

**GREY SAUBLE CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
MINUTES
Full Authority Board of Directors
Wednesday, September 28, 2022, at 1:15 p.m.**

The Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) Board of Directors' meeting was held in a hybrid format of in-person at the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Administrative Office and virtually via the meeting application, WebEx.

1. Call to Order

Chair Scott Greig called the meeting to order at 1:16 p.m., welcomed all those present in person and virtually, and made a land acknowledgement declaration.

Directors Present In-Person: Chair Scott Greig, Dwight Burley, Paul Vickers, Marion Koepke, Scott Mackey, Harley Greenfield, Ryan Greig

Directors Present Virtually: Vice Chair Matrosovs, Cathy Moore Coburn, Cathy Little, Paul McKenzie

Regrets: None

Staff Present: CAO, Tim Lanthier; Administrative Assistant, Valerie Coleman; Gloria Dangerfield; Manager of Finance and Human Resource Services, Alison Armstrong; Manager of Environmental Planning, Mac Plewes; Forestry Coordinator, Mike Fry, Water Resources Coordinator, John Bittorf

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

The Directors were reminded to disclose any pecuniary interest that may arise during the course of the meeting. No disclosures of pecuniary interest were expressed at the time.

3. Call for Additional Agenda Items

Nothing at this time.

4. Adoption of Agenda

Motion No.:
FA-22-081

Moved By: Dwight Burley
Seconded By: Ryan Greig

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the agenda of September 28, 2022.

Carried

5. Approval of Minutes

Motion No.:
FA-22-082

Moved By: Harley Greenfield
Seconded By: Marion Koepke

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the Full Authority minutes of August 24, 2022, as amended.

Carried

6. Business Out of Minutes

Nothing at this time.

7. Consent Agenda

Motion No.:
FA-22-83

Moved By: Ryan Greig
Seconded By: Dwight Burley

THAT in consideration of the Consent Agenda Items listed on the September 28, 2022, agenda, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the following items: (i) Environmental Planning – Section 28 Permits – August 2022; (ii) Administration – Receipts & Expenses – August 2022; (iii) Correspondence – Georgian Bay Garden Club; GSCA Member Newsletter – Fall 2022; (v) Minutes – Beaver River Watershed Initiative – January, February, March, April, and May 2022; (vi) Recent Media Articles

Carried

Members Scott Mackey and Paul Vickers joined the meeting at 1:20 p.m.

8. Business Items

i. Board Orientation – Operations – Property Management and Compliance

Operations Manager, Morgan Barrie provided a presentation via PowerPoint on the activities of the Operations Department.

Chair Greig thanked Morgan for his presentation.

Members thanked the Operations staff and extended the positive comments they had received from the public.

A Member asked with regard to the camping and if there are other issues with camping on other properties. Morgan commented that there seem to be less compliance issues this year, outside of a few notable occurrences. Additionally, some of the encampment type sites are complicated by the mental health and substance abuse issues of the person or persons involved.

A Member commented on the considerable work that so few staff manage to complete.

A Member asked with regard to the budgeting and spending of revenues generated by parking pass sales.

Morgan answered that funding for the Operations department is pulled from several different departmental budgets. Funds from the parking pass sales are used to cover seasonal staff positions and upgrades within the various areas. The CAO explained further that wages for operational staff are divided among the various departments

associated with particular tasks, however parking revenues are only being utilized for lands related items such as wages, capital, maintenance and taxes.

A Member asked if there are any shortfalls in the department and/or specific areas. Morgan stated that they are starting to get some capital projects done. Staff retention and hiring continues to be an issue for seasonal positions. Morgan commended his staff on the work they do.

A Member asked with regard to GSCA's fleet, where is it sitting and what needs are coming. Morgan answered that there will be a tender for an SUV coming. GSCA will start selling some of the older vehicles and replacing with new. Staff are exploring partnership opportunities with member municipalities to increase buying power and decrease costs.

A Member asked with regard to electric vehicles. Morgan responded that staff had tendered for one in 2021 but it fell through due to stock availability. Staff will be looking to revisit electric and hybrid vehicle options in the future.

The CAO thanked Morgan and the Operations staff for the excellent work that they have been doing.

ii. Administration

a. Updates to CAA Governance

The CAO stated that Conservation Authorities have been notified that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry is once again the Ministry responsible for the Conservation Authorities Act.

Motion No.:
FA-22-084

Moved By: Scott Mackey
Seconded By: Harley Greenfield

WHEREAS on August 30, 2022, the Province of Ontario released an email advising Conservation Authority Partners and Interested Parties that Orders-in-Council had been made pursuant to the Executive Council Act which delegated responsibility for the Conservation Authorities Act to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry,

THAT the GSCA Board of Directors receive Staff Report 025-2022 – Update to Conservation Authorities Act Governance as information

Carried

b. Second Quarterly Report to MNR for Transition Plan

The CAO, Tim Lanthier spoke with regard to the Second Quarterly Transition Plan report to the MNR. There were no significant changes noted. There were some timeline changes made based on the recommendation made by senior municipal staff to present the Programs and Services inventory to the incoming councils.

Motion No.:
FA-22-085

Moved By: Marion Koepke
Seconded By: Dwight Burley

WHEREAS amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act require GSCA to submit quarterly progress reports to the Province,

Vice Chair Andrea Matrosovs joined the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

c. GSCA Fee Policy

The CAO stated that recent changes to the Conservation Authorities Act require all conservation authorities to develop and adopt a Fee Policy by January 1, 2023.

The policy is to be based on the user pay principle and includes information on how the fees are established, the process to appeal a fee, and the period for review of the policy and its schedules.

It was noted that some programs are designed to be cost recovery and some are designed to generate revenue (i.e. Planning Fees versus Parking Fees).

A Member asked if the Authority has the flexibility to put funds into reserves in the event that the department, such as planning, realizes a surplus. The CAO explained that the planning fees cannot be designed to generate a surplus, however if a surplus is realized, those funds can be put into reserves. Other self-generated fees, such as parking fees, can be designed to generate surplus and put into reserves.

The consultation process will consist of circulating the policy to the senior staff of all municipal partners and counties and posting the policy to the website for a 21-day period. This is not intended for a comment on the individual fee schedules but rather on the policy itself. Once the consultation process has been completed, the policy will be brought back to the Board for approval.

A Member asked with regard to the timing of the election. The CAO replied that GSCA is required to move forward with this prior to the end of the year.

**Motion No.:
FA-22-086**

**Moved By: Paul Vickers
Seconded By: Andrea Matrosovs**

WHEREAS amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act require GSCA to administer fees in a transparent and accountable manner by adopting and publishing a written fee policy,

AND WHEREAS these changes to the Act will take effect on January 1, 2023,

THAT the GSCA Board of Directors endorse the Draft Fee Policy prepared by Staff,

AND THAT the GSCA Board of Directors direct staff to consult on the Draft Fee Policy,

AND THAT the GSCA Board of Directors request that staff bring back a final version of the GSCA Fee Policy at the November 23, 2022 Board of Directors meeting

Carried

d. Personnel Policy Update

The Manager of Finance and Human Resources Services spoke to the upcoming changes to OMERS Pension Plan eligibility and the required changes to GSCA's Personnel Policy.

As of January 1, 2023, all GSCA staff, including part-time and contract, will be eligible to be enrolled in the OMERS plan and must be offered the option.

At present, the GSCA Personnel Policy links eligibility for enrollment into GSCA's Benefit Plan with eligibility for enrollment into the OMERS pension plan. Staff proposed to dissolve the link between OMERS and Benefits enrollment.

There was concern raised with regard to the minimum threshold to be eligible for Health Benefits under the policy.

There was discussion about the need to revisit the policy as a whole.

Staff stressed that the purpose of this change in the personnel policy was to separate the condition of being eligible for OMERS enrolment from eligibility for benefits.

Motion No.:
FA-22-087

Moved By: Harley Greenfield
Seconded By: Marion Koepke

WHEREAS updates to Regulation 14 Pension Plans of the GSCA Personnel Policy are required as the result of changes to the voluntary enrollment requirements for other-than-continuous full-time employees for the OMERS Pension Plan,

AND WHEREAS, Regulation 15 Other Employee Benefits, Group Health Insurance is directly linked to Regulation 14,

THAT, the Board of Directors endorses the recommended changes to the GSCA Personnel Policy as detailed in the attached document.

Carried

Motion No.:
FA-22-088

Moved By: Scott Mackey
Seconded By: Marion Koepke

THAT, the Board of Directors direct staff to bring forward a wholly revised Personnel Policy within the first quarter of the new Board year.

Carried

iii. Water Management

Nothing at this time.

iv. Environmental Planning

a. Environmental Planning Fee Review

The Manager of Environmental Planning, MacLean Plewes, presented the conclusion of the Environmental Planning Fee Review consultation process.

MacLean displayed the presentation that was utilized for public consultation.

It was noted that GSCA is in the top 20% of CAs for total planning applications but in the bottom 40% for staffing level. This illustrated the misalignment of staff and workload.

MacLean reviewed the mandatory and discretionary roles and activities that the department conducts. It was noted that the current fee structure was established in 2006 and had not been based on a comprehensive review of actual costs.

The activity-based costing methodology used by Watson and Associates included all of the direct and indirect costs associated with the services provided by the department.

MacLean reviewed the findings and recommendations of the fee review.

MacLean explained the consultation process with watershed stakeholders, municipal partners, and industry experts in the development, building, engineering, planning, and environmental fields.

MacLean reviewed the major fee category items that had raised the most concern and explained that these major fee categories are new and structured differently than the previous fee structure. It was noted that the new major fee items have included the technical review fees that had previously been charged as separate items.

MacLean noted that concern was raised at the staff level over the minor project fee and as a result staff have recommended creating an additional "Routine Project" fee category that would cover routine permit applications intention of this fee category is to capture very basic types of development that require little effort and staff time to review and pose little to no risk from a natural hazard perspective.

A Member raised a concern regarding the process being fair, that larger more involved projects are charged more than those that require less staff time.

A Member commented that the fee structure does a good job of aligning the cost of providing service to the fees being applied. Additionally, appreciation was given of the staff's recommendation of the Routine Permit Fee and looks forward to seeing the details from staff.

A Member agreed that they would like to see the minor fees be kept appropriate.

A Member asked if the plan is to get fees to 100% cost recovery. The CAO explained that through the review, fees were compared to the market rate and some fees needed to be scaled back to be in line with the market rate.

How responsive would the department be in the case of a severe reduction in workload. MacLean explained that the number of applications used in the calculation were based on a five-year average. The CAO added that the additional staff could be utilized in other areas of the agency and partner municipalities, in the unlikely event of a significant reduction in workload.

Motion No.:
FA-22-089

Moved By: Paul Vickers
Seconded By: Harley Greenfield

WHEREAS, the GSCA Board of Directors recognizes that more capacity and expertise is required within GSCA's Environmental Planning Department;

AND WHEREAS, the GSCA Board of Directors directed staff to engage Watson & Associates to conduct a review of the Environmental Planning Department's service rates and fee for full cost recovery of an enhanced level of service;

AND WHEREAS, the Program Rates and Fees Review Final Report was completed in March of 2022;

AND WHEREAS, staff consulted with watershed stakeholders and further refined the consultant recommended proposed fee structure

**THAT THE Board of Directors endorse the Program Rates and Fees Review Final Report;
AND THAT The Board of Directors approve the staff amended proposed fee structure.**

Carried

v. Operations

Nothing at this time.

vi. Conservation Lands

a. GSCA Parking Lots

The Manager of Conservation Lands, Rebecca Ferguson, spoke to the proposed addition or expansion of the four identified parking lots.

Rebecca reviewed each of the four locations.

A Member asked with regards to funding the projects. Rebecca responded that some of the user groups have offered to pay for the construction, there may also be grants available. Any maintenance and/or snow removal could be included in the service agreements with user groups.

A Member asked what the extent of the work that would be required?

Rebecca responded that staff will be bringing more detail back to the Board.

A Member recommended discussing opportunities to partner with municipalities.

**Motion No.:
FA-22-090**

**Moved By: Scott Mackey
Seconded By: Paul Vickers**

WHEREAS, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) is the fee-simple owner of the lands known to us as:

**Massie Hills Management Area
Griersville Management Area
Hepworth Management Area
Wodehouse Management Area**

AND WHEREAS, under Section 21 (1)(m) of the Conservation Authorities Act, GSCA has the ability to use lands owned or controlled by the authority for park or other recreational purposes, and to erect, or permit to be erected, buildings, booths and facilities for such purposes and to make charges for admission thereto and the use thereof;

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve GSCA staff continuing to pursue partnerships and NEC permits for the four proposed parking lots.

Carried

Member Dwight Burley left the meeting at 3:49 p.m.

vii. Forestry

Nothing at this time.

viii. Communications/Public Relations

Nothing at this time.

ix. Education

Nothing at this time.

x. GIS/IT

Nothing at this time.

xi. DWSP

Nothing at this time.

9. New Business

Nothing at this time.

10. CAO's Report

The CAO, Tim Lanthier, gave an update on activities from the past month.

On September 12th staff met with Arran-Elderslie Council regarding the programs and services inventory and transition plan. This was well received with very few questions. Staff will be reaching out to senior staff at all member municipalities to brief new councils on the programs and services inventory.

Tim followed up with some of the Eastern CAs regarding the Agricultural Representative, there have been no Ministry assigned representative as of yet.

Conservation Ontario has hired Angela Coleman, previously the CAO from South Nation CA, as the General Manager of CO.

On September 30th, Tim, Chair Scott Greig and Vice Chair Andrea Matrosovs and Manager of Information Services, Gloria Dangerfield, will be meeting with MPP Rick Byers to provide some high-level information about the GSCA and CAs in general.

Parking revenues continue to be high, having exceeded \$240,000 in total parking sales and more than 1,100 seasonal parking passes sold.

Due to unacceptable levels of service and communication, staff have ended the administration building's cleaning contract early. Staff will be putting this out to tender soon. Staff anticipate there being an impact on the year-end forecast.

Tim thanked Members for their support and work over the past several years and wished all those members running for re-election luck in respective races. Additionally, Tim expressed special thanks to Members Cathy Little and Paul McKenzie and wished them best wishes in their future endeavors.

11. Chair's Report

Chair Greig wished all members good luck in their upcoming elections and gave special thanks to Members Cathy Little and Paul McKenzie on all of their work and dedication to the GSCA as representatives of their municipalities.

Chair Greig asked Members for direction on conducting the CAO's performance review and handling of staff survey results. After discussion, it was agreed to conduct the CAO's performance review at the October meeting.

A Member recommended not having a meeting in November. This was agreed on.

Member Paul McKenzie left the meeting at 4:17 p.m.

12. Other Business

Nothing at this time.

13. Resolution to Move into Closed Session

Nothing at this time.

14. Resolution Approving the Closed Session Minutes

Nothing at this time.

15. Next Full Authority Meeting

Wednesday October 26th, 2022

16. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:17 p.m.

Motion No.:
FA-22-091

Moved By: Ryan Greig
Seconded By: Scott Mackey

THAT this meeting now adjourn.

Carried

Scott Greig, Chair

Valerie Coleman
Administrative Assistant