MINUTES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday, December 18, 2025

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Boardroom
Morrison Dam Conservation Area

DIRECTORS PRESENT
Ray Chartrand, Adrian Cornelissen, Steve Herold, Jaden Hodgins, Dave Jewitt, Dave Marsh, Wayne Shipley, Marissa Vaughan

DIRECTORS ABSENT
Joey Groot

STAFF PRESENT
Andrew Bicknell, Tina Crown, Millie Ghorbankhani, Abbie Gutteridge, Davin Heinbuck, Brian Horner, Tracey McPherson, Jaden Schoelier, Nathan Schoelier, Mari Veliz, Ellen Westelaken

OTHERS PRESENT
Adam Skillen, *Skillen Investment Management*

CALL TO ORDER
Chair Ray Chartrand called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m., welcomed everyone in attendance, and read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION #BD 84/25 **Moved by Jaden Hodgins**
Seconded by Marissa Vaughan

"RESOLVED, THAT the agenda for the December 18, 2025 Board of Directors Meeting be approved."

Carried.

DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST
There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest at this meeting or from the previous meeting.

DISCLOSURE OF INTENTION TO RECORD
None.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOTION #BD 85/25 **Moved by Wayne Shipley**
Seconded by Dave Jewitt

"RESOLVED, THAT the minutes of the Board of Directors meetings held on November 20, 2025 and the email vote from December 1, 2025, and the motions therein be approved as circulated."

Carried.

BUSINESS OUT OF THE MINUTES
Vote on 2026 Proposed Operating Levies (Category 1 and 3), Capital Levy, and Budget
Davin Heinbuck, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer, reviewed the process to date for the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) Proposed 2026 Budget, and then reviewed the operating levies for both Category 1 and 3, as well as the Capital Levy, and advised that the approval is by weighted vote, based on those municipalities present to vote. He noted that the total proposed budget increase over 2025 is 3.93%.

2026 Proposed Operating Levies and Capital Levy Vote

MOTION #BD 86/25 **Moved by Wayne Shipley**
Seconded by David Jewitt

"RESOLVED, THAT the 2026 Operating Levy for Category 1 be approved at $1,347,884."

	Yea	Nay	Absent
Adelaide Metcalfe	✓		
Bluewater			✓
Central Huron	✓		
Huron East	✓		
Lambton Shores	✓		
Lucan Biddulph	✓		

Middlesex Centre	✓
North Middlesex	✓
Perth South	✓
South Huron	✓
Warwick	✓
West Perth	✓

"The result was Yea 100% based on the current value assessment apportionment schedule."

Carried.

MOTION #BD 87/25 **Moved by David Marsh**
Seconded by Steve Herold

"RESOLVED, THAT the 2026 Operating Levy for Category 3 be approved at $168,056."

	Yea	Nay	Absent
Adelaide Metcalfe	✓		
Bluewater			✓
Central Huron	✓		
Huron East	✓		
Lambton Shores	✓		
Lucan Biddulph	✓		
Middlesex Centre	✓		
North Middlesex	✓		
Perth South	✓		
South Huron	✓		
Warwick	✓		
West Perth	✓		

"The result was Yea 100% based on the current value assessment apportionment schedule."

Carried.

MOTION #BD 88/25 **Moved by Jaden Hodgins**
Seconded by Marissa Vaughan

"RESOLVED, THAT the 2026 Capital Levy be approved at $40,095.

	Yea	Nay	Absent
Adelaide Metcalfe	✓		
Bluewater			✓
Central Huron	✓		
Huron East	✓		
Lambton Shores	✓		
Lucan Biddulph	✓		
Middlesex Centre	✓		
North Middlesex	✓		
Perth South	✓		
South Huron	✓		
Warwick	✓		
West Perth	✓		

"The result was Yea 100% based on the current value assessment apportionment schedule."

Carried.

2026 Proposed Budget

MOTION #BD 89/25 **Moved by Marissa Vaughan**
Seconded by Adrian Cornelissen

"RESOLVED, THAT the proposed 2026 overall budget be approved."

Carried.

PRESENTATION

Adam Skillen, of Skillen Investment Management, presented a semi-annual update on the investment income since spring of 2025. The ABCA portfolio continues to perform well, despite an uncertain economic climate. However, he noted that the targets for bonds and equities have shifted over the past several months. In particular, there have been significant gains in equities, and that it is time to lock in these gains and rotate back to the targets of 65% bonds and 35% equities, as per the ABCA approved policy. Adam also noted that there was one significant withdrawal in 2025, which was for the purchase of the Spruce Tract. However, due to the gains realized in 2025, the withdrawal made very little impact on the portfolio.

PROGRAM REPORTS

1. (a) Development Review

Jaden Schoelier, Water & Planning Technician, presented the Development Review report pursuant to Ontario Regulation Ontario Regulation 41/24 *Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits*. Through the application process, proposed developments within regulated areas are protected from flooding and erosion hazards. Staff granted permission for 9 *Applications for Permission* and 6 *Minor Works Applications.*

(b) Violation/Appeals Update

Andrew Bicknell provided a brief update regarding an appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT). He noted that this permit application for a deck and storage structure on the dynamic beach area came before the Board in a Hearing in July 2024, and was subsequently denied. The applicant filed an appeal at the OLT for both the ABCA and Municipality permits. There was a formal Hearing process in November that lasted for 6 days, and councils have now wrapped up and filed their summary statements. There has been no decision yet, but it is expected in the new year.

MOTION #BD 90/25 **Moved by Wayne Shipley**
Seconded by Jaden Hodgins

"RESOLVED, THAT the Board of Directors affirm the approval of applications as presented in Program Report # 1 – a) Development Review and receive the verbal Violations and Appeals update as presented."

Carried.

2. Ontario Regulation 41/24 Mapping Updates – Annual Review

Tracey McPherson, GIS/IT Supervisor, noted that in the ABCA's annual review of mapping with respect to O. Reg. 41/24, two small updates were required. One was a reduction of 1.3 ha of regulated area along the McInroy Drain, and the second was an increase of 8.2 ha of regulated area along the Bayfield River tributaries in Stanley Township.

MOTION #BD 91/25 **Moved by David Marsh**
Seconded by Dave Jewitt

"RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves the two mapping updates resulting from staff review as outline in the report Ontario Regulation 41/24 Mapping Updates – Annual Review."

Carried.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Davin Heinbuck, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer, provided a report with a brief update on the progress of various projects, staff training, upcoming meetings and events, and general activities of ABCA staff.

MOTION #BD 92/25 **Moved by Marissa Vaughan**
Seconded by Steve Herold

"RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the General Manager's Report for information as presented."

Carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

MOTION #BD 93/25 **Moved by Jaden Hodgins**
Seconded by Wayne Shipley

"RESOLVED, THAT the minutes of the Source Protection Committee meeting held on October 22, 2025, and the motions therein be approved as circulated."

Carried.

MOTION #BD 94/25 **Moved by Adrian Cornelissen**
Seconded by Marissa Vaughan

"RESOLVED, THAT the minutes of the Arkona Lions Club Museum Management Committee meeting held on November 4, 2025, and the motions therein be approved as circulated."

Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

a) Reference: Various Conservation Authorities and Municipalities throughout Ontario
File: A.5.1/A.5.2
Brief: Resolutions and ERO submissions from many conservation authorities and municipalities in opposition to the proposed amalgamation of conservation authorities in Ontario.

b) Reference: Support for Conservation Authorities from Local Organizations
File: A.5.1

Brief: Letters from Southcott Pines Residents Association, Lakeshore Eco Network, Huron County Soil and Crop Association, and the Huron Tract Land Trust Conservancy voicing support for keeping conservation local.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Davin Heinbuck reported that the Province is holding regional meetings for each of the seven proposed Conservation Regions. ABCA staff attended the regional meeting in Collingwood, and Chair Ray attended the regional meeting held in London. They both noted that the Province is not committed to just seven regions and this number could expand somewhat. In general, he noted that there are still a lot of questions that have not been answered, but each authority office will continue to exist and be overseen by the region.

2. All Board members present noted that each municipality either had or planned to pass a resolution opposing the amalgamation of conservation authorities, and that they would be forthcoming.

3. Adrian Cornelissen asked Nathan Schoelier about the status of the proposed Parkhill Trails. Nathan noted that we have not yet reached our funding needed, but that staff have been applying to some smaller grants and understands that there is potential for municipal support.

4. Davin Heinbuck noted that the ABCA office would be officially closed from December 24 at noon until January 1, but that the office would remain closed to the public on January 2, 2026, as there would be very few staff in that day.

5. Davin Heinbuck reported that he recently attended CA University and was a speaker on the Budget Panel.

6. Matthew Rae, MPP for Perth-Wellington offered to meet with local conservation authorities in 2026 to hear their concerns.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
None.

ADJOURNMENT
The meeting was adjourned by Wayne Shipley at 4:01 p.m.

_____	_____
Ray Chartrand	Abigail Gutteridge
Chair	Secretary

Copies of program reports are available upon request.
Contact Abigail Gutteridge, Corporate Services Coordinator