

# Minutes

## Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA)

### Board of Directors Meeting

#### Tuesday, March 28, 2023

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

#### Members Present:

Jim Craigmile

Peter Cuddy – Online

Skylar Franke – Online

Tom Heeman

Debbie Heffernan

Anna Hopkins

Sandy Levin

Hugh McDermid

Paul Mitchell

Harj Nijjar – Online

Brian Petrie – Chair

Mark Schadenberg

Dean Trentowsky

George Way

Scotty Zehr

#### Regrets:

Solicitor: G. Inglis

#### Staff Present:

Jenna Allain

Tracy Annett

Amy Bumbacco

Richard Brewer

Emily Chandler

Christine Creighton

Brad Dryburgh

Jay Ebel

Mike Funk

Erik Gaskin

Eleanor Heagy

Justin Henry

Sarah Hodgkiss

Teresa Hollingsworth

Jennifer Howley

Mike Knox

Stefanie Pratt

Naghmeh Sharifi

Chris Tasker

Tara Tchir

Brent Verscheure

Michelle Viglianti – Recorder

Brandon Williamson

## 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

### **4.1. Environmental Planning and Regulations Programs and Services**

Jenna Allain and Stefanie Pratt provided a presentation on the Environmental Planning and Regulations Unit's programs and services.

P.Cuddy joined the meeting at approximately 10:00am.

Staff noted they have been striving to build more staff overlap in the Planning and Regulations department to maintain service levels during staff vacations and sudden departures.

Members suggested a public facing status update system for the planning process. Staff noted it would be very complicated, since the planning process is driven by the Municipalities, and they each have their own tracking systems.

Members noted a need to improve the perception of the public regarding the planning and regulations process, specifically emphasizing the number of permits that are completed within the prescribed timelines.

Members raised concerns about how staff plan to meet the new Provincial timelines without sacrificing the quality of output. Staff noted they are currently mapping out a process to provide realistic timelines based on the current staff capacity, and will note where adjustments will be needed.

Mover: A.Hopkins

Secunder: G.Way

THAT the Board of Directors receive the presentation for information.

Carried.

## 5. Administrative Business

### 5.1. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting: February 28, 2023

Mover: S.Levin

Seconder: M.Schadenberg

THAT that the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the Board of Directors' minutes dated February 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

There was no correspondence.

## 6. Reports – For Consideration

### 6.1. Wetland Compensation Position Paper

(Report attached)

It was clarified that the definition of a wetland will be the one provided in the Conservation Authorities Act.

Concerns were raised regarding the proposed summer consultation period, with members concerned it could be more difficult to get stakeholders and the public informed and engaged during the summer months.

Some members raised concerns around the 3:1 ratio being perceived to be set in stone. They felt the ratio should be flexible, allowing for a higher ratio if the site supports it.

Mover: T.Heeman

Seconder: P.Mitchell

THAT staff be directed to move forward with the recommendations outlined in this report to draft a wetland compensation policy.

AND that this position paper and draft policy be shared with the public and stakeholder groups within the UTRCA watershed for consultation and feedback.

Carried.

## **6.2. UTRCA COVID-19 Interim Vaccination Policy**

(Report attached)

Mover: S.Levin

Seconder: T.Heeman

That the Board of Directors approve the suspension of the COVID-19 Interim Vaccination Policy for all UTRCA employees as defined in the policy.

AND it is further recommended that any re-implementation of the policy be an operational decision as determined by the General Manager in consultation with Human Resources

Carried.

## **6.3 Provincial Offences Act Officer Designation for Jay Ebel and Richard Brewer**

(Report attached)

Mover: S.Levin

Seconder: A.Hopkins

That the Board of Directors designate Jay Ebel and Richard Brewer as Provincial Offences Act Officers for the purpose of enforcing the Trespass to Property Act and the Conservation Authority Regulations on Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) property, as a requirement of the position of Land Management Technician.

Carried.

## **6.4 2023 Board of Directors Meeting Schedule Revision**

(Report attached)

Mover: H.McDermid

Seconder: S.Zehr

That the Board approves the following amended meeting dates for the remainder of 2023: Tuesday, April 25, 2023 Tuesday, May 23, 2023 – Short meeting to be followed by a Tour to end at 3:00pm Tuesday, June 27, 2023 – Proposed date change to June 20th, 2023 Tuesday, August 22, 2023 Tuesday, September 26, 2023 Tuesday, October 24, 2023 Tuesday, November 28, 2023.

Carried.

## **6.6 2023 Finance and Audit Committee – Open Position**

Mover: P.Mitchell

Seconder: H.McDermid

That nominations be re-opened to fill the vacant position on the Finance & Audit Committee.

Carried.

T.Heeman nominated H.Nijar to be a member of the Finance and Audit Committee for 2023. The Chair called two more times for nominations. Nominations were closed.

H.Nijar agreed to let his name stand for the position on the Finance and Audit Committee for 2023.

Harj Nijar was declared to be elected by acclamation to the 2023 Finance and Audit Committee.

Mover: H.McDermid

Seconder: T.Heeman

TO take a short break before going into Closed Session.

Carried.

Chair called meeting back to order.

## **7 Reports – In-Camera**

Mover: S.Levin

Seconder: S.Zehr

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 litigation affecting the Authority.

Carried.

### **7.1 Litigation Affecting the Authority – Statement of Claim Update**

#### **Progress Reported**

The Board received a report for information regarding litigation affecting the authority.

## 8 Reports – For Information

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

(Report attached)

Members suggested sharing with municipal staff the number of permits that are completed within the prescribed timelines and the low number of permits that are either withdrawn or appealed.

It was clarified that if Board members get questions or concerns on Planning or Regulations files, they can be passed along to J.Allain. Staff emphasized the importance for Board members to maintain impartiality, especially Hearing Committee members where a perceived apprehension of bias could result.

Mover: D.Trentowsky

Secunder: G.Way

THAT the Board of Directors receive the report for information.

Carried.

### **8.2 Inventory of Programs and Services Report #4**

Staff noted errors in the Percentage Contributions table and provided a corrected version of the table, which will be included in the submission report to the province and posted on the UTRCA website.

Questions were raised around which Tier in Oxford County would part of the negotiations. Staff clarified different categories could fall to different Tiers, but meetings have been set with Oxford County staff to discuss this question.

Staff confirmed that some programs that are currently partially funded through self-generated funding are considered category one programs and in the future can be funded through levy. This may have significant impacts on the municipal levy.

Mover: T.Heeman

Secunder: G.Way

THAT the Board of Directors receive the amended report for information.

Carried.

### **8.3 Annual Health and Safety Update**

Mover: P.Mitchell

Seconder: D.Heffernan

THAT the Board of Directors receive the report for information.

Carried.

### **8.4 March For Your Information Report**

The March For Your Information Report was presented for the member's information.

### **8.5 Building Overview Presentation**

Staff provided a presentation outlining the history and systems of the Watershed Conservation Centre.

## **9 Notices of Motion for April 25, 2023**

The Chair inquired whether any Board members had motions to bring to the floor for a future meeting. There were none.

## **10 Chair's Comments**

The Chair reported that he will be attending the in person Conservation Ontario Annual General Meeting on April 3<sup>rd</sup> with T.Annett.

## **11 Member's Comments**

H.McDermid requested that sequential page numbers be added to the agenda package, and the corresponding page numbers be included on the agenda.

D.Trentowsky congratulated staff on the success of the Rural Landowner Workshop, which he attended and provided greetings on behalf of the Board.

## **12 General Manager's Comments**

The General Manager thanked D. Trentowsky for providing greetings on behalf of the Board at the Mitchell Rural Landowner Workshop. The Mitchell and Ilderton Rural Landowner Workshops each had about sixty people attend. Another one is being planned for the fall in Oxford County.

The General Manager noted that new regulations from the Province are expected to be announced soon.

### 13 Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:05 pm on a motion by H.McDermid.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tracy Annett", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tracy Annett, General Manager  
Att.