

## Minutes

### Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA)

#### Board of Directors Meeting

9:30am Tuesday, August 27, 2024 at 1424 Clarke Rd, London  
(Hybrid Meeting)

---

Brian Petrie, UTRCA Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:59am.

#### Members Present:

Peter Cuddy – Online

Jim Craigmile

Skylar Franke

Anna Hopkins – Online

Sandy Levin

Scotty Zehr – Online

Hugh McDermid

Paul Mitchell

Brian Petrie – Chair

Mark Schadenberg

#### Regrets:

Tom Heeman

Debbie Heffernan

Harj Nijjar

Dean Trentowsky

George Way

Solicitor: Grant Inglis

#### Staff Present:

Jenna Allain

Tracy Annett

Amy Bumbacco

Ben Dafoe

Karlee Flear

Eleanor Heagy

Mike Knox

Christine Saracino

Graeme Shaw

Chris Tasker

Tatianna Lozier

Tara Tchir

Brent Verscheure

Michelle Viglianti – Recorder

## 1. Territorial Acknowledgement

The Chair read the territorial acknowledgement.

## 2. Modifications to the Agenda

There were no modifications made to the agenda.

### 3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

### 4. Delegations/Presentations

There were no delegations or presentations.

### 5. Administrative Business

#### **5.1. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting: June 25, 2024**

Mover: Skylar Franke

Seconder: Jim Craigmile

THAT that the UTRCA Board of Directors approve the minutes from the June 25<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Carried.

#### **5.2. Business Arising from the Minutes**

There was no business arising from the minutes.

#### **5.3. Correspondence**

There was no correspondence.

### 6. Reports – For Consideration

#### **6.1. 2025 Preliminary Draft Budget and Communications**

T.Annett provided a preliminary draft budget overview presentation and presented four Category 1 levy increase options, and the risks, implications and projected deficits associated with each scenario.

There was discussion around a large federal grant, with staff noting the agreement has not yet been signed. Staff noted that a large part of the grant would go to Category 3, but some can be used for administrative costs which would fall under Category 1.

There was discussion around the potential budgetary impact if the freeze on fees was lifted. A member raised concerns around the potential for significant flood control

capital projects and felt the Municipalities with special benefiting levies should be aware of the financial risks associated if WECl funding is not available to offset the cost.

A member proposed separating out the portion of the levy for the Clean Water Program and listing it as a separate line item. They noted that while the costs are currently low, it has the potential to increase over time. The purpose would be to show the provincial downloading to the Municipalities. The province funds the Clean Water Program, but there is a cap on administrative costs. The remainder of the program cost gets distributed through levy to the Municipalities. The Board provided feedback, with several members supporting the idea, feeling that the more the UTRCA is able to show where the drivers of the budget are coming from, the clearer the view will be for the Municipalities. Another member recommended putting the provincial downloads in an executive summary, to highlight their impact on the budget.

Members felt there was a need for further advocacy, similar to what has been done for the Fee Freeze, to the Provincial government on the following items: Conservation Authority transfer payment, Clean Water Act transfer payment, and increased financial support for water and erosion control capital infrastructure. A member suggested creating a short-term advocacy task force made up of Board members.

The Board discussed their risk tolerance comfort level based on the options presented in the General Manager's presentation. Members felt that, in general, they were most comfortable with the 15% increase and were uncomfortable with the risks associated with the other lower percentage increase options.

A member asked staff to include, in a future report, the Conservation Authorities who are at or near 100% municipal levy for Category 1 programs.

Mover: Sandy Levin

Secunder: Skylar Franke

1. THAT the 2025 Preliminary Draft Budget report be received.
  2. THAT the 2025 Draft Budget be developed in conformity to the updated Conservation Authorities Act (CAA) and Ontario Regulation 402/22: Budget and Apportionment.
  3. To refer the draft budget to the Finance and Audit Committee to a September meeting to review comments and the reserve policy.
- Carried.

Board members were asked to email any additional comments or questions to staff.

## **6.2. Administrative By-Law Review**

A member questioned the procedure listed in the By-Law for a vote to reconsider a motion. Staff confirmed they would check Roberts Rules.

Mover: Hugh McDermid

Seconder: Anna Hopkins

That the Board approves the amended Administrative By-Laws updated August 27, 2024, effective September 1, 2024 for the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority.  
Carried.

## **7. Reports – In-Camera**

Mover: Hugh McDermid

Seconder: Jim Craigmile

THAT the Board of Directors adjourn to Closed Session – In Camera, in accordance with Section C.13 of the UTRCA Administrative By-Law to discuss a position, plan and instruction to be applied to negotiations.

Carried.

The Board adjourned to closed session 10:50 am to discuss a position, plan and instruction to be applied to negotiations regarding land lease agreements.

### **7.1. Position, Plan and Instruction to be Applied to Negotiation – Land Lease Agreement**

Peter Cuddy left the meeting at 11:29am.

The Board rose from closed session at 11:47am.

Anna Hopkins left the meeting at 11:47am.

Mover: Paul Mitchell

Seconder: Hugh McDermid

THAT the Land Lease Options Report prepared by CBRE as presented in closed session be received for information.

Carried.

## 8. Reports – For Information

### **8.1. Administration and Enforcement – Section 28 Status Report**

Mover: Hugh McDermid

Seconder: Paul Mitchell

THAT the Board of Directors receive the report for information.

Carried.

### **8.2. Project Status Update**

Mover: Sandy Levin

Seconder: Scotty Zehr

THAT the Board of Directors receive the report for information.

Carried.

### **8.3. Mid-Year Financial Update**

Mover: Skylar Franke

Seconder: Jim Craigmile

THAT the Board of Directors receives the report for information.

Carried.

### **8.4. City of London Climate Emergency Action Plan Reporting**

Mover: Skylar Franke

Seconder: Hugh McDermid

THAT the Board of Directors receives the report for information.

Carried.

### **8.5. Presentation – Wildwood Video**

Mover: Skylar Franke

Seconder: Hugh McDermid

THAT the Board of Directors receives the presentation for information.

Carried.

## **8.6. Thames River Current – August Edition**

The August edition of the Thames River Current was presented for the member's information.

Mover: Paul Mitchell

Seconded: Jim Craigmile

THAT the Board of Directors receives the report for information.

Carried.

## **9. Reports – Committees**

### **9.1. Finance and Audit Committee – June 25<sup>th</sup> and July 19<sup>th</sup> Meetings**

Sandy Levin, Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee, introduced the report.

There was discussion around the Cash Management and Investment Policy, specifically on avoiding investments in fossil fuel. It was confirmed that a portion of the portfolio currently resides in a fossil fuel free fund. A member suggested moving the rest of the portfolio into fossil fuel free funds, where possible. Concerns around whether this could exclude projects through fossil fuels that are helping improve the industry, and the potential negative impact on the portfolio were raised.

Mover: Skylar Franke

Seconded: Sandy Levin

TO refer the discussion regarding fossil fuel free portfolio to the Finance and Audit Committee.

Carried.

Mover: Paul Mitchell

Seconded: Hugh McDermid

THAT the Board of Directors approves the revised Cash Management and Investment Policy.

Carried.

### **9.2. Hearing Committee**

There will be a meeting of the Hearing Committee meeting today at 1:00pm.

## 10. Notices of Motion – Sept 24th

There were no notices of motion for September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

## 11. Chair's Comments

The Chair provided an update on the advocacy work being done to get the Fee Freeze lifted. He noted there were a couple more council meetings he will be attending in September and two municipalities requested further information.

## 12. Member's Comments

Mark Schadenberg shared that on August 10th, Pittock hosted the Woodstock Dragon Boat festival for the first time since 2019. It was a well-attended, successful event, and he noted it highlighted the need for upgrades to the bathroom facility.

## 13. General Manager's Comments

The General Manager thanked the park staff for such a great season.

The General Manager reported that the amendments to the Provincial Planning Statement passed and that the recent changes reflected the role of Conservation Authorities related to natural hazards were positive and provided further clarity.

The General Manager recognised that the summer has involved additional staff involvement related to the significant rain fall. The General Manager informed the members of the tragedy of the child who fell in the river in July. The London Fire Chief came in person to thank staff for the dam operations undertaken to assist during the recovery efforts.

The General Manager reported that there was a sump pump malfunction in the observation tunnel of Fanshawe Dam, which lead to flooding in the dam structure. Efforts to remove the water were completed and remediation work underway.

The General Manager reported that during the most recent significant rain event Harrington Dam overtopped, created erosion issues. Staff have stabilized the structure and will begin remediation work.

The General Manager announced there will be a field tour at the Thorndale demonstration farm on Sept 4<sup>th</sup>. It is open to the public and staff will circulate the poster to the Board members for their information.

#### 14. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:14 pm on a motion by Skylar Franke.

Tracy Annett, General Manager  
/mv