

Minutes

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA)

Board of Directors Meeting

Tuesday, November 22, 2022

Virtual Meeting Due to COVID-19 Pandemic.

Alan Dale, UTRCA Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:33am.

Members Present:

M.Blosh	H.McDermid
A.Dale – Chair	P.Mitchell
A.Hopkins	B.Petrie
T.Jackson	J.Reffle
S.Levin	J.Salter
M.Lupton	M.Schadenberg

Regrets:

N.Manning
A.Westman
A.Murray

Solicitor: G. Inglis

Staff Present:

J.Allain	T.Hollingsworth
T.Annett	T.Lozier
E.Chandler	S.Pratt
B.Dafoe	D.Schofield
B.Dryburgh	C.Tasker
M.Funk	B.Verscheure
E.Gaskin	M.Viglianti – Recorder
S.Hodgkiss	

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

The Chair read the territorial acknowledgement.

2. Modifications to the Agenda

The Chair inquired whether the members had any proposed modifications to the agenda.

An error was noted by staff, item 6.3 should be a motion to approve the report, not a motion to receive the report.

Mover: S.Levin

Secunder: B.Petrie

THAT item 6.3 be considered as the first item on the agenda.

Carried.

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: October 26, 2022

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

Mover: B.Petrie

Secunder: M.Blosh

THAT that the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the Board of Directors' minutes dated October 26, 2022, 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

6.3 Omnibus Bill 23: More Homes Built Faster Act*

*Item 6.3 was considered first as directed by the motion passed in item 2 Modifications to the Agenda.

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

Staff noted they had also passed comments along to the Upper Tier Municipalities in the watershed regarding the unintended consequences of Bill 23.

Concerns were raised regarding the piece of Bill 23 that prevents Municipalities from requesting comments, beyond natural hazards, from Conservation Authorities through the development review process. The concern was for the smaller Municipalities, who do not have the staff capacity to provide those comments internally.

Concerns were raised on the potential changes to the Provincial Policy Statement that may come out of the additional Environmental Registry of Ontario consultations.

The members discussed the draft letter and provided staff with suggested additions. Suggestions included stronger messaging condemning Bill 23, a request that the commenting period be extended beyond November 24th, including the reasons why the extension is necessary, how the changes will slow down the planning process, the concerns and request for clarity on how these changes will affect the Provincial Policy Statements, and expanding the cc list to include all local Members of Provincial Parliament.

There was a suggestion that the General Manager, Chair or Vice-Chair request meetings with the local Members of Provincial Parliament to discuss Bill 23 and its unintended consequences.

The Board provided direction to staff to strengthen the wording and expand the cc list to include all local Members of Provincial Parliament.

Mover: S.Levin

Secunder: J.Salter

AMEND the motion to include: THAT The Board gives staff authority, with consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, to write the province if there are changes to the Provincial Policy Statement that effect the work of the Conservation Authority.
Carried.

Mover: T.Jackson

Secunder: H.McDermid

THAT the Board of Directors approve the recommendation as presented in the report and THAT the Board give staff authority, with consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, to write the province if there are changes to the Provincial Policy Statement that effect the work of the Conservation Authority.

Carried.

6.1. 2023 Fees Policy and Fee Schedules

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

There was a suggestion to add messaging to the Environmental Registry of Ontario posting for Bill 23, demonstrating that Conservation Authority fees function on a user pay principal and do not exceed cost recovery. It was noted that this is the standard annual review of the fees and any increases are to move towards achieving the 50-50 user fee to levy ratio set out in the Fees Policy.

Staff clarified the significant increase for wet and dry dock fees was due to inflation, an increase in user demand, and increased maintenance costs.

Staff clarified the proposed shoulder season would extend full access to the day use areas into the end of November for a reduced fee. The proposal is in response to demand and the required service levels to support that increased demand.

There was a suggestion to include the percent increase beside all fees in the future. There was a suggestion to consider adding a surcharge for travel expenses for site visits and off site meetings to help cover the cost of fuel and staff travel time.

There was a suggestion to shift some planning fees into the pre-consultation phase, if that section is not impacted by the proposed freeze on Conservation Authority fee increases.

A typo was noted on page 14, the 2023 fee for Major Site Plan should be \$3,200.00, not \$320.

Mover: A.Hopkins

Secunder: T.Jackson

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

Carried.

6.2. 2023 Board of Directors Meeting Schedule, Transition and Orientation Plan

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

Mover: S.Levin

Seconder: M.Lupton

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

A.Hopkins left the meeting at 11:03am.

6.4 2023 Draft Budget Approval

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

The Board members reviewed and discussed the 2023 draft budget for circulation to the Municipalities. Staff noted that this document will continue to be refined as more accurate information comes in regarding program funding for 2023.

There was a discussion on the planned Electric Vehicle charging stations. It was noted that there may be an opportunity to apply for a grant from the Federal Government that would provide up to a 50% rebate.

An error was noted in the Total Structures – City of London table on the 2023 UTRCA Draft Budget Municipal Levy sheet. Staff confirmed there was an error and that it would be fixed before circulation to member Municipalities.

There was a discussion on the ongoing required electrical upgrades in all three campgrounds. Staff noted that since all electrical infrastructure at all three parks required costly upgrades, they consulted with the Electrical Safety Authority and were directed to prioritize and do what is financially possible, year over year. Staff emphasized the need for an asset management plan.

While understanding the need for a maintenance budget in this transition year, some members noted it was at the expense of the long term strategic goals and strongly encouraged the future board not to lose sight of those goals.

Mover: P.Mitchell

Seconder: J.Salter

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

7 Reports – For Information

7.1 Administration and Enforcement – Section 28 Status Report

(Report attached)

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

Staff noted they have been in contact with London Development Institute (LDI) about the permits that have not been issued and will be looking at ways to include additional information in future reports.

Mover: B.Petrie

Seconder: J.Reffle

THAT the Board of Directors receive the report for information.

Carried.

7.2 November For Your Information Report

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

The General Manager thanked the Board members, on behalf of all staff members, for their support and participation in events over the last year.

Mover: J.Salter

Seconder: M.Schadenberg

THAT the Board of Directors receive the report for information.

Carried.

8 Notices of Motion

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

9 Chair's Comments

The Chair noted Conservation Ontario cancelled their December Council meeting in lieu of holding a listening session next Monday on Bill 23. On the day scheduled for the Council meeting the General Managers will meet to discuss Bill 23.

10 Member's Comments

B.Petrie thanked all members who were citizen appointments, acknowledged their expertise and significant contributions, and expressed his disappointment in the new Provincial requirement to appoint Councillors.

11 General Manager's Comments

The General Manager noted the many challenges and obstacles that Conservation Authorities currently face, and those they have faced and overcome since the 1990s.

12 Reports – In-Camera

There was no in-camera business.

13 Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:01pm on a motion by M.Blosh.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tracy Annett".

Tracy Annett, General Manager
Att.