



**GREY SAUBLE CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
MINUTES
Full Authority Board of Directors
Wednesday, August 26, 2020, at 1:15 p.m.**

The Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors meeting was held via the internet on the meeting application, WebEx.

1. Call to Order

Chair Cathy Little called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m.

Directors Present – Chair Cathy Little, Dwight Burley, Sue Carleton, Harley Greenfield, Vice Chair Scott Greig, Marion Koepke, Scott Mackey, Andrea Matrosovs, Paul Vickers

Staff Present – Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Tim Lanthier, Recording Secretary Nancy Guest, Manager of Information Services Gloria Dangerfield, Manager of Financial and Human Resources Services Alison Armstrong, Programs & Communications Planner Vicki Rowsell

Regrets – Ryan Greig, Paul McKenzie

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

The Directors were reminded to disclose any pecuniary interest that may arise during the course of the meeting. No disclosures of pecuniary interest were expressed at this time.

3. Call for Additional Agenda Items – none

4. Adoption of Agenda

**Motion No.:
FA-20-059**

**Moved by: Dwight Burley
Seconded by: Paul Vickers**

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the Agenda of August 26th, 2020.

Carried

5. Approval of Minutes

**Motion No.:
FA-20-060**

**Moved by: Andrea Matrosovs
Seconded by: Scott Mackey**

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the minutes of July 22nd, 2020.

Carried

6. Business Out of Minutes – none

7. Consent Agenda

**Motion No.:
FA-20-061**

**Moved by: Marion Koepke
Seconded by: Harley Greenfield**

THAT in consideration of the Consent Agenda Items listed on the August 26th, 2020, agenda, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the following items: i) Environmental Planning - Section 28 Permits – July 2020; ii) Administration - Receipts & Expenses – July 2020; v) Recent Media Articles.

Carried

8. Business Items

i) Administration

a) Update on COVID-19-related Business and Operations Status

The CAO advised that this region has entered into Phase 3 of the Provincial reopening guidelines and accordingly, all Authority operations are functional. Managers returned to the office on August 10, 2020 to work out the logistics of staff returning, and most staff returned to the office on August 17, 2020. Some staff continue to work remotely while also carry out fieldwork, site visits and site meetings.

Designated as a “tourism operator” under the regional tourism organization RTO7, the Authority received a \$1000 grant for personal protective equipment (PPE) to reimburse the Authority for costs incurred for the purchase of COVID-19 related PPE for staff on conservation properties..

b) Administration By-Law Update to Permit Electronic Meetings

The CAO advised that, after a state of emergency was declared due to the pandemic, a motion was passed enabling the Board to meet electronically during a state of emergency. The Provincial state of emergency was lifted effective July 24, 2020 and an amendment to Section

4 of the GSCA Administrative By-Law is proposed to allow electronic board meetings to continue at the discretion of the Board. Board Member, Marion Koepke, suggested an addition to the motion to include the definition of “meeting” and the CAO will amend the motion accordingly and report to the Board at its next meeting.

Motion No.:
FA-20-062

Moved by: Marion Koepke
Seconded by: Dwight Burley

WHEREAS GSCA amended its Administrative Bylaws at the April 22, 2020 Full Authority meeting to enable electronic meetings of the Authority during a state of emergency;

AND WHEREAS ongoing use of electronic meetings of the Authority may be advisable and desired after the end of a declared state of emergency;

THAT the following proposed amendments to the Section 4 of Grey Sauble Conservation Authority’s (GSCA) Administrative By-Law be executed in order to allow the GSCA Board of Directors to continue to meet and fulfill its duties under the Conservation Authorities Act.

Carried

c) TD Portfolio Q2 Report

The CAO reviewed the TD Wealth Investment Account statement for the second quarter and reported that approximately 75% of previous losses caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have been recovered and this recovery is expected to continue.

d) Staffing Update

The CAO advised that, effective immediately, the position of Manager of Conservation Lands will be filled by Rebecca Ferguson, formerly the Stewardship Technician. The Chair acknowledged the excellent value Rebecca brought to the Stewardship position and congratulated her on her new position.

The Administrative Assistant position has been posted as of August 26, 2020 in print ads, on the GSCA website, and also on Facebook. The CAO hopes to have the position filled by October 5, 2020.

ii) Water Management

No new information at this time.

iii) Environmental Planning

The CAO reported that Conservation Ontario has introduced a new Client Service and Streamlining initiative created to support actions outlined in the provincial Housing Supply Action Plan, and identifies a number of actions to improve client service and accountability, increase speed of approvals, and reduce red tape and regulatory burdens. Initial reports indicate the high-growth conservation authorities have been meeting the best-practice timeline at a 92% success rate. GSCA will be changing its reporting methods to accommodate the new initiative.

iv) Conservation Lands

a) Update on Operations and Visitation at GSCA Properties

The CAO advised that conservation lands have been busier than normal this past summer, presumably because visitors want to get outside after the long quarantine period and have available time during the week. The increased usage has required full-time staffing of several properties.

Christie Beach has been unusually busy with reports of 200 or more visitors on weekend days. Due to site capacity issues, the property has been staffed and visitation has been limited to 70 users at a time, which has resulted in people waiting in line to get on the beach. Other options are being considered including revenue generation to cover the increased cost of maintenance and staffing.

A Management Plan is currently in development for the Eugenia Falls Conservation Area. A tour is being arranged for the Board members in the Fall to view the property and to discuss concerns and opportunities.

There has been good public use of the properties including outdoor gatherings resulting in added revenue and a positive public image for conservation authorities. The Authority is currently on track to meet this year's revenue targets respecting the use of conservation lands.

v) Forestry

No new information at this time.

vi) Communications/Public Relations

No new information at this time.

vii) Education – Guided Hikes Information

Programs & Communications Planner, Vicki Rowsell, advised that to offset a number of scheduled activities that had to be cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Staff reached out to partner groups including the Arboretum Alliance, the Bruce Trail Association and

Friends of Hibou to collaborate on guided hikes of GSCA properties. The program is named “Back to Work? Back to School? Back to Nature!” and is aimed at reducing stress by connecting with nature and introducing and welcoming visitors to GSCA properties. The first guided hike, “Learn About Nature”, was conducted by Friends of Hibou member, Bob Knapp at the Hibou Conservation Area and was so well-received, another hike is being scheduled. On September 1st, 2020, Friends of Hibou member Marie Knapp will be conducting a meditative walk at Hibou called “Forest Bathing” and depending on enrollment, will be holding a second walk to accommodate the numbers. Other walks are being scheduled for September at Jones Falls and the Inglis Falls Arboretum.

There has been tremendous interest in this idea and there are plans are to expand to other locations in the GSCA watershed. Board members were asked to inform their respective municipalities of the possibilities.

viii) GIS/IT

No new information at this time.

ix) Drinking Water Source Protection & Risk Management

No new information at this time.

9. CAO’s Report

The CAO reported that two opportunities for funding have been presented to GSCA respecting the Healthy Lake Huron project. A grant application will be submitted shortly through the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) for projects in the Sauble River Watershed area that will improve shore water quality. Also, GSCA is working with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) respecting a grant to fund a staff person to improve engagement with the agricultural community.

Community partners and groups have been interested in using our facilities to meet outdoors during the pandemic. Several board meetings have been held in our pavilions and the Sweetwater Music Festival has expressed an interest in a pared-down version of its festival at the Arboretum and Hibou pavilions.

The Georgian Bay Owen Sound Climate Action Team has been consulting with the CAO respecting amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* and have lobbied local Provincial Member of Parliament, Bill Walker about the changes.

10. Chair’s Report

The Chair advised that she has been trying to get out in the community and would like to engage even more as the pandemic allows.

She continues to keep in close contact with the Vice Chair, Scott Greig, and CAO, Tim Lanthier, to deal with immediate matters.

11. Other Business

No new information at this time.

12. Closed Session

Nothing at this time.

13. Next Full Authority Meeting – Wednesday, September 23rd, 2020 at 1:15 p.m.

14. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Cathy Little, Chair

Nancy Guest
Recording Secretary