

GREY SAUBLE CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
MINUTES
Full Authority Board of Directors
Wednesday, September 27, 2023, 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 Sue Carleton 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 Sue Carleton, Vice Chair Scott Greig, Tobin Day, Nadia Dubyk, Tony Bell, Scott Mackey, Robert Uhrig

Directors Present Virtually: Jon Farmer, Alex Maxwell, Scott Mackey, Jennifer Shaw

Regrets: Jay Kirkland

Staff Present: CAO, Tim Lanthier; Administrative Assistant, Valerie Coleman; Manager of Information Services, Gloria Dangerfield; Manager of Financial and Human Resources Services, Alison Armstrong; Manager of Conservation Lands, Rebecca Anthony, Operations Manager, Morgan Barrie, Manager of Environmental Planning, MacLean Plewes

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-23-081

Moved By: Tony Bell
Seconded By: Nadia Dubyk

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the agenda of September 27, 2023.

Carried

5. Approval of Minutes

Motion No.: FA-23-082	Moved By: Seconded By:	Scott Greig Tony Bell
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THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the Full Authority minutes of August 30, 2023.

Carried

6. Business Out of Minutes

Nothing at this time.

7. Consent Agenda

A Member asked to have the *GSCA Indigenous Relationships Committee – July 2023* item pulled for discussion.

Motion No.: FA-23-083	Moved By: Seconded By:	Jon Farmer Robert Uhrig
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THAT in consideration of the Consent Agenda Items listed on the September 27, 2023, agenda, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the following items: (i) Environmental Planning – Section 28 Permits and Planning – August 2023; (ii) Administration – Receipts & Expenses – August 2023; GSCA 6th Quarterly Transition Plan Report to MNRF; (iii) Correspondence – Hamilton Conservation Authority Motion; (v) Minutes – GSCF Board June 2023 & July 2023; (vi) Recent Media Articles

Carried

A Member asked with regard to Business item iv. GSCA Signage and Potential Inclusion of Anishinaabemowin and the suggestion of new and/or expanded signage at GSCA properties. It was asked if there was direction from the committee or if this item was only discussion without any consideration of cost or a formal report. The CAO, Tim Lanthier responded that any recommendations from committee would be brought forward to the Board for approval, however; it was noted that some of the language pieces discussed are already built into GSCA's signage guidelines.

A Member made a request to ensure that "Indigenous" is always capitalized when referring to persons. Staff agree and will ensure that best practice is followed on moving forward.

Motion No.: FA-23-084	Moved By: Seconded By:	Scott Greig Nadia Dubyk
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THAT in consideration of the Consent Agenda Items listed on the September 27, 2023, agenda, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the following items: (v) Minutes – GSCA Indigenous Relationships Committee – July 2023

Carried

8. Business Items

i. Water Management

Nothing at this time.

ii. Environmental Planning

Nothing at this time.

iii. Operations

a. Parking Fees

Operations Manager, Morgan Barrie, spoke to the proposed changes to the parking fee schedule. Mr. Barrie gave a brief overview of the parking program and noted that rates had not been increased since 2021. In light of increasing costs and wages, staff recommended increasing parking rates for 2024. The recommendation was as follows:

Day Parking Pass - \$10 +HST

Member's Pass - \$45 +HST

Non-Resident Seasons Pass - \$80 +HST

A Member asked if there has been negative feedback with regard to the cost of parking. Mr. Barrie answered that there have been no complaints with regard to the Member Pass costs, however; there have been some complaints regarding the day pass fee.

A Member asked whether going higher would be appropriate. Mr. Barrie noted that at present the parking fees have the taxes included and built into the price. Moving forward tax would be added on top of the cost, making the increase a little more.

A Member asked with regard to the library pass lending program and if it was well received. Mr. Barrie noted that the passes had been loaned out more than 100 times with Meaford being the most popular.

A Member asked why there isn't a resident versus non-resident day pass parking rate. Mr. Barrie explained that it would be a time-consuming and challenging process to confirm where visitors live when they are entering the areas. It was noted that gate staff make every effort to direct residents towards the purchase of a Member's pass.

Motion No.:
FA-23-085

Moved By: Jon Farmer
Seconded By: Jennifer Shaw

WHEREAS, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority has reviewed its paid parking fee schedule against program costs,

THAT the GSCA Board of Directors approves the updated fee schedule for the paid parking program, as presented.

Carried

iv. Conservation Lands

a. Inglis Falls Management Plan Final Approval

Manager of Conservation Lands, Rebecca Anthony, requested the Board to endorse the Inglis Falls Management Plan. This endorsement is required in order for the plan to be submitted to the Niagara Escarpment Commission and the MNRF.

Ms. Anthony added that there had been questions regarding how projects would be funded. Staff will utilize grants and fundraising for projects that focus on community, education, accessibility, and cultural heritage. While infrastructure projects will draw on reserves.

A Member asked why the outreach area was restricted to two kilometres. Ms. Anthoy responded that this is the recommended catchment area in the NEPOSE planning manual.

Motion No.:
FA-23-086

Moved By: Tobin Day
Seconded By: Robert Uhrig

WHEREAS, property management plans were a deliverable under the “Enhance GSCA Land Management” goal in the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan;

AND WHEREAS, the development of a management plan is a requirement for Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Spaces Systems (NEPOSS) properties under Section 3.1.5.1 of the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP);

AND WHEREAS, under Section 21.1(1) ii. of the Conservation Authorities Act, programs and services related to the conservation and management of lands owned or controlled by the authority, including any interests in land registered on title are a mandatory program.

THAT the GSCA Board of Directors endorse the Inglis Falls Management Plan.

Carried

v. Forestry

Nothing at this time.

vi. Communications/Public Relations

Nothing at this time.

vii. Education

Nothing at this time.

viii. GIS/IT

a. Regulation Mapping

Manager of Information Services, Gloria Dangerfield, presented the annual regulation mapping report. Ms. Dangerfield explained why and where the mapping is used by staff and other agencies. It was noted that staff update and revise the mapping as needed.

Ms. Dangerfield explained that the Board approves the process as opposed to actual changes as these changes can be and are being made on a continual basis. These updates have led to developing some of the best and most detailed mapping available in the watershed. These maps are used across the agency and in conjunction with member municipalities. Elevation information is a

critical piece, staff are waiting on the provincial LiDAR data to delivered to further update GSCA's mapping.

Motion No.:
FA-23-087

Moved By: Nadia Dubyk
Seconded By: Jon Farmer

THAT the GSCA Board of Directors receive staff report 031-2023 – Regulation Mapping for information.

Carried

ix. DWSP
Nothing at this time.

x. Administration
a. Strategic Plan Steering Committee

CAO, Tim Lanthier reviewed the recommendation made in the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan Final Report to form a steering committee made up of Board and staff members. It was noted that this committee would assist in making decisions related to the Plan process, the development of a survey, discussion questions and topics, and in the development of recommendations to the Board of Directors. This would reduce the workload on the Board at large, however; key decisions would continue to be made by the Board.

A Member asked how often the committee is anticipated to meet. Mr. Lanthier responded that he anticipates between six and ten meetings during the course of the year.

A Member asked if the meeting day, time, and location are flexible. Mr. Lanthier responded that both day and times are flexible and that a hybrid meeting format could be arranged.

Member Nadia Dubyk, Member Tobin Day, Scott Mackey, Robert Uhrig, and Vice Chair Scott Greig all volunteered to sit on the steering committee with Chair Carleton to act as an alternate should it be necessary.

Motion No.:
FA-23-088

Moved By: Nadia Dubyk
Seconded By: Tobin Day

WHEREAS the GSCA is preparing to undertake a new 10-year Strategic Plan;

THAT the GSCA establish a Steering Committee comprised of Board Members and GSCA Staff to facilitate and guide the process for the development of the new Strategic Plan;

AND THAT the GSCA Board of Directors designate the following Board Members to sit on a Strategic Plan Steering Committee:

Nadia Dubyk, Tobin Day, Robert Uhrig, Scott Greig, Scott Mackey

Carried

b. GSCA Administration Funding Options

CAO, Tim Lanthier provided a presentation via PowerPoint to outline the administration centre renovation project funding plan options.

Mr. Lanthier provided a breakdown of the preliminary cost estimates, with and without the full addition. It was noted that the costs for the roof/skylights, landscaping, contingency, furniture/fixtures, and temporary office space are broken out and not included with the initial project cost estimates.

Mr. Lanthier showed a breakdown of GSCA's reserves including the 10-year capital needs for those individual reserves. It was noted that several reserves have specific purposes and cannot be drawn upon.

There was general discussion around the growth rate of GSCA's staffing numbers and if the renovated building would meet the needs of the Authority.

A Member asked if it would be appropriate to wait on construction until the rate of inflation levels out or goes down. Mr. Lanthier explained that it is anticipated that construction would not begin until 2025 and that final construction costs will not be fully known until then.

A Member asked with regard to revenue potential of the full addition and if that would change should the Board move forward with Scenario 1. Mr. Lanthier responded that after having reviewed revenue and occupancy from other organizations with similar spaces, the revenue potential through this rental is insufficient to rely on at this time.

A Member asked with regard to the noted shortfall in the Lands reserve to cover the 10-year capital needs. Mr. Lanthier responded that GSCA has been contributing an estimated \$50,000 per year into the reserve, lessening the shortfall significantly. Staff intend to explore all other potential funding avenues, such as grants, partnerships, and fundraising, as well as analyzing GSCA's capital assets to determine which are desirable for renewal and which are not.

Mr. Lanthier outlined the potential funding models should GSCA borrow the necessary funds to cover the shortfall.

A Member asked if there would be grants available to cover some of the costs. Mr. Lanthier replied that it is possible, and staff will work to locate as many other funding avenues as possible. However, it is prudent to budget for the full cost and deduct from that should other funding become available.

A Member asked with regard to selling carbon credits. Mr. Lanthier explained that staff had brought forward a report explaining why this is not a feasible option for GSCA at this time.

Mr. Lanthier outlined the potential options should GSCA utilize levy to cover the short fall. It was stressed that the Modified Current Value Assessment (MCVA) is set by the province and not the GSCA. Mr. Lanthier explained the pros and cons of the possible alternative options for apportioning and included the total dollar amounts that these would equate to.

A Member expressed a desire to not rush to make a decision and to explore if there are any properties that could be divested in order to help fund the cost of the Administration Building renovation capital project.

A Member asked what budget year GSCA is intending. Mr. Lanthier responded that with Options 6 and 7, apportionment would be one full payment in either the 2024 or 2025 budget, or two half payments in 2024 and 2025 budgets, respectively. It was noted that this could be delayed, however; there are certain items in the project that must be addressed more immediately. Additionally, it was

noted that the funds from member municipalities could be held with the intent that if any funds are generated through other means such as fundraising and/or land divestment, the relevant levy dollars would be returned back to the member municipalities.

A Member suggested that the funding plan be circulated to all member municipal senior staff for consideration as soon as possible to allow time for municipalities to plan.

A Member raised the concern regarding the financial burden on member municipalities despite it being necessary and encouraged staff to explore all other funding options to soften the impact, including fundraising and property divestment.

A Member encouraged Mr. Lanthier to circulate the funding options out to municipalities as soon as possible and consider speaking to municipal councils directly.

A Member suggested a motion to defer the decision to the November 22nd, 2023 Board of Directors meeting. A Member asked what impact would delaying the decision to November have on the process. Mr. Lanthier responded that this budget would not be included in GSCA's regular budget but rather as a special project item that stands on its own. However, the delay could affect how and when the expense is included in member municipal budgets.

Mr. Lanthier noted that he will discuss these options with senior financial staff at the member municipalities.

Motion No.: FA-23-089	Moved By: Seconded By:	Tony Bell Robert Uhrig
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WHEREAS the GSCA Administrative Centre is in need of renovation, updates, and inclusion of AODA standards,

AND WHEREAS the Board of Directors approved GSCA proceeding with architectural design for the renovation of the GSCA Administration Centre, by motion FA-23-017,

AND WHEREAS Staff have compiled options to allow for funding of the proposed renovations,

THAT, the Board of Directors direct staff to proceed with budgeting for Scenario ____ based on Option Number ____.

Deferred

Motion No.: FA-23-090	Moved By: Seconded By:	Scott Greig Scott Mackey
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THAT, the Board of Directors defer voting on motion FA-23-089 until the November 22, 2023.

Carried

Motion No.: FA-23-091	Moved By: Seconded By:	Scott Greig Robert Uhrig
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THAT, the Board of Directors direct staff to bring any potential options for alternative funding through land divestment, including recent inquiries from private individuals.

Carried

The Board recessed at 2:50 pm.

c. GSCA Draft 2024 Budget

CAO, Tim Lanthier presented the draft GSCA 2024 budget for discussion, noting that the document presented would not be the version of the budget intended for circulation.

Mr. Lanthier gave a high-level overview of the funding breakdown. It was noted that the \$285,233 total budget increase is primarily made up of wage costs, including increases in Canada Pension Plan payments, Minimum Wage, and Cost of Living Allowance (COLA).

It was noted that the draft budget includes a total operating increase of \$323,433, total capital decrease of \$38,200, and an overall levy increase of \$115,951. This represents a 7.067% increase in levy over 2023.

Mr. Lanthier noted that the three-year aggregate of GSCA's COLA increases have been lower than the three year aggregate of local member municipalities, counties, and neighbouring CAs and that the proposed 5% is less than the three year aggregate Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation rate.

GSCA's 2024 budget utilizes an increased internal fleet mileage rate of \$0.68. This is increased from \$0.50 and aligns with CRA recommendations. This intent of this increase is to adequately cover increased operating expenses (gas, insurance, etc) and also to support long-term capital renewal planning. There was discussion around how GSCA's fleet is managed. It was noted that this mileage charge is an internal chargeback wherein the departments utilizing the vehicles are charged for this usage and the revenue is identified in the Fleet portion of the budget.

Concern was raised with regard to increasing the rate so steeply in one year and would prefer to see it increased over the course of three years.

Concern was raised with regard to the volume of permits and planning items and asked if there was a plan in place to deal with a significant slow down. Mr. Lanthier responded that the department continues to field a large volume of files and that there is increasing pressure from the Province to process files faster. It was also noted that GSCA cannot fluctuate staff to correspond with fluctuations in annual applications.

There was general discussion around the proposed COLA increase.

There was support from some members in increasing the mileage rate and the proposed 5% COLA increase. However, there were some members that expressed concern with the increase and obtaining support from their respective municipalities.

The Board directed staff to bring back budgets with a 3% and 4% COLA increase for comparison.

Motion No.:
FA-23-092

Moved By: Nadia Dubyk
Seconded By: Tony Bell

WHEREAS GSCA Staff have prepared the 2024 Draft Budget for the Board of Directors' consideration,

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors receive the 2024 Draft Budget for consideration and provide direction to staff.

Carried

9. New Business

Nothing at this time.

10. CAO's Report

The CAO, Mr. Lanthier gave a brief report on activities within the GSCA over the last month.

Mr. Lanthier informed the Board that six of the eight Category 3 Agreements have been fully executed. The remaining two municipalities have passed by-laws authorizing the execution of Category 3 agreements.

The Indigenous Relationships Committee met on September 14th. As part of the meeting, Lorne Pawis, Cultural Resources Coordinator for M'WIKwedong Indigenous Friendship Centre provided the Committee with a presentation on the cultural significance of the Sweat Lodge structure.

GSCA hosted a Strategic Planning session for Board Members on September 19th. A lot of great information gathered. Board members will be provided with a survey to provide further information.

Mr. Lanthier presented at the September 19th Beaver Valley Bruce Trail Club meeting.

Mr. Lanthier attended the Conservation Ontario Council meeting on September 25th. Nothing to report back.

Mr. Lanthier and some members of the GSCA Indigenous Relationship Committee participated in a hike with partners at Neyaashiinigmiing on September 26th led by hike leaders from Cape Croker Park and hosted by the M'WIKwedong Indigenous Friendship Centre

Mr. Lanthier will be presenting to the Grey Bruce Healthy Communities Partnership meeting on September 29th to discuss some of the initiatives that GSCA has undertaken towards truth and reconciliation.

GSCA Agricultural leases are out for tender and will be closing on October 16th.

11. Chair's Report

Chair Sue Carleton had nothing to report.

12. Other Business

Nothing at this time.

13. Resolution to Move Into Closed

Motion No.:
FA-23-090

Moved By: **Scott Greig**
Seconded By: **Scott Mackey**

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors proceed into closed session at 3:47 pm to discuss matters related to the following:

- i. Minutes of the Closed Session of the Regular Board of Directors meeting held on August 30, 2023; and,**
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- ii. To discuss an item in the Municipality of Georgian Bluffs related to litigation or potential litigation including matters before administrative tribunals (GSCA Administrative By-Law, Section 4(xvi)(d)); and,

AND FURTHER THAT CAO, Tim Lanthier and Administrative Assistant, Valerie Coleman, will be present with the Manager of Environmental Planning, MacLean Plewes being present for item ii only.

Carried

14. **Declaration that the Board of Directors has Resumed Open Session**

Chair Carleton declared that the Board of Directors had resumed open session at 4:00 p.m.

Member Scott Mackey left the meeting at 4:00

15. **Resolution Approving the Closed Session Minutes of August 30, 2023**

Motion No.:
FA-23-094

Moved By: Jennifer Shaw
Seconded By: Jon Farmer

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the August 30, 2023, Closed Session minutes as presented in the closed session agenda.

Carried

16. **Reporting out of Closed Session**

Chair Carleton reported that the Members approved the closed session minutes of August 30, 2023, and gave direction to staff on items that were identified and nothing else.

17. **Next Full Authority Meeting**
Wednesday October 25, 2023

18. **Adjournment**
The meeting was adjourned at 4:01 p.m.

Sue Carleton, Chair

Valerie Coleman
Administrative Assistant