



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: February 22, 2024 Time: 10:00 a.m.
Dawn-Euphemia Community Centre
6213 Mill Street, Florence, ON

Directors Present: Al Broad, Pat Brown, Chair; Terry Burrell, Sue Cates, Greg Grimes, Aaron Hall, Emery Huszka, Rhonda Jubenville, Brad Loosley, Betty Ann MacKinnon, Don McCabe, Don McCallum, Mary Lynne McCallum, Steve Miller, Kristen Rodrigues, Lorie Scott, Vice Chair; Jerry Westgate

Directors Remote: John Brennan, Adam Kilner

Directors Regrets: Anne Marie Gillis, Frank Kennes

Staff Present: Donna Blue, Manager of Communications; Steve Clark, Risk Management Official/Inspector; Melissa Deisley, Director of Planning and Regulations; Nicole Drumm, Watershed Biologist; Chris Durand, Manager of IT/GIS; Emily Febrey, Communication and Education Technician; Ashley Fletcher, Administrative Assistant/Board Coordinator; Kate Jamieson, Payroll/Accounting Clerk; Melissa Levi, Conservation Education Coordinator; Chunning Li, Director of Corporate Services; Tim Payne, Manager of Forestry; Ken Phillips, General Manager; Girish Sankar, Director of Water Resources; Steve Shaw, Manager of Conservation Services; Kelli Smith, Conservation Lands Specialist; Sarah Snetsinger, Watershed Biologist; Myra Spiller, Conservation Education/Community Partnership Technician; Shane White, Maintenance Foreman – McKeough Dam; Greg Wilcox, Manager of Lands

Guests Present: Jeff Agar, Mayor of the Township of St. Clair; Steve Arnold; Gary Atkison, Mayor of Plympton-Wyoming; Lindsay Buchanan, Rural Lambton Stewardship Network; Donna Clermont, Town of Dawn-Euphemia; Jason Cole, Lambton County; Paul Dalton, Township of Dawn-Euphemia; Grace Dekker, Centre Ipperwash Community Association; Joe Faas, St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation; Dr. Catherine Febria, Healthy Headwaters, University of Windsor; Dave Ferguson, Mayor of Brooke-Alvinston; Michelle Ferri, Centre Ipperwash Community Association; Maureen Harvey, Centre Ipperwash Community Association; Jill Jackson, Hillside School; Jeffrey Lallean, Healthy Headwaters; Brad Langstaff, Township of St. Clair; Kevin Marriott, Warden of Lambton County; Dave Marsh, Municipality of Lambton Shores; Sandra Marshall, Centre Ipperwash Community Association; Andrew Meyer, Lambton County; Netty McEwen, Township of Plympton-Wyoming; Anne McGugan; Don McGugan; Ray Mile, MNP Chartered Professional Accountants LLP; Nicole Monague, Hillside School; Ross O'Hara, 2024 Director; Kathryn Shailer; Sarika Sharma, Healthy Headwaters; Bonnie Stevenson, The Beacon of St. Clair Township; Carla Trepanier, Town of Dawn-Euphemia; Anita

Turner, Centre Ipperwash Community Association; Thiranya Weerakoon, Healthy Headwaters; Julie Welker, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority.

1. Land Acknowledgement

A land acknowledgment was read by General Manager, Ken Phillips which recognized the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority watershed as part of the traditional territories of the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak and Chonnonton Nations, who have a sacred responsibility to preserve the land and water of southwestern Ontario. Also acknowledged are the Treaties that allow the SCRCA to work alongside the First Nation Communities of Kettle and Stony Point, Aamjiwnaang and Bkejwanong to ensure we share the responsibility of preserving the land and water.

2. Call to Order and Chair's Remarks

The meeting was called to order by the Chair, Pat Brown, who on behalf of the directors and staff of the Conservation Authority, welcomed everyone to the annual meeting and went on to highlight some of the Conservation Authority's achievements this past year.

2023 Highlights:

- The Conservation Education program continued to be a popular choice among teachers and students alike, with almost 22,000 students engaged throughout the year. The team continued to offer virtual and schoolyard programs, allowing them to reach schools unable to visit our Education Centre in Petrolia due to bussing costs and availability.
- In collaboration with St. Clair Township and the City of Sarnia, shoreline protection work continued along Lake Huron and the St. Clair River to help reduce erosion that can threaten important municipal infrastructure. This on-going work will also help prepare shoreline communities for more intense wind and wave action, expected as a result of climate change.
- The Planning and Regulations team continued to support safe and resilient development throughout the watershed by issuing over 200 permits and providing comments on over 200 *Planning Act* applications.
- 2023 also marked the release of the 10,000th turtle hatchling by the Biology team since 2016, when the Captive Hatch and Release turtle program began. This program aims to lend a helping hand to our local turtle species by collecting and incubating eggs from nests at risk of predation, development, and human activities.
 - Biologists also monitored local waterways for fish and freshwater mussel species as part of their work to fill knowledge gaps related to species at risk distributions and populations which is essential to prioritizing research activities and implementing rehabilitation and protection measures.
- Through the Healthy Watersheds and tree planting programs, the SCRCA continued to provide both technical and financial support to local landowners interested in implementing projects on their properties – over 70,000 trees were

- planted, and 41 stewardship projects were implemented throughout the watershed.
- In support of the commitment to continuously improve visitor experience and accessibility at our Conservation Areas, the SCRCA was able to secure several grants to upgrade trails and other amenities to allow everyone to enjoy and connect with the outdoors.

And lastly, the SCRCA continued to meet the legislative requirements prescribed under new regulations issued through the *Conservation Authorities Act*.

3. Introduction of Guests

The Chair thanked our Board of Directors and staff for their hard work and dedication to the Authority and acknowledged the partners, whose support and collaborations help realize our vision of a healthy and sustainable natural environment in the St. Clair Region.

Special guests were introduced and the following collaborators and partners in attendance were recognized:

- Kettle and Stony Point Hillside School
- Lambton County
- Council members and staff from several of our member municipalities
- St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation
- The University of Windsor
- Rural Lambton Stewardship Network
- Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
- Plains Midstream Canada

The Honourable Marilyn Gladu, Member of Parliament for Sarnia-Lambton, who was unable to attend the meeting; as well as his Worship Al Broad, Mayor of the Township of Dawn-Euphemia and his Worship Lambton County Warden and Mayor of the Township of Enniskillen, Kevin Marriott brought greetings and expressed appreciation of the collaborative efforts of the SCRCA on various initiatives and projects.

4. Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

Director Emery Huszka declared a pecuniary interest pertaining to budgetary items, as per the terms of his appointment as agricultural representative through the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry.

5. Approval of the Agenda

BD-24-01

Grimes – Huszka

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

CARRIED

6. Minutes

6.1 Minutes of the December 7, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting

BD-24-02

Miller – Loosley

“That the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held December 7, 2023, be approved as distributed.”

CARRIED

6.2 Minutes of the February 8, 2024 Executive Committee Meeting

BD-24-03

Burrell – MacKinnon

“That the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held February 8, 2024, be approved as distributed.”

CARRIED

7. Conservation Ontario Report

Verbal Update:

General Manager, Ken Phillips provided a verbal update on the new regulation, released Friday, February 16th surrounding flood hazard work and planning and regulations, providing Ministerial powers to overrule Authority and Board decisions on the issue of permits, as well as new protocols for environmental assessments. Conservation Ontario will be providing further updates regarding a response.

BD-24-04

Loosley – Scott

“That the Board of Directors receive for information, a verbal report on the Conservation Ontario Council meeting, held remotely on December 11, 2023.”

CARRIED

8. Presentation of the 2023 Audited Statements

BD-24-05

Burrell – Miller

“That the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority accepts the recommendation of the Executive Committee and report from the Authority’s auditors, MNP Chartered Professional Accountants LLP, and further approves the 2023 Audited Financial Statements.”

CARRIED

9. Conservation Awards

Vice Chair Lorie Scott presented the following Conservation Awards:

Kettle and Stony Point First Nation Hillside School

- For the past four school years, Hillside School has partnered with St. Clair Conservation's Education Team to provide students with hands-on, outdoor, land-based, learning opportunities.
- Hillside School offers a Land-Based Education program to ensure students understand their roles, responsibilities, and relationship toward the natural world.
- The success of this program is dependent on all the staff at the school – the Ojibwee teachers, classroom teachers, classroom support staff, and administration.
- Working together with St. Clair Conservation, each classroom visits a nearby forest for 'bushwalks' once every three weeks.
- During each bushwalk the students experience holistic lessons on various subjects.
- Lessons contain a blend of western-science, Ojibwee language, and traditional knowledge.
- Students at Hillside School, the next generation, benefit immensely from this on-the-land learning.
- Exceptional Educators, like the staff at Hillside School, contribute to an increase in knowledge and connection to the natural world.
- The Authority is grateful for the knowledge and education we also received from the teachers and students at Hillside School and for their warm welcome into their school community.

On behalf of the Kettle and Stony Point First Nation Hillside School, Nicole Monague expressed thanks for the award and for the collaborative relationship with the SCRCA.

Centre Ipperwash Community Association

- Members of the Centre Ipperwash Community Association embody their vision for projects, which states "By coming together to share, work, and play, the quality of life within our community can be improved."
- Many members, including a former Conservation Award recipient, Sandra Marshal (who is here today), head out to Ipperwash Beach almost daily to walk to shoreline.
- While out on their walks, enjoying Ipperwash Beach, members are geared up with gloves, buckets, and pickers to collect garbage they come across to ensure that the beach remains both aesthetically and environmentally clean.
- St. Clair Conservation partners with the Association to host the annual Ipperwash Beach Cleanup which happens the Saturday after Labour Day.

- Many members participate year after year and because of their daily garbage pickup, our September cleanup event is always much easier than expected, considering the busy summer crowds that visit the beach every summer.
- We want to thank the Centre Ipperwash Community Association for their commitment to community and long-standing commitment to ensure Ipperwash Beach remains an inviting and clean shoreline.

Representing the Centre Ipperwash Community Association, Sandra Marshall spoke regarding the initiatives and achievements of the group gave thanks for the award.

BD-24-06

Rodrigues – Cates

“That the Board of Directors congratulates the 2024 Conservation Award Winners and thanks them for their contributions to conservation.”

CARRIED

10. Service Awards

The following service awards were presented:

Five Years of Service

- John Brennan, Director
- Pat Brown, Director and Chair
- Frank Kennes, Director
- Don McCallum, Director
- Lorie Scott, Director
- Brad Loosley, Director

Ten Years of Service

- Melissa Deisley, Director of Planning and Regulations

15 Years of Service

- Steve Clark, Risk Management Official/Inspector

20 Years of Service

- Shane White, Maintenance Foreman, McKeough Floodway

25 Years of Service

- Chris Durand, Manager of IT/GIS

35 Years of Service

- Steve Shaw, Manager of Conservation Services

BD-24-07

Burrell – MacKinnon

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

CARRIED

A short recess was called following the conclusion of 2023 business. The meeting resumed at 11:02 a.m. to conduct 2024 business. Ross O’Hara, 2024 Director representing the Town of Petrolia was welcomed to the Board.

11. Code of Conduct

BD-24-08

McCallum, Mary Lynne – Burrell

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

CARRIED

12. Election of Officers

BD-24-09

Scott – Huszka

“That Ken Phillips be appointed chair for the election of the 2024 Chair and Vice Chair.”

CARRIED

BD-24-10

Miller – Westgate

“That Tim Payne and Donna Blue be appointed scrutineers in the event of an election.”

CARRIED

The positions of Chair and Vice Chair were declared vacant and nominations were called for the office of Chairperson for 2024.

Steve Miller nominated Pat Brown for the position of Chair.

Pat Brown confirmed his willingness to stand for the position of Chair.

Pat Brown was declared Chair of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority for 2024, by acclamation, and addressed the Board of Directors.

Emery Huszka nominated Lorie Scott for the position of Vice Chair.

Lorie Scott confirmed her willingness to stand for the position of Vice Chair.

Lorie Scott was declared Vice Chair of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority for 2024, by acclamation, and addressed the Board of Directors.

BD-24-11

Burrell - Grimes

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

CARRIED

13. Nominating Committee Report

Nominating Committee Chair, Betty Ann MacKinnon declared vacancies on the Executive and Low Water Response Committees due to the election of Chair and Vice Chair. Nominations were requested from the floor to complete memberships.

Kristen Rodrigues volunteered to serve on the Executive Committee.

Greg Grimes volunteered to serve on the Low Water Response Committee.

BD-24-12

Miller - Scott

“That the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority adopts the 2023 Nominating Committee's Report, as amended, fulfilling the SCRCA committee needs in 2024.”

CARRIED

BD-24-13

Burrell – Cates

“That the 2024 Executive Committee for the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority be: Pat Brown, Chair; Lorie Scott, Vice Chair; Al Broad, Terry Burrell, Rhonda Jubenville, Frank Kennes, Betty Ann MacKinnon, Steve Miller and Kristen Rodrigues.”

CARRIED

14. Authorization to Borrow

BD-24-14

Burrell – O’Hara

“That the Authority Chair or the Vice-Chair and the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer or Director of Finance be authorized to borrow from the Libro Credit Union, Strathroy for the general operations and capital program of the Authority, a sum not to exceed \$1,810,000 to be repaid from grants received from the Province of Ontario, Government of Canada, levies assessed to the member municipalities and general revenue.”

CARRIED

15. 2024 Appointments

BD-24-15

Kilner – Brennan

“That the Authority’s 2024 representative to Conservation Ontario will be the Authority Chair, the Vice-Chair will be the first alternate and the General Manager be the second alternate.”

CARRIED

16. Presentation

BD-24-16

McCabe - Rodrigues

“That the Board of Directors receive for information the presentation provided by Dr. Catherine Febria, Canada Research Chair, Assistant Professor and Director of the Healthy Headwaters Lab at the Great Lakes Institute for Environmental Research (GLIER) at the University of Windsor on the relationship and collaboration with the SCRCA Biology department.”

CARRIED

17. Staff Reports

17.1 General Manager’s Report

BD-24-17

Burrell – Miller

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the General Manager’s report dated February 12, 2024.”

CARRIED

17.2 Land Acquisition Policy

BD-24-18

Brennan – McCallum, Mary Lynne

“That the board of directors approves the SCRCA Land Acquisition and Disposition Policy as identified through the recent changes to the Mandatory Programs and Services regulation under the *Conservation Authorities Act*.”

CARRIED

17.3 Land Inventory

BD-24-19

Grimes – Burrell

“That the board of directors acknowledges the report highlighting the development of a Land Inventory as required through the recent changes to the Mandatory Programs and Services regulation under the *Conservation Authorities Act*.”

CARRIED

17.4 Draft Conservation Lands Strategy

BD-24-20

Scott – Burrell

“That the board of directors acknowledges the draft Conservation Lands Strategy developed as part of the recent changes to the Mandatory Programs and Services regulation under the Conservation Authorities Act. Furthermore, the board of directors directs staff to proceed with the public consultation and Indigenous engagement sessions as the next step in the process of finalizing the Conservation Areas Strategy.”

CARRIED

18. Consent Agenda

Item 18.1 (k) on SCRCA 2024 Special Events was pulled from the consent agenda for discussion.

BD-24-21

Huszka – Burrell

“That the Board of Directors approves the consent agenda and endorses the recommendations accompanying Items 18.1 a - 18.1 j.”

CARRIED

Director Emery Huszka highlighted the upcoming Sydenham River Canoe & Kayak Race on Sunday, April 28, 2024 and encouraged staff, guests and fellow directors to participate.

Director Don McCabe reminded attendees of the upcoming A.W. Campbell Maple Syrup Festival held at the A.W. Campbell Conservation Area on Saturday, March 16 – Sunday, March 17, 2024 occurring in conjunction with the annual pancake breakfast, hosted by the Alvinston Firefighters at the Brooke-Alvinston-Inwood Community Centre. All are encouraged to attend both events.

BD-24-22

Grimes – Westgate

“That the Board of Directors approves and endorses the recommendations accompanying Item 18.1 k.”

CARRIED

19. Correspondence

19.1 Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry Letter re Approval of Extension

BD-24-23

Cates – Burell

“That the Board of Directors acknowledge the correspondence from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, dated December 13, 2023, granting the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority an extension to March 31, 2024 in order to meet the transition requirements under Ontario Regulation 687/21: Transition Plans and Agreements under the CAA (O. Reg 687/21).”

CARRIED

19.2 Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry Letter re Direction on Planning Fees

BD-24-24

Miller – Scott

“That the Board of Directors acknowledge the correspondence from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, dated December 13, 2023, extending the Minister’s direction for Conservation Authorities regarding fee changes associated with planning, development and permitting fees to December 31, 2024.”

CARRIED

The Board of Directors voted to take a one hour recess. The meeting reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

The following directors, present earlier within the meeting, were absent at this time: John Brennan, Terry Burrell, Aaron Hall, Adam Kilner.

BD-24-25

Broad – Miller

“That the Board of Directors approve a one hour recess with intent to reconvene at 1:00 p.m.”

CARRIED

20. In-Camera

BD-24-26

Scott – MacKinnon

“That the Board of Directors move in-camera at 1:03 p.m. to discuss legal matters with only the General Manager, Board Coordinator, and Manager of Conservation Lands remaining present.”

CARRIED

BD-24-27

O’Hara – McCallum

“That the Board of Directors rise and report at 1:06 p.m. and return to regular business.”

CARRIED

21. Adjournment

BD-24-25

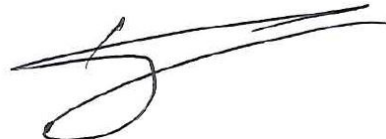
Huszka – Cates

“That the meeting be adjourned.”

CARRIED



Pat Brown
Chair



Ken Phillips
General Manager