

Minutes

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA)

Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, January 30, 2024, 9:30am 1424 Clarke Road, London

Brian Petrie, UTRCA Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:30am.

Members Present:

Jim Craigmile

Peter Cuddy - Online

Tom Heeman

Debbie Heffernan

Anna Hopkins – Online

Sandy Levin

Hugh McDermid

Harj Nijjar – Online

Brian Petrie – Chair

Mark Schadenberg

Dean Trentowsky – Online

George Way

Scotty Zehr

Regrets:

Paul Mitchell

Skylar Franke

Solicitor:

Grant Inglis

Staff Present:

Jenna Allain

Tracy Annett

Richard Brewer

Emily Chandler

Ben Dafoe – Online

Eleanor Heagy

Teresa Hollingsworth

Dan Hyland

Mike Knox

Nathan Robinson - Online

Christine Saracino

Damian Schofield

Chris Tasker

Sarbjit Singh

Tara Tchir

Brent Verscheure

Michelle Viglianti – Recorder

Brandon Williamson

Presenters:

Scott Robertson – Matrix Solutions

Mariëtte Pushkar – Matrix Solutions

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

The Chair read the territorial acknowledgement.

2. Modifications to the Agenda

There were no modifications 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: November 28, 2023

Mover: Mark Schadenberg

Seconder: Scotty Zehr

THAT that the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the Board of Directors' minutes dated November 28, 2023, including any closed session minutes, as posted on the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority web-site.

Carried.

5.2. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

5.3. Correspondence

5.3.1. Minister's Direction on Fees December 13, 2023

5.3.2. UTRCA Transition Extension Letter

Mover: Peter Cuddy

Seconder: Harj Nijjar

THAT the Board of Directors receive the correspondence for information.

Carried.

6. Reports – For Consideration

6.1. Embro Environmental Assessment – BoD-01-24-01

Staff introduced Scott Robertson, senior water resources engineer, and Mariëtte Pushkar, Fluvial Geomorphologist, from Matrix Solutions Inc. They provided a presentation on the Embro Environmental Assessment.

Staff confirmed the Township of Zorra council voted to endorse the option presented.

Tom Heeman joined the meeting at 9:59am.

Mover: Sandy Levin

Secunder: Scotty Zehr

THAT the Board endorses the EA study and approves proceeding with final posting of the Class Environmental Assessment.

Carried.

6.2. Asset Management Framework – BoD-01-24-02

Members noted that provincial funding was made available to municipalities when they were required to develop asset management plans, but no funding has been provided for Conservation Authorities to help develop asset management plans.

Staff confirmed there is an asset management position included in the 2024 draft budget.

Mover: Tom Heeman

Secunder: George Way

THAT the Board of Directors approve the UTRCA Asset Management Policy.

Carried.

6.3. Provincial Offences Act Officer Designation for Nathan Robinson and Richard Brewer – BoD01-24-03

Staff confirmed the Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) team and UTRCA lands staff have Provincial Offences Act Officer Designation to enforce section 29 of the Conservation Authorities Act, and through an agreement with the City of London, Municipal Law Enforcement Officer Designation to enforce the Trespass to Property Act.

Amended 27-03-2024

Staff noted there would be a report on 2023 Section 28 violations at the February Annual General Meeting, and report with proposed guidelines for staff regarding the pursuit of violations at the March meeting.

Mover: Hugh McDermid

Seconder: Debbie Heffernan

THAT the Board of Directors designate Nathan Robinson as a Provincial Offences Act Officer pursuant to Section 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* for the purpose of enforcing the Trespass to Property Act and Ontario Regulation 688/21 on Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) property, as a requirement of the position of Assistant Superintendent, and further, that the Board of Directors designate Richard Brewer as Provincial Offences Act Officers pursuant to Section 28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* for the purpose of administering and enforcing Ontario Regulation 157/06, Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation.

Carried.

7. Reports – In-Camera

Mover: Hugh McDermid

Seconder: George Way

THAT the Board of Directors go into closed session.

Carried.

Anna Hopkins joined the meeting at 10:19am.

The Committee rose from closed session at 10:39am and passed the following motions.

7.1. Summary of Existing Statements of Claim

Mover: Tom Heeman

Seconder: Debbie Heffernan

THAT the Board of Directors receive closed session report 7.1 for information.

Carried.

7.2. Pending Acquisition of Land

Mover: Peter Cuddy

Seconder: Anna Hopkins

THAT the Board of Directors approve the recommendation as presented in closed session report 7.2.

Carried.

8. Reports – For Information

8.1. Administration and Enforcement – Section 28 Status Report – BoD-01-24-06

Mover: Dean Trentowsky

Seconder: Peter Cuddy

THAT the Board of Directors receive the report for information.

Carried.

8.2. Project Status Updates – BoD-01-24-07

Mover: Scotty Zehr

Seconder: Debbie Heffernan

THAT the Board of Directors receive the report for information.

Carried.

8.3. Draft Budget Review and Municipal Feedback – BoD-01-24-08

The General Manager asked that members pass along to staff any further comments from their councils regarding the 2024 draft budget.

Tom Heeman noted from Thames Centre and Lucan-Biddulph there was more willingness to engage with the increased transparency that the three category format provides. Further, he noted the challenges of the new funding model, highlighting Category one programs, which can't be offset. He felt all partner municipalities, Conservation Ontario and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) needed to push the Province on this issue, in particular the freeze on fees.

Jim Craigmile shared concerns on the draft budget on behalf of all three of his municipalities, noting that some couldn't handle the increase because of other responsibilities to their constituents. Further, he noted that South Huron had concerns and questions over the significant difference between the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) draft budget levy increase, which was relatively low, and the UTRCA budget, which was comparatively much higher.

Mover: George Way

Seconder: Debbie Heffernan

THAT the Board of Directors receive the report for information.

Carried.

8.4. Watershed Conservation Centre Building Report – BoD-01-24-09

Mover: Hugh McDermid

Seconder: Jim Craigmile

THAT the Board of Directors receive the report for information.

Carried.

8.5. Thames River Current – January Edition

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

Mover: Anna Hopkins

Seconder: Scotty Zehr

THAT the Board of Directors accept the report for information.

Carried.

9. Reports – Committee Updates

9.1. Finance and Audit Committee

There was no report from the Finance and Audit Committee.

9.2. Hearing Committee

The Chair reported that the Hearing Committee met briefly on January 25th to wrap up 2023 business and receive minutes.

10. Elections

Mover: Anna Hopkins

Seconder: Mark Schadenberg

THAT Grant Inglis be nominated as Acting Chair for the purpose of conducting the 2024 elections.

Carried.

G.Inglis outlined the procedures for electing the Chair and Vice-Chair as specified in the Conservation Authorities Act and the UTRCA Board of Directors' Administrative By-Law.

I. Chair

Sandy Levin nominated Brian Petrie for the position of Chair.

Amended 27-03-2024

G.Inglis called for nominations for the position of Chair of the UTRCA Board of Directors for 2024.

G.Inglis called for nominations three times. B.Petrie accepted his nomination.

Mover: Tom Heeman

Secunder: Sandy Levin

THAT the Board of Directors close nominations.

Carried.

Brian Petrie was declared to be elected by acclamation to the position of Authority Chair for 2024.

II. Vice-Chair

G.Inglis called for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair of the UTRCA Board of Directors for 2024.

Hugh McDermid nominated Dean Trentowsky.

G.Inglis called for nominations three times. D. Trentowsky accepted his nomination.

Mover: Brian Petrie

Secunder: Tom Heeman

THAT the Board of Directors close nominations.

Carried.

Dean Trentowsky was declared to be elected by acclamation to the position of Authority Vice-Chair for 2024.

III. Hearing Committee (three positions)

G.Inglis noted that the Hearing Committee consists of the Authority Chair, Vice-Chair, past Chair, and two additional Authority members. Since there is no past Chair, a third member will be elected.

G.Inglis called for nominations for three positions on the 2024 Hearing Committee.

Hugh McDermid nominated Paul Mitchell for a position on the 2024 Hearing Committee.

Sandy Levin nominated Anna Hopkins for a position on the 2024 Hearing Committee.

Brian Petrie nominated Mark Schadenberg for a position on the 2024 Hearing Committee.

Amended 27-03-2024

G.Inglis called for a short break at 11:11am. The meeting was resumed at 11:20am.

G.Inglis called a third and final time for nominations.

Brian Petrie nominated Sandy Levin for a position on the 2024 Hearing Committee.

Mover: Tom Heeman

Second: Scotty Zehr

THAT the Board of Directors close nominations.

Carried.

A. Hopkins declined her nomination. P. Mitchell, M. Schadenberg and S. Levin accepted their nominations.

Paul Mitchell, Mark Schadenberg, and Sandy Levin were declared to be elected by acclamation to the 2024 Hearing Committee.

IV. Finance and Audit Committee (two to four positions)

G.Inglis noted that the Finance and Audit Committee consists of the Authority Chair, plus two to four additional Authority members.

G.Inglis called for nominations for two to four positions on the 2024 Finance and Audit Committee.

Hugh McDermid nominated Paul Mitchell for a position on the 2024 Finance and Audit Committee.

Brian Petrie nominated Sandy Levin for a position on the 2024 Finance and Audit Committee.

Sandy Levin nominated Harj Nijjar for a position on the 2024 Finance and Audit Committee.

Brian Petrie nominated Tom Heeman for a position on the 2024 Finance and Audit Committee.

Sandy Levin nominated Dean Trentowsky for a position on the 2024 Finance and Audit Committee.

G.Inglis called three times for nominations. There being no more nominations, nominations were closed.

G.Inglis advised the Board that a vote would be conducted to elect the four positions.

Amended 27-03-2024

Mover: Brian Petrie

Seconder: Jim Craigmile

THAT the Board appoints Eleanor Heagy and Teresa Hollingsworth as scrutineers.
Carried.

The scrutineers distributed, collected and tallied the ballots. G.Inglis reported that Dean Trentowsky, Paul Mitchell, Harj Nijjar, and Sandy Levin had been elected to the 2024 Finance and Audit Committee.

Mover: Hugh McDermid

Seconder: George Way

THAT the ballots be destroyed.
Carried.

V. Source Protection Striking Committee/Committee Liaison (one position)

Brian Petrie nominated Sandy Levin for the position of Source Protection Striking Committee/Committee Liaison.

G.Inglis called three times for nominations. S.Levin accepted his nomination.

Mover: Brian Petrie

Seconder: Jim Craigmile

THAT the Board of Directors close nominations.
Carried.

Sandy Levin was declared to be elected by acclamation to the position of Source Protection Striking Committee/Committee Liaison for 2024.

With the conclusion of the 2024 Elections, G.Inglis relinquished the Chair to B.Petrie.

A member suggested that in the future, the Board consider having the Vice-Chair automatically appointed to the Finance and Audit Committee.

11. Notices of Motion for February 27, 2024

There were no notices of motion.

12. Chair's Comments

The Chair thanked the members for allowing him to serve another term as Chair and noted he would save further comments for the Annual General Meeting.

The Chair noted the challenges still facing this Board, in particular the draft 2024 budget, but congratulated the Board on their first full year, noting how much they had accomplished together.

13. Member's Comments

Anna Hopkins shared that while she receives comments from developers about their concerns on the speed of approvals, she also receives positive feedback from developers who voice their appreciation for the work and cooperation of the Planning and Regulations staff.

14. General Manager's Comments

The General Manager noted that feedback, positive or negative, is always helpful to hear from members and asked that feedback be directed through the General Manager.

The General Manager noted the Annual General Meeting will be an in-person meeting, and that conservation awards and staff service awards would be given out after the business portion of the meeting.

15. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:48am on a motion by Hugh McDermid.



Tracy Annett, General Manager
Att.