



Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Date: February 26, 2026 Time: 10:00 a.m.
Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 583
22 Durham Street, Newbury N0L 1Z0

Directors Present: Al Broad, Pat Brown, Terry Burrell, Greg Grimes, Sue Cates, Frank Kennes, Adam Kilner, Brad Loosley, Betty Ann MacKinnon, Don McCabe (arrived at 10:10 a.m.), Don McCallum, Steve Miller, Kristen Rodrigues, Ian Veen, Jerry Westgate, Brian White

Directors Remote: Aaron Hall (joined at 10:30 a.m.), Rhonda Jubenville (joined at 10:10 a.m.)

Directors Regrets: John Brennan, Frank Kennes, Lorie Scott

Staff Present: Donna Blue, Manager of Communications; Jacqueline Cannon-Wilvert; Steve Clark; Risk Management Official/Inspector; Melissa Deisley, Director of Planning and Regulations; Ashley Fletcher, Administrative Assistant and Board Coordinator; Kate Jamieson, Payroll/Accounting Clerk; Melissa Levi, Conservation Education Coordinator; Chunning Li, Director of Corporate Services; Kelsey Oatman, Planning & Regulations Clerk; Craig Paterson, Manager of Biology; Tim Payne, Manager of Forestry; David Oczkowski, Forest Conservation Technician; Ken Phillips, General Manager; Jeff Sharp, Manager of Conservation Services; Kelli Smith, Lands Technician; Myra Spiller, Conservation Education/Community Partnership Technician; Ian Van Arkel; Jeff Vlasman, Regulations Coordinator; Greg Wilcox, Manager of Conservation Areas.

Guests: Mayor Gary Atkinson, Town of Plympton-Wyoming; Reeve Diane Brewer, Village of Newbury; Tim Byrne, Essex Region Conservation Authority; Todd Casier, Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority; Ralph Coe, St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation; Jason Cole, County of Lambton; Blaise Chevalier, Municipality of Chatham-Kent; Marlene Dorrestyn, Blake Ellis, The Independent; Mayor Dave Ferguson, Municipality of Brooke-Alvinston; Gerrit Kremers, Catfish Creek Conservation Authority; Derrick LeClair, Conservation award recipient; Warden Kevin Marriott, County of Lambton; Brian McDougall, Don and Anne McGugan, Ray Mile, MNP Chartered Professional Accountants; Mark Peacock, Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority; Dominique Rumball, Conservation award recipient; Dusty Underhill, Catfish Creek Conservation Authority; Elizabeth VanHooren, Catfish Creek Conservation Authority.

1. Land Acknowledgement

A land acknowledgment was read by Vice-Chair Kristen Rodrigues, 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, Greg Grimes, 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.

2025 Highlights:

- Planning and Regulations issued over 200 permits, supporting responsible development while protecting people, property, and natural features from natural hazards
- Conservation Services planted over 50,000 trees across the watershed, increasing forest cover, enhancing wildlife habitat, and strengthening ecosystem resilience.
- Water Resources issued 19 flood forecasting and warning bulletins, providing municipalities with timely, science-based information during potential flooding events, and continued proactive efforts to protect infrastructure, safeguard local economies, and keep residents safe.
- Education staff connected with over 12,500 students through Conservation Education programs, fostering awareness of watershed health and environmental responsibility to build long-term stewardship and informed decision-making.
- 2025 marked the first full year of implementation of the Sydenham Phosphorus Reduction Initiative, funded by Canada Water Agency. Staff worked with agricultural producers to implement stewardship projects, installed targeted monitoring sites to better understand phosphorus movement, engaged students in learning about balancing environmental protection with viable farming operations and advanced measurable improvements to local water quality and addressed phosphorus as a leading cause of harmful algal blooms.
- SCRCA staff continued delivering core watershed-based services amid the Government of Ontario's proposal to consolidate Conservation Authorities and continued to advocate for maintaining effective, locally based, watershed-driven conservation, focused on long-term stability.
- Staff, Board members, municipal partners, Indigenous communities, landowners, volunteers, donors and funding agencies are thanked for their commitment to a healthy, resilient, and sustainable natural environment for the St. Clair Region – now and for future generations.

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:

- Council members and staff from several of our member municipalities
- Lambton County
- Catfish Creek Conservation Authority
- Essex Region Conservation Authority
- Kettle Creek Conservation Authority
- Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority
- St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation

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. Her Worship, Diane Brewer, Reeve of the Village of Newbury also gave greetings and welcomed everyone to Newbury, highlighting the importance of maintaining the voice of small, rural communities.

4. Declaration of Pecuniary Interests

The Chair requested that each Director declare a conflict of interest at the appropriate time, on any item within this agenda in that a Director may have pecuniary interest.

5. Approval of the Agenda

BD-25-01

Burrell – Cates

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

CARRIED

6. Minutes

6.1 Board of Directors December 11, 2025 Minutes

BD-26-02

Brown – White

“That the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting, held December 11, 2025, be approved as distributed.”

CARRIED

6.2 Executive Committee February 12, 2026 Minutes

BD-26-03

Miller – Burrell

“That the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held February 12, 2026, be approved as distributed.”

CARRIED

7. Chair and Conservation Ontario Report (none)

8. Audited Financial Statements

BD-26-04

MacKinnon – Loosley

“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 2025 Audited Financial Statements.”

CARRIED

9. Conservation Awards

Vice Chair Kristen Rodrigues presented the following Conservation Awards:

Dominique Rumball

Dominique Rumball, a PhD student at the University of Toronto specializing in freshwater ecosystems. Her research focuses on improving the recovery of aquatic species at risk and addressing important knowledge gaps in restoration ecology. Since 2021, Dominique has been a valued collaborator with the SCRCA, supporting our Aquatic Species at Risk monitoring programs. She has played an integral role in the coastal wetland restoration project for the endangered Spotted Gar at the Keith McLean Conservation Lands near Rondeau Bay, a property owned by the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation. Her scientific knowledge, strong work ethic, and genuine commitment to conservation have made her an invaluable partner. Dominique’s impact extends beyond her research. Education is another area where she excels. She enthusiastically shares her research and passion with community members, often right along the wetland shoreline! Dominique is also the author of a children’s book, “Finding a Forever Home: The Adventures of Giigoonh the Spotted Gar” which introduces young readers to the importance of protecting freshwater habitats and species at risk. Dominique donates \$1.00 from every book sold back to the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation to support species at risk programming. Dominique is not only an emerging leader in the scientific community but a committed steward of Ontario’s natural heritage.

Derrick Leclair

Derrick Leclair is a Certified Crop Advisor, and a driving force behind the success of the Sydenham Phosphorus Reduction Initiative in the south portion of our watershed. Through his soil sampling business, R&K Farms, Derrick has become an invaluable partner in advancing soil health and responsible nutrient management across our region. Through his strong relationships with local landowners, he has connected farmers to our stewardship programs, particularly the Sydenham Phosphorus Reduction Initiative, also known as SPRI, with which the majority of participants in our 4R Nutrient Management and Alternative Phosphorus programs were referred directly through Derrick's efforts. Because of his support, nearly 2,500 acres of agricultural land in our watershed have adopted improved nutrient management practices and enabled the SPRI program to distribute close to \$50,000 in funding to landowners. Derrick's dedication, leadership, and commitment to soil conservation strengthens not only individual farms, but our entire watershed. We are grateful for his partnership and proud to recognize his contributions.

BD-26-05

Cates - White

"That the Board of Directors congratulates the 2026 Conservation Award winners and thanks them for their contributions to conservation."

10. Service Awards

The following service awards were presented:

Five Years of Service

- Myra Spiller, Conservation Education/Community Partnership Technician
- Jeff Vlasman, Regulations Coordinator

Ten Years of Service

- Greg Wilcox, Manager of Conservation Areas

Fifteen Years of Service

- Maryanne Nieuwenhuizen, Assistant Superintendent at A.W. Campbell Conservation Area

Twenty Years of Service

- Steve Miller, Director representing the Township of St. Clair

BD-26-06

Burrell – Veen

“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

11. Code of Conduct

BD-26-07

Kilner – Cates

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges and complies with the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority’s Code of Conduct and Administrative By-laws, updated in 2024.”

CARRIED

12. Election of Officers

BD-26-08

White – McCallum

“That Ken Phillips be appointed chair for the election of the 2026 Chair and Vice Chair.”

CARRIED

BD-26-09

White Loosley

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

CARRIED

12.1 Position of Chair

The positions of Chair and Vice Chair were declared vacant and nominations were called for the office of Chairperson for 2026.

Adam Kilner nominated Greg Grimes for the position of Chair.

Greg Grimes confirmed his willingness to stand for the position of Chair.

Greg Grimes was declared Chair of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority for 2026, by acclamation, and addressed the Board of Directors.

BD-26-10

Loosley – Kilner

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

CARRIED

12.2 Position of Vice Chair

Steve Miller nominated Pat Brown for the position of Vice Chair.

Sue Cates nominated Kristen Rodrigues for the position of Vice Chair.

Both Pat Brown and Kristen Rodrigues confirmed their willingness to stand for the position of Vice Chair.

Pat Brown was declared Vice Chair of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority for 2026, by majority vote, and addressed the Board of Directors.

BD-26-11

Broad – Loosley

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

CARRIED

13. Committees

BD-26-12

Burrell – Cates

“That the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority adopts the 2026 Nominating Committee's Report, as amended, fulfilling the SCRCA committee needs in 2026.”

CARRIED

BD-26-13

Kilner – Westgate

“That the 2026 Executive Committee for the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority be: Greg Grimes, Chair; Pat Brown, Vice-Chair; Al Broad, Frank Kennes, Don McCabe, Rhonda Jubenville, Terry Burrell, Kristen Rodrigues, and Steve Miller

CARRIED

14. Authorization to Borrow

BD-26-14

Burrell – Cates

“That the Authority Chair or the Vice-Chair and the General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer or Director of Corporate Services 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 \$1,800,000 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. Appointments to Conservation Ontario Council

BD-26-15

Kilner – Veen

“That the Authority's 2026 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-26-16

Miller – Cates

“That the Board of Directors receive for information the presentation provided by Dominique Rumball titled Collaboration in Conservation: Fighting to Preserve a Living Fossil, the Spotted Gar.”

CARRIED

17. Reports

17.1 General Manager’s Report

A brief verbal report was provided by General Manager, Ken Phillips. Regarding the Government Ontario proposal to consolidate Conservation Authorities, there are no new updates or developments to share at the time of the meeting.

BD-26-17

White – Veen

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the General Manager’s report dated February 26, 2026.”

CARRIED

17.2 Projected Future Conservation Area Reserves

BD-26-18

Cates – Kilner

“That the Board of Directors acknowledges this report dated January 21, 2026, on

the projected recovery of the Conservation Area Reserve, following the proposed installation of a new septic/sewer system at the A.W. Campbell Conservation Area.”
CARRIED

18. Consent Agenda

BD-26-19

Burrell – MacKinnon

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

CARRIED

19. Correspondence (none)

20. In-Camera (none)

21. New Business (none)

22. Adjournment

BD-26-20

Kilner – Veen

“That the meeting be adjourned.”

CARRIED



Greg Grimes
Chair



Ken Phillips
General Manager