

SAUGEEN VALLEY
CONSERVATION
AUTHORITY

MINUTES

Conservation through Cooperation

MEETING: Authority Meeting
DATE: Thursday October 1, 2020
TIME: 10:00 am
LOCATION: Electronic (Zoom)

CHAIR: Dan Gieruszak

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Allen, Maureen Couture, Mark Davis, Barbara Dobreen, Cheryl Grace, Tom Hutchinson, Steve McCabe, Mike Myatt, Sue Paterson, Diana Rae, Bill Stewart

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: Mark Goetz, Christine Robinson

OTHERS PRESENT: Jennifer Stephens, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer
Shaun Anthony, Flood Warning/Water Quality Coordinator
Erik Downing, Manager, Environmental Planning & Regulations
Jo-Anne Harbinson, Manager, Water Resources and Stewardship Services
Rene Kleinecke, GIS Coordinator
Donna Lacey, Manager, Forestry & Lands
Laura Molson, Manager, Accounting
Janice Hagan, Recording Secretary

Chair Dan Gieruszak called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

1. Adoption of Agenda

The Chair requested that a Closed Session to discuss personal matters regarding identifiable individuals, be added to the agenda under item 6, New Business.

MOTION #G20-82

Moved by Steve McCabe

Seconded by Maureen Couture

THAT the agenda be adopted as amended.

CARRIED

2. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

No persons declared a pecuniary interest relative to any item on the agenda.

3. Minutes of the Authority Meeting – August 6, 2020

MOTION #G20-83

Moved by Maureen Couture

Seconded by Diana Rae

THAT the minutes of the Authority meeting, held on August 6, 2020 be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

a. Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Response Update

Jennifer Stephens, GM/S-T informed the members that the date for opening the Administration office has been pushed back to October 13th, since several staff have had to self-isolate due to testing of family members for COVID-19. Correspondence will go to the municipalities next week to inform them of the new opening date.

5. Consent Agenda

MOTION #G20-84

Moved by Sue Paterson

Seconded by Steve McCabe

THAT the reports, minutes, and information contained in the Consent Agenda, [items 5a-b], along with their respective recommended motions be accepted as presented.

CARRIED

6. New Business

There was no new business.

7. Closed Session

Due to technical issues with the “polling” feature on the Zoom platform, Barbara Dobreen requested a recorded vote to move into Closed Session.

MOTION #G20-85

Moved by Barbara Dobreen

Seconded by Bill Stewart

That the Authority move to Closed Session, In Camera to discuss matters relating to identifiable individuals, and further

That Jennifer Stephens, Laura Molson, and Janice Hagan remain in the meeting.

Authority Meeting – October 1, 2020

Paul Allen	Yea
Maureen Couture	Yea
Mark Davis	Yea
Barbara Dobreen	Yea
Cheryl Grace	Yea
Tom Hutchinson	Yea
Steve McCabe	Yea
Don Murray	Yea
Mike Myatt	Yea
Sue Paterson	Yea
Diana Rae	Yea
Bill Stewart	Yea
Dan Gieruszak	Yea

CARRIED

MOTION #G20-86

Moved by Barbara Dobreen

Seconded by Bill Stewart

That the Authority adjourn from Closed Session, In Camera, and rise and report.

CARRIED

There was nothing to report from the Closed Session.

8. Presentations

a. 2021 Draft Budget Review

A copy of the proposed draft 2021 Budget and the budget presentation is appended to the office copy of these minutes.

Jennifer Stephens reviewed the guiding principles for the budget, including the potential for decreased funding from the province and alignment with the 2019 revisions to the *Conservation Authorities Act*. The mandatory programs and services are those that are related to the risk of natural hazards, the conservation and management of lands owned or controlled by the authority, the authority's duties under the *Clean Water Act, 2006*, and those related to the CA's duties and responsibilities under an Act prescribed by the regulations which is anticipated for release by the end of 2020. Under the amended *Conservation Authorities Act*, CAs are enabled to provide a program or service if those services are addressed under another Act such as the *Environmental Protection Act* or the *Ontario Water Resources Act*.

Jennifer reviewed the Reserves report and described the purpose of each Reserve account. There was extensive discussion regarding the reserves and the members observed that they are in a good standing from a financial perspective. Access to reserves may be necessary due to the extraordinary times.

Each department manager/coordinator reviewed the budget for their program responsibility. Discussion

Authority Meeting – October 1, 2020

included the elimination of the Community Relations department and a proposal for the development of a Community & Outreach Coordinator position under the direction of the Corporate Services department. Changes to this program would include decreasing staff support for Saugeen Valley Conservation Foundation (SVCF) fundraising activities, organization of events, and rebranding of the Authority.

Shaun Anthony reviewed the Flood Warning program and noted that this budget would see a slight decrease due to a reduced need for equipment purchases, and staff travel and training. Shaun reviewed the Water Quality program and noted that proposed changes include increased biomonitoring costs to accommodate the rising cost of ethanol, used for preservation of specimens.

Jo-Anne Harbinson presented the budget for Water Resources which includes Capital Flood, Erosion Control Projects and Stewardship Services. Increases in this budget include the Neustadt and Inverhuron Flood Control Projects. Stewardship projects include the Saugeen Watershed Improvement Program which will support an incentive platform for agricultural landowners to complete Nutrient Management or Crop Nutrient plans.

Erik Downing explained the responsibilities and purpose of the Environmental Planning & Regulations department and presented the proposed budget. The hiring of a Regulations Coordinator to shorten review timelines of permit applications and to address the high number of violations has been approved, as has the hiring of a consultant on an as needed basis to offer technical expertise to improve accuracy of reviews. A new Content Management System is recommended which will integrate with all other SVCA departments. Increased revenue is anticipated due to expanded Plan Services Agreements, higher Stormwater Management reviews, and increased subdivision development on the Lake Huron shoreline.

Donna Lacey presented the Non-Revenue Parks and Property Management budget. Revenue from reserves will be used to offset some expenses. The budget will see an increase in salary and travel due to the new Manager and Operations Assistant positions. An increase in hazard tree removal costs is anticipated due to the Emerald Ash borer influencing many of SVCA trails which is a safety issue. It was noted by the members that infrastructure on SVCA lands has become a major safety issue and dipping into reserves may be necessary for updating assets.

Donna presented the budget for the Campgrounds. Staff indicate that major improvements to the washrooms and showers are necessary for accessibility and health and safety. Projects proposed to address safety issues include a secure gated access, improved cellular reception at the Bluffs and Brucedale campgrounds, a weather warning system installed at each campground, and a UV water system replacement at the Durham campground. A new tractor is included in the Motor Pool budget but will be charged to the Durham campground over the next 5 years. Revenues will be drawn from reserves to cover major capital improvements. It was noted that, with major improvements completed, the parks are anticipated to have expanded usage especially with seasonal campers which will increase revenues.

Donna presented the budget for Agricultural Lands. There are no major projects planned for 2021. There is an anticipated increase in revenue with the renewal of the Moss Lake cash crop contract.

Donna presented the Forestry budget. Staff development expenses will be greater as tree marker certification updates are mandatory in 2021. It was noted that 2020 revenue for Forest Products will be realized by the end of the year and 2021 revenues are similarly budgeted.

Authority Meeting – October 1, 2020

Donna presented the Motor Pool budget. Proposed for 2021 is the purchase of a new truck, a used truck, and a replacement tractor. Funding for these purchases will come from reserves.

Laura Molson presented the 2021 Administration budget. The purchase of a VOIP telephone system is necessary to replace the aging Formosa Administration office phone system. Decreased interest revenues will affect this budget.

Rene Kleinecke presented the GIS and IT budget. Staff will be implementing a 4-year computer replacement schedule and it is anticipated that 8 computers will be replaced in 2021. Staff will purchase 6 ESRI desktop licenses used for data collection which will replace the Manifold platform. The 2020 Manifold licences have not been purchased and the funds will go to replacing 8 computers in the current year.

Jennifer presented the Education department budget. She informed the members that the DEER program, historically a contract with Bruce Power, will now be administered in partnership with the Nuclear Innovation Institute. The budget for 2021 remains essentially the same as 2020. SVCF will be asked to provide funding for the Flood Waters & You program.

Laura Molson presented a sample schedule determining % Change in General Levy with an increase of \$81,000 in the provincial grant in the Flood Warning budget instead of the budgeted \$40,000 as submitted in the presentation, and drawing on reserves for \$30,000 in the Community Relations budget for re-branding and website updates. The resulting levy increase would be 3.99% or \$67,970.

The Members discussed the requested General Levy increase of 3.99% and requested that staff incorporate changes as discussed to reduce the 2021 general levy increase to between 1% and 2%.

After discussion, the following motion was passed:

MOTION #G20-87

Moved by Maureen Couture

Seconded by Bill Stewart

THAT staff be advised to incorporate changes directed by the Authority into the draft proposed 2021 budget; and further

THAT staff resubmit the new proposed budget at the November meeting, along with the 2021 Fee Schedule.

CARRIED

b. 2021 Draft User Fee Schedule

The members requested that the 2021 Draft User Fee Schedule be presented at the November meeting.

9. Other Business

There was no other business.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:43 p.m. on motion of Maureen Couture and Diana Rae.

Dan Gieruszak
Chair

Janice Hagan
Recording Secretary