environmental efforts.

Upcoming potential events:

- September 12, Great Canadian Shoreline Clean up at Ipperwash Beach, Lambton Shores

Strategic Objectives(s):

The Healthy Watershed Program fulfils Goals 2 and 3 of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority strategic objectives.

Financial Impact:

The Healthy Lake Huron Program is funded by grants and landowner contribution. In general, MECP provides \$50-60,000 for staff salaries, stewardship project implementation, water quality monitoring, and outreach in the Lambton Shores area.

(i) *That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated August 7, 2020 on the Healthy Lake Huron Program Update.*

The Healthy Watershed Program have restored or enhanced over 1,000 ha of land, and over 2.3 million trees planted throughout the region. These projects, along with our outreach and education events aim to minimize non-point source sedimentation, nutrient loading, and thermal changes of water bodies within our watershed.

Update:

Unfortunately, COVID-19 shuttered many opportunities for the Healthy Watershed Program's outreach activities, such as the annual TD Tree Days in Sarnia and Strathroy, the Forest Fall Fair, Ag in the Classroom in Forest, and the local chapter events of Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association. Nonetheless, Healthy Watersheds staff sent out soil health and water quality focused newsletters to over 1,500 landowners in the region.

Healthy Watershed staff also used Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to connect with landowners. Posts highlighted available stewardship grants, species at risk, soil health building concepts and practices, actions to improve water quality, and what staff were beginning to do in the field with respect to monitoring mussels and fish. Healthy Watershed staff prepared a Sydenham River Aquatic Species at Risk & Critical Habitat presentation that can be used to provide information to municipal staff and interested citizens about the unique attributes of the Sydenham River, the species that inhabit the river and its tributaries, and urban and rural threats to the Sydenham River's aquatic habitat. The recording also provides an explanation of Species at Risk Critical Habitat and what it implies regarding permits and approvals for in-water and near water projects. Check it out! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2h1jwrZ3j6s>

Staff went on 10 socially distant landowner site visits to meet landowners interested in completing stewardship projects on their property. There are some great potential projects in the queue to be implemented later this summer and/or fall.

Strategic Objectives(s):

The Healthy Watershed Program fulfils Goals 2 and 3 of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority strategic objectives.

Financial Impact:

The Healthy Watershed Program is funded by grants, landowner contribution and corporate donations. Since its beginning, the program has distributed more than \$1.9 million in grants to landowners, which has resulted in over 550 projects (total project cost nearly \$5.75 million).

(j) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Healthy Watersheds Program Outreach Update dated August 7, 2020.

A summary of staff activity related the municipal plan input and review for the months June, July and August, 2020 was reviewed.

(l) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority's monthly Planning Activity Summary Report dated September 3, 2020 for June, July and August, 2020.

The revenue and expenditure report to July 31, 2020 was reviewed.

(m) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the revenue and expenditure report to July 31, 2020, as it related to the budget.

The June, July and August, 2020 disbursements were reviewed.

(n) That the Board of Directors approves the June to August 2020 disbursements as presented in the amount of \$1,532,913.83

The general levy receipts to August 31, 2020 were reviewed.

(o) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the status report on the 2020 general levy receipts to August 31, 2020.

The current pandemic has affected many businesses and communities. The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority was able to move quickly to protect employees and reduce the risk of spread. Several measures we adopted immediately include: closing to the public, providing secured access and equipment for employees to be deployed to work from home, thus reducing risk to the employee of contracting COVID-19 and risk to SCRCA of potential liability.

SCRCA was able to keep the parks and trails open through the early stages of the pandemic with limited maintenance on trails, which provide communities with much

needed outdoor space. Innovation came from our situation, in that our Education department was able to find ways to continue to engage schools and students who were not able to visit as groups.

As the pandemic continues to unfold with unknown outcomes, we continue to monitor cost and revenues. The following steps have been taken to mitigate expenses:

- 1) Delayed hiring several seasonal staff for the campgrounds as they are not operating at capacity nor will they until further Provincial Direction is received (about 25 staff).
- 2) Not filling to key positions in Planning
- 3) Delay filling RAP Coordinator position

Most of the savings from the salary gapping dollars will be offset with losses in revenue and increased cost associated with Increases in Health and Safety supplies required to maintain a safe environment for employees rotating into the office currently and in preparation of increasing an employee presence in the office. Other considerations and cost moving forward will be increases in cost to have a higher level of disinfection and the cost of increase social distancing in a small environment (shields, vehicle costs, supplies).

Financial Impact:

Levy, Fee & S39 Funded Departments, to July 31, 2020

Expense Reductions:

Planning	Salary Gapping	\$35,000
	10% CRA relief	3,500
Administration	10% CRA relief	6,800
Water	10% CRA relief	3,000

Reductions in Revenue:

Planning Fees compared to July 2019	\$0
Admin – Interest/Investment Income	13,800
Across Levy Departments Increase in Health and Safety directly related to COVID-19	9,500

Net savings to July 2020 \$25,000

As a result of travel restrictions and closures of other businesses and industries, costs have been reduced in these areas to date:

Travel Expenses	\$0
Board Member Travel & Expenses	3,000
Training Expenses (including travel specific to training, contains mandatory training which may need completion)	800

The cost of mileage increased due to the need for social distancing in vehicles during summer seasonal work. Invoice for Cambium Aboriginal Training received in early March was not received until late June.

The % of the Municipal General Levy of overall 2020 Budget is 12%.

(p) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated September 4, 2020 regarding the effect COVID-19 to July 31, 2020 on the 2020 budget.

The investment statements for the period ending June 30, 2020 were reviewed.

(q) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the investment statements for the period ending June 30, 2020.

Minutes of the Joint Health and Safety Committee meeting held on March 26, 2020 were reviewed.

(r) That the Board of Directors acknowledges the minutes of the March 26, 2020 Joint Health and Safety Committee.

Conservation Education:

With the uncertainty surrounding the re-opening of schools due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions, SCRCA education staff have been formulating alternate strategies to ensure the continuation of conservation education programs for the 2020-2021 school year.

2020-2021 Conservation Education Program Strategies and Options:

1. Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) Great Lakes Virtual Field Trips

At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, SCRCA education staff created “virtual field trips” to support teachers in delivering important science-based concepts to their students during school-closures. The success of the “virtual field trips” exceeded all expectations and led to MECP contacting the SCRCA to discuss creating a regional Great Lakes field trip to support their Great Lakes literacy program. The Ministry’s proposal will provide \$15,000 in funding to create a Lake Huron/St. Clair River “virtual field trip” and materials (e.g., draft script) that can be used by other Conservation Authorities and non-profit organizations to develop “virtual field trips” for the other Great Lake regions. Confirmation of this funding is expected in mid-September.

2. Live Virtual Programming

SCRCA staff are investigating the possibility of offering live virtual programming that would allow individual classes to “visit” the Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area from their classrooms and participate in conservation education programming. An application to the Ontario Trillium Foundations’

Resilient Communities Fund has been submitted that if approved, will allow staff to purchase additional equipment and improve internet connectivity in support of this initiative.

3. Expansion of Virtual Field Trips

SCRCA can expand their virtual field trip catalogue and create additional resources that will provide teachers in various grades with more options to meet science-based curriculum requirements.

4. School Yard and Nature in Your Neighbourhood Programming:

With current protocols restricting visitors from entering schools, SCRCA staff are in communication with school boards to develop School Yard and Nature in Your Neighbourhood outdoor program options. Many of the programs delivered at the Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area can be easily transferred to local school yards. In addition, staff are investigating the possibility of offering “Urban Interpretive Hikes” that would allow students to investigate nature and the environment in their local neighbourhoods.

5. Family Field Trips:

Family field trips have been developed at other Conservation Authorities with good uptake and feedback. The field trips would involve an SCRCA conservation educator leading a single family unit or homeschooling program on a guided educational hike.

Proposed Fees:

Program	Fee
Live Virtual Programming	\$100.00 for 1-hour program per class
Virtual Field Trips (September 2020 to January 2021)	\$250.00 for virtual field trip suite per school (up to 350 students) OR \$50.00 per virtual field trip per class
School Yard and Nature in Your Neighbourhood Programming	\$100.00 for 1-hour program \$75.00 for additional 1-hour program at the same school
Family Field Trips	\$75.00 + HST for 1-hour program (up to 10 participants)

Despite the uncertainty surrounding the 2020-2021 school year, elementary and secondary education brochures have been created that outline the 2020-2021 education programs available at the Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area and those that can be delivered in-class. The brochures will be distributed to each teacher in the St. Clair region and are available on the SCRCA website. Copies of each brochure have been included in this package.

Upcoming Events:

Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup – Ipperwash Beach

Date – Saturday, September 12, 2020

Time – 9:00 am – 11:00 am

Location – Centre Ipperwash Boat Launch, Lambton Shores

CITO (Cache In, Trash Out) Event

Date – Sunday, September 20, 2020

Time – 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Location – Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area, Petrolia

Foundation Memorial Forest Dedication – Pre-Recorded/Virtual Event

Release Date – To Be Determined

*As a result of the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, the in-person Foundation Memorial Forest Dedication was cancelled. As an alternative, a pre-recorded/virtual event will be created and shared with the families who donated to the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation in memory of their loved ones. In addition, the 2020 families will also be invited to the 2021 dedication service where their loved ones will also be celebrated and remembered.

2020 Conservation Scholarship Presentations:

On June 25th, SCRCA Chair, Joe Faas and SCRCA General Manager, Brian McDougall met the 2020 Conservation Scholarship recipients at their homes to present them with their awards.

A.W. Campbell Memorial Scholarship (\$1000)

Brady Grubb, Lambton Kent Composite School, Dresden, Ontario

Tony Stranak Conservation Scholarship (\$500)

Trevor McBrayne, Lambton Kent Composite School, Dresden, Ontario

Mary Jo Arnold Conservation Scholarship (\$500)

Gracie Goodhill, North Lambton Secondary School, Forest, Ontario

Media and Social Media Analytics:

In order to continually improve upon our activities related to local media outlets and social media, communications staff will be reviewing analytics to help assess our communications efforts.

The following are statistics covering the timeframe from April 1, 2020 to August 31, 2020:

Media Relations

- 16 media releases
 - 2020 Total = 22 media releases
- 266 news article mentions
 - 2020 Total = 461 news article mentions

Social Media

- Facebook
 - New Likes = 208 (Total = 1,663)
 - New Followers = 92 (Total = 1,724)
 - Posts = 144 (2020 Total = 203)
- Twitter
 - Tweets = 126 (2020 Total = 194)
 - Retweets = 77 (2020 Total = 170)
 - New Followers = 58 (Total = 658)
 - Engagements (clicks, retweets, replies, follows, and likes) = 1662 (2020 Total = 3553)

(s) *That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Communications Report, dated September 3, 2020, including information regarding Conservation Education, Coming Events and Conservation Scholarships.*

Remedial Action Plan Coordinator:

The new Remedial Action Plan (RAP) Coordinator for the St. Clair River Area of Concern (AOC), Natasha Pozega, will begin her new role at the SCRCA on September 8th. Natasha holds a Bachelor of Science in General Science from the University of Waterloo and an Environmental Technician Diploma from St. Lawrence College.

For the last four years, she has worked at the St. Lawrence River Institute of Environmental Sciences in Cornwall, Ontario where, among her many responsibilities, she managed and coordinated the RAP for the St. Lawrence River AOC.

We are excited to welcome her to the SCRCA and look forward to moving the St. Clair River a step closer to being removed from the list of Great Lakes AOCs.

Friends of the St. Clair River Photo Contest:

The Friends of the St. Clair River community group in partnership with the Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC) is holding their third photo contest. Running until September 26, 2020, the contest is open to amateur digital photographers living in the St. Clair watershed in both Canada and the United States.

The purpose of the contest to raise public awareness and appreciation for the beauty and majesty of the St. Clair River. There are three categories open to both adult and

youth (18 years and under) photographers. Prizes will be awarded to the best photographs in each category based on the input of a panel of judges.

The Friends of the St. Clair River is an all-volunteer Canadian charitable organization that assists the St. Clair River BPAC in the development and implementation of the St. Clair River Remedial Action Plan by promoting the conservation, beautification and environmental activities associated with the St. Clair River.

Past and Upcoming Meetings:

Friends of the St. Clair River (FOSCR)

- June 8, 2020 – Zoom Conferencing Platform (Virtual Meeting)
- August 25, 2020 – Zoom Conferencing Platform (Virtual Meeting)

Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC)

- September 24, 2020 – Zoom Conferencing Platform (Virtual Meeting)

(t) *That the Board of Directors acknowledges the St. Clair River Area of Concern Update Report, dated September 3, 2020.*

The regulations activity report on “Development, Interference with Wetlands & Alterations to Shorelines & Watercourses” Regulation (Ontario Regulation 171/06) for June, July and August, 2020 were reviewed.

BD-20-75

Burrell – McMillan

“That the Board of Directors accepts the Regulations Activity Reports on “Development, Interference with Wetlands & Alterations to Shorelines & Watercourses” Regulation (Ontario Regulation 171/06), dated September 3, 2020 and includes the June 1, 2020 to August 31, 2020, as presented.”

CARRIED

Project:

The groyne on the west side of the boat ramp was constructed by the landowner prior to acquisition by the Authority. In 1986/87 the access road, parking lot, and boat ramp were constructed. Due to safety concerns at the ramp, additional protection was constructed in 1990. The works consisted of a steel sheet pile and armour stone breakwall on the northeast side of the ramp and a steel sheet pile curtain wall connected to the existing groyne on the southwest side.

In late November of 2019, damage occurred to the boat ramp seawall protection. The steel sheet pile on the original groyne at the west side was removed by wave action. In addition to the groyne damage, considerable erosion is occurring on both the east and west side of the ramp protection structures. On the east, the erosion is moving closer to the parking lot and within the protection, erosion has exposed the steel sheet wall side of the ramp.

The Conservation Authority sent out RFP's in August, 2020 for the completion of a study. All proposals will include an assessment and a design component.

Highlights of the work include:

Assessment

Inspection of the current infrastructure at Highland Glen CA to understand the structural issues on this site and coastal assessment of this shoreline reach to assist with permits.

Design

The proposal should outline a breakdown for each of the design components below:

- Plans and specifications for repair of the damaged groyne
- Plans and specifications for repair to the seawall to the west of the damaged groyne
- Plans and specifications for erosion protection for the area just east of the ramp
- Plans and specifications for erosion protection along the bluff to protect the parking lot
- Plans and specifications for improved ramp walkways
- Plans and specifications for improved beach access

SCRCA is looking to partner with a consulting organization that has significant experience in shoreline design and construction. Staff have shortlisted 4 pre-qualified consultants for this work.

1. AECOM
2. Baird
3. Riggs Engineering
4. Shoreplan Inc

RFP's were sent out the beginning of August 2020. SCRCA has received 2 submissions for this work. Details of the submissions are provided below:

Proposal summary		Proposal cost (Not including HST)
AECOM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed proposal that provides breakdowns and budget for each of the tasks • 3 design concepts will be provided verbally with a detailed design for the preferred alternative • No Geotechnical studies or EA work included • Includes breakdown of provisional items and costs for each item 	\$40,250
Shoreplan Inc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design concepts to be explored with SCRCA with a detailed design for the preferred alternative • No Geotechnical studies or EA work included 	\$40,500

Financial Impact:

AECOM Proposal	\$40,250
Provisional Work – Design and recommendation to safely open the boat ramp until full repairs and upgrades can be completed	\$4,417
HST	\$5,806.71
Contingency Fund	\$2,500
Total Cost	\$52,973.71
Existing Highland Glen Reserves	(\$11,619)
Remaining Project Cost to be funded via Special Levy in 2021 (As a Board designated Regional Conservation Area costs are levied to all member municipalities based on modified cumulative value assessment)	\$41,354.71

Proposed Special Levy - Highland Glen		
based on the maximum project budget and the use of HGCA reserves	2021	2021
Municipality	CVA Apportionment %	Highland Glen Special Levy
Township of Adelaide Metcalfe	1.9190%	\$ 794
Township Brooke-Alvinston	1.7871%	\$ 739
Municipality Chatham-Kent	13.0443%	\$ 5,394
Township Dawn-Euphemia	2.6508%	\$ 1,096
Township Enniskillen	1.9973%	\$ 826
Municipality Lambton Shores	4.9903%	\$ 2,064
Municipality Middlesex Centre	2.2426%	\$ 927
Village Newbury	0.1528%	\$ 63
Village Oil Springs	0.1986%	\$ 82
Town Petrolia	2.5364%	\$ 1,049
Town Plympton-Wyoming	5.4734%	\$ 2,264
Village Point Edward	2.2156%	\$ 916
City Sarnia	37.4674%	\$ 15,495
Municipality Southwest Middlesex	1.1705%	\$ 484
Township St. Clair	11.2021%	\$ 4,633
Township Strathroy - Caradoc	8.6479%	\$ 3,576
Township Warwick	2.3039%	\$ 953
	100%	\$ 41,355

BD-20-76

McEwen – Scott

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated September 4, 2020 regarding Highland Glen Conservation Area including an update on the community response to the closure of the Boat Launch, a status report on current conditions and a summary of the results of the request for proposals for the repairs to the Boat Launch and Shore Protection and further approves that the Chair and General Manager may accept the preferred tender and sign appropriate agreements to initiate the study as soon as possible.”

CARRIED

In January of 2020, SCRCA received a request from attorney Janet Gibbons of Strathroy on behalf of a landowner adjacent to Shetland Conservation Area requesting assistance in correcting errors to the landowners land title.

During this process, it was discovered that the Authority did not have proper title to Shetland CA and the error dates prior to the Authority’s acquisition of the property from the Shetland Picnic Corp.

Staff requested that Ms. Gibbons work on behalf of the Authority to correct this error. The cost of a survey required to correct the issue was split with the neighbouring landowner.

Ms. Gibbons will take the survey and other supporting documents before a judge to request that the error in title be corrected.

The cost of the Authority’s share of the survey was \$2325 plus \$40.95 non-recoverable HST. Since this is not a standard maintenance item, a 50/50 cost share was requested with the Township of Dawn-Euphemia.

In response to this cost share request, the Township of Dawn-Euphemia has requested that the Authority consider transferring ownership of the Shetland CA to the Municipality at this time. On April 7, 2020, a formal request was forwarded to the Authority (item 8.2.1).

Property History

In approximately 1908, a group of local farmers held a picnic in the bush on the farm of Duncan Bolton, the site of the present Conservation Area. The picnic included live music, fireworks, and baseball. A rental fee was paid to Mr. Bolton. The event continued annually on the second Wednesday in August. In 1934, the group formed a non-profit corporation (Shetland Picnic Corporation) to acquire the property from Mr. Bolton. In 1934, the approximately 10-acre property was purchased. In 1952, an additional 5 acres on the North side of the river was purchased across from the picnic grounds.

On the 8th of May, 1963, the corporation conveyed all the lands acquired to the Sydenham Valley Conservation Authority for \$1.00 on the condition that the property

would be maintained in perpetuity as a Conservation Area and Park for the inhabitants of the community and others. (Above history obtained in 1972 from Frank Johnston and Eric G. Moorhouse, Frank Johnston was the Secretary of the Shetland Picnic Corporation from 1920 - 1963)

Property Currently:

The Shetland Conservation Area is approximately 17 acres located on both the North and South sides of the Sydenham River. The property has approximately 15 serviced and 15 un-serviced campsites. North of the river the property has an old boat launch, between the river and Bentpath Line the property has campsites, a dock, playground equipment, a pavilion, and an old building.

Currently the Township of Dawn-Euphemia maintains the property and manages the campground. Property expenses are paid by the Authority and then paid by the municipality through special levy.

No lease agreement can be found on file.

Correspondence from the Township of Dawn-Euphemia regarding an interest to transfer ownership of the Shetland Campground was reviewed, as was a copy of the deed to the property.

Directors Comments: Director Al Broad clarified that the Township of Dawn-Euphemia’s interest in obtaining the land results from SCRCA’s request to contribute 50% of the costs associated with correcting the title. He also expressed concern that this cost is not part of the operating budget.

General Manager, Brian McDougall withdrew the request for the Township of Dawn-Euphemia to contribute 50% of the legal cost in amending the title.

A recorded vote was requested

Recorded Vote in Reference to BD-20-77

Director	For	Against
Brennan, John	✓	
Broad, Al		✓
Brown, Pat		✓
Bruziewicz, Andy	✓	
Burrell, Terry	✓	
Faas, Joe	✓	
Gordon, Larry	✓	
Hall, Aaron	✓	

Kennes, Frank	✓	
Loosley, Brad	✓	
MacKinnon, Betty Ann	✓	
Marriott, Kevin		✓
McEwen, Netty	✓	
McGill, Mark	✓	
McMillan, Dan	✓	
Miller, Steve		✓
Nemcek, Frank		✓
Scott, Lorie	✓	
Stark, Mike		✓
Westgate, Jerry	✓	
Totals	14	6

BD-20-77

Burrell – Nemcek

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated September 4, 2020 regarding Shetland Conservation Area and further affirms the Authority’s commitment to retain the property in perpetuity and still further directs staff to draft an updated management agreement for the property for approval by Dawn-Euphemia Council as well as the Board of Directors.

CARRIED

On August 13, 2020, the City of Sarnia forwarded a letter to the Conservation Authority General Manager regarding a resolution adopted by the Council of the Corporation of the City of Sarnia. The City of Sarnia would like the Authority to confirm whether it has interest in acquiring 1616-1620 Blackwell Road for establishing a conservation area.

1616-1620 Blackwell Road

This property was previously operated as the Inter-Recycling Systems Inc. Landfill. Staff have had limited time to investigate this property, however, acquiring a property with this history puts the Authority at risk of having to deal with issues resulting from site contamination.

In 2010, a 4m wide perimeter clay barrier was installed in two corners of the property to prevent contaminants from migrating off property. An asbestos management plan was also developed to deal with some of the unearthed waste materials during this project. An odour suppressant was required when the waste materials were exposed.

In 2007, one additional monitoring well (5 existing) was approved by the City of Sarnia to be located on the Howard Watson trail, adjacent to the property. Inter-Recycling Inc.

was monitoring for contaminants migrating off site. The results of this monitoring are unknown.

SCRCA has not accepted similar properties in the past.

Correspondence from the City of Sarnia to SCRCA regarding the potential property acquisition was reviewed, as were air photos of the site's property boundaries and surrounding area with identified environmental features.

BD-20-78

Brown – Miller

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated September 1, 2020 regarding the City of Sarnia Resolution concerning property at 1616-1620 Blackwell Road, Sarnia and further directs SCRCA staff to notify the City of Sarnia that the Conservation Authority does not have interest in acquiring this property for the purpose of establishing a Conservation Area.”

CARRIED

- a) The 5 year lease agreements are due for renewal at the end of 2020. A new lease agreement has been prepared, divided by the available properties where possible, consistent with the management of the lands. There are 4 agriculture leases that will be direct reward. These lands require crossing private land to access the agriculture land. The tender closing date is Friday September 25th.

The current tender process has advantages and shortcomings. Allowing the current tenant to match the highest bid negates the bidding process. Current tenants are aware that they are able to match the highest bid and potential new tenants may be discouraged from bidding. Furthermore, accepting the highest bid may not be in the best interest of the SCRCA or the land. The SCRCA should have discretion in awarding a lease.

To level the playing field for all bidders, it is suggested that current tenants be required to submit a bid for any lands that they wish to lease or continue to lease, with the option to match the highest bid. The SCRCA should reserve the right to refuse the highest bid for any reason.

Staff plan to re-establish buffers on the Agriculture Lands that have been removed over the past 5 years. New signage or replacement signage will be installed. Erosion will be assessed and options will be reviewed to mitigate the erosion on the lands.

- b) As part of the lands management, the removal of structures and debris is required for the general cleanliness of the property, liability, or due to items no longer being needed. The unmaintained structures and debris piles are not considered assets as they have little or no value, and are not listed. In most cases, there will be a cost to remove such items. Should an opportunity arise to have these items removed from the lands at no cost, or within budget, staff will do so.

- c) Over the past year the SCRCA staff have assisted other organizations by providing locations and/ or staff time to monitor for invasive species, including the McKeough Upstream Lands and the County of Lambton Lands. These projects include:
- In 2019 and 2020, staff installed and monitored traps for oak wilt for the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.
 - The Canadian Food Inspection Agency placed traps for a general collection for any invasive alien species.
 - The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs placed sticky traps at the Darcy McKeough Dam area specifically for the European cherry fruit fly.
 - Bird Canada sends out staff in the spring for bird identification and counts.
 - Natural Resources Canada reach out asking for locations of ash trees that are of certain criteria to sample for resistance to emerald ash borer.
- All these organisations copy the SCRCA the results of the work they perform.
- d) This winter several woodlands will be inventoried and assessed on the potential for harvesting. Over the last several years, timber prices have remained low, which has made harvesting a low priority.

Strategic Objectives(s):

Goal 2 – Protect, manage, and restore our natural systems including woodlands, wetlands, waterways, and lakes

Financial Impact:

Minor funding will be needed for signage and seed for buffering lands. Any erosion work or disposal of structures and debris, will be reviewed and completed through the allotted budget or grant funding.

Director's comments: Directors deliberated on the fairness of allowing current tenants the first right of refusal. General Manager, Brian McDougall explained that this clause is included due to past precedence, but can be removed at the request of the Board. Directors requested that amendments be made to all new lease agreements removing the clause referring to the tenant's first right of refusal and/ or the tenant's ability to match the highest bid. It is agreed that SCRCA staff shall maintain the right to refuse the highest bid at their discretion. Staff are also directed to discuss the possibility of making the same amendment to land lease agreements for Foundation-owned lands with the Foundation Board of Directors.

BD-20-79

Burrell – Marriott

“That the Board of Directors accepts the report dated September 1, 2020 on the Mckeough lands and supports that none asset items be disposed of as part of the routine maintenance of the land and further directs staff to remove all clauses within the land lease agreements giving the first right of refusal and the right to match highest bids to current tenants while also maintaining the right to refuse the highest bid for any reason.

CARRIED

- As presented to the Board of Directors at their December 2019 meeting, under item 13.4, the Board approved the following resolution:

BD-19-205

Marriott – Loosley

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report on SCRCA Drain Enclosure Policy dated December 3, 2019, and direct staff to consult with Drainage Superintendents and our member Municipalities for comments on the policy.”

- Staff departures and the COVID pandemic have left staff unable to undertake the proposed consultation in a timely fashion
- Correspondence was received from 4 municipal partners seeking further review of the situation be the Board of Directors in July and August – this correspondence is attached
- With new staff filling vacancies and staff returning from maternity leave, we are finally back to a position where we can begin the planned consultation process
- On September 2nd, an e-mail was circulated to all drainage contacts in our watershed to begin this consultation process

A copy of the original e-mail sent by SCRCA staff to all SCRCA Drainage Superintendents regarding the SCRCA Drain Enclosure Policy Consultation was reviewed.

BD-20-80

Scott – Burrell

“That the Board of Directors accepts the report dated September 10, 2020 on the SCRCA Drain Enclosure Policy.”

CARRIED

Directors Comments: Directors expressed concern regarding the request to rescind the SCRCA Drain Enclosure Policy and requested that staff be given an opportunity to speak on the significance of the document and explain its value. It was noted that the St. Clair Region Conservation Board of Directors have a fiduciary duty to follow the

Conservation Authorities Act. A recorded vote was requested.

Recorded Vote in Reference to BD-20-81

Director	For	Against
Brennan, John		✓
Broad, Al		✓
Brown, Pat		✓
Bruziewicz, Andy	✓	
Burrell, Terry	✓	
Faas, Joe		✓
Gordon, Larry		✓
Hall, Aaron	✓	
Kennes, Frank		✓
Loosley, Brad		✓
MacKinnon, Betty Ann	✓	
Marriott, Kevin		✓
McEwen, Netty	✓	
McGill, Mark		✓
McMillan, Dan	-	-
Miller, Steve	✓	
Nemcek, Frank		✓
Scott, Lorie		✓
Stark, Mike		✓
Westgate, Jerry		✓
Totals	6	13

BD-20-81

Burrell – Miller

“That the Board of Directors defer any decision to accept or rescind the SCRCA Drain Enclosure Policy and further that staff provide a report explaining the significances of the document and how it relates to the Conservation Authorities Act.”

FAILED

Directors Comments: Directors discussed concerns from drainage engineers who feel that the Conservation Authorities Act is being held with higher importance than the Drainage Act and is hindering development applications and plan of subdivisions.

General Manager, Brian McDougall clarified that the SCRCA Drain Enclosures Policy document is informational in nature, providing an explanation as to how and why SCRCA deals with enclosed drains, and that rescinding the document will not affect the responses from SCRCA under the Conservation Authorities (CA) Act. The CA Act requires staff and the Board to ensure that development in regards to municipal drains is done in adherence to the CA Act. It was reiterated that the CA Act and Drainage Act are of equal importance and adherence requires cooperation and respect to both Acts. It is requested that staff report to the November Board of Directors meeting highlighting where within CA Act the clause(s) regarding the Conservation Authority's interest in municipal drain enclosures can be found. A recorded vote for the rescinding of the SCRCA Drain Enclosure Policy document was requested.

Recorded Vote in Reference to BD-20-82

Director	For	Against
Brennan, John	✓	
Broad, Al	✓	
Brown, Pat	✓	
Bruziewicz, Andy	✓	
Burrell, Terry		✓
Faas, Joe	✓	
Gordon, Larry	✓	
Hall, Aaron		✓
Kennes, Frank	✓	
Loosley, Brad	✓	
MacKinnon, Betty Ann	✓	
Marriott, Kevin	✓	
McEwen, Netty	✓	
McGill, Mark	✓	
McMillan, Dan	-	-
Miller, Steve		✓
Nemcek, Frank	✓	
Scott, Lorie	✓	
Stark, Mike	✓	
Westgate, Jerry	✓	
Totals	16	3

BD-20-82

Loosley – Marriott

“That the SCRCA Drain Enclosure Policy be rescinded effective upon the final passing thereof and that the member Municipalities be so informed”

CARRIED

The 2021 proposed schedule of fees for planning and regulations was reviewed.

BD-20-83

Westgate – Burrell

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated September 5, 2020 regarding Planning and Regulations Fee Schedule 2021 and concurs with staff recommendations, as presented.”

CARRIED

The increase in CVA analysis and Schedule B of the 2021 preliminary draft budget were reviewed.

Directors Comments: A request was made to schedule a special meeting in October in order to receive and accept the full preliminary 2021 draft before it is sent to municipalities for comment. It was clarified that the budget is preliminary in nature and that municipalities and Directors will be given ample opportunity to comment, with a final weighted vote expected to take place at the December, 2020 Board of Directors meeting.

BD-20-84

Scott – Broad

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the 2021 preliminary draft budget of \$9,540,120 with a proposed municipal general levy of \$1,129,926 and further that this preliminary budget will be circulated to member municipalities for information and input based on our budget review process.”

DEFERRED

Under New Business

Director Al Broad enquired whether the Sinclair property will be coming up for lease tender. Staff informed that the Sinclair property is a Foundation-owned land and is currently under a 10 year lease to the Rural Lambton Stewardship Network (RLSN). It is requested that staff approach the Foundation Board of Directors to consider re-naturalizing the Sinclair and Gawne properties, as well as any other Foundation-owned lands that are no longer suitable for farming.

BD-20-85

Scott – Burrell

“That the meeting be adjourned.”

CARRIED



Joe Faas
Chair



Brian McDougall
General Manager