

GREY SAUBLE CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
MINUTES
Annual General Meeting & Full Authority Board of Directors
Wednesday, March 25, 2026, at 1:45 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 1:45 p.m., welcomed all those present in person and virtually, welcomed Deputy Mayor Caleb Hull as the Board's newest Member, and provided a land acknowledgment.

Directors Present In-Person: Chair Scott Greig, Vice Chair Jennifer Shaw, Robert Uhrig, Nadia Dubyk, Tony Bell, Tobin Day, Scott Mackey, Alex Maxwell, Rick Winters

Directors Present Virtually: Jon Farmer, Caleb Hull

Regrets: NA

Staff Present: CAO, Tim Lanthier; Administrative Assistant, Valerie Coleman; Manager of Information Services, Gloria Dangerfield; Manager of Financial and Human Resource Services, Alison Armstrong; 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.

Vice Chair Shaw declared an item of pecuniary interest in the January receipts and expenses item under the Consent Agenda.

3. Call for Additional Agenda Items

Nothing at this time.

4. **Adoption of Agenda**

Motion No.: FA-26-031	Moved By: Seconded By:	Nadia Dubyk Scott Mackey
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THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the agenda of March 25, 2026.

Carried

5. **Approval of Minutes**

Member Farmer noted one wording error that was noted and corrected by the recording secretary.

Motion No.: FA-26-032	Moved By: Seconded By:	Jon Farmer Robert Uhrig
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THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the Full Authority minutes of February 25, 2026, as amended

Carried

6. **Business Out of Minutes**

None at this time.

7. **Consent Agenda**

Motion No.: FA-26-033	Moved By: Seconded By:	Rick Winters Tobin Day
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THAT in consideration of the Consent Agenda Items listed on the March 25, 2026, agenda, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the following items: (i) Administration – a. Receipts & Expenses – January 2026.

Carried

Motion No.: FA-26-034	Moved By: Seconded By:	Jennifer Shaw Nadia Dubyk
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THAT in consideration of the Consent Agenda Items listed on the March 25, 2026, agenda, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the following items: (i) Environmental Planning – Section 28 Permits – February 2026; (ii) Administration – Receipts & Expenses – February 2026; (iii) Correspondence – a. Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Park – March 10, 2026; b. MECP Letter to Chairs – March 10, 2026; (iv) Recent Media Articles.

Carried

8. Presentation – Mike Knopka – TD

Chair Greig welcomed Mike Konopka from TD Wealth to present on the GSCA Annual Review. Mr. Konopka gave a summary of GSCA investment portfolio and its performance over the past year and historically.

Member Day asked regarding the global economy and how it is changing between renewable and non-renewable resources. Mr. Konopka spoke to the responsible investing elements of the portfolio makeup and noted that there is still strong investment in renewable energy in European markets.

Member Day asked with regard to the impact of AI on the investment industry. Mr. Konopka noted that his industry will see a significant rise in AI usage as a tool, especially as a productivity tool. Mr. Konopka offered to forward materials developed by TD around the use of AI.

Member Uhrig asked with regard to impacts of amalgamation and the various CA investments. CAO Tim Lanthier replied that there is no information at this time.

9. Business Items

i. Administration

a. Administration Building

Manager of Engineering Services, Ian Eriksen provided the Board an update on the Administration Building Renovation project.

Member Mackey thanked Mr. Eriksen for keeping the building ad-hoc committee up to date during the course of the project and commended him for the work that he has done to keep the project on time and within reasonable budget.

Vice Chair Shaw thanked and commended Mr. Eriksen and the committee for their efforts.

Member Maxwell asked with regard to the additional insulation and waterproofing. Mr. Eriksen responded that once the exterior walls were exposed a small amount of leaking was found and addressed. Once those walls were opened there was the opportunity to add insulation at a more reasonable cost than had been originally estimated.

Member Uhrig asked with regard to the timing of the move and the May Board meeting. CAO Lanthier responded that staff do not foresee any concerns with the timing of the move.

Member Dubyk asked with regard to the asbestos that was found and if the building is now asbestos free. Mr. Eriksen responded that there was very little found in the building and was isolated to some floor tiles and one sewage line and confirmed that the building is now asbestos free.

b. CAA Changes Update

CAO Tim Lanthier provided an update on the proposed changes to the Conservation Authorities Act and Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities. Mr. Lanthier gave a brief overview of the timeline up to present day and spoke to the impacts on GSCA's local communities and municipalities.

Mr. Lanthier noted that there are no answers at present on how levies will be allocated between upper and single tier municipalities and the respective lower tier municipalities.

It was noted that a transition committee will be established with the CAO and one board member from each of the current 36 CAs.

Mr. Lanthier noted that a coalition group organized a media event at Queen’s Park for March 25th to oppose the consolidation.

Member Farmer expressed concern around funding with three levels of “Board” and asked how the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) is being funded at present. Mr. Lanthier responded that funding from the province was provided to OPCA as “start up” funds. Adding that there is little clarity on how the funds from the province will be allocated. Mr. Lanthier noted that the legislation allows OPCA the ability to apportion its costs to the RCAs and from there the RCAs may apportion costs to member municipalities.

Member Farmer asked if anyone is attempting to summarize and collate the ERO comments if anyone is aware of comments from local MPPs. Mr. Lanthier responded that he is unaware of any agency working to analyze the ERO comments and added that they would not easily be able to access any comments that came in by email.

Member Uhrig requested that CAO Lanthier provide a presentation to the Meaford Council.

Member Day asked if there is any indication of what may happen to buildings and staff. Mr. Lanthier noted that the Province has stated that no offices will close and no jobs will be lost.

Member Mackey asked with regard to the make-up of the future Regional Boards. Mr. Lanthier responded that the presentation from the MECP stated that representation would be by population. However, it is still unknown what calculation will look like.

Several Members expressed concern over the funding, budgeting, and lack of clarity and detail.

Member Maxwell asked if there has been any discussion around the Province folding CAs into the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. Mr. Lanthier responded that CAs have never been part of the MNRF and was always intended to be a relationship between CAs and their watershed municipalities. Also, CAs are currently under the Ministry of the Environmental, Conservation and Parks (MECP).

Chair Greig asked how GSCA’s fees compare to those in other CAs such as NVCA or Lake Simcoe. Manager of Environmental Planning, MacLean Plewes responded that GSCA’s fees are comparable to neighbouring CAs. However, there is a significant difference with Lake Simcoe in terms of complexity and fee structures. Still unknown how fee structures will work in the future.

Member Uhrig asked how many municipalities will be included in the new Lake Huron RCA. Mr. Lanthier responded that, after the removal of Lakehead CA, there would be approximately 75 lower-tier municipalities.

Motion No.:
FA-26-035

Moved By: Rick Winters
Seconded By: Scott Mackey

WHEREAS the Government of the Province of Ontario (the Province) has announced its proposal to proceed with the consolidation of Ontario’s 36 conservation authorities into nine regional conservation authorities,

AND WHEREAS the legislation to enable this is expected imminently,

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors receive this report as information.

Carried

c. Huron-Kinloss Communication

CAO Lanthier gave an overview of the proposal by The Township of Huron-Kinloss though noted that the proposal is less relevant due to the province’s announcement. It was noted that there was not any consultation with other CAs or member municipalities.

Mr. Lanthier outlined the shortcomings of the proposal and the negative effects on GSCA and its member municipalities.

Motion No.:	Moved By:	Rick Winters
FA-26-036	Seconded By:	Tobin Day

WHEREAS the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) has received a copy of The Township of Huron-Kinloss Resolution No.2026/02/02-31 regarding the creation of a Lake Huron Region Conservation Authority,

AND WHEREAS GSCA has identified substantial concerns with this proposal,

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors objects to the Regional Conservation Authority boundary proposed by the Township of Huron-Kinloss as it fails to recognize watershed boundaries, existing organizational expertise, and existing conservation authority jurisdiction,

AND FURTHER THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors direct Staff to send the attached letter of objection to this proposal to the Council of the Township of Huron-Kinloss,

AND FURTHER THAT this resolution of the GSCA Board of Directors and the attachments be forwarded to all of those municipalities, conservation authorities, and MPPs included in the notice from the Township of Huron-Kinloss.

Carried

The Board recessed for 10 mins at 3:20 p.m.

The resumed session at 3:32 p.m.

d. Foundation Programming

CAO Lanthier spoke to the GSC Foundation, its programs and services, and their status after the GSCF dissolved. It was noted that both relevant GSCA staff and Foundation Executive Members were consulted prior to the Board meeting.

Mr. Lanthier provided an analysis and a review of staff input on each of the programs as detailed in the Staff Report.

The Foundation’s funds are still being finalized, there is approximately \$110,000 to be transferred to GSCA. Mr. Lanthier outlined how the funds are recommended to be allocated within the Staff Report.

Member Day advocated for the continuation of the student conservation awards program stressing that it is a valuable resource to those students who have received it. Additionally, noted that maintaining the award would help keep Malcolm Kirk's name alive in the region.

Member Farmer asked with regard to how many years of planting space is available. Mr. Lanthier responded that this year's planting will take it to capacity. Member Farmer noted the benefits of the program while recognizing the impact on staff.

Member Farmer asked if the proposed \$25,000 could be used toward the education award instead of one large legacy donation. Mr. Lanthier responded that the \$25,000 would be drawn from the Foundation's Project Fund, the intention of which is to provide funding for GSCA projects. It was noted that there was no feedback from the foundation with regard to how to utilize the \$25,000. However, Foundation members could be consulted on this.

Member Uhrig asked with regard to the Earth Day Hike and how that worked. Member Uhrig added that consolidation of the CAs could directly impact the future of the Memorial Forest making the current decision difficult. Mr. Lanthier responded that there a decision on the Board in the present provides a better opportunity for continuation of any programs than not having a decision from the Board at all.

Member Hull spoke with regard to the Environmental Awards and their reflection of the local region and advocated for its continuation. Member Hull added that Town of South Bruce Peninsula is working on creating its own memorial forest program and would be interested in working with GSCA. In reference to the Earth Day Hikes, Member Hull would like to see GSCA provide resources that would allow schools to continue running their own hikes.

Member Mackey noted that the Foundation's members only request was for the continuation of the Memorial Forest, adding that there was interest from members of the Foundation to volunteer. Member Mackey advocated for the Board to honour the Foundation's request to continue the Memorial Forest Program.

Member Maxwell supported creating partnerships between GSCA and member municipalities to continue the Memorial Forest Program.

Vice Chair Shaw supported running the program for 2026 and then reassessing for the future. Vice Chair Shaw supported a decentralized version of the Memorial Forest program. Vice Chair Shaw added support for the environment award, and the festivals. However, if a choice is required then would support the funds going to the festivals over the scholarship. Vice Chair Shaw asked if there was any agreement when the fund for the scholarship was created. Mr. Lanthier responded that the endowment fund was not created to fund the awards, but rather projects of the Authority. This fund has not funded the awards previously.

Member Dubyk supports continuing the memorial forest in a decentralized format, given that it is a self-funding program. Member Dubyk supported utilizing the endowment funds to support the two festivals and Member Farmer's suggestion of reaching out to the Foundation Board with regard to redirecting the \$25,000 project funds to the scholarship instead.

Chair Greig noted that the Memorial Forest ceremony is held on a weekend and asked Board Members to be cognizant of commitment of staff time and resources. Chair Greig supported looking at alternative formats for the memorial forest program to continue in collaboration with member municipalities. Chair Greig supported investing the \$25,000 in a capital legacy project, though suggested it utilized on a project outside of the administration building. Chair Greig supported continuing to support the two festivals over the scholarship, though questioned if the amount of the

Environmental Award could be reduced to be able to continue it without drawing funding away from the festivals.

Member Day supported using the \$25,000 for a project somewhere in the watershed that would provide recognition for the Foundation, reaffirmed the impact of the Environmental Awards for students and GSCA and would like to hear the Foundation's thoughts on allocating the project funds towards the Environmental Awards. Member Day supported continuing the Memorial Forest in a decentralized format, recognizing the staff time involved.

Mr. Lanthier thanked the Members for their thoughtful discussion, adding that there may be a benefit in rethinking how these programs fit together. Through the course of the discussion, Mr. Lanthier suggested that there may be a way to have the Memorial Forest continue in an alternative format and for the funding from the Memorial Forest program to provide the funding to support the Environmental Awards.

Member Mackey supported deferring the motion to provide staff more time to rethink the Memorial Forest program and the Environmental Awards program.

Motion No.: FA-26-037	Moved By: Seconded By:	Scott Mackey Nadia Dubyk
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THAT THE GSCA Board of Directors defer the motion and directs staff to bring back a report to the Board

Carried

Motion No.: FA-26-038	Moved By: Seconded By:
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WHEREAS the Grey Sauble Conservation Foundation has made the decision to dissolve, AND WHEREAS GSCA must consider the future of the Foundation programming and distribution of funds,

THAT the GSCA Board of Directors direct Staff to take the follow actions for the Foundation's existing programs:

- a. Continue the Earth Film Festival as a part of GSCA's Environmental Education Programming.**
- b. MEMORIAL FOREST OPTION AS SELECTED BY BOARD**
- c. To cease the Earth Day Hike program in its current format.**
- d. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION AWARDS OPTION AS SELECTED BY BOARD.**

AND FURTHER THAT the GSCA Board of Directors direct Staff to:

- a. Create a Memorial Forest Reserve to hold the existing Memorial Forest Fund, and to use this money for the ongoing maintenance of the Memorial Forest sites.**
 - b. To transfer \$50,000 from the GSC Foundation to GSCA's Youth Reserve to help fund GSCA's Environmental Education programming.**
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- c. To utilize \$25,000 of the money from the GSC Foundation to offset the costs of the Administration Building renovation or other large project.
 - d. To utilize the earnings from the Endowment Fund to help fund the Bruce-Grey Forest Festival and Grey-Bruce Children's Water Festival at a 50/50 ratio OR AS DETERMINED BY BOARD.

Deferred

- ii. **Environmental Planning**
 - a. **Permit Exemption Update**

Manager of Environmental Planning, MacLean Plewes presented a proposed administrative update to the 2026 permit fee schedule in which Staff recommend adding shore wells to the list of exceptions on the fee schedule.

Member Dubyk commended staff on their quick update to the fee schedule prior to the fee freeze.

Motion No.: FA-26-039	Moved By: Seconded By:	Nadia Dubyk Robert Uhrig
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THAT THE GSCA Board of Directs receive for information the Minister's Direction to freeze conservation authority planning and permitting fees;

AND THAT THE GSCA Board of Directors approve an administrative update to the 2026 Permit fee schedule;

Carried

10. New Business
Nothing at this time.

11. CAO's Report

Spring freshet within GSCA's watersheds was higher this year than in several recent years. Significant snowpack combined with warm heavy rain and high temperatures resulted in a quick rise to water levels. Most watercourses peaked in the 10- to 25-year event range. Some roadway flooding was noted, as well as ice jamming in Meaford harbour resulting in flooding over the banks. Great communication was noted with municipal partners.

GSCA's Environmental Planning Department met with and presented to the Grey Bruce Home Builders Association on March 24, 2026. It was noted that the meeting went well and provides a good opportunity for future collaboration.

Member Uhrig thanked GSCA staff for their communication and diligence during the flooding episode.

12. Chair's Report

Chair Greig reported that he and several other Board Members attended a session which had a presentation by a member of the OFA adding support to improving the planning processes but expressed concern around the large geographic regions

13. Other Business

Nothing at this time.

14. Resolution to Move into Closed Session

Motion No.:
FA-26-039

Moved By: Jon Farmer
Seconded By: Robert Uhrig

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors proceed into closed session at 4:34 pm to discuss matters related to the following:

- i. Minutes of the Closed Session of the Regular Board of Directors Meeting held on January 28, 2026; and,**
- ii. A Legal item – closed as it relates to the receiving of advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose. (GSCA Administrative By-Law, Section 4 (xvii)(f)); and,**
- iii. A Human Resource item – closed as it relates to personal matters about an identifiable individual including Authority Directors or Authority employees. (GSCA Administrative By-Law, Section 4 (xvii)(b)).**

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

Carried

Members Caleb Hull and Alex Maxwell left the meeting at 4:34 p.m.

15. Declaration that the Board of Directors Has Resumed Open Session

Board resumed open session at 5:40 pm.

16. Resolution Approving the Closed Session Minutes of February 25, 2026

Motion No.:
FA-26-040

Moved By: Robert Uhrig
Seconded By: Rick Winters

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the February 25, 2026, Closed Session minutes as presented in the closed session agenda.

Carried

17. Reporting out of Closed Session

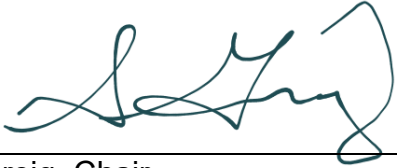
Members discussed the closed session minutes of February 25, 2026, and gave direction to staff on items that were identified and nothing else.

18. **Next Full Authority Meeting**

Wednesday April 22, 2026

19. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:41 p.m.



Scott Greig, Chair



Valerie Coleman
Administrative Assistant