



Adam A. Donaldson @adamadonaldson

Dec 16 · 54 tweets · [adamadonaldson/status/1603760596599578626](https://twitter.com/adamadonaldson/status/1603760596599578626)

Follow along as we see what's going at the Grand River Conservation Authority with the Board of Directors meeting. Here's the agenda.

https://calendar.grandriver.ca/directors/Detail/2022-12-16-GRCA-General-Membership-Meeting/Agenda%20Package%20-%20GRCA%20General%20Membership%20Meeting_Dec16_2022_reduced.pdf

Chair Chris White warns of a "reasonably large agenda" after they couldn't make quorum in November. There have also been a lot of changes from Bill you-know-what.

Motion to approve the agenda as amended approved.

No Declarations of Pecuniary Interest.

Motion to approve the minutes from October approved unanimously.

First presentation, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Samantha Lawson will talk about the changes in Bill 23. Lawson says there were no changes made to schedule 2, all the changes to the Conservation Authorities Act, even though there was a lot of objection from GRCA & others.

GRCA now reports to the Minister of Natural Resources instead of Minister of Environment and Parks. These are the changes taking effect Jan 1.

2. Provisions that come into force on **January 1, 2023:**

- Process changes for disposition of CA lands (S. 39 lands)
- Prohibition on municipal services related to reviewing and commenting under prescribed Acts *
- Minister's direction to freeze CA fees**

zoom

GRCA is expecting to receive the minister's guide to the freezing of fees shortly. Other regulations may take a while to be received due to speed of Bill 23's passage. Lawson says it's "business as usual" till they get the new regs.

GRCA is also moving forward with renegotiations of activities of service with the exception of natural heritage consultation, which was explicitly changed in the bill.

Haldimand and Norfolk Counties rep Dan Lawrence asks if the GRCA has joined other CAs to protest the changes as united front. White says they've been submitting things over the last several months, "banging the drum", doing as much as they can with so much leg. happening at once

Lawrence says this really has an impact on budgets, and "this is not a good time" for these kind of changes. White adds that they will dealing with this for a long time, and it's going to take a long time to see the full impact.

Halton Region rep John Challinor notes that the Province has pledged to "keep the municipalities whole" in terms of development charges (not that it makes any of this okay). Believes GRCA has been clear about impacts and is confident that they will continue to advocate.

County of Brant rep David Miller notes that the City of Guelph is talking about "beefing up" planning dept., will GRCA do same? Lawson says they have added staff members, mostly out of increased plans during the pandemic, but Bill 23 won't impact CA planning same way as cities.

City of Brantford rep Kevin Davis asks Lawson about what's going to be different. Lawson says right now, not much. That will change with regs come in, like preventing CA from commenting on planning apps. Also, municipalities can issue CA approvals if plans are approved...

...Lawson notes that the city planners don't have the same technical expertise on natural heritage systems as staff at conservation authorities. Again, Lawson notes that they're still waiting for regs, plus changes to growth plan and other things to take into account.

Davis asks about fees in parks. Lawson says Bill 23 focuses on planning, other aspects of CAs will be impacted by Bill 229, and adapting those changes is underway still.

Region of Waterloo rep Sue Foxton notes that the concern is being able to build on wetlands and the effect on water. Waterloo gets 90% of water from ground source. Lawson says the challenge will be wetland evaluation system where the onus is on the developer to assess wetland.

White says again that the devil's in the details and staff are working on the final implementation and are trying to work backwards. He says he sympathizes with new members, especially members on municipal councils b/c they're getting it from all sides.

Davis says there was a lot of lobby through the Big City Mayors, and they determined that there was no chance of getting repeal of Bill 23, so they decided to focus on mitigating 3 areas. He suggests that GRCA do the same.

White says they're not there yet, but once they get clarity about the regs, the GRCA will work with Conservation Ontario to get changes "as best we can." He notes that in previous bills there were some pull backs over time w/advocacy.

Next up, correspondences:

- a. Hamilton City Council - Conservation Authority Board Composition
- b. Brant Waterways Foundation - Impacts of Bill 23
- c. City of Guelph Council - Analysis of Bill 109 and Bill 23

On letter a, White notes ("without getting too deep into the weeds") that votes on the board are weighed by how much the municipality pays in. They're setting up a subcommittee to deal with the Hamilton request.

Hamilton rep Alex Wilson notes that solving this will let them get a citizen rep on the board, so what's the timeline? Staff say that they will vote on composition later in the meeting, and then they will schedule meet ASAP, likely for January.

White adds that he can't say how long the whole process will take because it involves legal advice and things like that, but he does promise a resolution as soon as possible.

Motion to receive correspondences passes unanimously. Report of ad hoc committee also passed.

- | | | |
|----|--|----|
| a. | Report of the Ad-hoc CA Act Committee Meeting - November 10, 2022 | 68 |
| | THAT the Minutes of the Ad-hoc CA Act Committee held on November 10, 2022; and Correspondence to Premier Doug Ford and Ministers Clark, Smith, and Piccini; and staff reports GM-11-22-87, and GM-11-22-88 dated November 10, 2022 be received as information. | |
| 1. | Correspondence to Premier Doug Ford and Ministers - November 15, 2022 | 72 |
| 2. | GM-11-22-87 - ERO No. 019-6160 Proposed Update to the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System | 74 |
| 3. | GM-11-22-88 - ERO No. 019-6141 - Legislative and Regulatory Proposals affecting Conservation Authorities to support the Housing Supply Action Plan 3.0 | 78 |

We're now going through the reports and passing them individually as White sees if questions are raised by the board. Some of these are updates or responses to older legislation passed.

- | | | |
|----|---|----|
| b. | GM-12-22-103 - ERO Posting 019-6161 - Conserving Ontario's Natural Heritage | 83 |
| | THAT Report Number GM-12-22-103 – ERO No. 019-6161- Conserving Ontario's Natural Heritage be approved and submitted to the Environmental Registry of Ontario. | |
| c. | GM-12-22-104 - ERO Posting 019-6177 - A Place to Grow and Provincial Policy Statement | 86 |
| | THAT Report Number GM-12-22-104 – ERO No. 019-6177- Review of a Place to Grow and the Provincial Policy Statement be approved and submitted to the Environmental Registry of Ontario. | |

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| d. | GM-12-22-105 - ERO Posting 019-2927 - Proposed updates to the Regulation of Development | |
| | THAT Report Number GM-12-22-105 – ERO Posting #019-2927 – Proposed updates to the regulation of development for the protection of people and property from natural hazards in Ontario be approved and submitted to the Environmental Registry of Ontario. | |
| e. | GM-12-22-99 - Progress Report #3 - Ontario Regulation 687/21 | |
| | THAT Progress Report #3 be approved, circulated to all participating Grand River watershed municipalities, posted on the Grand River Conservation Authority website, and submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry in accordance with Ontario Regulation 687/21. | |
| f. | GM-12-22-100 - Inventory of Programs and Services Update | |
| | THAT the updated Inventory of Programs and Services be approved, circulated to all participating Grand River watershed municipalities, posted on the Grand River Conservation Authority website, and submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry in accordance with Ontario Regulation 687/21. | |

Now on to report [#G](#) and there's a presentation for this one.

g. GM-12-22-98 - GRCA Fee Policy

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority Fee Policy be approved and implemented effective January 1, 2023;

AND THAT Fee Schedule 1 – Outdoor Environmental Education Fees be approved and implemented effective January 1, 2023;

AND THAT Fee Schedule 2 – Conservation Areas Fees be approved and implemented effective January 1, 2023;

AND THAT Fee Schedule 3 – Planning and Regulations Fees be approved and implemented effective January 1, 2023;

AND THAT Fee Schedule 4 – Tree Nursery Fees be approved and implemented effective January 1, 2023

Legislation previous passed by the Province has demanded a change to the fee structure for CA programs and services. A minister's list was created in Apr 2022 to provide guidance, rest governed by CA act.

The GRCA also engaged a consultant to look at the fee structure and offer recommendations, and that report will come back in early 2023.

Areas that the fees cover.

GRCA Fee Policy – Programs and Service



- Outdoor Environmental Education
- Planning and Regulations
- Property
- Tree Nursery
- Conservation Areas

zoom

Outdoor education programs currently funded by school and non-school programs and donations. No fee increase proposed for this area. There will be a 4% increase (rounded to nearest \$5) for permits, plan reviews and inquires. No changes to water quality review.

Conservation area fees. There's been an increase demand in this area, which means increased costs.

Conservation Areas (CAs)

CAs pay-for-use programs/services:

- General Admission Fees – day use, membership, boat launch
- Activity/Equipment Fees – tubing, boating, cross-country skiing
- Camping Fees - seasonal camping, overnight camping, and additional vehicle fees
- Hunting Fees
- Facility Rental Fees
- Event/Access Fees



GRCA proposing 3-5% increase for the majority of fees, exceptions being membership cards, facility rentals, group camping, nightly unserviced camp sites, and nightly serviced campsites.

Fee changes for campsites.

GRCA 2023 Proposed Nightly Camping Fees – Tax included	Unserviced	Serviced	Serviced (with Sewer)
All Conservation Areas	\$48.00	\$57.00-\$60.00	\$64.00
Ontario Parks – tax included	Unserviced	Serviced	Serviced (with Sewer)
Ontario Parks Low	\$38.70	\$43.79	N/A
Ontario Parks Middle	\$43.79	\$49.44	N/A
Ontario Parks Premium	\$52.55	\$59.33	N/A
Conservation Areas – tax included	Unserviced	Serviced	Serviced (with Sewer)
Upper Thames River	\$41.00	\$51-59	N/A
Hamilton	\$49.72	\$57.63	\$61.02
Long Point Region	\$42.94	\$56.50-\$66.67	\$68.93-\$76.84
Niagara Peninsula	\$50.94	\$55.73-\$65.31	N/A
Private Campgrounds – tax included	Unserviced	Serviced	Serviced (with Sewer)
Conestoga Family Campground (Moorefield)	\$35.00	\$40.00	N/A
Green Acre Park (Waterloo)	N/A	\$55.37-\$73.45	\$63.28-\$84.75
Knight's Beach Resort (Dunnville)	\$79.10-\$90.45	\$84.75-\$96.05	\$96.05-\$107.35
Pine Valley Park (Branchton)	N/A	\$79.10	N/A
Bingeman's Camping Resort	\$45.20-\$62.15	50.85-\$62.15	\$62.15-\$73.45
Emerald Lake (Puslinch)	N/A	\$136.60	\$155.55
Flamboro Valley Camping Resort	\$62.15	\$70.06	\$79.10

Board member asks about "shocking" increase of 25% on worms. Staff say that the cost of worms has not gone up in a number of years. (This may have been a jest.)

Shouldn't there be increases across the board given inflation? Different areas have different needs. For instance, not many areas in the province for hunting and one of the GRCA areas that allow hunting is at the top end of fees for similar areas.

Recommendation passes unanimously.

g. GM-12-22-98 - GRCA Fee Policy

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority Fee Policy be approved and implemented effective January 1, 2023;

AND THAT Fee Schedule 1 – Outdoor Environmental Education Fees be approved and implemented effective January 1, 2023;

AND THAT Fee Schedule 2 – Conservation Areas Fees be approved and implemented effective January 1, 2023;

AND THAT Fee Schedule 3 – Planning and Regulations Fees be approved and implemented effective January 1, 2023;

AND THAT Fee Schedule 4 – Tree Nursery Fees be approved and implemented effective January 1, 2023

The following reports passed unanimously.

h. GM-12-22-101 - Budget 2023 Notification Letter to Member Municipalities

THAT a letter be sent to participating municipalities on January 25, 2023, advising them of the General Membership meeting to be held on February 24, 2023, to approve the 2023 Budget and the municipal levy;

AND THAT the GRCA 2023 Budget Draft #2, which will be presented at the General Membership meeting on January 27, 2023, be included with the letter.

i. GM-11-22-91 - Chair's Report of the Audit Committee

THAT the Report of the Audit Committee be received as information.

j. GM-11-22-86 - Cash and Investment Status

THAT Report Number GM-11-22-86 - Cash and Investment Status – October 2022 be received as information.

k. GM-12-22-96 - Cash and Investment Status

THAT Report Number GM-12-22-96 Cash and Investment Status – November 2022 be received as information.

l. GM-11-22-95 - Financial Summary

THAT the Financial Summary for the period ending October 31, 2022 be approved.

m. GM-12-22-102 - Financial Summary

THAT the Financial Summary for the period ending November 30, 2022 be approved.

Motion to approve the recommendation for the reserves report:

Recommendation:

THAT the *Property and Liability Insurance* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance, less significant uninsured losses, and no interest to be allocated to this reserve for 2022;

AND THAT the *Building and Mechanical Equipment* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance, plus amount transferred from the small office equipment reserve, less expenses or any unspent budgeted building maintenance and equipment amounts be transferred to this reserve for future expenditures, and no interest to be allocated to this reserve for 2022;

AND THAT the *Small Office Equipment* Reserve balance at December 31, 2022 be transferred into the Building and Mechanical Equipment Reserve;

AND THAT the *Personnel* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance, less expenditures or accruals for sick leave, vacation, staff restructuring and/or termination of employees, less CEWS claims interest charges, and no interest be allocated to this reserve for 2022;

AND THAT the *Transition* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance, less forecast transfers from reserve, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Nature Centre* Reserves be maintained at amounts equal to opening balance, less expenses related to major maintenance of the Nature Centre buildings, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Information Systems and Technology* (formerly Computer Replacement) Reserve be maintained at a level where interest income and charge-out rates equal total operating and capital costs over the long run;

AND THAT the *Cottage Lot Program* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to the opening balance, plus unspent 2022 budgeted cottage lot expenses related to service fee expenses, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Water Management Plan* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance, less expenses related to updating the water management plan, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Planning Enforcement* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance, plus any savings related to budgeted and unspent legal fees, less any expenses in excess of budget related to enforcement of planning regulations, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Property Rental* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance, less unbudgeted maintenance expenses related to rental properties, plus any unspent budgeted property repairs and maintenance expenses including demolition costs, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Forestry Management* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance plus transfers to reserve of timber revenues, less expenses related to forest management expenses as budgeted (or forecast), plus interest;

AND THAT the *Master Plans* Reserve established in 2019 be comprised of an initial \$120,000 amount placed in to the reserve plus interest;

AND THAT the *Water Management Operating* Reserve be maintained at amount equal to \$1,000,000 transferred into this reserve as at December 31, 2022, plus interest commencing January 1, 2023;

AND THAT the *Cambridge Desiltation Pond* Reserve be maintained at an amount that reflects the funds advanced to the Authority by the City of Cambridge, less actual cost to maintain the pond, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Completion of Capital Projects* Reserve be maintained at an amount that reflects obligations under outstanding capital contracts, less payments;

AND THAT the *Gravel* Reserve be maintained at an amount that includes all gravel income to date, less eligible expenditures, consistent with the original or subsequent agreements with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Land Sale* Reserves be maintained at amounts that include the proceeds of land sales, less costs (including interest charges) incurred to prepare lands for sale, less net expenditures and/or borrowing authorized by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) and as per policy statement dated June 13, 1997 (including floodplain mapping expenses), plus interest;

AND THAT the *General Capital* Reserve be maintained at an amount which reflects the surplus transferred in from the former Dunnville Lock reserve, less expenditures for any Water Management Capital projects approved by the General Membership, less unbudgeted expenditures related hydro turbine repairs plus any repayment of the Conestogo Turbine Repairs loan, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Conservation Areas Capital/Stabilization* Reserve, increased/decreased by any surplus/deficit generated by the Conservation Areas in 2022, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Gauge* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance less expenses related to gauge equipment as identified in the budget (or forecast) as applicable, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Watershed Restoration* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to opening balance, plus special project funding surpluses, less expenditures for wetland acquisitions or enhancements in the watershed, less expenditures for natural heritage restoration projects and conservation services watershed restoration projects as outlined in the budget (or forecast), plus interest;

AND THAT the *Water Control Structures* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to the opening balance, less \$1,000,000 transferred to the Water Management Operating Reserve as at December 31, 2022, less any funding required for spending in excess of budget, plus any unspent major maintenance budget amount, plus any unspent operating budget amount that was to be funded from general levy, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Motor Pool Equipment Replacement* Reserve be maintained at a target level of approximately 25% to 30% of replacement cost of the Motor Pool fleet, plus interest;

AND THAT the *Motor Pool Insurance* Reserve be maintained at an amount equal to the opening balance, plus interest, less significant uninsured losses.

On motion p. White notes that the complimentary pass is not meant for board members to have a good time, but meant for members to explore issues are different facilities as need. Guelph rep Billings asks if it excludes Elora Gorge, and it does.

- o. GM-11-22-92 - 2023 Board Meeting Schedule
THAT the 2023 Grand River Conservation Authority Board Meeting Schedule be approved.
- p. GM-11-22-93 - 2023 Complimentary GRCA Membership Passes
THAT Report Number GM-11-22-93 – 2023 Complimentary GRCA Membership Passes be received as information.

Recommendation for q. is passed differently from presented here. It's a report for receipt with no additional motion.

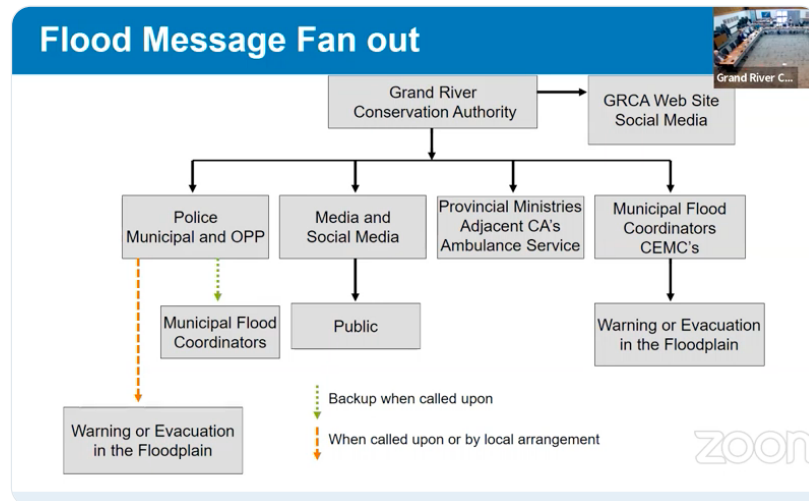
- q. GM-12-22-97 - Revised - Shade's Mills Backflow Preventer
THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) award the Shade's Mill Backflow Preventer installation at 450 Avenue Road, Cambridge to Avertex Utility Solutions of Amaranth, Ontario for the amount of \$111,973.00 excluding HST;
AND THAT a total budget of \$125,000.00 excluding HST be approved.

These reports passed unanimously.

- r. GM-11-22-94 - Current Watershed Conditions
THAT Report Number GM-11-22-94 – Current Watershed Conditions as of November 16, 2022 be received as information.
-
- s. GM-12-22-107 - Current Watershed Conditions
THAT Report Number GM-12-22-106 – Current Watershed Conditions as of December 7, 2022 be received as information.

Last report: Grand River Watershed Flood Notification System with a short presentation from Vahid Taleban, the senior engineer for flood management.

There was a flood warning emergency planning meeting in November with 135 people in attendance. If you're interested this is the flow chart for how the flood warning rolls out.



A test of the flood message system was done in November and everything seems to be working as prescribed, which is good news going into the winter season.

It seems odd to note today, but remember, winter has no yet technically begun...



White calls flood management the core of what GRCA does. "This is who we are," he said.

Miller asks about following up with the two municipalities that had issues with the warning. Taleban said that it was an issue on the municipal end with new staff, but that was the point of the test to begin with.

Motion to receive the report approved unanimously.

- t. GM-12-22-106 - Grand River Watershed Flood Notification System
- THAT Report Number GM-12-22-106 – Grand River Watershed Flood Warning System be received as information.

Motion to approve committee memberships approved unanimously.

a. Appointments to Committees

1. Appointments to Ad-hoc Conservation Authorities Act Committee

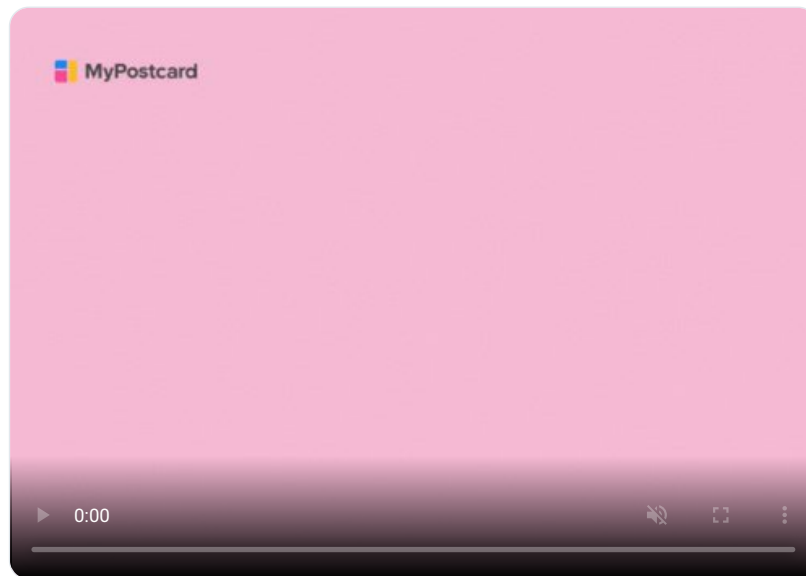
THAT the following members be appointed the Ad-hoc Conservation Authorities Act Committee: (two)

2. Appointments to Board Composition Committee

THAT the following members be appointed to the Board Composition Committee: (four)

Motion coming out of closed session: to increase salary of non-union workers by 2.5% starting in January. Passes unanimously.

Next GRCA board meeting: January 27, 2023 at 9:30 am. This will include the election of new officers.



Billings asks if it's going to be in-person or hybrid. It seems like hybrid wins the day for the purposes of flexibility.

Meeting adjourned on this board!



[@threadreaderapp](#) Unroll please.

...