



NVCA Board Meeting Highlights December 11, 2020

Next Meeting: January 22, 2020, location to be determined

For the full meeting agenda including documents and reports, visit nvca.on.ca/about/boardofdirectors

The December 11, 2020 Board meeting was held electronically through WebEx, and streamed on YouTube for public viewing due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Our next scheduled board meeting will be held on January 22, 2020.

Presentation on Stewardship

The Manager of Stewardship Services provided an overview of NVCA's stewardship program.

This program aims to strategically improve water quality and enhance habitats in the Nottawasaga Valley Watershed while integrating opportunities to enhance recreation, economic returns and flood control to local communities.

The stewardship team works with a wide variety of partners, from schools, community volunteers, corporate sponsors, municipal partners and representatives from all government levels to complete projects

Typically, for every dollar of municipal levy that is received, \$4 - \$6 is generated through other funding sources, including grants, sponsorships and donations.

The stewardship program is separated into two subprograms: the Healthy Waters Grant Incentive Program and the River Restoration Program.

The Healthy Waters Grant Incentive Program offer grants to landowners across the Nottawasaga Valley Watershed on a first come first served basis. These projects help reduce flooding, improve water quality, fish and wildlife habitat and much more. Projects include

manure runoff reduction, nutrient management planning, well decommissioning and cover crops. In a typical year, over 3000 volunteers help complete these projects. During COVID-19, stewardship staff and small groups of volunteers were able to complete projects with appropriate safety measures in place.

Projects under the River Restoration Program are selected based on hard science. These projects typically improve water quality and habitat in more than one municipality, and include collateral benefits such as flood control, safety, and optimizing human health.

Some ongoing projects include removing the Petun Dam at NVCA's Petun Conservation Area, removing a head water pond at the Beeton Creek Ice Dam, and also extending high quality water and coldwater fish habitat from the Niagara Escarpment in to the Simcoe Lowlands in Adjala-Tosorontio.

Municipal resolutions in response to Bill 229

As of December 5, 2020, the following municipalities passed resolutions in support of removing Schedule 6 from Bill 229, Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures), 2020.

- Municipality of Grey Highlands
- Township of Essa
- Town of Mono
- Town of Shelburne
- Town of Innisfil
- Town of Collingwood
- Town of the Blue Mountains

Resolutions passed after December 5, 2020 by other member municipalities were not included in this highlight document.

NVCA 2020 Budget Approved

The Board of Directors voted to approve NVCA's 2020 budget at \$4,949,422 million in revenue as compared to the 2020 approved budget of \$5,004,264. This includes a \$35,768.23 increase to the municipal levy (shared among all 18 member municipalities), with the remainder coming from grants, fees for services, and other sources. Funds from municipal levy represent 50% of NVCA's revenues.

Provincial government passes Bill 229

On December 8, 2020, legislative changes regarding the *Conservation Authorities Act* were made with the passing of Bill 229. At this time, conservation authorities are still waiting for the associated regulation changes that work in concert with the new legislation.

One important change that was made with the passing of the Bill 229 returns the duties of members to the original wording as seen in the Section 14.1 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*: "Every member of an authority shall act honestly and in good faith with a view of furthering the objects of the authority."

Below are some of the changes NVCA will expect with the changes to the *Conservation Authorities Act*.

- NVCA is mandated to perform three core-work items: flood and erosion, drinking source water and lands management. Conservation authorities can still do other items identified in integrated watershed management, but must have approval from municipal partners if levy will be used for this work.

Changes to Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) between NVCA and municipalities will have to be in place for the 2022 budgeting cycle. NVCA staff will work on the processes to update the MOUs and work agreements with municipal staff during 2021.

- The minister can appoint a member from the agricultural sector to sit on the board. This board member will have limited voting rights.
- If an applicant does not agree with a permit decision or a decision on a permit has not been made within 120 days, the applicant can appeal to the minister or LPAT.
- NVCA cannot refuse to issue a permit for an application under a Minister's Zoning Order (MZO), however conditions can be added to the permit.
- Fines for non-compliance work is increased under the MZO section.
- Conservation authorities will have the ability to issue stop work orders. Regulations regarding warrantless access to properties have also been updated.
- NVCA can appeal planning decisions related to natural hazards.

Other anticipated changes to NVCA will be listed in a future staff report.

Upcoming events

Self guided Christmas Bird Count for Kids

Saturday, December 26, 2020, All Day, Tiffin Conservation Area (free parking)

NVCA Annual General Meeting

Friday, January 22, 2021 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Virtual meeting