



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: December 8, 2022 Time: 10:00 a.m.
Warwick Community Centre – 7074 Egremont Rd, Watford

Directors Present: Diane Brewer, Vice Chair Pat Brown, Terry Burrell, Joe Faas, Greg Grimes, Brad Loosley, Kevin Marriott, Steve Miller, Frank Nemcek, Chair Mike Stark, Jerry Westgate, Tim Wilkins

Directors Present (Remote): Al Broad, John Brennan, Frank Kennes, Aaron Hall, Emery Huszka, Lorie Scott

Regrets: Bill Dennis, Debbie Heffernan, Betty Ann MacKinnon

Staff Present: Donna Blue, Manager of Communications; Melissa Deisley, Director of Planning and Resources; Nicole Drumm, Special Projects Technician; Chris Durand, Manager of IT/GIS (remote); Emily Febrey, Stewardship Communications Technician; Ashley Fletcher, Administrative Assistant/ Board Coordinator; Kate Jamieson, Payroll/Accounting Clerk; Chunning Li, Director of Corporate Services; Tim Payne, Manager of Forestry; Ken Phillips, General Manager; Shane White, Maintenance Foreman, McKeough Dam; Greg Wilcox, Manager of Conservation Areas

Guests Present: Phil De Moor, Mark Hay, Kristen Rodriguez (remote)

The Chair welcomed Directors, staff and guests 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. The Chair gave his congratulations to Kevin Marriott on his re-election as Warden of Lambton County and wishes him the best of luck. Congratulations is also expressed to all of the Lambton County representatives, sworn in on December 7, 2022. The Chair also wished to recognize and give his appreciation for the efforts of SCRCA staff this year.

BD-22-117

Burrell – Wilkins

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

The minutes of the Board of Directors meeting, held November 10, 2022 were reviewed.

BD-22-118

Grimes – Westgate

“That the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting, held November 10, 2022, be approved as distributed.”

CARRIED

Manager of Forestry Tim Payne presented an overview of the Forestry department.

Additional Comments:

Director Emery Huszka enquired whether Authority staff have arranged selective harvesting of the 677 acres of land. This question was asked in order to highlight that private landowners are encouraged to do so as an environmentally responsible, best management practice. Manager of Forestry, Tim Payne explained that SCRCA has not done any harvesting since the invasion of the Emerald Ash Borer, at which time an aggressive ash salvage was completed. Since this time, SCRCA has been monitoring the health and rehabilitation of its forests. Harvesting is not currently scheduled to occur, however staff are considering all factors, including price of lumber.

BD-22-119

Loosley – Wilkins

“That the Board of Directors acknowledge the presentation from Tim Payne, Manager of Forestry, providing an overview of the Forestry department.”

CARRIED

The presentation Slides reviewed on the recommendations of Climate Proof Canada on the National Adaptation Strategy (NAS), as delivered by Craig Stewart (Vice President, National Affairs at the Insurance Bureau of Canada) and Blair Feltmate (Head, Intact Centre on Climate Adaptation, University of Waterloo).

Additional Comments: It is requested that the presentation slides be shared with municipalities, who are encouraged to consider the flood-reducing strategies contained within and share with their respective ratepayers.

BD-22-120

Miller – Loosley

“That the Board of Directors acknowledge the presentation on the recommendations of Climate Proof Canada on the National Adaptation Strategy (NAS), as delivered by Craig Stewart (Vice President, National Affairs at the Insurance Bureau of Canada) and Blair Feltmate (Head, Intact Centre on Climate Adaptation, University of Waterloo) and further that a copy of the presentation slides be forwarded to all member municipalities.”

CARRIED

General Manager, Ken Phillips provided a presentation on the progression of Bill 23 – *More Homes Built Faster*.

Additional Comments:

Director of Water Resources, Girish Sankar provided a brief update on the floodplain mapping project. Contractor Riggs Engineering is expected to produce a draft version of the watershed mapping by the end of 2022. While an overall reduction in floodplain area is resulting, some areas such as those surrounding bridges, demonstrate a pooling effect and possibly larger reach of the floodplain area.

Letters endorsed by the Authority Chair, Vice-Chair and agreeable member municipal mayors have been sent to Provincial Government, carbon copying relevant Ministers and local Members of Provincial Parliament (MPP) outlining our concern with Bill 23 have been sent and member municipalities have also been encouraged to draft their own responses. It was noted by Chair Mike Stark that not all of our member municipal leaders are in unity regarding the Authority’s response.

Director Joe Faas made a suggestion to draft correspondence to our local MPPs to express the Authority’s dissatisfaction with Bill 23 and to request a meeting to discuss the matter further.

Director and Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry agricultural representative Emery Huszka requests a concise, point form document focussing on the Authority’s top 3 concerns, including constructive criticism and alternative solutions that can be relayed to local MPPs in correspondence or face to face discussion.

BD-22-121

Faas – Grimes

“That the Board of Directors directs the drafting of correspondence to the relevant Members of Provincial Parliament with respect to the Authority’s alarm regarding the progression of Bill 23 – *More Homes Built Faster*, including a request for a meeting to further discuss such concerns.”

CARRIED

Operations

- General Manager and the Director of Planning and Regulations attended a session on November 9th, 2022, hosted by Conservation Ontario, focusing on streamlining service delivery standards. A number of initiatives were discussed and SCRCA staff will be coordinating an information session with municipal staff, in partnership with Lambton County staff, in early 2023.
- The 2023-2028 Strategic Plan commenting period ended on November 22. All official comments have been catalogued and the final plan will be sent to the Board of Directors for approval. There were no major edits required based on comments received.

- Staff are currently undergoing performance reviews and the review system is being examined to in order provide a better model for future years.

Community/Partnership Outreach

- The General Manager attended a meeting with the new senior staff of the Bluewater Association for Safety, Environment, & Sustainability (BASES) on November 22. The General Manager provided a brief presentation of the BASES/SCRCA relationship since 1996.
- The General Manager had a number of interviews with local media outlets (print, radio and TV) regarding Bill 23. The messaging centered around the risks the proposed legislation has for Conservation Authorities and their municipal partners.
- The General Manager attended the Lambton County Warden's Banquet on November 19. He had the opportunity to meet a number of local politicians, the new County CAO and a number of County staff.

Federal/Provincial/Municipal Meetings

- The General Manager has attended a Conservation Ontario Meeting on November 15 to discuss the challenges and receive for information on Bill 23. A special session of Conservation Ontario will take place on November 28. It is anticipated that the legislation will be passed either December 8 or 9. As of the writing of this report, Bill 23 had passed third reading with no changes. A verbal update on the legislation will be provided at the Board of Directors meeting.
- The General Manager attended meetings co-ordinated by Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA) with the Mayors of Southwest Middlesex and Chatham-Kent to provide information on the potential impacts to our watershed municipalities. He will be meeting with staff from Sarnia and Lambton County in the coming week.
- The General Manager has presentations scheduled with 6 member municipalities in early 2023 to provide an overview of the SCRCA. 1 other is pending a finalized date.

BD-22-122

Burrell – Kennes

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the General Manager’s report, dated November 24, 2022, as well as the verbal report on the changes to the Conservation Act.”

CARRIED

A summary of proposed changes to the SCRCA Administration Manual was reviewed.

BD-22-123

Burrell – Westgate

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges receipt of the draft SCRCA Administration Manual and summary of proposed changes and further approves the adoption of all updates recommended within the report.”

CARRIED

A summary of proposed changes to the SCRCA Administrative By-Laws were reviewed.

Additional Comments:

Director Terry Burrell raised concern with item 6.3, the appendix for the procedure for election of officers. It is requested that the procedure be amended in order for nominated individuals to express their willingness to stand before the closing of nominations.

BD-22-124

Marriott – Nemcek

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges receipt of the draft SCRCA Administrative By-Laws and summary of proposed changes and further approves the adoption of all updates recommended within the report.”

CARRIED

The revised list of the rotation of annual general meeting locations was reviewed.

BD-22-125

Brown – Grimes

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated November 2, 2022 regarding the rotation of annual general meetings and further approves the schedule of locations, as presented.”

CARRIED

The current retention policy states that accounts payable and accounts receivable documents are to be retained for 7 years.

The current retention policy states that vehicle records are to be retained for 6 years.

Documents to be destroyed:

- 2015 accounts payables, including government remittances, OMERS remittances, group benefit remittances and property tax remittances.
- 2015 deposits, including camping deposits and invoices
- 2016 vehicle inspection sheets

BD-22-126

Miller – Burrell

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated November 21, 2022 regarding document retention and approves the destruction of the identified documents as per the SCRCA Document Retention Policy.”

CARRIED

Measures that are currently in place along with proposed recommendations to ensure public safety on and near hunting areas

- The SCRCA hunting program requires that hunters be member in good standing with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH), which comes with \$5 million excess Member’s Personal Public Liability Insurance.
- The Ontario Government requires all hunters take the Ontario Hunter Education Course which instills responsible hunting practices, to respect hunting regulations, prevent accidents and ensure public safety. The course includes in class training and a practical exam.
- The Government of Canada requires hunters to complete the Canadian Firearms Safety Course before applying for a Possession and Acquisition License (PAL) to obtain a firearm. There is an in-class instruction as well as a written and practical test where applicants need to demonstrate firearms safety practices, safe handling and carry procedures, safe storage, display, transportation, and handling of non-restricted firearms. Prior to obtaining a PAL, a federal background check is completed.
- Hunting has proven to be a safe and compatible activity in multi-use recreation areas. According to Statistics Canada, hunting is statistically safer than golf, horseback riding, bicycling, baseball, swimming, and boating.
- Hunters play an important role in reducing vehicle collisions with wildlife, managing wild game populations, and wild game monitoring through mandatory hunter reporting.
- Hunters must follow provincial and federal laws including the Migratory Birds Convention Act and the Wildlife Conservation Act. Legislation is enforced by Conservation Officers. Municipal governments may pass by-laws, which they enforce, regarding the discharge of firearms as it pertains to public safety.
- Hunting, and trapping are heritage activities and are recognized as such in federal and provincial legislation. Millions of Ontarians participate in these activities, which contribute billions annually to the province’s economic, cultural, and ecological wealth, and through license sales, provide two thirds of the funding of Ontario’s fish and wildlife programs.
- Hunting provides recreational opportunity for many Ontario residents and is a popular activity due to its physical and mental challenge. Outdoor recreation activities and time in nature have been shown to improve mental health. Additionally, wild game meat is a great source of lean, free-range protein that helps offset food costs.
- Hunters and trappers play an important role in wildlife management through licenses and game seals. The money gets reinvested in habitat improvement, enforcement, science, and education in the province. Hunters also donate their own time and resources to conservation projects that help our lands and wildlife. Hunters contribute

to wildlife research by completing harvest reports and providing wildlife samples to scientists. The research is used by wildlife biologists to inform management.

- The SCRCA suspends all other hunting activities during the two controlled deer hunt seasons and require hunters to apply to hunt in the seven McKeough hunting parcel zones to limit hunting pressure. The SCRCA Controlled deer hunt zone draw application is included in this report. In the last 20 years no hunter has applied to hunt zone 3 during the shotgun hunt, and only once has a hunter been permitted to hunt zone three in those 20 years. That hunter was the only SCRCA permitted hunter to receive a controlled deer hunt tag from the MNR, that hunter did not hunt zone 3.

In addition to the above existing requirements, staff at SCRCA recommend specific improvements:

- (a) Include aerial maps of the properties on the SCRCA website showing the property boundaries.
- (b) Include a copy of the current Ontario Hunting Summary and Migratory Bird hunting summary on the SCRCA website
- (c) Install property delineation markers before the 2023- 2024 hunting season for properties with identified issues (reported trespassing, unusual property line, etc.).
- (d) Create SCRCA Hunters Code of Ethics to include with the hunting permit.
- (e) Encourage adjacent landowners to post their property to deter trespassing, call the OPP or Conservation Office if there is a safety issue, and report concerns to SCRCA staff.
- (f) Include a reminder with the hunting permit that hunting the SCRCA lands is a privilege, trespassing or unsafe and unethical hunting practices will not be tolerated and may result in the elimination of the privilege to hunt.
- (g) Continue the hunting program in its current state with no restrictions or buffers and continue to document, corroborate, and investigate any issues moving forward to determine if permitted hunters are causing issues or if the issues are non-permitted hunters trespassing to hunt.
- (h) Replace property corner signs along roadways of the upstream properties. Install access point signage (or trespass signage, whichever route we wish to go) at each property informing the public of permitted activities on that parcel and any known risks (similar to the examples below)

2. The Implications to the overall SCRCA hunting program if the property in question were to be eliminated as a permitted hunting property

- The SCRCA hunting program generated \$8260.00 in funds for the SCRCA upstream lands in the 2022-2023 hunting season.
- The elimination of property 40 and property 56 would eliminate approximately 40 acres and 78 acres respectively from the roughly 1700 acres of land currently permitted for hunting by the SCRCA.
- Eliminating properties, implementing restrictions or buffers to the hunting properties may make enforcement difficult and set an unwanted precedent for

future issues.

3. Notices to all SCRCA hunting permit holders regarding the safety concerns

- As a normal practice SCRCA staff include a letter in the permit package to all permitted hunters. This letter reminds the hunters to be safe, ethical, and respectful hunters while hunting on conservation lands. Informing hunters of issues or changes to the SCRCA hunting program and reminding hunters to review the Ontario hunting regulations and migratory bird hunting summary to keep current with any changes that have been implemented.
- As per the board direction, a letter has been sent to all hunting permit holders on November 15, 2022. A copy of this letter is attached here.

4. Clarification:

The Delegation that addressed the Board at the November meeting was concerned that the Board may have misinterpreted the nature of their request, and requested it be included in this report which is:

- Property 40 be restricted to archery hunting only, with a 100m buffer zone (no firearms) and
- Property 56 establish a 100m buffer zone at the north end of the property.

It is not the delegation's intention to eliminate hunting on property 40 & 56, or the SCRCA hunting program in its entirety.

BD-22-127

Marriott – Burrell

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated November 21, 2022 on the Property 40 and 56 hunting report.”

CARRIED

The McKeough Upstream lands are not considered prime agricultural lands. These lands were acquired during the construction of the Darcy McKeough Dam and Floodway, to be flooded during the operation of the Dam. Lands in this area are low floodplain and have small acreage of workable lands. A small portion of these lands are tiled, and many have not benefitted from best farm practices.

Historically, agricultural lands were leased for 3-year terms, with the current tenant having first right of refusal (i.e. the ability to match the highest bid). During the last tendering process, the Board approved several changes to the lease agreement documents, including a longer term (5 years) and the withdrawal of the current tenant's first right of refusal.

At the November 10, 2022 Board of Directors meeting, a delegation from Mr. Ben Arnold was presented with the request to approve 2 5-year extensions of the agriculture lease agreements for 13 properties currently rented.

Mr. Arnold has been a tenant for two years. During this time, he has become familiar with the lands and has sought input from a professional agronomist regarding farming practices and soil health. Mr. Arnold has received recommendations from the agronomist to invest inputs to increase the soil fertility. As mentioned at the board meeting, Mr. Arnold is requesting an extension of the lease in order benefit from the results of his investment in the lands,

Mr. Arnold has rented the lands at what appears to be a fair market value, give the location, topography, and history of the lands. (Previous rent amounts attached)

It is understood by staff that soil health and fertility is a benefit to the tenant and has very little benefit to the actual conservation of the lands. However, the Conservation Authority, as a landowner, should still be promoting best farming practices. Currently, there is a tenant that is willing to invest in the lands and provide results.

Staff intends to review the agriculture lease agreement template prior to the next tender, necessary edits and/or further conditions may be made at that time.

Strategic Objectives(s):

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

Develop New Tools to Promote Stewardship Practices and Evaluate the Effectiveness of Best Management Practices:

Evaluate the current model of landowner outreach and voluntary stewardship and explore new tools and collaborations that expand conservation opportunities utilizing information from our watershed report cards. Best Management Practices (BMPs) are encouraged to promote soil health, improve water quality, and provide for more resilient watersheds. Efforts need to be made to evaluate the various BMPs to ensure they are creating the results expected such as reducing nutrient loss from farm fields (with a focus on phosphorus) and decreasing sedimentation in watercourses. This is an opportunity to work with colleges and universities, farming groups, and others to develop solid science to evaluate BMP effectiveness.

Financial Impact:

None

BD-22-128

Burrell - Loosley

“That the Board of Directors acknowledge the report dated November 24, 2022 on McKeough Upstream Lands Agricultural Lease Agreement and deny the extension of the agricultural lease agreements, upholding the current terms and cycle of the tender process and further that the Board of Directors form a committee to review the agricultural lease documents prior to the scheduled tender and that members of this committee be appointed at the February 9, 2023 Nominating Committee meeting.”

CARRIED

Strategic Plan Public Open Houses:

Open houses were held throughout October and November to solicit feedback from the public on the draft 2023-2028 strategic plan. In total, 14 people attended the in-person sessions. Comments were also received via email and at the office until November 22nd. Two submissions were received via email/in-person at the SCRCA Administration building. A summary of the public open houses, as well as comments received were reviewed.

Proposed Revision to Draft 2023-2028 Strategic Plan

With the passing of Bill 23 – *More Homes Built Faster Act* on November 28th, the following revision is proposed to Goal 3.1 – Effectively and Efficiently Administer Regulations of the *Conservation Authorities Act* to Protect Natural Heritage.

Current Draft:

The SCRCA is committed to providing customer service excellence for watershed municipalities and citizens in providing input on risks to natural heritage features. Through collaboration with partner organizations, the SCRCA will provide biological and ecological expertise for natural heritage plans, strategies, and policies. While responsibility for natural heritage protection falls to municipalities under the *Planning Act*, the SCRCA can provide the ecological and biological knowledge to support our member municipalities.

Proposed Change:

The SCRCA is committed to providing customer service excellence for watershed municipalities and citizens in providing input on risks to natural heritage features. **As permitted and/or requested, the SCRCA will provide biological and ecological expertise for natural heritage plans, strategies, and policies in collaboration with partner organizations.** While responsibility for natural heritage protection falls to municipalities under the *Planning Act*, the SCRCA can provide the ecological and biological knowledge to support our member municipalities.

BD-22-129

Nemcek – Westgate

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated November 29, 2022, that summarizes the consultation and comments received regarding the SCRCA’s draft 2023-2028 strategic plan and further approves the editorial changes surrounding natural heritage services provided by the Authority.”

CARRIED

The following items were reviewed under the consent agenda.

Item (a) – Business Arising

The report on business arising from the November 10, 2022 Board of Directors meeting was reviewed.

Item (b) – Current Watershed Conditions and Great Lakes Levels

Report Highlights:

- Precipitation has been below normal the last 2 months but at normal amounts the past 18 months
- Surrounding lakes water levels are projected to remain above average
- Current flood threat is low owing to lack of precipitation and lower levels on the surrounding lakes

Watershed Conditions:

Precipitation

- Precipitation has been below normal for most stations over the past 2 months
- High precipitation events in previous months have helped cushion the overall 18-month trend to near- and above-normal amounts
- River flows are impacted by precipitation trends and as a result below normal flows have been recorded recently

Lake Levels

- Water levels on the surrounding lakes are down 30+ cm from last year
- Lake Huron remains above average by 14 cm, Lakes St. Clair and Erie are both 23 cm above average
- Water levels on Lake Huron are projected to flow closer to but remain above average over the next 6 months

Flood Threat

- Flood threat is currently low; Wallaceburg has 80 cm of freeboard
- A lack of precipitation has seen a drop in water levels and flows, resulting in a greater storage capacity in the watershed

- Moving into winter, freeze-thaw events, rain on snow, and ice jamming will be potential concerns for flood events

Item (c) – Healthy Watershed Program 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. To implement stewardship and outreach, SCRCA staff source grant funding from a variety of sources.

Update:

Outreach and Events

Healthy Watersheds staff continue to host stewardship and agriculturally based outreach events to promote the implementation of best management practices and stewardship within the Sydenham River and St. Clair watershed.

Stewardship Staff worked with the Municipality of Lambton Shores and the Lake Huron Coastal Centre (LHCC) in restoring a portion of dune grass near the Upperwash Beach Boat Launch. SCRCA worked with Lambton Shores and LHCC staff to properly transplant grasses from the adjacent property to a section along a sidewalk that will assist in holding down sand and provide habitat.

Stewardship and Education Staff hosted a tree planting event at Kettle and Stony Point First Nation Hillside School in November. Students and Staff planted cedars, willows, and red oak trees that all have medicinal and cultural importance to the Ojibwe People. SCRCA Staff greatly appreciated the enthusiasm of the students and the Hillside teachers who shared the Ojibwe language of the tree parts and species. This project was funded by MECP COA and was part of the Healthy Lake Huron program.

Outreach Materials

Outreach materials assist in promoting stewardship and implementation of best management practices within the Sydenham River and St. Clair watershed.

Learn with Ranger Em Episodes continue! New episodes include an interview with the Biology Department showcasing their “Captive Hatch and Release” program, highlighting the success of working to restore the Spiny Softshell Turtle’s population; an Interview with Lake Huron Coastal Centre and discussing Lake Huron, Dune Restoration and the invasive species, Phragmites; and an interview with Katie Stammler from Essex Region Conservation Authority to discuss the Great Lakes and the challenges facing them today while highlighting the work farmers are doing. Find the episodes here:

<https://rogerstv.com/show?lid=12&rid=9&sid=8348&gid=626867>

Stewardship Project Update:

This summer and fall have been busy with stewardship projects! Staff has been working with landowners, partners, and contractors to implement 5 wetlands (5 acres in total) across the watershed. Stewardship staff continues to work with partners to create 3 more wetlands (3 acres). Conservation Services is gearing up for fall site visits and planning for the spring planting season.

Grant Update:

Staff has been busy working on interim reports for DFO Canadian Nature Fund (\$339,000 – ending in March 2023), MECP COA HLH (\$60,000 – ending in December 2022), and MECP OCEF (\$56,643.65).

Staff are also currently working with DFO to finalize a “top-up” on the current Canadian Nature Fund for \$24,500 to go towards additional education programming, stewardship programming, and outreach. Finally, Stewardship Staff are currently working on an application for Environment Climate Change Canada’s EcoAction. This application will be to further fund stewardship programming and education programming.

Item (d) – Planning Activity Summary Report

The planning activity summary report for the period October 1, 2022 to October 31, 2022 was reviewed.

Item (e) – Regulations Activity Summary Report

The regulations activity summary report for the period October 1, 2022 to October 31, 2022 was reviewed.

Item (f) – Revenue and Expense Summary

The revenue and expense summary to October 31, 2022 was reviewed.

Item (g) – Disbursements

The list of disbursements to October 31, 2022 was reviewed.

Item (h) – 2022 General Levy Summary

The general levy summary to October 31, 2022 was reviewed.

Item (i) – Investment Reports

The investment reports to October 31, 2022 were reviewed.

Item (j) – St. Clair River AOC

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 and October 2022 to promote completion of the survey. Direct emailing to relevant area businesses also occurred in August 2022. The survey remains available for completion online at the Friends of the St. Clair River website. There have been 136 responses to date.

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 redesignated 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 presentation to the newly elected Walpole Island First Nation Chief and Council is anticipated in January 2022. A presentation to the Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC) will follow. 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 redesignate 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. An Interim Progress Report was submitted to MECP on November 1, 2022, as per the agreement.

Recent and Scheduled Meetings:

Canadian RAP Implementation Committee (CRIC)

- January 20, 2022
- June 23, 2022
- November 8, 2022

Friends of the St. Clair River (FOSCR)

- February 15, 2022
- May 10, 2022
- September 21, 2022
- December 5, 2022 (Annual General Meeting)

Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC)

- January 27, 2022
- March 24, 2022
- June 23, 2022
- November 1, 2022

Outreach and Engagement:

Redesignation Event

Members of the BPAC gathered September 13, 2022 aboard the Duc d'Orleans to celebrate four milestones in the restoration of the St. Clair River – the re-designation of four BUIs to Not Impaired on the Canadian side of the St. Clair River: Fish Tumours or Other Deformities, Bird or Animal Deformities or Reproductive Problems, Restrictions on Dredging Activities, and Beach Closings. The 50th Anniversary of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement was also recognized during the celebrations.

Community Events

The RAP Office provided support to the Friends of the St. Clair River at the following 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. Completion of the Fish Survey was also promoted during the events.

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: [November E-Newsletter](#)

BD-22-130

Burrell – Miller

“That the Board of Directors approves the consent agenda and endorses the recommendations accompanying Items 7.1 a - 7.1 j.”

CARRIED

BD-22-131

Loosley – Faas

“That the Board of Directors move in-camera at 11:20 a.m. to discuss conservation awards and personnel information with the General Manager, Manager of Communications, Director of Finance, Manager of IT and Administrative Assistant/ Board Coordinator remaining.”

CARRIED

Chair Mike Stark announced that the Board of Directors approved the nominees for the annual conservation awards and changes to cost of living, mileage and salary grid steps for eligible staff, as outlined within the in-camera reports.

BD-22-132

Miller – Brewer

“That the Board of Directors rise and report at 11:25 a.m.”

CARRIED

Director Terry Burrell brought forward the matter of SCRCA’s 2023 fees and requested that they be put into effect December 31, 2022.

BD-22-133

Burrell – Scott

“That the Board of Directors approve the codifying of motions BD-22-78 to BD-22-79, to resolve that 2023 fee rates be effective on Dec 31 2022.”

CARRIED

Under New Business

Vice Chair Pat Brown provided a brief update on Association of Municipalities Ontario and their response to Bill 23, as well as the Conservation Ontario listening session. Directors are reminded that the commenting registry for regulations (besides Wetlands) remains open until December 30th, 2022.

General Manager Ken Phillips provided a reminder that Bill 39, *Better Municipal Governance Act, 2022* is another act expected to be passed that municipalities should be aware of. This act will remove planning commenting and capabilities on regional municipalities and may have an effect on finances.

Chair Mike Stark gave thanks to Special Projects Technician Nicole Drumm for her efforts in managing the IT for the meeting. Staff and Directors were all acknowledged for their efforts and a successful year ahead is wished to all.

Director Brad Loosley provided his remarks to staff, highlighting all of the positive work that has been done this year. A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all.

Directors Kevin Marriott and Tim Wilkins thanked the Authority for their time as directors. Both will be passing the baton to new council members in 2023. Mr. Marriott reminded staff they are not taken for granted, particularly as we adapt in these times of rapid change.

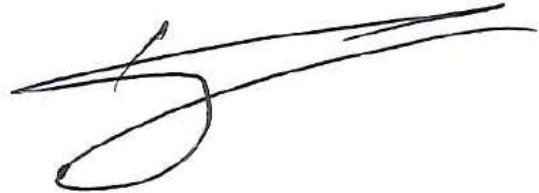
BD-22-134

Grimes – Loosley

“That the meeting be adjourned at 11:41 a.m.”



Pat Brown
2023 Chair



Ken Phillips
General Manager