

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday, June 18, 2020

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Boardroom
Morrison Dam Conservation Area

VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Ray Chartrand, Doug Cook, Adrian Cornelissen (by phone), Bob Harvey, George Irvin, Dave Jewitt, Mike Tam, Marissa Vaughan, Alex Westman

STAFF PRESENT

Bev Brown, Geoff Cade, Tim Cumming, Abbie Gutteridge, Brian Horner, Ian Jean, Daniel King, Tracey McPherson, Kate Monk, Judith Parker, Meghan Tydd-Hrynyk, Mari Veliz, Angela Van Niekerk

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Doug Cook called the virtual meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance. He thanked staff for organizing the meeting and stated the procedures for voting and asking questions would be by show of hand.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION #BD 41/20

**Moved Alex Westman
Seconded by Ray Chartrand**

“RESOLVED, THAT the agenda for the June 18, 2020 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

Chair Cook stated that the meeting was being recorded for the public to view, and a link would be posted on the ABCA website.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES**MOTION #BD 42/20****Moved by Marissa Vaughan
Seconded by George Irvin**

“RESOLVED, THAT the minutes of the Board of Directors virtual meeting held on May 21, 2020 and the motions therein be approved as circulated.”

Carried.

BUSINESS OUT OF THE MINUTES

None

PROGRAM REPORTS1. (a) Development Review

Meghan Tydd-Hrynyk, Planning & Regulations Officer, presented the Development Review report pursuant to Ontario Regulation 147/06 *Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses*. 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 8 *Minor Works Applications*.

(b) Violations/Appeals Update

Staff advised there has been an increase in the number of violations. In the Municipality of Bluewater there are 5 properties under review for undertaking construction projects such as decks, additions and dumping large amounts of fill over the lakebank. At Beach o’ Pines in Lambton Shores, there has been reports of ongoing work taking place where five landowners were charged for constructing a seawall without a permit. Other conservation authorities are experiencing a similar increase in violations during the current pandemic lockdown.

MOTION #BD 43/20**Moved by Alex Westman
Seconded by Bob Harvey**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Board of Directors affirm the approval of applications as presented in Program Report # 1 – Development Review.”

Carried.

2. Stewardship Program Project Review

Angela Van Niekerk, Wetlands Specialist presented 2 project applications eligible for funding assistance through the Canada Nature Fund for wetland restoration to improve aquatic habitat in the Ausable River for freshwater mussels and fish that are species at risk. Also one project was funded through Eco Action Program for wetland restoration by creating and enhancing water storage and water filtration on the landscape.

MOTION #BD 44/20

**Moved by Dave Jewitt
Seconded by Marissa Vaughan**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Board of Directors approve the projects eligible for stewardship program funding as presented.”

Carried.

3. COVID-19 Operations Update

General Manager, Brian Horner provided an update on the ABCA operations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. On May 22, 2020 all ABCA properties were re-opened to the public with washrooms, privies, playgrounds and buildings to remain closed. A financial summary estimating impacts to the education department was provided. It is anticipated that education programs will be implemented again this fall.

Visitor use has increased substantially since the reopening of Rock Glen Conservation Area. Two assistants will be hired for July and August to allow someone to staff the gatehouse while the second person cleans the washrooms, collects garbage, cuts grass and can monitor visitors. The hours of operation will be expanded to 8 p.m. In the interim, Corporate Services Assistant, Sharon Pavkeje has been working at Rock Glen, 2-3 days a week, to assist Superintendent Dale Cable.

MOTION #BD 45/20

**Moved by Alex Westman
Seconded by George Irvin**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Board of Directors receive the report as presented.”

Carried.

4. Covid-19 Procedures for Healthy Watersheds Monitoring

Mari Veliz, Healthy Watersheds Manager provided a summary of the protocols developed specific to water and biomonitoring during the current pandemic. To protect staff and community volunteers, these standard operating procedures will be utilized when gathering samples in the streams, at the beach, wetlands and the edge of fields, working in the lab to prepare sample bottles, and shipping water samples for analysis.

5. Healthy Watersheds Reports and Communications

Mari Veliz reported that the healthy watersheds staff have been working on a number of reports and deliverables during the office closure, to meet the commitments of various projects and funders. A list of the reports and various communications was provided. A summary with highlights will be presented at the July Board meeting. The reports will be available to the directors prior to the next meeting upon request. Staff are writing funding applications for future projects and continue to focus on community engagement, which is important to funders.

6. Spring 2020 Tree Planting Program

Ian Jean, Forestry & Stewardship Specialist gave a summary of the spring tree planting program. There were 37,390 trees planted and distributed this spring as compared to 45,015 last year. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, customers were informed of procedures staff would be using for public health and safety. Only two customers chose to cancel their projects as they were US residents and

couldn't cross the border. The Arkona Improvement Association, Bayfield River Flats project and municipalities of Bluewater, Lambton Shores, Lucan Biddulph and South Huron used the ABCA for special tree planting projects in their communities.

PRESENTATION

Ian Jean and Kate Monk, Lands, Stewardship & Education Manager, made a presentation on delivering land stewardship services during Covid-19. When non-essential workplaces were closed, as part of the provincial emergency declaration in March, staff began working from home and decision making went from long term to day to day. The ABCA spring tree program was in final stages of preparation and needed a plan as trees were ordered. The province did designate tree planting as an essential service and staff were committed to moving forward using Covid-19 health and safety protocols. Nursery suppliers were able to lift their tree stock for shipment and tree planters were hired. Landowners were contacted and were willing to proceed with picking up or planting the trees they had ordered using safety protocols.

Wetland creation and restoration projects also continued during the pandemic lockdown. While working from home, staff were able to set up site visits and supervise contractors effectively from a distance. A successful postcard campaign on stewardship grants was sent to watershed residents and received good feedback as people were spending more time at home. The keys to success during these unprecedented times, was the dedication of staff and willingness of landowners, time and patience, risk management, support and capacity of IT, and having funding available through grants for projects such as tree planting, buffer strips, cover crops and wetland creation.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Brian Horner provided a written report with a brief update on the progress of various projects, staff training and development, upcoming meetings or events and general activities over the previous month.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

MOTION #BD 46/20

**Moved by Bob Harvey
Seconded by Marissa Vaughan**

“RESOLVED, THAT the minutes of the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation meeting held on May 26, 2020 and the motions therein be approved as circulated.”

Carried.

MOTION #BD 47/20

**Moved by Mike Tam
Seconded by Ray Chartrand**

“RESOLVED, THAT the minutes of the Source Protection Committee meeting held on May 27, 2020 and the motions therein be approved as circulated.”

Carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

- a) Reference: Investing in Sustainable Green Economy
 File: A.7.1
 Brief: Copy of a letter from Wayne Emmerson, Chair of Conservation Ontario to the federal Ministers of Finance; Infrastructure & Communities; and Environment & Climate Change, expressing interest in working with the federal government in program considerations for a resilient, sustainable green economy as Canadians rebound from Covid-19 realizing how important the population relies on visiting greenspaces and nature for health and wellbeing.
- b) Reference: Conservation Authorities Next Steps
 File: A.7.1
 Brief: Copy of correspondence from Chair Wayne Emmerson to Minister Jeff Yurek in support of AMOs concerns for municipal and conservation authority workloads in implementing any amendments under the *Conservation Authorities Act* while dealing with impacts from COVID-19.

NEW BUSINESSEnforcement Services

Kate Monk reported that she and Brian Horner met with Bill Menzies of Municipal Enforcement Unit (MEU), regarding utilizing their enforcement services on ABCA conservation lands and properties for Section 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*. Staff are looking for a presence on our properties for the purpose of ticketing trespassers and educating visitors on permitted uses. MEU is contracted by other local municipalities and conservation authorities.

**MOTION #BD 48/20 Moved by Ray Chartrand
 Seconded by Bob Harvey**

“RESOLVED, THAT Municipal Enforcement Unit (MEU) be designated for regulatory enforcement duties associated with Section 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* and the *Trespass to Property Act* with respect to properties owned by Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority and Huron Tract Land Trust Conservancy, and

FURTHER, THAT the parties enter into a fee for service contract agreement for a one year period.”

Carried.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

 Doug Cook
 Chair

 Judith Parker
 Corporate Services Coordinator

*Copies of program reports are available upon request.
 Contact Judith Parker, Corporate Services Coordinator*