

UPPER THAMES RIVER CONSERVATION AUTHORITY BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING

AGENDA

TUESDAY, MAY 26, 2020 at 9:30 A.M
Virtual Meeting Due to COVID-19 Pandemic

1. Approval of Agenda

Mover: B.Petrie

Secunder: J.Reffle

THAT the Board of Directors approve the Agenda as posted.

2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting: Tuesday April 28, 2020

Mover: J.Salter

Secunder: M.Schadenberg

THAT that the UTRCA Board of Directors approve the Board of Directors' minutes dated April 28, 2020 as posted on the Members' web-site.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

5. Delegations

6. Business for Approval

6.1 Approval of Audited Financial Statements for 2019 – I.Wilcox/C.Saracino FIN #1058

Mover: A.Westman

Secunder: M.Blosh

THAT the Board of Directors approve the recommendation as presented in the report.

7. Closed Session – In Camera

8. Business for Information

8.1 Conservation Area – COVID 19 Tentative Opening Plan – J.Howley CA #7574

8.2 COVID-19: UTRCA Return to Work – I.Wilcox #123464

8.3 UTRCA COVID Financial Impacts and Response – I.Wilcox/C.Saracino #123393

8.4 2020 April Year to Date Financial Update – C.Saracino FIN#1059

- 8.5 Motherwell Blacksmith Shop – A.Shivas/B.Mackie L&F #5759
- 8.6 Section 28 Report – T.Annett ENVP #9036
- 9. **Spring For Your Information Report**
- 10. **Other Business (Including Chair and General Manager’s Concluding Remarks)**
- 11. **Adjournment**
Mover: A.Dale



Ian Wilcox, General Manager

c.c. Members of the Board of Directors and Staff

MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING
Virtual Meeting Due to COVID-19 Pandemic
TUESDAY, MAY 26, 2020

| | | |
|------------------|------------|---------------|
| Members Present: | M.Blosh | P.Mitchell |
| | A.Dale | A.Murray |
| | A.Hopkins | B.Petrie |
| | T.Jackson | J.Reffle |
| | S.Levin | J.Salter |
| | N.Manning | M.Schadenberg |
| | H.McDermid | A.Westman |

Regrets: D.Edmiston

Solicitor: G.Inglis

| | | |
|--------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Staff: | T.Annett | C.Saracino |
| | B.Glasman | J.Schnaithmann |
| | C.Harrington | C.Tasker |
| | T.Hollingsworth | B.Verscheure |
| | J.Howley | M.Viglianti – Recorder |
| | B.Mackie | I.Wilcox |
| | A.Shivas | K.Winfield |

1. Approval of Agenda

The Chair confirmed the Board members were comfortable not moving receipt of “for information” reports at this meeting. The Chair confirmed the mover and seconder for approval of the agenda were willing to let their names stand.

Mover: B.Petrie

Secunder: J.Reffle

THAT the Board of Directors approve the Agenda as posted.

Carried.

2. Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

The Chair inquired whether the members had any conflicts of interest to declare relating to the agenda. There were none.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

April 28, 2020

The Chair confirmed the mover and seconder were willing to let their names stand.

Move: J.Salter

Secunder: M.Schadenberg

THAT that the UTRCA Board of Directors approve the Board of Directors' minutes dated April 28, 2020 as posted on the Members' web-site.

Carried.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

The Chair brought forward T.Jackson's Point of Order, deferred from the April meeting, regarding the motion to "not consider the question" put on the floor at the Annual General Meeting. The Point of Order was raised at the April meeting based on concern that according to Roberts Rules, the motion to "not consider the question" should have gone straight to a vote without discussion. It was argued that debate did occur making the resolution invalid.

The Chair reported that in response to the Point of Order, he and staff had consulted with Nigel Bellchamber, an expert in Parliamentary Procedure. The Chair ruled the Point of Order had no standing at this meeting because a Point of Order may only be raised during the meeting in which the procedural matter occurs, and that the original motion regarding item 7.1 of the agenda of the Annual General Meeting did not comply with the UTRCA's Administrative By-Laws (Notice of Motion, Section C-15).

T.Jackson appealed the decision of the Chair.

There was a disagreement regarding whether or not a seconder and discussion were needed or permitted before voting on an appeal to the decision of the Chair. The Chair ruled there to be no seconder or discussion required.

T.Jackson appealed the decision of the Chair.

The Chair called the question to the Board, shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained. The Board of Directors voted to sustain the decision of the Chair.

(Note that this matter was re-opened and further discussed by the Board under item 10. Other Business, later during this meeting).

5. Delegations

There were no delegations.

6. Business for Approval

6.1 Approval of Audited Financial Statements for 2019

(Report attached)

The Chair confirmed the mover and seconder were willing to let their names stand.

S. Levin, Chair of the 2020 Finance & Audit Committee, gave the Board an overview of the Comments provided by the Auditors. Two areas were identified as needing attention, which included improvements around the Campground's Camis registration system, and the discrepancy between budget and actual due to deferred revenue. Staff reported they were working on both issues, and that while the accounting issue of bringing deferred revenue into the current year is getting better, due to the unpredictability of large scale projects, there will always be the potential for a large difference in capital expenditures between budget and actual.

The Finance and Audit Committee Chair gave a brief overview of the Hydro Dam issues the Committee has been monitoring.

Mover: A. Westman

Secunder: M. Blosch

THAT the Board of Directors approve the recommendation as presented in the report.
Carried.

7. Closed Session – In Camera

There were no matters to cover in Closed session.

8. Business for Information

8.1 Conservation Areas – COVID 19 Tentative Opening Plan

(Report attached)

Staff reviewed the Standard Operating Procedures, when and what Personal Protective Equipment staff will be required to wear, and confirmed the UTRCA has sufficient supplies.

Staff clarified that camping, opening June 8th for Fanshawe and Pittock, and June 15th for Wildwood, is currently restricted to seasonal camping only, with the direction that campers

must be self-contained in their camping unit. Day use washrooms will stay closed for the time being, but staff, in consultation with the Health Units, will continue to work on plans for managing washrooms in preparation for their eventual opening.

Staff continue to monitor the number of visitors in the parks to ensure public safety. Provincial Offences Officers were given the ability to enforce group size restrictions, however no charges have been laid to date.

8.2 COVID-19: UTRCA Return to Work (Report attached)

Staff presented the report and advised the Board that Conservation Areas is currently the only area of business where staff are returning to the work place. The return to work plan for the rest of the organization will be developed by the Joint Health and Safety Committee and will be guided by direction from the Provincial and Health Units. A Pandemic Policy and Standard Operating Procedures have been written and implemented, and staff have begun acquiring Personal Protective Equipment.

There was a suggestion to have staff review procedures, staffing levels, and working from home options and report back to the Board. Staff confirmed that once the return to work plan is developed it will be brought to the Board.

8.3 UTRCA COVID Financial Impacts and Response (Report attached)

Staff disclosed that due to new developments, the information in the report was out of date at the time of the meeting. Despite being initially approved and receiving money, the UTRCA was deemed not eligible for the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy. Due to the ongoing budget review and revisions to the revenue forecasts and expenditures, staff were not in a position to present a detailed finance plan at the time of the meeting. Staff reported that mitigating one hundred percent of the loss in 2020 was unlikely and a financial recovery plan will be needed.

Staff noted the planned hiring deferrals for both the vacant full time positions and seasonal positions. Seasonal staff will be phased in and trained in small groups.

Staff clarified that Conservation Authorities can operate with a budgeted deficit if needed for a limited period of time, although it is not preferable. The 2020 year-end is expected to result in a financial deficit.

Board members raised the possibility of forgoing stipends. Staff recommended it be a voluntary, individual decision by Board members to forego their per-diem for meeting participation.

8.4 2020 April Year to Date Financial Update
(Report attached)

Staff reported that while user fees and total revenue were both down, so were expenses. Staff cautioned that this report covered up to the end of April, which was week six of the lockdown, and the more significant declines will not show up in the finances until later into the year.

8.5 Motherwell Blacksmith Shop
(Report attached)

Staff presented the report and the Board discussed the possibility of renting the blacksmith's shop if the roof was fixed. There was a suggestion to reach out to the Motherwell Heritage Group to help raise funds for the roof replacement project if the decision is made to retain and rent the building. Staff confirmed that while none of the UTRCA owned buildings in Motherwell have a heritage designation, the heritage interest remains strong within the local community. Staff will present the Board with recommendations regarding the future of the UTRCA owned buildings in the village of Motherwell, in closed session, at the June meeting.

8.6 Section 28 Report
(Report attached)

Board members voiced their concerns around the large number of violations this month. Staff confirmed the number of violations were higher than usual, however, most violators are willing to work with staff to rectify the situation.

Concerns around Municipal awareness and education of Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act were raised. Staff informed the Board the current issues largely lie in recent high levels of turnover in Municipal staff, mostly due to retirements. Past practice has been to have on-site and informal talks with Municipal staff, unfortunately, UTRCA staff have not had time in the last two years to continue with this practice.

9. Spring For Your Information Report
(Report attached)

The Spring FYI was presented to the Member's information.

10. Other Business (Including Chair and General Manager's Concluding Remarks)

I. Wilcox informed the Board that Carol Tattersall, former Provincially appointed member of the UTRCA Board of Directors between 1992 and 1996 and tree commissioner for Oxford County, passed away recently at the age of 55. Dr. Douglas Bocking, who was on the Board of Directors

for twelve years and led the designation of the Thames as a Heritage River, recently passed away a few weeks before his 100th birthday. Donations have been made in their honour and trees will be planted next spring in the Member's grove in their memory.

The Chair referred back to agenda item 4. Business Arising from the Minutes, and, after further review, recognized that a seconder and discussion for an appeal to the ruling of the Chair is permissible. As such, he re-visited the appeal to the ruling of the Chair that the point order raised by T.Jackson had no standing at this meeting.

Moved: T.Jackson

Seconded: H.McDermid

To appeal the decision of the Chair.

The floor was open to debate the ruling of the chair that the Point of Order raised by T.Jackson had no standing at this meeting. T.Jackson presented his reasons for raising the Point of Order, feeling that the rules of parliamentary procedure were not upheld in relation to the objection to consideration of the motion and expressed concern that his Point of Order provided in writing was not circulated to the Board in preparation of this meeting. Board members felt the Point of Order submitted to staff and the Chair should have been included in this agenda package. Board members agreed with the point of order being raised, however, felt it was not brought forward at the appropriate time.

T.Jackson read an exception listed in Roberts Rules allowing a Point of Order to be raised at a subsequent meeting, which he felt applied to this situation.

The Chair called the question, shall the decision of the Chair be upheld. The Board of Directors voted to uphold the decision of the Chair.

11. Adjournment

The Chair confirmed the mover was willing to let their names stand. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:20am on a motion by A.Dale.



Ian Wilcox

General Manager

Att.

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Finance & Audit Committee
Date: 15 May 2020
Subject: Approval of Audited Financial Statements for 2019

Agenda #: 6.1
Filename: C:\Users\vigliantim\Documents\GroupWise\1058-1.doc

Recommendation:

That the Board accepts and approves the Audited Financial Statements for 2019 prepared by Deloitte as attached.

The Finance & Audit Committee met with Dale Zorgdrager and Francesca Liberatore from Deloitte on May 8th to review the 2019 Draft Audited Financial Statements and Deloitte's audit findings report. Discussion centered on:

1. 2018 (and prior) restatement required by capitalization of 1991 construction of the St Marys floodwall,
2. Note disclosure for impacts of COVID-19 as a subsequent event to year end 2019
3. Clarification and correction to the presentation of our investment portfolio at cost until the accounting standard requires reporting at fair market value in 2022
4. Review of the two recommendations around integrating forestry billings with our main UTRCA invoicing system and cash handling/revenue recognition at the parks

The committee also met with our investment advisor from Phillips, Hager & North of RBC Wealth Management, to review the economic conditions resulting from COVID-19 currently impacting our long-term portfolio and analyst expectations for market recovery. While markets slumped in March and our returns from since inception fell to 1.22%, it is still slightly higher than its benchmark. Fortunately the April balance saw a 6.6% increase, but we are aware that markets are currently volatile.

Recommended by:

Ian Wilcox,
General Manager

Prepared by:

Christine Saracino,
Supervisor, Finance & Accounting

Financial statements of
Upper Thames River
Conservation Authority

December 31, 2019

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Independent Auditor's Report

To the Members of
Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (the "Authority"), which comprise the statement of financial position as at December 31, 2019, the statements of operations and accumulated net revenue, change in net financial assets, and cash flows for the year then ended, and notes, comprising a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, including schedules.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Authority as at December 31, 2019, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards ("Canadian GAAS"). Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of our report. We are independent of the Authority in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in Canada, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, management is responsible for assessing the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Authority or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Authority's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Canadian GAAS will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with Canadian GAAS, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Authority's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Authority's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Company to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Chartered Professional Accountants
Licensed Public Accountants
London, Ontario
[DATE]

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
Statement of operations and accumulated net revenue
Year ended December 31, 2019

| | | 2019 Budget \$ | 2019 Actual \$ | 2018 Actual \$ Restated Note 10 |
|--|----|----------------------|----------------------|---|
| Revenue | | | | |
| Municipal general levy | | 4,234,483 | 3,561,202 | 3,914,548 |
| Dam and flood control levy | | 3,095,641 | 4,349,957 | 1,324,939 |
| Conservation areas | | 3,646,079 | 3,638,044 | 3,638,513 |
| Land and asset management | | 2,162,035 | 1,117,794 | 1,078,167 |
| Fees for service | | 1,127,891 | 2,408,354 | 2,268,355 |
| Provincial transfer payments | | | | |
| Ministry of Natural Resources | | | | |
| Section 39 grants | | 351,016 | 181,213 | 351,020 |
| Other provincial grants | | 1,569,863 | 2,930,380 | 1,172,735 |
| Donations | | 23,350 | 41,276 | 81,033 |
| Federal program funding | | 2,902,999 | 3,926,595 | 977,772 |
| Other revenues | | 1,740,928 | 617,660 | 952,106 |
| | | 20,854,285 | 22,772,475 | 15,759,188 |
| Expenditures | | | | |
| Recreation | | 4,445,099 | 4,299,438 | 4,202,551 |
| Flood control centre | 10 | 7,364,097 | 10,241,655 | 3,018,279 |
| Lands and facilities management | | 1,028,791 | 788,766 | 2,820,464 |
| Watershed research, planning and monitoring | | 1,057,218 | 807,248 | 1,087,042 |
| Community partnership program | | 1,580,567 | 1,279,628 | 1,448,984 |
| Source water protection | | 541,939 | 599,461 | 629,343 |
| Environmental planning & regulations | | 1,360,443 | 1,333,060 | 1,172,799 |
| Soil and forestry programs | | 2,182,862 | 1,436,863 | 1,486,329 |
| Environmental significant areas | | 533,386 | 638,311 | 606,046 |
| Service cost centres | A | 96,071 | 437,534 | 43,925 |
| | | 20,190,473 | 21,861,964 | 16,515,762 |
| Annual surplus (deficit) | 10 | 663,812 | 910,511 | (756,574) |
| Accumulated surplus, beginning of year | | 43,532,604 | 43,532,604 | 44,289,178 |
| | | 44,196,416 | 44,443,115 | 43,532,604 |

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
Statement of financial position
As at December 31, 2019

| | 2019 \$ | 2018 \$ Restated Note 10 |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Financial assets | | |
| Cash | 1,848,192 | 2,134,374 |
| Restricted cash | 100,291 | 112,551 |
| Accounts receivable | 5,084,976 | 3,269,258 |
| Investments | 7,231,105 | 6,595,498 |
| | 14,264,564 | 12,111,681 |
| Financial liabilities | | |
| Accounts payable | 2,411,173 | 2,345,554 |
| Accrued liabilities | 538,919 | 487,803 |
| Deferred revenue | 6,397,439 | 8,181,175 |
| Other liabilities | 100,291 | 59,202 |
| | 9,447,822 | 11,073,734 |
| Net financial assets | 4,816,742 | 1,037,947 |
| Non-financial assets | | |
| Tangible capital assets | 39,491,860 | 42,386,738 |
| Prepaid expenses and deposits | 108,229 | 84,295 |
| Inventories | 26,284 | 23,624 |
| Accumulated surplus | 44,443,115 | 43,532,604 |

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

Approved by the Board

_____, Chair

_____, General manager

_____, Supervisor of Finance

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
Statement of change in net financial assets
Year ended December 31, 2019

| | | 2019 \$ | 2018 \$ Restated Note 10 |
|---|----|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Annual surplus (deficit) | 10 | 910,511 | (756,574) |
| Acquisition of tangible capital assets | | (1,912,659) | (5,359,168) |
| Revenue from amounts recorded as construction in progress | 6 | 3,655,585 | — |
| Amortization of tangible capital assets | | 1,151,730 | 924,678 |
| Gain on sale of tangible capital assets | | (58,252) | (963,432) |
| Proceeds on sale of tangible capital assets | | 58,474 | 2,340,001 |
| Change in inventories | | (2,660) | 3,709 |
| Change in prepaid expenses and deposits | | (23,934) | 330 |
| Change in net financial assets | | 3,778,795 | (3,810,456) |
| Net financial assets, beginning of the year | | 1,037,947 | 4,848,403 |
| Net financial assets, end of the year | | 4,816,742 | 1,037,947 |

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

DRAFT

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

Statement of cash flow

Year ended December 31, 2019

| | Notes | 2019 \$ | 2018 \$ Restated Note 10 |
|---|-------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Operating activities | | | |
| Annual surplus (deficit) | 10 | 910,511 | (756,574) |
| Adjustment for | | | |
| Amortization of tangible capital assets | 10 | 1,151,730 | 924,676 |
| Changes in non-cash operating working capital | | | |
| Accounts receivable | | (1,815,718) | (2,545,583) |
| Prepaid expenses and deposits | | (23,934) | 331 |
| Accounts payable and accrued liabilities | | 116,735 | 1,302,211 |
| Inventories | | (2,660) | 3,709 |
| Deferred revenues | | 1,871,849 | 4,463,896 |
| Other liabilities | | 41,089 | (5,369) |
| | | <u>2,249,602</u> | <u>3,387,297</u> |
| Financing activities | | | |
| Restricted cash | | 12,260 | 153,715 |
| | | <u>12,260</u> | <u>153,715</u> |
| Capital activities | | | |
| Gain on sale of tangible capital assets | | (58,252) | (963,432) |
| Proceeds on sale of tangible capital assets | | 58,474 | 2,340,001 |
| Acquisition of tangible capital assets | | (1,912,659) | (5,359,168) |
| | | <u>(1,912,437)</u> | <u>(3,982,599)</u> |
| Investing activities | | | |
| Change in investments, net | | (635,607) | (1,049,899) |
| | | <u>(635,607)</u> | <u>(1,049,899)</u> |
| Decrease in cash | | (286,182) | (1,491,485) |
| Cash, beginning of year | | 2,134,374 | 3,625,859 |
| Cash, end of year | | <u>1,848,192</u> | <u>2,134,374</u> |

The accompanying notes are an integral part of the financial statements.

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

Notes to financial statements

Year ended December 31, 2019

1. Description of the business

The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (the "Authority") is established under the Conservation Authority Act of Ontario to further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources, other than gas, oil, coal and minerals for the watersheds within its area of jurisdiction.

2. Significant accounting policies

The financial statements of the Authority are representations of management prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles as recommended by the Public Sector Accounting Board of the Chartered Professional Accountants Canada. Significant aspects of the accounting policies adopted by the Authority are as follows:

Reserves:

Appropriations are made to reserves for future expenditures and contingencies for such amounts as required by various cost sharing arrangements, provincial restrictions and are deemed appropriate, and upon approval of the Board of Directors.

Government transfers:

Government transfer payments are recognized as revenue in the financial statements in the year in which the payment is authorized and the events giving rise to the transfer occur, performance criteria are met, and a reasonable estimate of the amount can be made. Funding that is stipulated to be used for specific purposes is only recognized as revenue in the fiscal year that the related expenses are incurred or services performed. If funding is received for which the related expenses have not yet been incurred or services performed, these amounts are recorded as a liability at year end. To the extent that stipulations by the transferor give rise to an obligation that meet the definition of a liability, government transfers are recognized as revenue as the liability is extinguished.

Deferred revenue:

Certain grants are received for which the related services have yet to be performed or were used in the construction of capital assets. These amounts are recognized as revenue in the fiscal year the related expenditures are incurred or over the course of the useful life of the asset constructed.

Tangible capital assets:

Tangible capital assets are recorded at cost which includes amounts that are directly attributable to acquisition, construction, development or betterment of the asset. The cost, less residual value, of the tangible capital assets, excluding land are amortized on a straight - line basis over their estimated useful lives as follows:

| | Useful life, years |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Land improvements | 10–25 |
| Buildings | 15–50 |
| Infrastructure | 20-50 |
| Furniture and fixtures | 7 |
| Vehicles | 5–10 |
| Flood control structures | 50–80 |
| Computers and communications | 3–7 |

2. Significant accounting policies (continued)

Tangible capital assets (continued)

Amortization is charged in the year of acquisition and in the year of disposal. Construction in progress is not amortized until the asset is available for productive use.

(i) Contributions of tangible capital assets

Tangible capital assets received as contributions are recorded at their fair value at the date of receipt and also are recorded as revenue.

(ii) Natural resources

Natural resources that have not been purchased are not recognized as assets in the financial statements.

Contaminated sites:

Under PS 3260, contaminated sites are defined as the result of contamination being introduced in air, soil, water or sediment of a chemical, organic, or radioactive material or live organism that exceeds an environmental standard. This standard relates to sites that are not in productive use and sites in productive use where an unexpected event resulted in contamination.

Use of estimates:

The preparation of financial statements requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported amounts of assets and liabilities and disclosure of contingent assets and liabilities at the date of the financial statements and the reported amounts of revenues and expenses during the year. Key components of the financial statements requiring management to make estimates include the amortization rates for tangible capital assets and the establishment of certain accruals. Actual results could differ from these estimates.

Investments:

Investments are recorded at cost unless there is a reduction in market value that is determined to be other than temporary, at which time they would be written down to market

3. Restricted cash

Restricted cash consists of funding received from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks that has been restricted in its use by the funding Agency for source water protection.

Source water protection trust

| Notes | 2019 \$ | 2018 \$ |
|-------|------------|------------|
| 5 | 100,291 | 112,551 |

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

Notes to financial statements

Year ended December 31, 2019

4. Investments

Investments are comprised of the following:

| | 2019 \$ | 2019 Market value \$ | 2018 \$ | 2018 Market value \$ |
|--------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Fixed income | 3,005,040 | 3,005,040 | 2,769,027 | 2,769,027 |
| Equity investments | 4,226,065 | 4,427,089 | 4,122,001 | 3,826,471 |
| | 7,231,105 | 7,432,129 | 6,891,028 | 6,595,498 |

Fixed income investments consist of term deposits and guaranteed investment certificates with maturities ranging from January 13, 2020 to September 25, 2023. Interest rates on the investments range from 2.11% to 2.35%. Fixed income and equity investments are recorded on the Statement of financial position at cost.

5. Other liabilities

The Authority is the lead Agency in the source water protection fund, whereby funds are received by the Authority for the other parties to the arrangement. Each party is entitled to its pro-rata share of funding which is for the purpose of source water protection.

Funds received by the Authority for the other parties to the arrangement which have not been dispersed at December 31, 2019 amount to \$100,291 (\$59,202 in 2018). These amounts have been included in restricted cash.

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

Notes to financial statements

Year ended December 31, 2019

6. Tangible capital assets

The historical cost of tangible capital assets employed by the Authority at December 31 is as follows:

| | Land \$ | Land improvements \$ | Buildings \$ | Infrastructure \$ | Furniture and fixtures \$ | Vehicles \$ | Flood control structures \$ | Computers and communication \$ | Construction in progress \$ | Total \$ |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Cost | | | | | | | | | | |
| Balance 2018 | 14,981,939 | 877,984 | 14,785,859 | 7,654,460 | 830,897 | 1,791,850 | 20,675,884 | 853,701 | 3,678,444 | 66,131,018 |
| Additions | 107,091 | 55,296 | 105,214 | 46,341 | 55,806 | 268,481 | 1,248,500 | 43,359 | — | 1,930,088 |
| Reclassifications and adjustments | — | 171,934 | (87,798) | — | (126,601) | 119,654 | — | 39,912 | — | 117,101 |
| Disposals | 130 | — | — | — | — | 154,920 | — | 117,287 | 3,655,585 | 3,927,922 |
| Balance 2019 | 15,088,900 | 1,105,214 | 14,803,275 | 7,700,801 | 760,102 | 2,025,065 | 21,924,384 | 819,685 | 22,859 | 64,250,285 |
| Amortization | | | | | | | | | | |
| Balance 2018 | — | 550,199 | 3,889,512 | 6,856,156 | 452,854 | 1,221,016 | 10,062,429 | 712,114 | — | 23,744,280 |
| Additions | — | 41,361 | 278,915 | 23,386 | 71,932 | 106,260 | 537,706 | 92,170 | — | 1,151,730 |
| Reclassifications and adjustments | — | 108,348 | (104,142) | — | (15,718) | 137,734 | — | 8,308 | — | 134,530 |
| Disposals | — | — | — | — | — | 154,828 | — | 117,287 | — | 272,115 |
| Balance 2019 | — | 699,908 | 4,064,285 | 6,879,542 | 509,068 | 1,310,182 | 10,600,135 | 695,305 | — | 24,758,425 |
| Net book value | | | | | | | | | | |
| Balance 2018 | 14,981,939 | 327,785 | 10,896,347 | 798,304 | 378,043 | 570,834 | 10,613,455 | 141,587 | 3,678,444 | 42,386,738 |
| Balance 2019 | 15,088,900 | 405,306 | 10,738,990 | 821,259 | 251,034 | 714,883 | 11,324,249 | 124,380 | 22,859 | 39,491,860 |

The majority of the amounts transferred out of Construction in Progress during the year relate to projects which were not capitalized in the Authority when the project was closed during the year. These amounts were as such expensed during the year, with an offsetting recognition of related revenue that had been deferred in the prior year.

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

Notes to financial statements

Year ended December 31, 2019

7. Accumulated surplus

| | 2019 \$ | 2018 \$ |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| | | Note 11 |
| Surplus | | |
| Invested in tangible assets | 39,491,862 | 42,386,738 |
| Unrestricted net assets | (1,691,709) | (5,297,992) |
| Total surplus | 37,800,153 | 37,088,746 |
| Reserve set aside for specific purposes of the Authority | | |
| Operating and/or capital reserves (Schedule B) | 3,237,955 | 2,825,591 |
| Reserve funds set aside for specific purposes by the Authority | | |
| Restricted reserves (Schedule B) | 3,606,031 | 3,618,267 |
| | 44,644,139 | 43,532,604 |

8. Pension agreements

The Authority makes contributions to the Ontario Municipal Employees Retirement System ("OMERS"), which is a multi-employer plan, on behalf of certain members of its staff. The plan is a defined benefit plan that specifies the amount of the retirement benefit to be received by the employees based on the length of service and rates of pay.

Contributions made by the Authority to OMERS for 2019 were \$1,303,791 (\$1,270,557 in 2018). As at December 31, 2019 the OMERS plan is 97% funded (96% in 2018). This deficit will be addressed through temporary contribution rate increases, benefit reductions and investment returns.

9. Contingencies

There are certain claims pending against the Authority as at December 31, 2019. The final outcome of these claims cannot be determined at this time. In management's opinion, insurance coverage is sufficient to offset the costs of unfavorable settlements, if any, which may result from such claims.

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

Notes to financial statements

Year ended December 31, 2019

10. Restatement

During the year, it was identified that previous capital repairs to St. Mary's floodwall had been expensed in the year incurred. The floodwall was constructed by the UTRCA at the request of the Town of St. Mary's; its major maintenance has been undertaken by UTRCA; there is a continued expectation that it be maintained by the UTRCA; the Authority's flood control program benefits from the floodwall, and the UTRCA has the ability to levy for its continued maintenance as it did for the initial construction. In the absence of anything indicating otherwise, management determined that it controls the St. Mary's floodwall, thus the costs incurred on account of that structure have been set up as tangible capital assets. This change has been accounted for retroactively with restatement of prior year balances. The impact to the comparative balances are as follows:

| | As previously reported \$ | Adjustment \$ | As restated \$ |
|--|---------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Accumulated surplus as at January 1, 2018 | 44,024,528 | 264,650 | 44,289,178 |
| Annual (deficit) surplus for the year ended December 31, 2018 | (737,329) | (19,245) | (756,574) |
| Tangible Capital assets as at December 31, 2018 | 42,141,333 | 245,405 | 42,386,738 |
| Accumulated surplus as at December 31, 2018 | 43,287,199 | 245,405 | 43,532,604 |

11. Subsequent Event

Subsequent to year-end, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization characterized the outbreak of a strain of the novel coronavirus ("COVID-19") as a pandemic which has resulted in a series of public health and emergency measures that have been put in place to combat the spread of the virus. The duration and impact of COVID-19 is unknown at this time and is not possible to reliably estimate the impact that the length and severity of these developments will have on the financial results and condition of the Authority in future periods.

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority**Schedule A - Service cost centres**

Year ended December 31, 2019

| | 2019 Budget \$ | 2019 Actual \$ | 2018 Actual \$ |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Recoveries from mission cost centres | 3,381,195 | 3,086,260 | 3,768,052 |
| Expenditures | | | |
| Occupancy | 550,323 | 543,449 | 555,291 |
| Information systems | 707,366 | 722,227 | 724,639 |
| Administration | 603,493 | 645,974 | 644,812 |
| Finance | 614,458 | 640,821 | 708,271 |
| Marketing and communications | 402,578 | 383,157 | 496,772 |
| Vehicles and equipment | 599,048 | 588,166 | 682,192 |
| | 3,477,266 | 3,523,794 | 3,811,977 |
| Deficit in service cost centre | (96,071) | (437,534) | (43,925) |

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

Schedule B - Reserves and reserve funds

Year ended December 31, 2019

| | 2018 \$ | Appropriations to (from) reserves \$ | 2019 \$ |
|--|------------------|---|------------------|
| Restricted reserves | | | |
| Flood control | 3,468,935 | (7,063) | 3,461,872 |
| Donor designated memorial forests | 32,323 | (1,335) | 30,988 |
| Harrington Grist Mill | 51,032 | (3,838) | 47,194 |
| Land disposition/acquisition reserve | 65,977 | — | 65,977 |
| | <u>3,618,267</u> | <u>(12,236)</u> | <u>3,606,031</u> |
| Operating and/or capital reserves | | | |
| Capital building, fleet and equipment replacement | 619,553 | 51,940 | 671,493 |
| General operating reserves | 449,835 | (228,557) | 221,278 |
| Defined purpose reserves | 1,756,203 | 588,981 | 2,345,184 |
| | <u>2,825,591</u> | <u>412,364</u> | <u>3,237,955</u> |
| | <u>6,443,858</u> | <u>400,128</u> | <u>6,843,986</u> |

DRAFT

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Jennifer Howley, Manager, Conservation Areas
Date: May 18, 2020 **Agenda #:** 8.1
Subject: Conservation Areas – COVID-19 Tentative Opening Plan **Filename:** C:\Users\howleyj\Documents\Group Wise\7574-1.doc

COVID-19 Timeline and Impact on Conservation Areas

March 17, 2020 - Declaration of Emergency under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act

- Minimal conservation area staff were permitted to perform duties involving enforcement, legislative requirements (drinking water), risk management
- UTRCA permitted limited access to lands for passive activities including hiking, biking and walking

March 30, 2020 – Emergency Order under subsection 7.0.2 (4) of the Act – Closure of Outdoor Recreational Amenities

- Conservation area staff closed all playgrounds, leash free areas, and disk golf courses on UTRCA properties
- UTRCA continued to permit limited access to lands for passive activities including hiking, biking and walking

March 31, 2020 – Order under subsection 7.0.2 (4) of the Act – Enforcement of Orders

- Provincial Offences Act (POA) Officers enforcement powers were enhanced to enforce orders under the Act

May 16, 2020 – Phase 1 of reopening the provincial economy

- Seasonal campgrounds and marinas/launch ramps are eligible to open

On Thursday, May 14, 2020, as part of the “Framework for Reopening Our Province,” Premier Ford announced that, as of Saturday, May 16, 2020, “private parks and campgrounds may open to enable preparation for the season and to allow access for trailers and recreational vehicles whose owners have full season contracts.” The announcement also stated that “marinas, boat clubs and public boat launches may open for recreational use.”

Following the announcement, there was a flurry of emails and phone calls from seasonal campers and day users to Conservation Area staff, asking if hydro and water would be turned on in time for May 16 and if boats could be launched. There was confusion as the messaging during Premier Ford’s daily briefing was not the same as the announcement (quoted above) posted on the Province’s website.

Staff created and distributed a newsletter to seasonal campers on Friday, May 15, explaining that we will announce our opening date on Friday, May 22. Staff need this time to develop a detailed plan that will ensure we continue to adhere to government directives and health unit orders. These plans will follow the UTRCA Pandemic Plan and standard operating procedures that have been developed.

Huron Perth Public Health has distributed “Guidelines for Campgrounds and Trailer Parks during COVID-19.” This document provides enhanced measures and guidance to prevent and limit person-to-person transmission of COVID-19. The guidelines are either already in place or staff are prepared to enact them once the conservation areas open.

Who can camp in our parks once they open?

- Trailer owners who are registered as seasonal campers and whose trailers are self-contained with washroom facilities and running water.
- Tents are not permitted at this time.
- Nightly camping is not permitted at this time.

What are the responsibilities of the campground operators during this time?

- Permit seasonal campers to camp as per the provincial order.
- Post signage at the entrance that reminds individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 to stay home and refrain from using their trailer at this time.
- Ensure that public washroom facilities and amenities are closed and locked at all times.
- Ensure that shared playground equipment, pools and other sites where people may gather are inaccessible.
- Maintain physical distancing by decreasing occupancy, cancelling any planned communal gatherings, and posting signage about physical distancing.
- Encourage electronic payments at the campground to minimize handling of cash.
- Ensure hand sanitizer (60-90% alcohol concentration) is available to staff at cash registers and performing other duties.

What have staff been doing to increase awareness about COVID-19 through communication with seasonal campers and other park users?

- Creating and distributing weekly newsletter updating our seasonal campers on the pandemic situation and the impact on the camping season and providing reliable, informative pandemic links.
- Posting signs at the entrances to our campgrounds and day use areas identifying that parks are closed due to COVID-19 and only passive recreation activities (walking, hiking, biking) are permitted.
- Posting eye-catching graphic signs throughout the conservation areas to remind people about group sizes, physical distancing, and keeping their visits brief.
- Providing social media and website updates.

What is the timeline to open the conservation areas, based on provincial directives?

The health and safety of staff and park visitors has always been our priority and, since COVID-19, this is even more important. Conservation area staff will be devoting a great deal of time to ensuring that seasonal staff are properly trained for their positions, and there will be a major emphasis on safety concerns and additional measures in place due to the pandemic. It is paramount that all staff feel comfortable with their jobs and the extra precautions in place, before the conservation areas open.

The following are tentative key dates for our operation, based on current government directives.

Friday, May 29

- Continued free access to conservation area lands offering passive recreational opportunities

- Seasonal campers will have daily vehicle access to the campground to permit site and trailer preparation for the season

Monday, June 1

- Seasonal camper early registration will begin at all three conservation areas
- Day use areas will open to the public with Fanshawe and Wildwood gatehouses open for the sale of day and seasonal passes
- Reservoirs will open to the public and UTRCA clubs

Monday, June 8

- Seasonal camping will open for the season at Fanshawe and Pittock Conservation Areas

Monday, June 15

- Seasonal camping will open for the season at Wildwood Conservation Area

At this time, a date has not been established for nightly camping as it is unclear when the government will permit it. Reservations are not being taken until further details direct our decisions.

Effective communications, both internally and with the public, have been critical. Communication will continue to have an important role in our ability to provide safe, carefully managed outdoor recreational opportunities during this unprecedented time.

Prepared by:
Jennifer Howley
Manager, Conservation Areas

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Ian Wilcox, General Manager
Date: May 18,2020
Subject: COVID-19: UTRCA Return to Work

Agenda #: 8.2
Filename: D:\Users\wilcoxi\Documents\Group Wise\123464-1.doc

The UTRCA implemented a “working from home” protocol on March 16,th 2020 in response to the global spread of COVID-19. Prior to that, several work place procedures had been enacted to minimize the risk of infection including broad distribution of disinfectant wipes, new protocols for cleaning of common areas and work stations, circulation of education materials regarding handwashing and use of personal protective equipment, physical distancing practices, etc. Staff have adapted and continue to deliver programs and services while working from home. While some adjustments have been necessary, the transition has been relatively smooth with staff now well-adjusted to their new routines.

The duration of this pandemic is unknown however it is prudent for the UTRCA to begin to plan for staff to eventually return to Authority work places. As such, a UTRCA Return to Work Plan (the Plan) is being developed by the Authority’s Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC). The Plan will guide what is expected to be a gradual resumption of “near” or “new” normal operations however it is clear some permanent changes to work place policies and procedures are inevitable. Ultimately the Plan will need to be consistent with, and adapt to, guidance from Public Health and the Province of Ontario. Once the plan is final, (noting that it will have to be highly adaptive based on changing infection rates, expert’s guidance, as well as local circumstances) it will be circulated to the Board for information.

Plan Assumptions and Possibilities:

1. There will be a “new normal” regarding staff and visitors at Authority work places. What that ultimately looks like will be based on public health guidance and industry standards, (i.e., the practices of other Conservation Authorities and municipalities).
2. Staff will return to work in scheduled phases.
3. The schedule of staff returning will be based on continued minimization of infection risk in the work place, program and service level priorities, and the circumstances of individual staff.
4. New policies and procedures will be implemented to minimize the on-going risk of infection after returning to work. These new policies and procedures could be permanent.
5. “Work from home” for at least a portion of the work week may become a long term practice for staff where it’s appropriate.
6. Return to work efforts may include reversals in the event of increasing infection rates or infections among staff.
7. Periodic virtual Board of Directors meetings may become part of regular practice.

Please note that high levels of uncertainty regarding future infection rates, the duration of the emergency declaration, and public health guidance makes planning difficult and necessitates a flexible and adaptable approach.

Prepared by:

Ian Wilcox,
General Manager

To: UTRCA Board of Directors
From: Ian Wilcox, General Manager
Christine Saracino, Supervisor, Finance and Accounting
Date: May 18, 2020 **Agenda #:** 8.3
Subject: UTRCA COVID Financial Impacts and Response **Filename:** D:\Users\wilcoxi\Documents\Group Wise\123393-1.doc

Introduction

The following report provides an overview of the COVID-19 Pandemic's financial impacts on the UTRCA's 2020 budget and management responses to date. Staff are not presenting a revised budget to the Board for approval at this time. A revised budget will be developed through the summer once there is clearer provincial and public health direction regarding business operations, and infection rates are better understood.

Scenario Planning

As explained to the Board previously, the COVID-19 Pandemic has primarily impacted revenue; it has not created significant new expenses beyond budget and, in fact, has reduced expenses in several areas such as wages for seasonal staff, fuel and cleaning services. Regardless, the loss of revenue greatly overshadows any incidental reduction in expenditures.

In that light, management took steps many weeks ago to forecast a range of potential revenue impacts. These estimations include many assumptions during a time of significant uncertainty. The primary working scenario assumed a June 1st "back-to-normal" date but then, as days passed, this was extended as the possibility of a much longer emergency closure became more likely. For all scenarios, given that the Conservation Areas generate 23% of overall UTRCA revenues, it became apparent that financial impacts would be driven by when, or if, the parks could open for service. June became a critical month in those forecasts.

Based on forecasts of all units and closure of the parks from normal opening, May 1st, until:

| | |
|--|-------------|
| June 1 st , net deficit would be | \$394,000 |
| June 28 th , net deficit would be | \$2,775,000 |
| 2021 season, net deficit would be | \$3,541,000 |

Revenue Shortfalls- Current Status

The UTRCA has experienced a net reduction in park reservation fees to the end of April of \$1.26M. It is not yet possible to predict the amount which may be lost entirely as this is dependent upon an opening

date, and the willingness of the general public to return to “normal” activity levels. With the Province recently announcing that campgrounds may now prepare for opening, efforts are underway to hire and train staff, bring water systems into compliance with provincial regulations, and introduce new COVID-19 policies and procedures to protect the public and staff. Operations will open in stages as soon as possible with June 1st looking like a realistic target date. After opening, revenue will depend on the public’s comfort with resuming normal activities, as well as whether or not infection rates spike and further shut-downs become necessary.

The following is a summary of user fee revenues to date (not just Conservation Areas) compared to 2019:

| Type of User Fee | 2020 Actual YTD | 2019 Actual YTD | Difference |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Conservation Areas | \$94,755 | \$1,359,971 | (\$1,265,216) |
| Planning and Permits | \$84,414 | \$88,675 | (\$4,261) |
| Education fees | \$44,447 | \$45,884 | (\$1,437) |
| Landowner, tree sales, and cost recoveries | \$90,580 | \$103,923 | (\$13,343) |

Management Response

1. New Revenue

The UTRCA’s approach to financial challenges has always been to first aggressively pursue new revenue. This approach, if successful, allows the UTRCA to maintain service levels, provide program continuity and retain staff expertise. If new revenue cannot completely mitigate the financial issue, expenditure reductions are implemented. This has been the strategy used successfully to date to manage impacts from the COVID-19 Pandemic. New revenue includes:

- \$1M (\$330K thus far) support from the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS) covering a maximum of \$847 per week per employee for wages over 12 weeks. This results in approximately 10% of our annual wages being fully subsidized. This includes the Temporary Wage Subsidy of \$25,000.
- Recent approval of a \$150K contract from the RBC Foundation for continuing times series data management, public access to information and developing citizen science supporting environmental monitoring.
- Recent approval of a \$50K contract for a First Nations Youth project.
- Approval of a \$20K contract from the Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk research.

2. Line Item Expense Reductions

While new revenue is significant, the potential for significant revenue loss in the parks has necessitated reductions in planned capital projects (\$185K in the parks) and supplies and services. All units are working to reduce expenditures. Note that not all spending is distributed evenly over the year; see the utilities forecast below as an example. Also note some forecast figures are the result of increased costs not related to the pandemic (e.g., insurance).

Work-from-home and limits on public gatherings have reduced meeting and training costs to date as well as the provision of some services. Hydro savings are now starting to be experienced due to reduced activity and provincial rate reductions. Overall operating expenditures are down 5% to the end of April year over year from 2019. The 2020 forecast below represents the estimates management has made across the organization based on a June 1st park opening.

Revised 2020 UTRCA Expenses based on June 1 Opening of Conservation Areas

| Expense Groups | 2020 YTD | 2019 YTD | Change year over year YTD | 2020 Budget Approved | Revised 2020 Budget Forecast | Change in Budget 2020 |
|---|-----------|-----------|---------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Advertising and Promotion | 8,841 | 15,199 | -42% | 62,400 | 34,422 | -45% |
| Purchased Services (legal, audit, consulting, Camis system) | 115,811 | 157,560 | -26% | 675,400 | 680,400 | 1% |
| Fees | 2,982 | 5,866 | -49% | 41,025 | 16,025 | -61% |
| Computers and Communications (internet, network services, phones, hardware, software licenses) | 113,957 | 141,597 | -20% | 337,225 | 346,225 | 3% |
| Fleet-related | 19,965 | 21,632 | -8% | 164,200 | 122,200 | -26% |
| Insurance and CO Levy | 102,226 | 81,998 | 25% | 302,285 | 324,785 | 7% |
| Property-related (meetings, taxes, cleaning, repairs, parking lot, security, garbage, tree removal) | 278,185 | 309,949 | -10% | 1,172,232 | 962,467 | -18% |
| Utilities (hydro, natural gas, heating) | 79,674 | 78,090 | 2% | 459,175 | 375,730 | -18% |
| Personnel expenses (training, PPE, uniforms, service awards) | 42,951 | 62,507 | -31% | 218,905 | 185,106 | -15% |
| Supplies (trees, water system supplies and testing, resale items, building materials, cleaning, sanitary products) | 312,703 | 262,219 | 19% | 1,054,059 | 1,055,559 | 0% |
| Total these expenses | 1,077,295 | 1,136,617 | -5% | 4,486,906 | 4,102,919 | -9% |

3. Staff Reductions

Full Time Position Vacancies: Currently eight full time technical positions (permanent and long term contract) are being left vacant to reduce expenses.

Deferred Seasonal Hiring: The hiring of 49 seasonal staff has been deferred or eliminated for 2020 pending provincial approval to resume near-normal operations.

Temporary Layoffs: Four positions are currently held as temporary layoffs pending provincial approval to resume near-normal operations.

** Cost savings from these staff actions have not been quantified as the duration of implementation is unknown.*

Several full time staff have been redeployed to help manage vacancies related to priority tasks (e.g., tree planting, environmental monitoring, property management). Many other staff adaptations have been implemented but are non-financial e.g., working from home, new work place protocols like fleet use and common area cleaning, physical distancing, etc.

In summary, the impacts of COVID-19 to the operations of the UTRCA have been unprecedented. The potential for significant financial losses are unlike anything experienced by the Authority during the past forty years. However, early efforts to manage expenses, combined with the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy and Authority strategies already in place (i.e., reserves, investment strategy) have helped mitigate losses and ensure on-going delivery of the majority of the UTRCA's programs and services, albeit in modified forms. While much uncertainty remains, management is comfortable at this point that conservation programs will continue to be delivered through 2020 and that while financial losses are likely, they can be managed through a long-term financial strategy (i.e., beyond 2020) assuming the pandemic risk eases and the public's demand for programs returns.

Prepared by:

Ian Wilcox,
General Manager

Christine Saracino,
Supervisor, Finance & Accounting

To: UTRCA Board of Directors

From: Christine Saracino

Date: 15 May 2020

Agenda #: 8.4

Subject: 2020 April Year to Date Finance update

Filename: ::ODMA\GRPWISE\UT_MAIN.UTRCA
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For Information:

Now four months into the year, we are seeing some impacts from the emergency closures just as business is starting to phase-in a return to normal. It may result by year end that the budget approved in February 2020 is less accurate than desired but for this report, at this time, we focus on actuals to date.

The Operating Statement on the next page indicates a 14% overall reduction of revenues compared to the same time in 2019. While all general levy funding is now recorded for the entire year and we expect little more federal funding to be recorded, provincial grants are demonstrating a comparative decline thus far. Other revenues, aside from donations and interest, are derived from funding set aside from earlier periods and may yet be recorded if activities are undertaken which require that funding. User fees are those that demonstrate greatest variance to 2019 and are discussed in another report in your package.

Expenses are lower in total compared to 2019, but this total is affected by entries for corrections to the investment balance following 2019 presentation adjustments. The line for Conservation Areas indicates clearly that expenses have been curtailed in park operations.

It is important to keep in mind that we do not experience an even or steady flow of revenue and expenditures during the year - it is not a smooth process, nor do we budget on a monthly basis - so blanket conclusions at this time may prove erroneous. We expect further variances to become apparent in the coming months.

The Statement of Financial Position (balance sheet) contains nothing remarkable save the unpaid amount of NDMP funding – an accrued receivable. We have completed all required spending and reporting but continue to await the remaining funding. We regularly hear promises that Public Safety Canada is attempting to get older claims cleared “soon”. Undoubtedly the pandemic will cause additional delays in processing claims and payments from the federal government to MMAH which administers the program in Ontario.

Submitted by:

Christine Saracino,
Supervisor, Finance & Accounting

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

Summary Statement of Operating Activities

For The Period Ending April 30, 2020

| | 2020 YTD Actual | 2020 Budget Approved | 2019 YTD Actual | Year over Year change | Notes |
|--|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|---|
| OPERATING ACTIVITIES: | | | | | |
| Levy Funding Current Year | | | | | |
| Municipal Operating Levy | 4,171,685 | 4,113,335 | 3,963,386 | 5% | |
| Dam and Flood Control Operations Levy | 1,442,175 | 1,461,675 | 1,286,282 | 12% | |
| Special Benefiting Levy | - | 310,037 | - | 0% | Growth funding was not approved by city |
| Operating Reserve Levy | 33,678 | 33,678 | 33,048 | 2% | |
| | <u>5,647,538</u> | <u>5,918,725</u> | <u>5,282,716</u> | <u>7%</u> | |
| Government Transfer Payments | - | 181,217 | - | 0% | |
| | | | | 0% | |
| Contracts | | | | | |
| Municipal within Watershed | 342,845 | 894,351 | 148,173 | 131% | |
| Municipal without Watershed | 28,160 | 73,340 | 15,156 | 86% | |
| Provincial | 297,499 | 635,591 | 539,868 | -45% | |
| Federal | 441,298 | 464,599 | 307,523 | 44% | NDMP Program now completed |
| All other | 1,168,449 | 1,853,982 | 1,127,222 | 4% | |
| | <u>2,278,252</u> | <u>3,921,863</u> | <u>2,137,942</u> | <u>7%</u> | |
| User Fees | | | | | |
| Conservation Areas | 94,755 | 3,709,056 | 1,359,971 | -93% | |
| Planning and Permit Fees | 84,414 | 315,000 | 88,675 | -5% | |
| Education Fees | 44,447 | 125,000 | 45,884 | -3% | |
| Landowner, tree sales, cost recoveries | 90,580 | 166,500 | 103,923 | -13% | |
| | <u>314,196</u> | <u>4,315,556</u> | <u>1,598,452</u> | <u>-80%</u> | |
| Other Revenues | | | | | |
| from deferred revenues | 365,985 | 582,621 | 454,947 | -20% | |
| Donations, interest and gains | 192,096 | 295,350 | 585,034 | -67% | Lower gains expected in 2020 |
| Municipal Operating Levy previous years | 80,000 | 239,794 | 175,592 | -54% | |
| Amortized Flood Control Capital Levy | - | 78,062 | - | 0% | Still to be distributed to programs |
| Amortized Capital Maintenance Levy | - | 42,745 | 66,005 | -100% | Still to be distributed to programs |
| | <u>638,081</u> | <u>1,238,572</u> | <u>1,281,578</u> | <u>-50%</u> | |
| Total Revenues | <u>8,878,067</u> | <u>15,575,933</u> | <u>10,300,688</u> | <u>-14%</u> | |
| Operating Expenditures: | | | | | |
| Mission Cost Centres | | | | | |
| Community Partnerships | 409,551 | 1,301,859 | 419,052 | -2% | |
| Water and Information Management | 965,501 | 2,726,437 | 932,333 | 4% | |
| Environmental Planning and Regulations | 702,346 | 2,253,972 | 659,001 | 7% | |
| Conservation Services | 617,381 | 1,995,488 | 582,202 | 6% | |
| Watershed Planning & Research | 361,863 | 1,120,434 | 367,142 | -1% | |
| Conservation Areas | 872,984 | 4,496,269 | 1,041,850 | -16% | |
| Lands and Facilities Management | 503,999 | 1,746,540 | 479,231 | 5% | |
| Service Cost Centres | (45,679) | 257,310 | 46,236 | -199% | |
| Total Operating Expenditures | <u>4,387,945</u> | <u>15,898,309</u> | <u>4,527,047</u> | <u>-3%</u> | |
| Surplus (deficit) in Current Operations | 4,490,121 | (322,376) | 5,773,642 | -22% | |
| (To) or from Equity [Reserves] | - | (53,678) | - | 0% | |
| Balance of Operating Activities | <u>4,490,121</u> | <u>(376,054)</u> | <u>5,773,642</u> | <u>-22%</u> | |
| Depreciation | 381,760 | 1,221,973 | 368,427 | 4% | |
| Net Cash Surplus (Deficit) | 4,871,882 | 845,919 | 6,142,069 | -21% | |

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
Statement of Financial Position and Accumulated Surplus (unaudited)
as at April 30, 2020

| FINANCIAL ASSETS | Current Year | Prior Year | Notes |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| Cash and equivalents | | | |
| Bank Balances | 2,440,923 | 2,626,060 | |
| Petty Cash, Floats and Advances | 1,302 | 6,119 | |
| Short-term Investments | 3,022,202 | 2,761,803 | |
| PHN Investment Portfolio | 4,236,022 | 4,261,670 | |
| | <u>9,700,450</u> | <u>9,655,652</u> | |
| Restricted Cash | | | |
| Source Water Protection Bank Account | 100,589 | 51,729 | |
| | <u>100,589</u> | <u>51,729</u> | |
| Receivable Amounts | | | |
| Accounts Receivable | 3,780,645 | 3,647,684 | |
| Federal Taxes Receivable | 26,647 | 54,282 | |
| Accrued Receivables | 2,901,058 | 1,988,881 | This is owing on the NDMP projects |
| | <u>6,708,349</u> | <u>5,690,847</u> | |
| | <u>16,509,388</u> | <u>15,398,228</u> | |
| FINANCIAL LIABILITIES | | | |
| Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities | | | |
| Wage-related payables | 772,183 | 802,655 | |
| Federal Taxes Payable | (9,869) | 168,381 | |
| Accounts Payable | 261,218 | 445,588 | |
| Amounts held for other groups | (156,554) | (128,396) | |
| | <u>866,979</u> | <u>1,288,227</u> | |
| Deferred Revenues | | | |
| Funding carried forward temporarily | 740,494 | 74,756 | |
| Customer prepayments | 153,000 | - | |
| Advanced WECl and SWP | 121,116 | 51,973 | |
| Deferred and Committed Capital Funding | 3,980,834 | 2,947,168 | |
| | <u>4,995,444</u> | <u>3,073,897</u> | |
| | <u>5,862,422</u> | <u>4,362,123</u> | |
| NET FINANCIAL ASSETS | 10,646,966 | 11,036,105 | |
| NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS | | | |
| Tangible Capital Assets | 65,684,416 | 61,956,817 | |
| less accumulated amortization | (26,390,429) | (23,726,064) | |
| Net tangible capital assets | <u>39,293,987</u> | <u>38,230,753</u> | |
| Capital projects in progress | 17,824 | - | |
| Prepaid Expenses, Deposits and Inventories | 101,121 | 96,492 | |
| | <u>50,059,898</u> | <u>49,363,349</u> | |
| Accumulated Surplus | 50,059,898 | 49,363,349 | |
| Equity in Tangible Capital Assets | 39,469,004 | 38,462,891 | |
| All other Equity | (1,678,761) | (1,623,827) | |
| Current year Surplus | 5,425,669 | 6,076,146 | |
| Reserves | 6,843,986 | 6,448,140 | |
| Accumulated Surplus | 50,059,898 | 49,363,349 | |

To: UTRCA Board of Directors

From: Alex B. Shivas
Manager, Lands & Facilities

Date: March 5, 2020

Agenda: 8.5

Subject: Motherwell Blacksmith Shop
-For Discussion

Filename: L&F #5759

The Village of Motherwell is located on the North Thames River, upstream of the Town of St. Marys. The UTRCA owns the land and the four remaining buildings in the hamlet, including a Blacksmith Shop, all of which were acquired as part of the Glengowan Dam and Reservoir Project. All structures would have ultimately been demolished to make way for the reservoir's construction. While the Glengowan Project has been formally abandoned, the Authority has retained title to the lands and buildings in the hamlet.

At the January 2020 Board of Directors meeting, the Motherwell Heritage Committee (MHC) (delegation) presented a proposal for the preservation of the remaining buildings in Motherwell with emphasis on the Blacksmith Shop.

The MHC presented two requests:

"The Motherwell Heritage Committee would like measures taken that would stop the deterioration of the former Blacksmith Shop", and

"The Motherwell Heritage Committee would like a permanent solution such as repair of any damage to the structure of the building and a new roof. We emphasize the importance of maintaining the heritage of this notable and well-loved community by keeping its significant buildings."

After suggestions from the Board, staff confirmed that a follow up report will be provided to the Board and include: the engineer's report, zoning options, limitations, and opportunities to work with the Motherwell Heritage Group, tree cover, and natural heritage features.

Engineer's Report:

In October 2019, UTRCA staff obtained the services of MTE Consultant's in Stratford to do an assessment and report on the stability of the roof of the Blacksmith Shop building in the Hamlet of Motherwell. Two engineering consultants attended the site on October 17th and proceeded to do an interior and exterior inspection. A report with recommendations and estimated costs was provided and is attached to this report for consideration. The Blacksmith Shop is currently locked and secured as it is deemed not suitable for occupancy until work is undertaken to repair the roof.

The report details the situation with the failing roof structure and also offers an estimated cost for the construction of a new roof. The estimate includes; removal of the old roof and engineering, material

and labor costs for replacement of a new roof. Details are highlighted in the attached Assessment Report. The estimated cost of the project as per the report, including taxes is approximately \$40,000.00.

Zoning and Regulatory Limitations:

As shown on the attached Regulation Limit mapping the location of the Blacksmith's Shop is entirely within the Authorities Regulation Limit and includes an area identified as riverine flooding hazard associated with the North Thames River. The UTRCA regulates development within the Regulation Limit in accordance with Ontario Regulation 157/06 made pursuant to Section 28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*.

Maintenance and repair of the existing structure does not require a permit from our office. However, any development that includes: *any change to a building or structure that would have the effect of altering the use or potential use of the building or structure, increasing the size of the building or structure or increasing the number of dwelling units in the building or structure* would require a Section 28 permit. Given the extent of the flooding hazard it would be unlikely that any additional development would be permitted.

The Zoning By-Law for the Municipality of West Perth identifies the location of the Blacksmith Shop as being in an Agriculture zone and within the flood constraint and regulation area. The underlying zone applies if the constraints can be addressed. As such, the By-Law identifies the hazard constraints by only permitting uses, buildings and structures to the extent allowed by regulation made under the Conservation Authorities Act. Under the current zoning, there is nothing preventing the repair of any buildings or structures, but there would not be support offered for any new structures. Alternatively, there is nothing in the Zoning By-law or Official Plan preventing demolition. The by-law covering property standards and habitable condition would come from the Municipality of West Perth. In addition, demolition permits required would come from the Municipality of West Perth.

Natural Heritage Features:

The woodlands that are located adjacent to the building are considered significant in the Perth County Official Plan. "woodlands that are 1.0 hectare or larger in size have been identified as significant (as added by OPA # 47) and are therefore designated "Natural Resources/ Environment."

The UTRCA does not support new development and site alteration in woodlands considered to be significant. Furthermore, new development and site alteration is not permitted on adjacent lands to significant woodlands unless an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) has been completed to the satisfaction of the UTRCA. The woodland and associated valley is also part of the Draft Natural Heritage System Study for the County of Perth. Policies for natural systems will not be finalized until the new Official Plan has been completed.

Motherwell Heritage Group Opportunities:

Staff has recently been approached by a local individual interested in contributing to the restoration of the Blacksmith Shop. However, at the time of writing this report, details and specifics of the proposed contribution are unknown. The individual has been asked to submit a proposal detailing their intended use and any conditions that they may have and this will be reported on at the next Board meeting.

To date, staff has not been approached by the Heritage Group who made the presentation in January, other than to notify us that the roof seems to be deteriorating further.

Prepared by:

Alex B. Shivas
Manager, Lands & Facilities

Tracy Annett
Manager, Environmental Planning & Regulations

Bill Mackie
Lands & Facilities Supervisor



MTE Consultants 365 Home St., Stratford, ON N5A 2A5

November 11, 2019
MTE File No.: 46812-100

Bill Mackie
Lands & Facilities Supervisor
Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
1424 Clarke Road
London, ON N5V 5B9

Dear Bill Mackie:

RE: Motherwell Bert Brown Blacksmith Shop Roof Assessment Motherwell, Ontario

On October 17, 2019 Mike Cotton, P.Eng and Mark Whittemore of MTE Consultants Inc. made a site visit to the above noted location. The purpose of the site visit was to perform a visual review of the existing building roof, and to make a recommendation on the suitability of the building to be occupied. Only a visual review of the roof framing was completed. No testing was done, and no analysis of the roof members was performed.

The building measures approximately 30' by 60', and has a wood framed roof and loft that bears on exterior brick walls. The roof framing consists of rafters that bear on the exterior wall and meet at the roof peak. A perpendicular wood beam supports the rafters at the mid point, and this beam bears on timber truss type members. The bottom timber of the truss supports the loft floor joists.

From the outside of the building the roof shows significant signs of deflection, especially on the east side. Many of the rafters have signs of moisture damage and rot and are sagging noticeably. The intermediate perpendicular beam that supports the roof rafters also has some rot and moisture damage. This beam is sagging and the splice joint has pulled apart and failed in a few locations. The bottom member of one of the timber trusses appears to have failed at the exterior wall. It has signs of significant rot at one end and has moved away from the brick wall. The loft floor is sagging considerably in many locations.

Based on our visual review of the roof structure, in our opinion the building is not suitable for occupancy in its current condition. The roof and loft floor framing will require significant reinforcement, and many members will need to be replaced if the structure is to be used. The roof may also be removed and replaced with new framing such a wood roof trusses. Any replacement or repair work must be designed by a structural engineer.

Engineers, Scientists, Surveyors.

Our review was limited to the roof structure, however the brick walls appeared to be in good condition and could likely be used to support the repaired or new roof structure. If the roof will be repaired or replaced an engineer should also review the brick to verify that the walls are structurally adequate to support the roof.

Yours Truly,

Mike Cotton, P.Eng
Structural Engineer
519-271-7952 ext. 2327
mcotton@mte85.com



MTE Consultants 365 Home St., Stratford, ON N 5A 2A5

November 12, 2019

MTE File No.: 46812-100

Bill Mackie
Lands & Facilities Supervisor
Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
1424 Clarke Road
London, ON N5V 5B9

Dear Bill Mackie:

RE: Roof Replacement Budget Cost Motherwell Bert Brown Blacksmith Shop

MTE has sourced 2 subcontractors to provide a budget cost to replace the existing roof system with new pre-engineered roof trusses and asphalt shingles. The new roof system will have the same roof slope as the existing roof, although the interior will be different from the existing. The existing roof system is constructed of timber members that span the 30' width of the building and provide a usable attic space. The new trusses will span the width of the building but no storage will be available in the attic area. The cost of the engineered roof trusses will be significantly lower than the cost of repairing the timber roof or the cost of replacing with a similar system. The proposed construction does not include any insulation.

DJ Jackson Eng'd Truss Components was contacted for a budget price for engineered trusses. Budget cost for the trusses - \$4700.00 + HST.

Red Seal Carpentry Inc. was contacted for a budget price for the removal of the existing roof system, disposal, temporary shoring and the installation of the new engineered trusses.

Budget cost for material - \$10,000.00 + HST

Budget cost for labour - \$13,500.00 + HST

MTE will complete the structural engineering and prepare drawings as required for building permit and tender. MTE will also complete reviews during construction as required by the Ontario Building Code.

Budget cost for engineering - \$6500.00 + HST

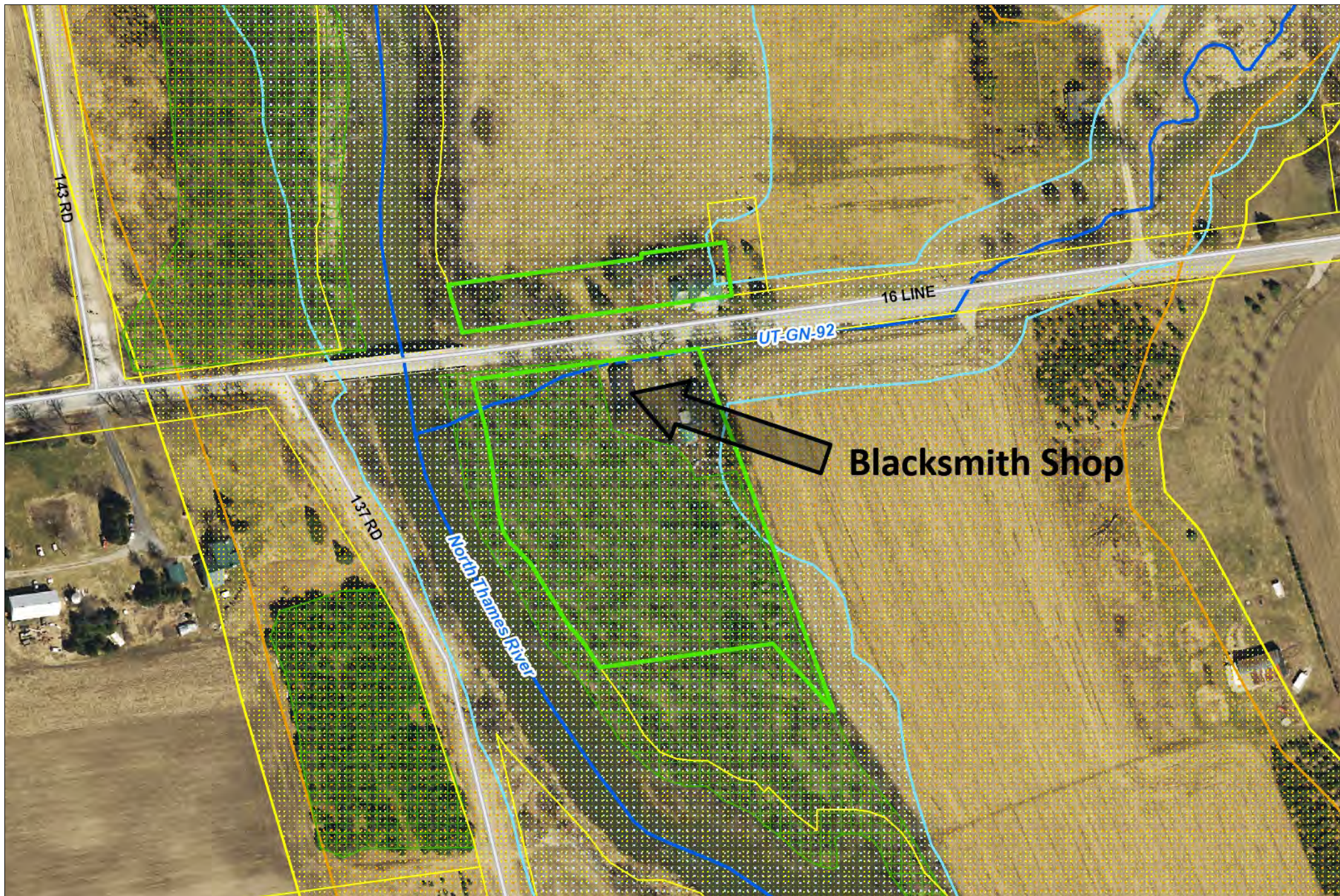
Total budget cost for roof replacement \$34,700.00 + HST

Prices shown are budget cost for information purposes only, and are not firm quotes.

This budget cost assumes that no upgrades to the existing wall structures are required. Quotations for the replacement can be provided by the contractors, after completion of the structural drawings.

Should you have any questions or concerns please contact Mark Whittemore (mwhittemore@mte85.com).

Yours Truly,
Project Manager
519-271-7952 ext. 2329
mWhittemore@mte85.com
MEW:smw
Encl.



Regulation Limit

Regulation under s.28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*
 Development, interference with wetlands, and alterations
 to shorelines and watercourses. O.Reg 157/06, 97/04.

Legend

- UTRCA Watershed (1:10K)
- UTRCA Property
- Assessment Parcel (MPAC)
- Watercourse (UTRCA, 2015)
 - Open
 - Tiled
- Perth NHSS Woodland (Draft 2017)
 - Candidate for Ecologically Important
 - Ecologically Important
 - Significant Ecologically Important
- Wetland Hazard
- Flooding Hazard
- Erosion Hazard
- Regulation Limit 2018

The Regulation Limit depicted on this map schedule is a representation of O.Reg 157/06 under O.Reg 97/04.

The Regulation Limit is a conservative estimation of the hazard lands within the UTRCA watershed. In the case of discrepancies between the mapping and the actual features on a property, the text of Ontario Regulation 157/06 prevails and the jurisdiction of the UTRCA may extend beyond areas shown on the maps.

The UTRCA disclaims explicitly any warranty, representation or guarantee as to the content, sequence, accuracy, timeliness, fitness for a particular purpose, merchantability or completeness of any of the data depicted and provided herein.

The UTRCA assumes no liability for any errors, omissions or inaccuracies in the information provided herein and further assumes no liability for any decisions made or actions taken or not taken by any person in reliance upon the information and data furnished hereunder.

This map is not a substitute for professional advice. Please contact UTRCA staff for any changes, updates and amendments to the information provided.

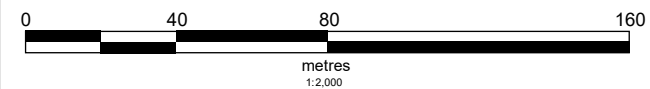
This document is not a Plan of Survey.

Sources: Base data, 2015 Aerial Photography used under licence with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Copyright © Queen's Printer for Ontario; City of London.

Notes:
 Motherwell - Blacksmith Shop Location

Created By: TA May 18, 2020

* Please note: Any reference to scale on this map is only appropriate when it is printed landscape on legal-sized (8.5" x 14") paper.



To: UTRCA Board of Directors

From: Tracy Annett, Manager – Environmental Planning and Regulations

Date: May 19, 2020 **Agenda #:** 8.6

Subject: Administration and Enforcement - Section 28 **Filename:** D:\Users\annett\Documents\GroupWise\9036-1.doc
Status Report – Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation (O.Reg157/06)

Section 28 Report:

The attached table is provided to the Board as a summary of staff activity related to the Conservation Authority's *Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation* (Ontario Regulation 157/06 made pursuant to Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act). The summary covers the period from April 1, 2020 to May, 15, 2020.

Status of Violations

Staff have been made aware of a number of activities commencing prior to obtaining a permit. The information related to violations is provided as a general update to the Board on the number activities that require staff time. Through cooperation with our municipalities and further investigation, not all are violations under Section 28. The landowner and/or individuals involved may be unaware that permission is required from the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA). However, this does not absolve the landowner and/or individuals involved from obtaining permission.

The landowner and/or individuals involved have two options:

- 1) cease the activity and have the activity approved by the UTRCA through the permit process, provided that the activity adheres to the Board-approved policies for the administration of Ontario Regulation 157/06, or
- 2) remove the offending development or cease the activity and restore the area to its original condition at the owner's expense.

If neither option is acceptable, the UTRCA may proceed to court. It is the preference of the UTRCA to address the violation using the first two options. All efforts to avoid pursuing legal action will be made. However, if an offender refuses to negotiate a resolution, UTRCA can lay charges.

We will continue to provide update to the Board on these matters.

Recommended by:

Tracy Annett, MCIP, RPP, Manager
Environmental Planning and Regulations

Prepared by:

Cari Ramsey
Environmental Regulations Technician

Jessica Schnaithmann
Land Use Regulations Officer

Brent Verscheure
Land Use Regulations Officer

Karen Winfield
Land Use Regulations Officer

**SECTION 28 STATUS REPORT
SUMMARY OF APPLICATIONS FOR 2019**



DEVELOPMENT, INTERFERENCE WITH WETLANDS AND ALTERATIONS TO SHORELINE AND WATERCOURSES REGULATION
ONTARIO REGULATION 157/06

Report Date: April 1 to May 15, 2020

| Permit # | Municipality | Location/Address | Category | Application Type | Project Description | Application Received | Notification of Complete Application | Permit Required By | Permit Issued On | Comply with Standards | Staff |
|----------|--------------|---------------------------------------|----------|-------------------|--|----------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 108-19 | Perth East | East Side of Perth Road 145 | Major | Municipal Drain | Proposed enclosure of approximately 1 km of a currently open watercourse was subject to a full Hearing for review and approval before the UTRCA Hearings Committee due to the size of the enclosure. Approved by the UTRCA Hearings Committee on May 28, 2019 but permit not issued until May 8, 2020 following receipt of final engineer's report. Work scheduled for summer of 2020. | 4-May-2020 | 4-May-2020 | 1-Jun-2020 | 8-May-2020 | YES | Winfield |
| 37-20 | West Perth | 100 St. George Street | Minor | Development | Proposed installation of pre-fabricated energy storage unit | 13-Mar-2020 | 6-Apr-2020 | 27-Apr-2020 | 16-Apr-2020 | YES | Schnaithmann |
| 38-20 | London | Highbury Avenue South - Dingman Creek | Major | Municipal Project | Proposed Rehabilitation of the Highbury Avenue Bridge at Dingman Creek (4-Br-05) | 18-Mar-2020 | 13-Apr-2020 | 11-May-2020 | 14-Apr-2020 | YES | Verscheure |
| 47-20 | London | 223 Rathowen Street | Minor | Development | Proposed construction of two storey addition to rear of existing residence | 18-Apr-2020 | 6-May-2020 | 27-May-2020 | 13-May-2020 | YES | Schnaithmann |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|------------|--|-------|--------------------------|--|-------------|------------|--------------|-------------|------------|--------------|
| 48-20 | Perth East | Perth Road 135, Lots 20 & 21, Concession 4 | Minor | Development | Proposed replacement of culvert | 23-Apr-2020 | 5-May-2020 | 26-May-2020 | 13-May-2020 | YES | Schnaithmann |
| 54-20 | London | W3 Subdivision - 3700 Colonel Talbot Road | Minor | Development | Proposed General Grading | 4-May-2020 | 7-May-2020 | 28-May-2020 | 7-May-2020 | YES | Verscheure |
| | | | | | EXTENSIONS | | | FALSE | | YES | |
| EX-99-19 | Woodstock | Brick Ponds Wetland Complex | Major | Restoration/ Creation | Proposed wetland creation and enhancement of the Brick Ponds Wetland Complex | 6-Apr-2020 | 7-Apr-2020 | 5-May-2020 | 7-Apr-2020 | YES | Verscheure |
| EX-221-19 | London | 1170 Meadowlark Ridge | Major | Restoration/ Creation | Proposed Slope Remediation | 30-Apr-2020 | 4-May-2020 | 1-Jun-2020 | 5-May-2020 | YES | Verscheure |

SUMMARY OF VIOLATIONS FOR 2020

| Municipality | General Location | Violation Description | Status Update | Staff | Update As Of | Notification of Violation |
|------------------|--------------------------------|---|--|------------|--|---------------------------|
| London | River Road | Unauthorized Interference with a Wetland, Alteration to a Watercourse, Placement of Fill and Site Grading | Ongoing discussions with property owner and consultants in an effort to achieve a net environmental benefit | Verscheure | May 15, 2020: Discussions continue with property owner and consultants to achieve an agreed upon setback to the adjacent watercourse and wetland. A site meeting is being coordinated with property owner/UTRCA staff to review recent proposed buffers and setbacks to delineate lands to be appropriately zoned through recent Zoning By-law Amendment application. | |
| London | Dingman Drive | Single Family Residential Development within Dingman Screening Area (Flood Plain) without Conservation Authority approval | Working with property owner, contractor and appointed engineer to determine if appropriate flood proofing can be achieved and a retroactive Section 28 permit can be issued | Verscheure | May 15, 2020: UTRCA staff met on-site May 11, 2020 with property owner, contractor and engineering consultant to review site grading and flood proofing requirements. It is believed that appropriate flood proofing can be achieved and a retro-active permit application will be applicable. UTRCA staff await as-built drawings and site specific flood proofing considerations to be completed by appointed engineer and submitted to UTRCA for review. | |
| London | Commissioners Road East | Unauthorized Interference with a Wetland, Alteration to a Watercourse, Placement of Fill and Site Grading | Ongoing discussions with property owner and consultants to address complete Section 28 Permit application requirements. | Verscheure | May 15, 2020: UTRCA staff met on-site May 13, 2020 with property owner and engineering consultant to review engineering drawings submitted to UTRCA April 30, 2020. Site plan and drawings (Development Agreement dated 1988) to be revised to include enhanced and naturalized setbacks to the adjacent watercourse, Dayus Creek. | |
| London | Adelaide Street North | Alteration to a Watercourse | Working with property owner, contractors, appointed engineers and environmental consultants to prepare a remediation plan to achieve a net environmental benefit. | Verscheure | May 15, 2020: UTRCA staff have received revised engineering drawings, complete with environmental recommendations and restoration details. UTRCA staff have provided comments to be considered in a revised and updated restoration plan to be implemented as soon as practical. | |
| London | Hamley Road | Placement of Fill in a Flood Plain | Ongoing discussions with property owner and consultants to determine origin and quantity of fill placed within the flood plain | Verscheure | May 15, 2020: UTRCA staff have received an engineering report to support the quantity and quality of fill. UTRCA staff to review internally to determine impacts of fill in flood plain and continue to work with the property owner through the City of London Site Plan Application process. | |
| Middlesex Centre | Gideon Drive and Carriage Road | Filling in a Floodplain and/or Erosion Hazard | Following a complaint of filling adjacent the river in Komoka UTRCA staff attended a site visit (March 3, 2020) and noted the recent addition of truckloads of fill. Through a number of email chains with the Municipality it was determined the property was owned by the County. We were further advised filling was occurring at the request of MNRF Parks staff in an effort to deter the area being used as a parking lot for unauthorized access to Komoka Provincial Park. | Winfield | UTRCA staff have since touched base with County staff (April 29, 2020). We advised that our staff understood the rationale for the project to eliminate the illegal parking. Further inquired as to the final amount and location of the fill and advised on the need for an appropriate setback from the river, appropriate sediment and erosion control(s) and written pre-approval from the UTRCA for filling works in a regulated area beside the river. | |

| | | | | | | |
|------------------|--|--|---|----------|--|--|
| EZ Tavistock | Multiple properties, Mud Creek at 10th Line and Braemar Sideroad | Tree Removal Complaint, Flooding Complaint and Alteration to a Watercourse | In addition to multiple landowner complaints regarding an adjacent municipal drainage project, UTRCA staff received a complaint of tree removal and potential watercourse alteration (April 1, 2020) on a tributary to the municipal drain. All works involved the same contractor as well as a fenceline and property boundary dispute. UTRCA staff attended the site with the County of Oxford Woodlands By-Law Enforcement Officer to view all the projects and meet with the landowners. | Winfield | UTRCA engineering staff have since attended a site visit (May 6, 2020) to meet with the landowner with the flooding complaint to determine an appropriate solution that may alleviate the flooding, cause the least amount of disruption to the environment and not involve works on adjacent property owned by others. Landowner is aware the works will require a permit and would best be undertaken in the drier summer months. UTRCA (engineering) staff will continue to work with the landowner on the tributary project and UTRCA (regulations) staff with the drainage superintendent for works on the adjacent municipal drainage project (scheduled for later this summer). | |
| Thames Centre | Cromarty Drive, Putnam | Interference with a Wetland | Following receipt of a building addition approval inquiry it was noted from recent aerial imagery that substantial clearing, filling and site grading had occurred within the South Dorchester Swamp Provincially Significant Wetland and the Area of Interference of this PSW. Another large building was also evident, recently constructed in the CA Regulated Area that apparently had received a municipal building permit but had never received UTRCA approval. UTRCA staff attended a conference call with the landowner, his consultants and Thames Centre staff (March 19, 2020) to discuss options that could bring the works into compliance as well as options for wetland restoration and Stormwater Management (SWM) plans for the site. | Winfield | UTRCA staff have since received (April 27, 2020) favourable SWM plans for the buildings and restoration plans for the site and are currently awaiting updated site plans showing buffers and a more appropriate siting of additional features such as roads, parking and delivery areas in locations away from the wetland. | |
| Middlesex Centre | Amiens Road at Melrose Drive | Interference with a Wetland | Following correspondence from municipal staff regarding clearing, filling and site grading within a UTRCA Regulated Area, UTRCA staff undertook a site visit to the property (April 2, 2020). Vegetation clearing, excavation/filling and site alteration were visible in the regulated areas of the property. Municipal staff have advised the landowner that the work currently being undertaken goes beyond the scope of their site alteration permit and they would need to reapply for the additional works. Municipal staff have further forwarded contact info for the landowner and will be contacting him to discuss our policies. While it appears all works have stopped UTRCA staff will continue to monitor this project. | Winfield | | |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---|----------|--|--|
| Perth South | Road 122 at the Avon River | Tree Removal and Potential Site Grading in the Valleyland | UTRCA staff received (April 23, 2020) a complaint of tree removal on Road 122 adjacent the Avon River. Photos provided by the contact potentially indicated filling and/or site grading as well. UTRCA staff forwarded the information onto Township staff and the County of Perth Woodlands By-Law Enforcement Officer. Woodlands Officer drive by the site and advised us that no filling and/or site grading was occurring, but simply tree removal. (Tree removal was deferred to the County.) | Winfield | | |
| Zorra | Thamesford Mill Dam | Filling in the Floodplain | Following complaints of fill being dumped in the floodplain adjacent the river in Thamesford (April 27, 2020) UTRCA staff attended a site visit to the property and noticed a very small amount of fill had been trucked onto the property. Subsequent conversation(s) with the landowners advised that they were planning to import more excess fill from a subdivision project in London. Though the owners were previously aware of the need for approvals prior to filling on the property we reiterated our policies both verbally (over the phone) and via a follow-up e-mail. While it appears that filling may have stopped, UTRCA staff will continue to monitor this site. | Winfield | | |
| Zorra | Wildwood Conservation Area (Cottage Lots) | Alteration to a Watercourse and Site Grading/Alteration in the Floodplain | Wildwood CA staff advised us (April 25, 2020) that they had stopped excavation in progress (in front of one of the WCA cottage lots) associated with a watercourse and floodplain on UTRCA owned land between the cottage lots and the reservoir. While out on site as a follow-up WCA staff noted another cottage leaseholder had recently hand dug a channel in an attempt to drain the UTRCA property between their cottage lot and the reservoir. From our elevation data and current spring water levels the cottages themselves were not at risk but it appears more likely the cottagers are interested in draining land between the road and the reservoir for aesthetic purposes. (Historically cottage leaseholders have been mowing/maintaining these areas off their lots.) | Winfield | UTRCA engineering staff have since attended a site visit (April 29, 2020) with WCA staff to view the unauthorized works and potential site remediation. WCA staff, engineering staff and Regs staff have been discussing options moving forward. It has been agreed that our staff will undertake remediation but details are still being worked out as to items such as permits, potential compensation and/or payment. | |

| | | | | | | |
|------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|----------|---|--|
| Thames Centre | Catherine Street, Dorchester | Filling in the Floodplain on UTRCA owned lands | UTRCA received a property inquiry (April 27, 2020) from a realtor for a house for sale adjacent the river and UTRCA lands known as Crestwell Park. From recent aerial imagery it was noticed that a secondary driveway (for boat/trailer storage) had been constructed in the floodplain of the Thames River on lands owned by the UTRCA. While technically unauthorized development in the floodplain, given that the works were constructed on UTRCA property, UTRCA Regs staff forwarded the information onto UTRCA Lands and Facilities staff. | Winfield | UTRCA Lands & Facilities staff forwarded the information (May 12, 2020) onto Thames Centre staff as per the agreement that Thames Centre staff manage this park property. UTRCA staff will continue to monitor this encroachment. | |
| Middlesex Centre | Prospect Hill Road and Nine Mile Road | Tree Removal and Alteration to a Watercourse | Following multiple complaints of tree removal and potential watercourse alteration (April 29, 2020 - May 4, 2020) UTRCA staff attended a visit to the site (April 30, 2020). While recent tree removal (including a potentially large woodland clearing) was visible on multiple properties and an excavator was parked near a creek and recent building demolition there did not appear to be any work in any of the adjacent watercourses. Complaints were forwarded onto the County of Middlesex Woodlands Conservation By-Law Enforcement Officer. | Winfield | | |
| Woodstock | Brick Ponds PSW | Filling in a Floodplain, Interference with a Wetland | Landowner called our office (May 4, 2020) directly after being advised by City staff that the fill he had started to bring in to his property required UTRCA approval. UTRCA staff attended a site visit to the property (May 12, 2020) and noted truckloads of fill being placed in a floodprone area adjacent the Brick Ponds PSW. UTRCA staff are working with the landowner on some options that could bring his proposed project into compliance with our policy. | Winfield | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---------------|---------------------------------------|---|---|----------|--|--|
| Thames Centre | Wye Creek in Thorndale | Filling in the Floodplain and Valleylands | As a follow-up to complaints received (in 2019) by neighbours that contractors working for the municipality were clearing trees and filling by Wye Creek in Thorndale to create a trail that some landowners did not want, UTRCA staff met on site with Municipal Parks Staff on May 5, 2020. We discussed the overall siting of the trail, construction to complete the loop trail and the need for more appropriate trail construction materials in certain sections. We further discussed the Thames Centre Trails Master Plan (which UTRCA staff had never been involved with or circulated on) which indicated multiple other trails at locations throughout Dorchester and Thorndale (including through UTRCA owned lands). Given we were not in favour of some of the Master Plan trail locations we further discussed the need for improved communication on proposed trail locations and construction methods in general. We agreed to discuss each proposed trail location going forward on a site-by-site basis. | Winfield | | |
| Woodstock | Burgess Park | Tree Removal on UTRCA lands | City staff advised us (May 8, 2020) of unauthorized tree removal and/or trimming in a previously approved setback area on the Hartley Farms subdivision impacting trees on UTRCA owned lands in Burgess Park. Given the large border between Burgess Park and the subdivision we asked to be provided with a more specific location. | Winfield | Once we were provided with the site specific location (May 14, 2020) we deferred the matter back to City staff given the location was not identified under s28 regulation and as per the agreement by which they manage the park property. | |
| Perth East | Road 135 at Black Creek, Sebringville | Filling, Excavation, Site Alteration in the Regulated Area. | Enroute back from compliance visits (May 8, 2020) UTRCA staff noted extensive excavation and/or filling works occurring within the UTRCA regulated area of the property adjacent Black Creek. As the landowner had submitted plans to our office but had not yet received site plan approval from the municipality or a permit from UTRCA we discussed the status with his consultant (May 15, 2020). Consultant advised she will be discussing with her client options for ensuring the floodplain storage will not be altered as a result of the works and remediation (if necessary) will be discussed. UTRCA staff will continue to monitor this project. | Winfield | | |

fyi

May 2020



American Avocets at Pittock Conservation Area

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Our Work Continues!

On Monday, March 16, the UTRCA Watershed Conservation Centre and all three parks closed down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff moved quickly to set up their home offices to continue their work, while others have returned to working in the field with proper precautions and personal protective equipment.

Our priority is the safety and well-being of our staff and clients. We will continue to work with the guidance of the Province and the Occupational Health and Safety Act to ensure we are taking all reasonable precautions to ensure a safe environment for all involved.

The UTRCA staff will continue their hard work, even if it's from our dining room tables, with furry office assistants!

#utrcaNatureChallenge

When it became apparent that social/physical distancing was going to be in place for a while, staff decided a social media campaign would be a great way to engage people to stay connected with the natural world. Community

Education and Partnerships staff presented 48 days of different and unique nature challenges. The family-friendly activities were designed to keep followers in touch with nature and to be accessible outdoors and indoors. Participants were encouraged to share responses using #utrcaNatureChallenge for a chance to win a UTRCA gift card or hat. The winners will be announced later in May.



Jane MacKean completed the "Up Close and Personal with Nature" challenge in which participants were encouraged to use and/or make binoculars to help focus on elements of nature that were of interest to them.

With the nature challenge completed, staff are transitioning into a new social media campaign called Watershed Wednesday! These posts will connect watershed residents to information, projects and actions being taken in many of the 28 subwatersheds.

Contact: [Maranda MacKean](mailto:Maranda.MacKean@utrca.on.ca), Community Education Specialist



This Perth South farm field suffers annually from erosion due to overland flow. The landowners, who just purchased the property, plan to repair and address future erosion concerns by constructing two water and sediment control basins.

Working with Area Farmers

While the UTRCA's office is closed, staff in the Conservation Services Unit are still able to answer watershed landowners' requests for technical assistance. Spring is always a busy time with projects being set up for the coming field season, but it is also a good time to respond to calls for erosion control assistance. Staff have been busy conducting field surveys and drawing up technical erosion control designs. Although the winter melt was fairly gentle this year, the demand for erosion control site calls is still high. Staff are still active in the watershed and doing their best to respond to requests for assistance. Contact: [Craig Merkley](#), Conservation Services Specialist

Permitting & Violations Work Continues

The UTRCA administrative offices may be closed, but staff continue to issue permits and investigate environmental violations.

With nicer weather approaching and more time being spent at home, it is understandable that thoughts have turned to how to improve backyard stay-cation spaces. While it may be tempting to tackle all the works you've been dreaming of since you moved in, please be mindful that your plans may be subject to specific environmental regulations as enforced by your local Conservation Authority.

Under the *Conservation Authorities Act*, written pre-approval (in the form of a Permit or a Letter of Clearance) may be required before undertaking any development, construction or site alteration which includes, but is not limited to, filling, excavating, or grading on or near waterways, flood plains, steep slopes, erosion hazards and wetland areas. Development includes both major (e.g. additions, garages, shops, pools, driveways) and minor/auxiliary structures (e.g. sheds, stairs, gazebos, fences, decks, docks, retaining walls, hard landscaping). Depending on the location, tree or vegetation removal may also require CA approval.



If you are a landowner whose property is affected by Conservation Authority regulations, we ask that you bear in mind the importance of protecting wetlands, flood plains, and the banks of watercourses that are prone to erosion. River and stream valleys are important natural features that can temporarily store floodwaters, help to moderate high water levels, protect water quality, provide groundwater recharge, and prevent erosion. These valleys also provide

essential habitat for wildlife and aquatic species. Given that their natural functions are based on the dynamic nature of these systems, it is essential that they be maintained in as natural a state as possible.

Inappropriate development and site alteration has the potential to alter drainage or water storage, which may often cause or exacerbate flooding or erosion on your property or adjacent/upstream/downstream properties. Development within these areas could be at risk due to flooding, erosion, or other unstable conditions such as the presence of organic wetland soils or a high or fluctuating groundwater table.

If you are looking to undertake any project or activity which may require prior written approval from our office, please discuss your plans with UTRCA staff prior to submitting an application. Inquiries may be directed to our permitting staff at RegulationsInquiry@thamesriver.on.ca. While response times have been affected by current closures, our staff are checking voice messages and e-mails frequently.

By contacting Conservation Authority staff prior to undertaking the work, you are abiding by the law, and doing your part towards protecting your development, neighbouring properties, and flood storage areas, and conserving our lands.
Contact: [Karen Winfield](#), Land Use Regulations Officer

SWM Pond Project

Maryam Yavarikia, a graduate civil engineering student at the Western University, is undertaking a project under the supervision of Dr. Imtiaz Shah, UTRCA Senior Environmental Engineer, to evaluate the performance of the stormwater management (SWM) wet pond next to the UTRCA's Watershed Community Centre (WCC). The pond was rebuilt in 2011-2012 to provide both stormwater quantity and quality control for the new UTRCA office building.

The performance of the pond will be evaluated by considering long term impact of sedimentation, in the absence of operation and maintenance. SWM ponds are an option for runoff detention, reducing peak flows and improving water quality.



The project involves updating the SWM pond model by updating digital elevations, incorporating new information, and considering additional low impact developments on the site.
Contact: [Imtiaz Shah](#), Senior Environmental Engineer

Upper Medway Project

Cover cropping is a farming practice that promotes soil health and improves water quality. Conservation services staff are leading a [demonstration project in the Upper Medway Creek subwatershed](#) to increase adoption of this best management practice across the Upper Thames watershed. The project aims to illuminate some of the economic and agronomic impacts of cover crops, as well as the environmental impacts on local water quality.

In partnership with VERITAS Farm Management, landowners planted cover crop trials in the fall



Conservation Services staff count cover crop plant population.

of 2019. After protecting the soil from erosion all winter, these trials are now being monitored to learn how the cover crops will impact this year's grain crop.

The warm spring temperatures brought on a growth spurt for the cereal rye planted last fall. Before the crop was terminated, Conservation Services staff were out collecting measurements of various soil parameters such as infiltration, temperature and moisture, as well as soil sampling. In addition, staff continue to collect water quality samples to investigate the impact of over winter cover on sediment and nutrient losses from the watershed.

This project was funded in part through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, a five-year federal-provincial-territorial initiative. The project was undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada through the federal Department of the Environment and Climate Change.

Contact: [Tatianna Lozier](#), Agricultural Soil & Water Technician

A Tree Planting Year Like No Other!

The [Private Land Tree Planting Program](#) for 2020 wrapped up on Thursday, May 14. When the season approached back in late March, there were so many unanswered questions. Were we going to be able to get trees, when would we get trees, could we hire staff, and how were we going to deliver the program safely in light of COVID-19?



Family members pitched in to help staff plant trees this spring.

In the tree planting business in recent years, we've taken to saying that no two years are alike. We're always referring to the weather - either too wet/dry/hot/cold. This year, the weather couldn't have been better for tree planting, if only we didn't have a global pandemic to deal with.

In the end, we were able to deliver most of our tree planting program, with the help of spouses, family members, and a small crew of three. A big thank you goes to all who contributed. We could not have done it without you!

Unfortunately, we were not able to deliver the machine planting portion. It was not possible to have multiple staff working safely in close proximity to each other around a tractor and machine planter. Our landowners understood fully and, for the most part, agreed to move their planting projects ahead to spring 2021.

Our curbside pickup program for trees was very successful. Landowners were very respectful of our protocols and were more than happy just to be getting their trees. With time on their hands and, in many cases, kids at home, it gave them something to do. In fact, this spring we had more requests for trees than ever before. Maybe there is something to be said about a slower pace to life. Hopefully this will result in more trees planted in 2021.

For next year we can only hope that the weather will be as nice and the global pandemic will be in the rear view mirror.

Contact: [John Enright](#), Forester

River Safety Program

When schools closed in March, the remainder of the UTRCA Community Education's in-class River Safety programs were cancelled. To ensure that Grade 2 students who would have missed out still received these important safety messages, staff developed a digital and interactive River Safety program for students to complete from the comfort and safety of their own homes.

In the new online program, students participate in many of the same aspects as the in-person program as well as a few new activities. These activities focus on how to stay safe near moving

water, the diversity of life that relies on our river, and the role of Conservation Authorities in protecting our communities from flooding events. The programs have also been tailored to the individual school so the students become familiar with waterways close to them. Once they've worked through each of the activities, students can either print or work online to complete our Activity Booklet full of mazes, crosswords, and puzzles to help reinforce the message. Thank you to our sponsors who make the River Safety program possible.

Contact: [Alexis Stupich](#), Community Education Specialist

Communities for Nature of Another Kind

School and community involvement was sidelined in the planting of the Communities for Nature trees this spring, due to COVID-19. As a result, several tree orders from various nurseries were reluctantly canceled. Originally anticipating 5000 trees and shrubs of various sizes and species, we managed to get 800 planted throughout the watershed. Many of these were large stock, bare root trees for memorial forests. The Furtney (London), Zorra Township, City of Woodstock, Thamesford-Zorra, and St. Marys memorial plantings were all completed.

Partial projects were also completed that normally would have seen hundreds of participating local students and community members in areas such as Medway Creek, Hodges Pond, Brick Ponds, Tavistock, and Hudson Boat Works (London). UTRCA staff and their



The Welker family planting at Medway Creek.

families were instrumental in getting the trees in the ground, in what also has been an unusually cold spring. Good tree planting weather!

Protocols in place included one staff per vehicle, family members in their own cars arriving on site, everyone having their own designated shovel for the duration of the planting, hand sanitation and, of course, physical distancing during the planting, which was not hard to do given the size of the sites.

While it was disappointing to have to postpone many projects, staff and family members of various ages worked hard to complete what we could do safely, which also included the unloading of trees.

Thanks go to all of your children, spouses (special needs education staff Sherri Glasman, "retired" Val Clarke, real estate lawyer Alex Kelly, financial consultant Charlie Maaskant), UTRCA carpenter Matt McCutcheon and his assistant Kevin, who had never planted a tree before but quickly learned, ESA staff Brandon Williamson and Richard Brewer, Wildwood staff Kaitlyn Muma and Maranda MacKean, with her family, as well as the Hertner, Maaskant, Smith and Welker families.

Contact: [Karen Pugh](#), Resource Specialist



Physical distancing of staff and family members planting the Furtney Memorial trees.

4Rs Improving Profitability & Water Quality in Ontario

The term 4Rs stands for Right Source, Right Rate, Right Time, and Right Place. The 4Rs is an

industry-led program to educate and encourage landowners to adopt good nutrient management designed to maximize crop nutrient uptake and minimize crop loss, while positively impacting local water bodies. The 4R program was initiated in the northern USA in response to water quality concerns in the Great Lakes.

Recently, Ontario's agri-business sector has led the way in bringing the program to this side of the border. A Steering Committee comprised of a diverse group of industry, government, agricultural organizations, and Conservation Authorities provides guidance and funding to encourage farmers and agri-business to adopt 4R Certification. More than 1700 farmers have signed onto the program so far. The Conservation Authorities are represented by Craig Merkley. *Contact: [Craig Merkley](#), Conservation Services Specialist*

Indigenous Perspectives in Outdoor Education

For the month of April, two Alternative Field Experience students from Western University, Mirco Hemmi and Adrianna Boersen, joined the education team at the UTRCA. Although Mirco and Adrianna could not participate in the regular Community Education activities at Fanshawe and Wildwood CAs as planned, they stepped up to the challenge of completing a research project instead. For the project, they investigated how Indigenous perspectives are currently being incorporated in various outdoor and environmental education settings as well as at our local school boards.

Mirco and Adrianna worked closely with the education teams at Wildwood and Fanshawe and reached out to school board representatives and local Indigenous contacts to complete the project. The Community Education and Partnerships team is now taking their research and is looking at practical ways to apply their findings to our programs and work with the community. We look forward to sharing how we can include more Indigenous perspectives in our work at the UTRCA in the future.

Contact: [Karlee Flear](#), Community Education Supervisor

2019 Oxford Stewardship Award Winner

The 2019 Oxford Stewardship Award was presented at the February 26 County Council meeting to Jeff and Diane Tribe. Also in attendance were runners up Gerard Pynenburg and his father Bernie, additional members of the Tribe family, and local artist Julie Hawkins.

The Tribe project consisted of digging an interconnected 1.4-acre wetland featuring two major and several smaller water features, supported by 8.9 acres of upland habitat. The project also included the planting of mixed native trees.

The recipient is chosen by Stewardship Oxford and the Oxford Soil & Crop Improvement Association from the pool of projects that received financial and/or technical assistance through the County-supported [Clean Water Program \(CWP\)](#) the previous year. The CWP, administered by the UTRCA, helps to fund and support the conservation and enhancement of natural heritage resources in Oxford County.

In 2019, a total of 83 CWP projects were funded in Oxford County. This reflected over \$389,000 in total project value and \$135,500 in grants. Oxford County committed \$70,000 to the program.

Contact: [Craig Merkley](#), Conservation Services Specialist

Full Circle

Community Education Specialist Maranda MacKean has been working with the Kindergarten classes at Mornington Central Public School, providing Schoolyard Outdoor School. With a fall and winter visit completed, a spring visit with students is unlikely. Luckily, thanks to teacher Lisa Meszaros, there was already a plan in place to plant trees during the spring visit. Between Maranda's family and Lisa's family, they were able to alternate planting times and complete that work. When students do return to their school, they will have new places to explore and play in, and a designated outdoor classroom area.

On a personal note, Maranda has found this one of the most rewarding partnerships she has had with a school, as it takes her home. Mornington Central PS is where she attended Kindergarten

and the school is located in the community where generations of her family have lived. When her mother heard about this partnership, she dug out Maranda's year end Kindergarten report card. Under the curriculum area of Environmental Studies (yes, that was a curriculum area in 1983) it reads, "Maranda tells about many learning type



The Meszaros (above) and MacKean families planting trees at the school.



activities that she and her family experience together in the outdoors. She stores in her mind many interesting details about the wonders she has observed in nature. All animal and bird life holds interest for her. Her older brother teaches his sister about tadpoles, turtles, fish and other little creatures. Streams of water interest her very much and she describes them fully."

All in all, that's a story that has come full circle. As Maranda says, it reminds her that she's working in the field she was always meant to! Together (on different days), the Meszaros and MacKean families planted 28 trees at Mornington Central PS.

Contact: [Maranda MacKean](#), Community Education Specialist



Kirkton-Woodham Conservation Area

Staff and four community volunteers spent a sunny May morning planting 100 hardwood trees, while maintaining physical distancing. A special thanks to Forestry Technician Jay Ebel, who spent two days digging holes in preparation.

Contact: [Brad Glasman](#), Manager, Conservation Services

Introducing Wild Geranium

Mid-May to early June is the time to look for Wild Geraniums (*Geranium maculatum*) in our deciduous forests. These delicate looking spring ephemeral wildflowers bloom before the trees leaf out and shade the forest floor. The other common name for this flower is Spotted Cranesbill.

The flowers are 1-1 ½ inches wide with five petals, rose-purple in colour. The leaves are deeply and irregularly cleft into 3-5 lobes. The petals have slightly darker coloured lines running along their length that function as nectar guides.



A small bee explores a Wild Geranium flower.

Honeybees, bumblebees, many types of native solitary bees and syrphid flies are the most common pollinators, although ants and beetles also visit the flowers.

After pollination, a fruit develops. The fruit capsules have a long, central beak-like column, resembling a crane's head, and five basal cells each containing one seed. When ripe, the fruit springs open, expelling the seeds 10 to 30 feet from the mother plant. The seeds attract Mourning Doves and, where present, Bobwhite Quail. Indigenous peoples used Wild Geraniums medicinally to treat diarrhea and open sores or wounds.

Wild Geraniums are found widely throughout eastern North America in undisturbed dry to moist woods and woodland edges. It is a good plant for a shade garden under deciduous tree cover and is available from some native plant nurseries.

Confusingly, "geranium" is also the common name of the horticultural bedding plant popular in garden centres. That larger, showier geranium is in the same family as Wild Geranium, Geraniaceae, but is of different genus, Pelargonium.

Contact: [Cathy Quinlan](#), Terrestrial Biologist

On the Agenda

The next UTRCA Board of Directors meeting will be a virtual meeting (due to COVID-19) on May 26, 2020.

- Audited Financial Statements
- Conservation Areas – COVID-19 Tentative Opening Plan
- COVID-19 Return to Work Plan
- 2020 April Year to Date Financial Update
- Budget Update – Mitigation Strategies
- Motherwell Follow up

Draft agendas, audio recordings, and approved minutes are posted at www.thamesriver.on.ca on the "Board Agendas & Minutes" page.

Contact: [Michelle Viglianti](#), Administrative Assistant