

Hybrid meeting held in-person and electronically

Board of Directors **2/24** **Thursday, February 22, 2024**

Regrets: Jeff Banks Shawn Pankow

1.0 Roll Call

2.0 Land Acknowledgement Statement

3.0 Agenda Review

4.0 Adoption of Agenda

Brian Dowdall

Seconded by: Gary Waterfield

THAT the Board of Directors of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority adopts the Agenda as circulated.

Resolution Carried

5.0 Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

6.0 Approval of Minutes of January 25, 2024

Resolution 2-240222

Moved by: Adrian Wynands
Seconded by: Anne Robinson

THAT the Board of Directors of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority approves the Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting #01/24, January 25, 2024 as circulated.

Resolution Carried

7.0 Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising.

8.0 Annual General Meeting

a.) Appointment of Executive Committee

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson reviewed the role and appointment of the Executive Committee and informed the board that all five members who served in 2023 agreed to serve another one year term.

Resolution 3-240222

Moved by: Susan Irwin
Seconded by: Anne Robinson

THAT the Board of Directors of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority appoints the Chair, Vice-Chair, Anne Barr, Brian Dowdall, and Gary Waterfield to the RVCA's Executive Committee for the year 2024.

Resolution Carried

b.) Appointment of Audit Committee

Ms. Casgrain-Robertson provided an overview of the role and appointment of

the Audit Committee and noted that Adrian Wynands had agreed to fill the vacancy left by Charlene Godrey.

In response to a member inquiry, Ms. Casgrain-Robertson confirmed that Anne Robinson fulfills the requirement to have at least one City of Ottawa representative on the Executive and Audit Committees.

Resolution 4-240222

Moved by:

Brian Dowdall

Seconded by:

Wilson Lo

THAT the Board of Directors of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority appoint the Chair, Vice-Chair, Barry Card, Steve Fournier, and Adrian Wynands to the RVCA Audit Committee for the year 2024.

Resolution Carried

c.) Appointments to Conservation Ontario

Ms. Casgrain-Robertson explained the role and appointment of voting delegates to Conservation Ontario Council.

Resolution 5-240222

Moved by:

Adrian Wynands

Seconded by:

Steve Fournier

THAT the Board of Directors of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority appoints the Chair as RVCA's voting delegate for Conservation Ontario Council for 2024 and that the Vice-Chair and General Manager be appointed as first and second alternate respectively.

Resolution Carried

d.) Appointment to Auditors

Ms. Casgrain-Robertson recommended appointing the current auditors for another one-year term, citing their tenure as RVCA auditors since 2018.

In response to a member inquiry, Ms. Casgrain-Robertson indicated that RVCA has no set schedule for going to tender for auditing services but noted that it could be done again in the next few years. She noted that the RVCA only received two submissions when it went to tender in 2017 and that other small to medium sized conservation authorities had struggled to find an auditor willing to take on a smaller client. She noted that General Managers in eastern Ontario had been comparing fees due to recent increases and can confirm that RVCA's rates are comparable to neighbouring conservation authorities.

Resolution 6-240222

Moved by:

Anne Robinson

Seconded by:

Gary Waterfield

THAT the Board of Directors of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority appoints MNP LLP as the auditor for the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority and Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation for 2024.

Resolution Carried

e.) Appointment to Legal Counsel

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson reviewed RVCA's list of legal counsel.

Resolution 7-240222

Moved by:

Susan Irwin

Seconded by:

Wilson Lo

THAT the Board of Directors of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority appoints the firm of Bell Baker LLP as legal counsel for the RVCA for the year 2024;

THAT the firm of Bird Richard be retained for employment issues;

THAT the firm of Wilson Law Partners LLP be retained for land transfers;

AND THAT other legal counsel be retained as required.

Resolution Carried

f.) Appointment of Land Appraisers

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson reviewed RVCA's use of land appraisers.

In response to a member inquiry, Ms. Casgrain-Robertson responded that there are not a lot of land appraisers available in the local area that meet the needs of the RVCA. In response to an additional question, Dan Cooper, Director of Conservation Lands and Stewardship, indicated that the \$14,560 spent on land appraisals in 2023 covered three appraisals. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson added that land appraisal expenses are often transferred to the RVCF as most land donations go through the Foundation.

Resolution 8-240222

Moved by:

Steve Fournier

Seconded by:

Anne Robinson

THAT the Board of Directors of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority appoint the firms of S. Rayner & Associates of Kingston and Rivington & Associates of Perth as land appraisers for the RVCA for the year 2024.

Resolution Carried

g.) Appointment of Signing Authorities

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson reviewed RVCA's signing authorities.

Resolution 9-240222

Moved by: Adrian Wynands

Seconded by: Bary Card

THAT the Board of Directors of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority appoints the following positions as RVCA's signing officers for 2024:

- General Manager / Secretary-Treasurer
- Manager of Finance
- Director of Communications and Outreach
- Chair of the Board of Directors
- Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors

Resolution Carried

9.0 Timeline Reporting for Section 28 Applications

Glen McDonald, Director of Science and Planning, presented the timeline reporting for Section 28 applications. He noted that all but two permits were issued within the 2010 MNRF service standard timelines (99% compliance rate) and that 275 out of the 298 permits issued met Conservation Ontario's more aggressive voluntary timelines. He indicated that permits not issued within the timelines required further discussions with applicants and consultants to align proposals with RVCA policies and that staff continuously monitor workload and performance timelines, adjusting resources and processes as needed to improve compliance with timing guidelines.

Members commended staff on their service standard achievement and thanked them for their efforts.

A member inquired about whether applicants are aware of the category they're in and the associated timelines when they apply. Mr. McDonald explained that once staff review an application, they typically communicate expected timelines to the applicant.

In response to a question, Mr. McDonald responded that typically applicants are not made aware of the two sets of timelines, however he emphasized the RVCA's commitment to meeting the timelines outlined in Conservation Ontario's 2019 guidelines. In response to a follow-up question, Mr. McDonald explained that permits not issued within the timelines are often complex, involving multiple issues that require collaborative efforts between staff and the applicants to resolve. Lastly, the member asked if RVCA loses application fees if timelines are exceeded like municipalities do with planning applications, Mr. McDonald confirmed that the Conservation Authorities Act does not have a provision like that.

In response to inquiries from another member, Mr. McDonald indicated that RVCA understands that neighbouring conservation authorities are performing at a similar service standard regarding timelines. He suggested that Conservation Ontario collects data from all conservation authorities and may be able to provide further details. Mr. McDonald then confirmed that recent legislative changes indicate that starting April 1, 2024, provincial timeline guidelines will be replaced with legislative timelines. He noted the new regulation that was just released on February 16, includes a 21-day timeframe for deeming an application complete and a 90-day timeline to render a decision. This timeline will be standard across all application types.

Resolution 10-240222

Moved by:

Anne Barr

Seconded by:

Brian Dowdall

THAT the Board of Directors of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority receive this report for information.

Resolution Carried

10.0 2024 Budget Approval

Ms. Casgrain-Robertson provided a summary of the budget process, indicated that no comments had been received from municipalities during the consultation period, and gave an overview of four changes that had been made to the budget as outlined on page 22 of the staff report. She also responded to a question raised at the January Board meeting, indicating that Section 28 and planning revenue will likely be \$20,000 below projected targets as a result of fees being frozen in 2024 which will be addressed through reserves if needed.

Sean Devine left the meeting 7:07 p.m.

A member inquired about the purpose of the Britannia Village Flood Control Project special levy and how long it would continue. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson responded that when the Britannia Flood Control structure was built, the City of Ottawa required the creation of a lifecycle reserve to ensure funds were available for ongoing maintenance as the structure aged. The special levy will therefore continue for the lifespan of the structure.

A member asked about potential changes to Rideau River Ice Management as a result of climate change. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson responded that ice management costs can vary greatly year-to-year based on winter ice conditions and that costs for the past two years have been below average due to recent mild winters.

As required by legislation and RVCA's Administrative By-law, a recorded weighted vote was held.

Resolution 12-240222**Moved by:**

Adrian Wynands

Seconded by:

Ann Barr

THAT the Board of Directors of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority approves the attached 2024 Budget in the amount of \$12,574,602 (dated February 12, 2024);

AND THAT a total of \$6,988,536 in operating and capital expenses be apportioned to municipalities using the MCVA apportionment method in accordance with the attached budget and the *Conservation Authorities Act* and its regulations;

AND THAT the following operating and capital expenses be apportioned to the City of Ottawa using the benefit-based apportionment method in accordance with the attached budget and the *Conservation Authorities Act* and its regulations:

- | | |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. \$10,000 | Capital Reserve for Water Control Structures in Ottawa |
| 2. \$21,500 | Capital Reserve for Britannia Village Flood Control Project |
| 3. \$40,000 | Operation of Water Control Structures in Ottawa |
| 4. \$795,717 | Rideau River Ice Management in Ottawa |
| 5. \$163,457 | Enhanced Water Quality Monitoring in Ottawa |
| 6. \$65,000 | Operation of Windsor and Brewer Park Water Control Structures |

Those in favour:

Anne Barr
Barry Card
Brian Dowdall
Susan Irwin
Wilson Lo
Angela Pierman
Kristin Strackerjan
Gary Waterfield

David Brown
Sean Devine
Steve Fournier
Theresa Kavanagh
Morgan Kenny
Anne Robinson
Adam Turcotte
Adrian Wynands

Those Opposed:**Abstentions:****Absent:**

Jeff Banks
Sean Devine

Shawn Pankow

Resolution Carried**11.0 Overview of RVCA and RVCF Conservation Lands**

In response to interest from members, Diane Downey delivered the attached presentation regarding the role and work of the Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation and the management of lands owned by both the RVCA and RVCF.

A member commended the Foundation's work and asked about the process for land acquisitions within the City of Ottawa. Ms. Downey explained that while acquisitions are often opportunistic based on a willing donor, there is ongoing dialogue with City of Ottawa staff and other land trust partners to identify priority areas for protection, including corridors and connections between existing parcels.

Another member expressed gratitude to staff for the presentation and suggested that it be shared with all new board members for its informative content. In response to a question, Ms. Downey explained that conservation lands staff manage the Foundations land holdings for them but that most lands are left idle for natural functions, so costs are kept to a minimum.

A follow up question was then directed to Sommer Casgrain-Robertson, who confirmed that when approached about a land donation the RVCA directs people to the Foundation. She explained that except in extenuating circumstances, land donations are directed to the Foundation.

A member asked if these lands are open for public use and Ms. Downey clarified that only the 11 developed Conservation Areas are open to the public.

A member then asked if there are situations where RVCA would acquire land instead of the Foundation. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson explained that the Foundation is the preferred land trust, but in some circumstances, the RVCA may take ownership such as land acquired for a capital project or land adjacent to a parcel already owned by the RVCA. The member then asked if land acquisitions were a Category 3 program and Ms. Casgrain-Robertson explained that managing conservation lands is a category 1 program but acquiring new land is a category 3 program. She then reminded members that the RVCA is required to provide an inventory of RVCA lands to the province this year and must indicate any lands that would be suitable for development. This legislative requirement does not extend to RVCF lands which is appealing to donors who want to ensure their ecological land donation is protected in perpetuity.

A member inquired about the categorization of lands in the inventory and any required percentage breakdown for submission to the province. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson explained that she was uncertain about any required categorization or breakdown but that a draft inventory would be forthcoming to the Board in the coming months for review and discussion prior to submission to the province. When asked which types of land may be identified for development, Ms. Casgrain-Robertson indicated that the

province is aware that some conservation authorities in southwestern Ontario have land in urban areas that are not ecologically sensitive that they are interested in disposing of for development but that these types of conservation lands are not common in eastern Ontario.

12.0 Meetings

- a) Lanark County Wetland Workshop for Municipal Planners – February 1, 2024
 - Ms. Casgrain-Robertson commended the workshop, highlighting staff's involvement in delivering two presentations and the valuable discussion amongst participants regarding wetland protection. Steve Fournier, the Warden of Lanark County, also praised the workshop and remarked that it was very educational.
 - Gary Waterfield mentioned that Joanna Bowes, Director of Development Services at the town of Perth, also praised the workshop.
- b) Source Protection Committee Meeting – February 8, 2024
- c) RVCA Executive Committee Hearing – February 8, 2024
- d) RVCA Annual Flood Forecasting and Warning meeting (outside City of Ottawa) – February 16, 2024

Upcoming

- e) RVCA Executive Committee Meeting (General Manager's Performance Appraisal) – March 4, 2024
- f) MVCA / RVCA / SNC Annual Flood Forecasting & Warning Meeting within City of Ottawa – March 5, 2024
- g) Conservation Ontario: General Managers' Meeting – March 18, 2024
- h) RVCF Board of Directors Meeting – March 19, 2024
- i) RVCA Board of Directors Meeting – March 28, 2024
- j) RVCA Annual Watershed Tour – June 21, 2024 (Baxter Conservation Area)
 - Save the date emails have been sent to all Board members, municipalities (staff and council), and neighbouring Conservation Authorities.

Chair Strackerjan notified members about South Nation Conservation's upcoming AGM and indicating that she was planning to attend.

13.0 Member Inquiries

Adrian Wynands inquired if the RVCA has a booth at the upcoming Ottawa Farm Show. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson indicated that the three Ottawa conservation authorities share and staff a booth at the farm show each year.

Mel Foster asked about the status of floodplain mapping on Stevens Creek. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson said that staff were working on modifications to the mapping that are currently under third party review and expected that updated draft mapping would likely be consulted on later this year.

14.0 New Business

Ms. Casgrain-Robertson notified members that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry released additional legislative changes on February 16, 2024, including a new Section 28 regulation. More details will be provided at the March meeting, but the posting includes:

- Proclamation of provisions in the Conservation Authorities Act
- Approval of Ontario Regulation 41/24: Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits
- Approval of Ontario Regulation 668/21: Rules of Conduct in Conservation Areas
- All of which come into effect on April 1, 2024.

15.0 Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 7:51 p.m. on a resolution by Adrian Wynands which was seconded by Steve Fournier.

Kristin Strackerjan
Chair

Marissa Grondin
Recording Secretary

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson
General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer