



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: September 15, 2022 Time: 10:00 a.m.
Warwick Community Centre – 7074 Egremont Rd, Watford

Directors Present: John Brennan, Vice Chair Pat Brown, Terry Burrell, Bill Dennis, Joe Faas, Greg Grimes, Emery Huszka, Frank Kennes, Kevin Marriott, Steve Miller, Frank Nemcek, Chair Mike Stark, Jerry Westgate, Tim Wilkins

Directors Present (Remote): Al Broad, Aaron Hall, Debbie Heffernan, Brad Loosley, Betty Ann MacKinnon

Regrets: Diane Brewer, Lorie Scott

Staff Present: Donna Blue, Manager of Communications; Melissa Deisley, Director of Planning and Resources; Chris Durand, Manager of IT/GIS; Ashley Fletcher, Administrative Assistant/ Board Coordinator; Sarah Hodgkiss, Manager of Planning and Natural Heritage; Kate Jamieson, Payroll/Accounting Clerk; Chunning Li, Director of Corporate Services; Tim Payne, Manager of Forestry; Ken Phillips, General Manager; Girish Sankar, Director of Water Resources; Greg Wilcox, Manager of Conservation Areas

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and 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. Directors were thanked for their commitment to attending the meeting during the busy municipal election season.

BD-22-73

Kennes – Grimes

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

CARRIED

The minutes of the Board of Directors meeting, held June 23, 2022 were reviewed.

BD-22-74

Marriott – Burrell

“That the minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting, held June 23, 2022, be approved as distributed.”

CARRIED

The minutes of the Conservation Ontario Council meeting, held remotely on June 20, 2022 were reviewed.

BD-22-75

Brown – Kennes

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the minutes of the Conservation Ontario Council meeting, held remotely on June 20, 2022.”

CARRIED

Operations

- On June 13, 2022 all staff returned to the office full-time, and the administration center was opened to visitors.
- Staff commenced working on the 2023-2028 Strategic Plan and all full-time personnel were involved in the discussions.

Community/Partnership Outreach

- On July 5, 2022 the General Manager attended an event hosted by the Grain Farmers of Ontario in Enniskillen.
- The General Manager provided a presentation to the Rotary Club of Sarnia, giving an update of recent projects in the Sarnia area as well a general overview SCRCA
- The General Manager volunteered to sit on the Sarnia-Lambton Chamber of Commerce Green Committee commencing in September.

Federal/Provincial/Municipal Meetings

- The General Manager was advised that all conservation authorities would fall under the authority of the newly constituted Ministry of Natural Resources and Forests (MNRF). All Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) staff in the Conservation Branch have transferred over to the MNRF. There are no anticipated changes to the direction that was provided to CAs from MECP (see item 7.2 under correspondence).
- The General Manager has preliminary discussions with Strathroy-Caradoc and Center Middlesex staff regarding MOU discussion timelines.
- The General Manager made a presentation to Lambton County Council on July 6, 2022. He provided an overview of the programs the SCRCA provides to the County.

Conservation Ontario

- The General Manager was appointed to the Conservation Ontario Enforcement Working Group to assist in the creation of Standard Operating Procedures for staff that are active in implementing conservation authority regulations.

BD-22-76

Miller – Burrell

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the General Manager’s report, dated September 2, 2022.”

CARRIED

The SCRCA draft fee policy was reviewed.

Directors Comments:

It was clarified that the increase to draft planning and regulations fees are in response to the board’s direction to achieve a 50/50 balance, and further that a step approach is being used to ease the transition for clients and partners. For all other fees, a comparative analysis of local competitors has been used.

Director Al Broad requested a review of the fee to review an engineer’s report under the Drainage Act (DART Review), including an analysis of staff time to complete such work, and that the report be made available at the November 10, 2022 Board of Directors meeting.

Director Al Broad expressed his opposition to adopting the fee policy, as presented.

BD-22-77

Faas – Grimes

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the draft fee policy and further adopts the policy as presented.”

CARRIED

Recommendations from Tim Dobbie Consultants Ltd. report pertaining to the budget include:

5.2 – That the Board of Directors of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority support increasing the capacity of the complement of staff from the current six to nine. The timing of these three staff joining the SCRCA would be subject to appropriate funding.

5.3 – That the Board of Directors of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority direct staff to consider the cost associated with the addition of 3 new technical employees and other corporate priorities to be funded by increases in both the levy and fees in the draft 2022 and 2023 budget.

The estimated cost of three new staff positions is a minimum of \$280,000 which can be funded with a combined increase in fees and levy. The Tim Dobbie Report suggested looking at a 10% increase in levy and a 10% increase in fees for both 2022 and 2023.

An increase in levy by 10% would result in a dollar amount of approximately \$137,851

The Planning & Regulations fees have been increased by 12% to reflect the recommended 10% increase noted above plus 2% for inflation costs.

In addition, fees have been added or increased higher to specific categories to help recuperate costs of staff review time including increased technical review fees, utility works fees, and additional fees for applications that have reactivated after being dormant. These increases are aligned with the Board of Directors' discussion during the August 20, 2021 Board Meeting, that fees should be increased and paid for by the developer.

A report was submitted to the Board of Directors meeting, held February 24, 2022 which provided a detailed analysis of planning revenue as well as multiple cost recovery scenarios for consideration. The following is an excerpt of the February 24, 2022 Board of Directors meeting minutes:

Directors Comments:

Directors requested and received clarification on the difference between the various types of permit applications and the justifications for the level of cost each incurs. General Manager, Ken Phillips confirmed that the recommendation from staff is to make a gradual move toward a 50% fee/50% levy cost recovery by 2026. Chair Mike Stark informed the board that he intends to bring this matter to a future Executive Committee for discussion and formal recommendation to the full board.

BD-22-25

Kennes – Brown

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated February 16, 2022 and further directs staff to carry out the recommendations listed within the report to assist with cost recovery efforts for Planning and Regulations operations.”

Strategic Objectives(s):

Goal 1 – Develop and maintain programs that will protect life and property from natural hazards such as flooding and erosion.

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

Goal 4 – Build a stronger and more valued organization through business excellence

The draft 2023 Planning and Regulations fee schedule was also reviewed.

Directors Comments:

Director Brad Loosley expressed his belief that the Planning department should look into

the possibility of having permit applications processed and approved by a single staff member.

BD-22-78

Faas - Westgate

“That the Board of Directors acknowledge the report dated September 1, 2022 regarding the Planning and Regulations Fees and further approve the Planning & Regulations Fee Schedule for 2023, with proposed increases, as recommended by Tim Dobbie Consultants Ltd.”

CARRIED

Education Program fees have not increased since 2018. A list of proposed fee increases for the 2022/2023 school year, including a comparison of neighbouring Conservation Authorities offering similar services was reviewed.

Director Terry Burrell declared a conflict of interest in regards to the education program and the proposed fees for 2022/2023.

BD-22-79

Miller – Kennes

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated September 1, 2022 on the proposed 2022/2023 education program fees and concurs with staff recommendations, as presented.”

CARRIED

Conservation Area Fee Increases

Fee increases are a result of increasing staffing costs, maintenance, park upgrades, and general cost increases. Fee increases are also required to ensure financial reserves are maintained at levels sufficient to undertake large capitals expenditures (septic system updates, road improvements, etc.) when required. With the proposed increases, our rates remain at or below most local private and regional Conservation Authority campgrounds.

A fee comparison table was also reviewed, comparing seasonal and transient camping fees of other Conservation Authorities, the Provincial Parks, and some local private campgrounds.

BD-22-80

Nemcek – MacKinnon

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated September 2, 2022 on the proposed 2023 Conservation Area fees and concurs with staff recommendations, as presented.”

CARRIED

The SCRCAs management team have completed an initial draft of the 2023 Budget. It is anticipated that the General Levy for 2023 will be \$1,583,050 shared by the 17-member municipalities, resulting in an increase of \$170,497 or 12.4% from 2022 general levy (see schedule B). The primary drivers of the levy increase include:

- 1.5 FTE staff for Planning and Regulations \$137,851 (81% of total increase) based on recommendations from Tim Dobbie Consultants Ltd. Report which was approved by the Board in 2021
- As 40% increase in liability insurance premiums totalling \$22,000 (13% of total increase)
- \$10,000 (6% of total increase) consulting fee for new phone system and server upgrade for Administrative Office. The SCRCAs has been informed by our carrier that our existing phone system with not be supported beyond 2023.

Directors Comments:

Director Terry Burrell expressed is opposition to the increase of \$10,000 for the server ugrade and consultation fee for the office phone system, stating that the cost is excessive. Manager of IT/GIS Chris Durand provided an overview of the reasoning and benefits for using a consultant to determine a solution for the phone system as well as the confirmation that a new server is urgently needed. General Manager, Ken Phillips reminded the Board of Directors that the report is to be received for information only, with the full draft budget to be reviewed in November. Directors Bill Dennis and Brad Loosley expressed their opposition to the motion.

BD-22-81

Terry – Dennis

“That the Board of Directors receive for information and discussion the report dated September 2, 2022 on the preliminary levy estimate for the 2023 Budget and further that the allocation of \$10,000 for the consulting fee for a new phone system and server upgrade be removed from the draft budget.”

DEFEATED

BD-22-82

Kennes – Marriott

“That the Board of Directors receive for information and discussion the report, dated September 2, 2022 on the preliminary levy estimate for the 2023 Budget.”

CARRIED

LAWSS Shoreline Repair:

- SCRCA was contacted by Lambton Area Water Supply System (LAWSS) staff following an email from a citizen, identifying a concerning rock along the shoreline
- This prompted a site investigation, followed by a condition review of the affected area along LAWSS shoreline
- Shoreplan was contracted to perform the site inspection
- It was identified that the stepped and sloped, special placement armourstone revetment structure has failed in multiple locations. Several stones are beginning to crack, which could potentially lead to revetment failures
- Replacing this reach of shoreline revetment was identified as the preferred solution
- Shoreplan provided a detailed design of the replacement
- Tender documents are being reviewed
- Tenders will be advertised for this project during second week of September
- All permits and approvals are being obtained
- Construction is expected to begin October 2022

BD-22-83

Burrell – Grimes

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated August 29, 2022 regarding the Lambton Area Water Supply System Shoreline (LAWSS) Repair Project, and further delegates the Authority Chair and General Manager to enter into agreement with the preferred contractor, subject to confirmation that all costs associated with the project will be covered through funding from LAWSS.”

CARRIED

Upcoming Shoreline projects (2022- 2023):

1) Groyne only Project:

- Permit process is complete
- 2 Groynes projects - one near Penhuron Drive and another near Kenwick Street
- Tenders for Groyne only projects were forwarded to pre-qualified contractors on August 2, 2022.
- Tenders closed on August 16 and August 18 respectively
- Expected start date – Fall 2022

2) Penhuron Drive to Kenwick Street shoreline restoration:

- 220 meters of shoreline restoration
- Design work completed
- Draft Tender being Prepared
- Expected start date – late Fall 2022

BD-22-84

Kennes – Burrell

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated August 25, 2022 on the ongoing Shoreline projects across the watershed and directs staff to follow the tender process, and further delegates the Authority Chair and General Manager to enter into agreement with the preferred contractor, subject to approval from the City of Sarnia and confirmation that all costs associated with the project will be covered through available funding.”

CARRIED

The Right to Disconnect Policy was reviewed.

Directors Comments:

Management is reminded to consider the Right to Disconnect Policy when choosing a phone system, as portability may be considered by staff to be an expectation. Directors agree that a mutual understanding should exist between directors, management and staff that e-mails sent outside of regular business hours do not require an immediate response and that in the event of a true emergency, it will be clearly stated.

BD-22-85

Brennan – Wilkins

“That the Board of Directors approve the adoption of the Right to Disconnect Policy in order to bring the SCRCA into compliance with the Working for Workers Act 2021, and direct staff to update all applicable manuals and procedures to include the policy.”

CARRIED

Correspondence from the Municipality of Chatham-Kent was reviewed.

BD-22-86

Faas – Kennes

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the correspondence, dated August 26, 2022 from the Municipality of Chatham-Kent regarding the 2023 draft budget.”

CARRIED

Correspondence from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry was reviewed.

BD-22-87

Burrell – Miller

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the e-mail correspondence, dated August 30, 2022 from the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) and Forestry regarding the designation of the MNR as the responsible administrator of the Conservation Authorities Act.”

CARRIED

A presentation on conservation areas and the lands department was provided by Greg Wilcox, Manager of Conservation Lands.

Directors Comments:

Director Tim Wilkins requested assistance from staff regarding the Howard Watson Trail and possible improvements to the signage and garbage collection to aid in access and cleanliness of the area. Manager of Conservation Areas, Greg Wilcox agreed to contact Lambton County in order to address the issues.

Chair, Mike Stark thanked staff for the thorough and complete presentation

BD-22-88

Kennes – Nemcek

“That the Board of Directors acknowledge the staff presentation provided by Manager of Conservation Lands, Greg Wilcox on the Lands Department.”

CARRIED

Item 9.1 (h) Revenue and Expenditure Report

The statement of revenue and expenditure report was reviewed.

Directors Comments:

A clerical error was noted in the title of the document and was corrected to read *The Six Months Ended 30/06/2022*

No significant overages or savings are noted.

BD-22-89

Kennes – Brennan

“That the Board of Directors receive 9.1 (h) as information”

CARRIED

Item 9.1 (a) Business Arising

The report on business arising from the Jun 23, 2022 meeting was reviewed.

Item 9.1 (b) Current Watershed Conditions

Highlights:

- Flood threat is currently low on the Sydenham River
- A very dry July was followed by above-normal precipitation amounts for August to date
- Overall precipitation trends for the region are near-normal values
- Water levels on the surrounding lakes continue to decline and move closer to average levels

Watershed Conditions

Flood Threat

The current flood threat for the watershed is low, owing to lower water levels on the surrounding Great Lakes, reduced precipitation in July and lower streamflow values. While high amounts of precipitation earlier this month saw urban flooding of drainage infrastructure and roads, the river system at present has a greater capacity for precipitation inputs with the stream gauge at Wallaceburg having 50 cm of freeboard.

Precipitation

Short-term precipitation trends saw a lack of rainfall in July with some stations reporting half their monthly precipitation totals; this reduced precipitation led to a likewise drop in streamflow at various gauges across the region. However, long-term precipitation averages depict overall precipitation levels being near normal values. Convective storms in early August brought significant amounts of rainfall to the area and many stations are already recording above their monthly average prior to the end of the month, with likewise rebounds in streamflow averages.

- Despite a dry July, precipitation amounts in the last quarter were near-normal values
- Precipitation trends across the region were close to normal, with some stations falling below the 80% threshold (London, Sarnia) in the 6-month total
- Higher amounts of precipitation in the past several weeks are anticipated to bolster long-term regional precipitation averages

Item 9.1 (c) Healthy Watersheds Update

The Healthy Watershed Program has restored or enhanced over 1,000 ha of land, and over 4 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 in water bodies within our watershed.

This summer has been busy for Healthy Watersheds staff. Landowners are very interested in various stewardship projects on their land such as tree planting, wetlands, cover crops, and soil erosion control projects.

Staff continues to encourage the uptake and implementation of best management practices (BMPs) and to promote conservation within our watershed, SCRCA provides relevant information regarding the building of soil health, conservation, and water quality through workshops, conferences, newsletters, and social media.

- Healthy Watersheds staff sent out a newsletter focused on soil health and alternative cropping methods to over 250 landowners in Lambton Shores.
- The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority's Stewardship Review Committee met and approved funding for five wetland stewardship projects that will be completed Fall 2022 within the St. Clair watershed

Upcoming outreach events that promote stewardship and conservation:

Tuesday, September 6th to Friday, September 9th – **BioStrip Till Tailgate Tour Series**. In collaboration with OMAFRA and OSICA, this series will visit farms that have been practicing BioStrip till or similar strip tilling practices over the course of the year to see how the plants grow, the pros and cons of this best management practice and how we can learn from each other. More information on the tours can be found here:

<https://bit.ly/BioStripTour>

Saturday, September 10th – **Ipperwash Beach Cleanup**. 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. The 10th annual Beach Cleanup is part of the Healthy Lake Huron project. Participants to meet at the Ipperwash Beach Boat Launch (end of Ipperwash Road). Please RSVP to efebrey@scrca.on.ca to attend.

Wednesday, September 21st – **Coldstream CA Planting Event**. 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. at Coldstream Conservation Area. In celebration of National Tree Day, SCRCA staff will be hosting a tree and shrub planting event. The goal of this public event is to continue to naturalize a portion of the Coldstream Conservation Area. Please RSVP to efebrey@scrca.on.ca to attend.

Staff continues to work on special projects that aim to improve the health of the watershed by engaging the local community and experts in identifying and addressing environmental issues. These projects include:

- Sydenham Watershed Phosphorus Management Plan is being undertaken with financial support from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks Great Lakes Program

- Sydenham River Aquatic Species at Risk Threat Inventory is being undertaken with funding from the DFO (Department of Fisheries and Oceans) Habitat Stewardship Program for Aquatic Species at Risk.

Item 9.1 (d) Conservation Services Update

Tree Planting Program

- Landowner contact and site visits for spring 2023 will start in early September. Inquiries from landowners continue to come in until the end of the year. Staff will be busy meeting with landowners, providing advice, developing tree planting plans and locating funding sources to assist landowners with the costs associated with a complete 3-year tree establishment program.
- Fewer grant programs seem to be the recent trend. Funding is necessary to make the program attractive to landowners. Without financial support, landowners turn away from the larger planting projects, instead opting for purchasing smaller quantities of tree seedlings that they can plant on their own at minimal cost to them.
- Tree survival assessments for projects that received partial funding through the Forests Ontario 50 Million Tree program are carried out in August and September by department staff. Tree survival rates vary from project to project, depending on how much added effort landowners have contributed to weed control. Average survival is approximately 90% in the first year after planting and 80% to 85% in the 5th year.

Vegetation Management Program

- Approximately 120,000 tree seedlings received vegetation management this past spring and another 100,000 trees require vegetation control this fall.
- Most tree projects receive 3 years of vegetation control after tree planting. Fall herbicide applications for 2020, 2021 and 2022 tree planting sites are scheduled to start the first week of October and will continue into late November after the deciduous seedlings go into dormancy (leaf drop). Payments for three years of vegetation control work is carried forward each year in the department budget.
- Spraying phragmites continues this year and involves several SCRCA and SCRCF lands, private properties and community association areas.

Seed Collection Program

- This year's tree seed collection is scheduled to start near the end of September. There is a short window of opportunity for tree seed, which only lasts approximately 2 to 3 weeks. Some scouting for seed was completed in July by staff with disconcerting results. Most deciduous tree species have little to no seed this year.
- Tree acorns, nuts, cones and keys that are collected will be shipped to the tree seedling nursery, 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 are indigenous to SCRCA's watershed.

Item 9.1 (e) Larvicide Report

- Municipal catch basins in rural and urban areas in the City of Sarnia and throughout Lambton County were treated with the growth regulator methoprene. Methoprene prevents mosquito larvae from developing into adult biting mosquitos.
- This work is carried out under contract with the County of Lambton with direction from Lambton Public Health.
- There were three separate larvicide applications set at 21-day intervals starting June 27th and finishing August 18th this year.
- Eight summer staff worked in teams of two and treated approximately 16,500 catch basins within a 10-day period.
- Permits to treat municipal catch basins were obtained from the MECP under the Authority's Pesticide Operators Licence, Insurance and staff exterminator's licences.
- Catch basins located within Aamjiwnaang, south of Sarnia, were also treated under a separate contract with Sarnia First Nation Health department and with approval from Health Canada.
- SCRCA staff conducted pre-treatment larvae sampling (dipping) in mid-June to monitor mosquito activity.
- SCRCA staff also conducted efficacy tests throughout the summer as part of the treatment program by collecting mosquito pupae samples every 15-17 days after methoprene treatment. Pupae are monitored for adult emergence after 4 days. Efficacy tests average 80% to 85% effectiveness at controlling adult mosquito emergence.
- The 3-year contract between SCRCA and Lambton County for this work was signed in 2018 but was extended to April 2023.

Item 9.1 (f) Regulations Report

The regulations activity summary report to July 31, 2022 was reviewed.

Item 9.1 (g) Planning Report

The planning activity summary report to July 31, 2022 was reviewed.

Item 9.1 (i) Disbursements

The list of disbursements from June to August, 2022 were reviewed.

Item 9.1 (j) 2022 General Levy Update

The list of general levy received to date was reviewed.

Item 9.1 (k) Investments

The investment statements to July, 2022 were reviewed.

Item 9.1 (l) Communications Update

2022 Conservation Scholarships:

On July 14th, 15th, and 22nd, the recipients of the 2022 Conservation Scholarships were presented with their awards by Authority Chair, Mike Stark.

The conservation scholarship program rewards graduating high school students who are pursuing post-secondary studies in a conservation-related field and who have demonstrated high academic standing and involvement in environmental initiatives.

A.W. Campbell Memorial Scholarship (\$1,000)

Tesni Greig-Clarke – Strathroy District Collegiate Institute

A.W. Campbell Memorial Scholarship (\$1,000)

Kiersten Denning – Strathroy District Collegiate Institute

Tony Stranak Conservation Scholarship (\$500)

Clark Dunn – Northern Collegiate Institute & Vocational School

Mary Jo Arnold Conservation Scholarship (\$500)

Heather Scott – Northern Collegiate Institute & Vocational School

Upcoming Events:

St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation Memorial Forest Dedication

Date – Sunday, September 25, 2022

Time – 2:00 p.m.

Location – Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area, Petrolia

Media and Social Media Analytics:

SCRCA staff circulate notices, media releases, and other communications through local media outlets and social media. Statistics covering the timeframe from June 1, 2022, to July 31, 2022 were reviewed.

Item 9.1 (m) Education Report

Conservation Education – 2022-2023 School Year

On September 7, 2022, the SCRCA Conservation Education team will return to work for the 2022-2023 school year.

With the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions at the end of the 2021-2022 school year, staff are looking forward to a more normal return to school this September. At the time of this report, local school boards had not released any COVID-19 guidelines, however, the Province of Ontario released its “2022-2023 Plan to Catch Up” in July which highlighted field trips as an integral part of student’s school experiences.

Discussions will be held with Conservation Education staff in September to finalize the SCRCA’s 2022-2023 conservation education strategy and programming.

Conservation Education Fees – 2022-2023

As outlined in Schedule 4 of the SCRCA’s Draft Fee Policy, an increase in Conservation Education fees has been proposed for the 2022-2023 school year to better align with fees charged by neighbouring Conservation Authorities and increase cost-recovery. Fees have not increased since 2018.

Item 9.1 (n) AOC Report

RAP Coordination

BUI 1- Restrictions on fish and wildlife consumption

To assist in gathering insight on the habits of recreational and sports anglers, a community survey remains available for those that fish the St. Clair River. The information collected will assist in the assessment of this Beneficial Use Impairment. The survey was launched in Spring 2021 and will remain available until the end of December 2022. Through the use of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, additional efforts were made in August 2022 to promote completion of the survey. Direct emailing to relevant area businesses also occurred. The survey remains available for completion online at the Friends of the St. Clair River website.

BUI 9- Restrictions on drinking water consumption or taste and odour problems

At the January 20, 2022 meeting of the Canadian RAP Implementation Committee (CRIC), the Draft Assessment Report for the restrictions on drinking water consumption or taste and odour problems BUI was approved to enter the process to have it re-designated as Not Impaired. Engagement activities are now underway. A presentation was made to Aamjiwnaang First Nation Chief and Council on May 30, 2022, the Walpole Island First Nation community on July 6, 2022 and the Walpole Island First Nation Infrastructure

Committee on July 21, 2022. A planned presentation to Walpole Island First Nation Chief and Council is to be scheduled after their Fall 2022 election, followed by a presentation to the Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC). Questions and comments raised during the sessions are documented and responses are provided and tracked for reporting purposes.

Workplan

Development of the 2022-2027 Workplan for the St. Clair River Area of Concern is currently underway. It will focus on outlining the key actions that need to be completed over the next five years to be able to re-designate the five remaining Beneficial Use Impairments to a Not Impaired status.

Administration

Funding for the RAP Coordinator position is provided by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks (MECP) and Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC). The current agreement with MECP is in place until February 28, 2024. The agreement with ECCC is in place until March 31, 2023 and has an option to be extended until March 31, 2024. In accordance with the agreements, the SCRCA will be providing periodic updates to MECP and ECCC on the status of the project work and allocation of project funds.

Recent Meetings

Canadian RAP Implementation Committee (CRIC)

- June 23, 2022
- Next Meeting: TBD

Friends of the St. Clair River (FOSCR)

- May 10, 2022
- Next Meeting: TBD

Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC)

- June 23, 2022
- Next Meeting: Fall 2022

Outreach and Engagement

Re-designation Event - The RAP Office is assisting BPAC in organizing an event on September 13, 2022 to celebrate the 50-year milestone of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, and the Re-designation of four Beneficial Use Impairments to a Not Impaired status on the Canadian side of the St. Clair River Area of Concern. The event is by invitation only and will be a free two-hour cruise on the St. Clair River on the Duc d'Orleans. During the cruise, a representative from Environment and Climate Change Canada will speak to the four BUI's that have been re-designated - Fish Tumours and

Other Deformities, Bird and Animal Deformities, Restrictions on Dredging Activities, and Beach Closings.

Community Events – The RAP Office provided support to the Friends of the St. Clair River at recent community events; Sombra Days on July 9, 2022 and Mermaids and Mariners on August 20, 2022. The support provided consisted of equipment and hand-outs for the booth, and staffing of the booth.

Newsletter - Friends of the St. Clair River and the RAP Office continue to partner on the production of St. Clair River News, a free monthly e-newsletter. The goal of this newsletter is to increase awareness and engagement in the Area of Concern and highlight environmental initiatives happening in the region.

Link to the most recent Newsletter: [August E-Newsletter](#)

BD-22-90

Brennan – Kennes

“That the Board of Directors approves the consent agenda and receives the accompanying items 9.1 (a) through 9.1 (n) as information with the exception of 9.1 (h).”

CARRIED

Under New Business

Director Emery Huszka addressed the Board, expressing the complexities of representing the SCRCA Board of Directors, while also delivering value to the local farming community. It was noted that many in the farming community feel that communication from local Conservation Areas, among other various levels of government, is significantly lacking. It is requested that the board and management reflect on how we can better engage local farmers and work to build stronger relationships as we discuss the strategic plan and our overall commitment to continuous improvement. A formal invitation will be provided to SCRCA staff to attend the 2023 Grain Farmers of Ontario annual meeting on January 19, 2023 and staff are welcome to consider hosting a booth in order to facilitate discussions on matters of concern, in particular, concerns related to drainage.

Director John Brennan suggested making amendments to SCRCA governing by-laws with consideration for board membership cycling. While long-standing and experienced members of the board are seen as an asset, it was discussed amongst directors that having an annual turnover of 1/3 may provide council members with a stronger understanding of the Conservation Authority.

Vice Chair, Pat Brown highlighted the St. Clair River Area of Concern (AOC) Boat Cruise, held on September 13, 2022, which celebrated the re-designation of four beneficial use impairments along the St. Clair River. The Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC),

SCRCA and the Friends of the St. Clair River were commended for their work.

Director Tim Wilkins enquired when municipalities can expect to see an improvement on service delivery and timelines as they relate to permit applications. General Manager, Ken Phillips informed the board that a draft service delivery policy is underway and is expected to be brought to the November 10, 2022 board meeting. It was reiterated that delays in permitting can be incurred for various reasons, some of which are not under the control of the Conservation Authority. In addition, SCRCA has experienced the loss of 3 staff to other agencies in the past month and is doing everything possible to fill gaps and return staffing levels to full compliment.

Chair, Mike Stark noted a vast improvement within the Planning and Regulations department and reminded the board that there is a direct correlation between staffing levels and service delivery.

Director Kevin Marriott requested that the board move in-camera to discuss the recent loss of planning staff to other agencies and the possible reasoning.

BD-22-91

Marriott – Huszka

“That the Board of Directors move in-camera at 11:12 a.m. to discuss staff issues with the General Manager and Administrative Assistant/Board Coordinator present.”

CARRIED

BD-22-92

Brennan – Kennes

“That the Board of Directors rise and report at 11:34 a.m.”

CARRIED

At the June 23, 2022 Board of Directors meeting, General Manager Ken Phillips presented a plan to create and ultimately approve a new strategic plan for the SCRCA for the 5-year period of 2023-2028. The General Manager engaged all SCRCA staff to provide analysis of the 2017-2022 plan and suggest improvements/revisions for the 2023-2028 plan. Attached is a draft based on those discussions. Once the Board of Directors had provided its comments and direction, staff will hold public information sessions throughout the watershed.

Strategic Objectives(s):

Goal 4: Build a Stronger and More Valued Workplace Through Business Excellence.

Financial Impact:

None

The draft strategic plan was reviewed.

Directors Comments:

Chair Mike Stark commented that SCRCA should maintain focus on mandatory, core Programming and that any additional programs must be fully funded.

BD-22-93

Burrell – Kennes

“The Board of Directors receive for information and discussion the draft 2023-2028 Strategic Plan and further that the Board of Directors directs staff to engage the public to provide feedback on the draft plan once revisions based on Boards of Directors comments are incorporated.”

CARRIED

BD-22-94

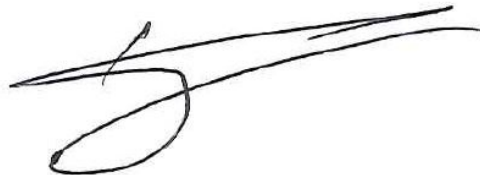
Brennan – Burrell

“That the meeting be adjourned at 12:03 p.m.”

CARRIED



Mike Stark
Chair



Ken Phillips
General Manager