

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday, December 19, 2024

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Boardroom
Morrison Dam Conservation Area

DIRECTORS PRESENT

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

STAFF PRESENT

Mike Bax, Andrew Bicknell, Tina Crown, Abbie Gutteridge, Davin Heinbuck, Brian Horner, Ian Jean, Daniel King, Nathan Schoelier, Erik Strahl, Angela Van Niekerk, Ellen Westelaken.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Marissa Vaughan 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 99/24

**Moved Jaden Hodgins
Seconded by Ray Chartrand**

“RESOLVED, THAT the agenda for the December 19, 2024, 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 100/24

**Moved by Joey Groot
Seconded by Wayne Shipley**

“RESOLVED, THAT the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on November 21, 2024, and the motions therein be approved as circulated.”

Carried.

BUSINESS OUT OF THE MINUTES

Vote on 2025 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 2025 Budget, and then reviewed the operating levies for both Category 1 and 3, as well as the Capital Levy, and advised that approval is by weighted vote.

2025 Proposed Operating Levies and Capital Levy Vote

MOTION #BD 101/24

**Moved by Dave Jewitt
Seconded by Wayne Shipley**

“RESOLVED, THAT the 2025 Operating Levy for Category 1 be approved at \$1,304,605.”

	<u>Yea</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Absent</u>
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 102/24

**Moved by Steve Herold
Seconded by Jaden Hodgins**

“RESOLVED, THAT the 2025 Operating Levy for Category 3 be approved at \$172,616.”

	<u>Yea</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Absent</u>
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 103/24

**Moved by Dave Jewitt
Seconded by Joey Groot**

“RESOLVED, THAT the 2025 Capital Levy be approved at \$20,045.”

	<u>Yea</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Absent</u>
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 assessment apportionment schedule.”

Carried.

2025 Proposed Budget

MOTION #BD 104/24

**Moved by Wayne Shipley
Seconded by Ray Chartrand**

“RESOLVED, THAT the proposed 2025 overall budget be approved.”

Carried.

PROGRAM REPORTS

1. (a) Development Review

Andrew Bicknell, Senior Regulations Coordinator, 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 5 *Applications for Permission* and 3 *Minor Works Applications*.

(b) Violation/Appeals Update

Andrew Bicknell provided one appeal update regarding a deck and storage area in the dynamic beach area of Huron Woods, which came to a hearing at the ABCA Board of Directors in 2024. It was appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal; however, councils for the applicant as well as the ABCA are speaking, and there is hope that a redesign that would be acceptable can be negotiated.

MOTION #BD 105/24

**Moved by Jaden Hodgins
Seconded by Ray Chartrand**

“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. Conservation Lands Risk Mitigation – Implementation Framework

Nathan Schoelier, Stewardship and Conservation Lands Manager, provided a report on the findings of a visit from ABCA’s insurance broker, Marsh Canada Limited (Marsh). This visit was to three properties, with the intent of observing a cross section of typical properties owned by the ABCA, obtaining and understanding of typical exposures and risk mitigating initiatives, reviewing permitted activities, identifying liability hazards, and discussing opportunities for improvement. In general, the ABCA employs reasonable risk mitigation measures, and is consistently working toward enhancing

these as funding permits. The properties visited included Mystery Falls, Rock Glen Conservation Area, and Ausable River Cut Conservation area. A memo was provided from Marsh's representative, and this report outlines a framework on how to implement these improvements.

MOTION #BD 106/24

**Moved by Dave Marsh
Seconded by Adrian Cornelissen**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves the framework described in this report for implementing conservation lands risk mitigation measures provided by Marsh Canada Limited.”

Carried.

3. Hazard Tree Policy

Nathan Schoelier presented a policy for the management of hazard trees on ABCA properties. As noted in Marsh Canada Limited's property visits, ABCA manages hazard trees well, but a formal policy for this management should be put into place. A draft policy for hazard tree management is attached.

MOTION #BD 107/24

**Moved by Wayne Shipley
Seconded by Joey Groot**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves the hazard tree policy appended to this report.”

Carried.

4. Rock Glen Conservation Area 2024 Summary

Mike Bax, Rock Glen Conservation Area (RGCA) Superintendent, provided Directors with a summary of the 2024 season at RGCA. He noted that this is the only ABCA conservation area that is staffed during the summer season. Two staff are present from May to October, and a summer student is typically employed during July and August. This year, ABCA was successful in receiving funding from Canada Summer Jobs to contribute to the student position. In general, it was a successful season at RGCA, which saw more than 40,000 day entries and almost 1000 pass entries. In addition, there was more than a 120 per cent increase in Family Pass and Individual Pass sales, as well as pavilion rentals. The Arkona Lions Museum, located within RGCA, also provides a good overview of visitors. In 2024, the visitor log at the museum showed more than 2000 visitors from 52 unique countries, 10 Canadian provinces and 17 U.S. states. RGCA has also remained an excellent venue for education programming throughout the year.

MOTION #108/24

**Moved by Steve Herold
Seconded by Wayne Shipley**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the report Rock Glen Conservation Area 2024 Summary as presented for information.”

Carried.

5. Stewardship Funding Update

Angela Van Niekerk, Wetlands Specialist, provided an update on stewardship funding and projects for 2024. The Canada Nature Fund from Fisheries and Oceans Canada has contributed to 15 projects including 9 fragile land retirement projects, and 6 wetland restorations. The Wetlands Conservation Partner Program through the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks has helped to fund 30 projects, including 13 wetland restorations and 17 fragile land retirement projects.

MOTION #BD 109/24

**Moved by Jaden Hodgins
Seconded by Dave Jewitt**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receive the Stewardship Funding Update as presented for information.”

Carried.

6. Tree Planting Program – 2024 Summary

Ian Jean, Forestry and Land Stewardship Specialist, provided a summary report on the 2024 tree planting program at the ABCA. Between both spring and fall planting programs, 243 landowners throughout the watershed participated, and more than 35,000 trees were planted. Projects that benefit watershed health include reforestation, field windbreaks and riparian buffers. The program operates on a cost recovery basis and is supported through technical service fees, and tree sales. Various funding sources also provide support to local landowners, including the Huron Clean Water Project, Forests Ontario, Canada Nature Fund, as well as others. ABCA also works with Maitland Valley Conservation Authority to help deliver their tree program.

MOTION #110/24

**Moved by Dave Marsh
Seconded by Dave Jewitt**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the Tree Planting Program – 2024 Summary for information as presented.”

Carried.

7. ABCA Ice Management Plan

To meet Ontario Regulation 686/21: Mandatory Programs and Services, Section 4: Ice Management, of the Conservation Authorities Act, staff have prepared a plan that focusses on the monitoring and messaging surrounding ice buildup and ice jam risks. This work is done as part of the Flood Forecasting and Warning program at the ABCA. The plan is intended to be a living document and will be reviewed, amended, and updated as needed.

MOTION #111/24

**Moved by Jaden Hodgins
Dave Jewitt**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the report ABCA Ice Management Plan for information as presented.”

Carried.

GENERAL MANAGER’S REPORT

Davin Heinbuck 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 112/24

**Moved by Dave Marsh
Wayne Shipley**

“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 113/24

**Moved by Joey Groot
Seconded by Ray Chartrand**

“RESOLVED, THAT the minutes of the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation meeting held on November 26, 2024 and the motions therein be approved as circulated.”

Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

- a) Reference: Extension of Minister’s direction to No Change Fees
File: A.5.3

Brief: Davin Heinbuck noted that the ABCA received a letter from the Honourable Graydon Smith, Minister of Natural Resources, noting that the freeze on fees associated with planning and regulations will continue in 2025. This will be the third year in which fees are not able to be raised. Directors agreed that advocacy should continue, and that ABCA should continue with their proposed letter to the Province with support of member municipalities.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Davin Heinbuck provided a brief update on the Low Water Response status within the ABCA watershed. He reported that base flows have now recovered with the snow, rain and melting in December, and that the Level 1 Low Water Advisory is being lifted.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:04 p.m.

Marissa Vaughan
Chair

Abigail Gutteridge
Secretary

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