



**Adam A. Donaldson** @adamadonaldson

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The August GRCA Membership meeting starts in just a few minutes. This is what's on the agenda: .



**MEETING PREVIEW: Grand River Conservation Membership Meeting f...**

After taking July off, the Grand River Conservation Authority membership gets back down to business with some fairly typical administrative matters. Look for the monthly budget update, some propose...

<https://guelphpolitico.ca/2024/08/16/meeting-preview-grand-river-conservation-membe...>

Before we get to that, a brief Source Protection Authority Meeting. Vice-Chair Foxton is leading this one.

One real piece of business: Source Protection Committee Member Appointments.

Recommendation: THAT the Grand River Source Protection Authority appoint Andrew Henry to the Lake Erie Region Source Protection Committee for a four-year term, as a public interest representative.

That one is approved!

Now on with the rest of the show!

Foxton calls the membership meeting to order.

Declarations of Pecuniary Interest? None.

We do have a delegation, and it's - surprise! - Sus\*n W\*tson. She's speaking to the reduction of speaking time for delegates to five minutes. She says she's not against it per se, but thinks it's disrespectful and undemocratic.

W\*tson notes that this seems to be a response to 10 people coming out to delegate at the June meeting, which was an aberration because the vast majority of the past 16 meetings had no delegates, or just one.

CAO Lawson says the intention is to limit each delegation to a max. of 5 minutes unless the chair allows otherwise. Not give 10 minutes total delegation time.

Member Shirton says that he thinks that things are good the way it is, and that's how they do it it Haldimand.

Member Billings notes that new policy says a delegation of more than 3 people will be limited to 10 minutes, does that mean per agenda item? Foxton says they'll discuss that.

W\*tson is also delegation on Land Acquisition and Disposition Policies. She says she's confused about why this is on the front burner for GRCA when the feds are trying to accelerate protection of land.

Another delegate seems unavailable and/or there are tech issues. Moving on, the membership approves the correspondences of the month.

Question about a letter from Bryan Duross about the Degradation of a navigable waterway and destruction of sport fishery. Did the closing up of the sluice lead to the build up sediment. (it did) So won't this impact effectiveness of dam. (Dam was used for flood control...

...it was used for the mill pond, and thus serves no purpose other than aesthetic.) Member is not sure if the potential remediation of the dam should be exclusive GRCA responsibility. Member Craig says this is bigger than Park Hill, and no one's got any money anyway.

Craig says doing a report on Park Hill is a good first step, but they do need to do a wider report about all dams in the CA. Shantz asks about role of CA in protecting environment as determined by ONgov, that's another point of inquiry.

Foxton notes that flushing the sediment will just create other issues downstream. Member Miller says river safety impacts everyone, and doesn't think the recommendations in the letter were too expensive, things like QR codes of current conditions or colour coding for danger.

On QR codes, the GRCA does not control all the access points to the river, including private properties, so that's kind of impossible for the GRCA to control, which is why they focus on education. You can sign up for flood warnings though.

Miller suggests reviewing the communications protocol because the extra rainfall this year has changed conditions in certain places. Another member notes that some signs might say weir, and not low head dam. The word "weir" is confusing to some people.

Motion to direct staff to look at silt and comms approved.

Next, GRCA Administrative By-law Update. Staff affirm that they did not change the way people delegate, they just changed the numbers. Individual delegates get 5 minutes instead of 10, and a group of 3 or more delegating as one get 10 minutes instead of 20. Also, this is a draft.

In other words, it's still got to go thru second and third reading. The report also deals with number of vice-chairs and term limits.

Craig says that the chair has the ability to limit or expand a delegates speaking time, and we need keep that in mind. The purpose of time limits is to guide people in their length, but the chair has distraction and can be generous.

White says delegations are windows to the public and if one person is confused about the intent then the writing needs to be simpler. He does agree with the limits themselves, but doesn't want to be ambiguous.

Deputy CAO Armstrong says that she would be surprised if people are referring to the bylaw when they look up how to delegate. Member Williams agrees with White that the language needs to be straightforward b/c she can see W\*tson's interpretation.

Member notes that you need a clarity in the language so that the interpretation of bylaws isn't happening in real time. Member Wolf says she's aware of three different instances where people delegating in groups get their speech limited. Not like they're overwhelmed w/ delegates.

Member Lawrence agrees that there needs to be limitations, and says that sometimes less is more. Need to show confidence in the chair too to make those determinations.

On vice-chairs, Shantz says that she's happy with the bylaw as is, but wonders what the thoughts of the current chair and vice-chairs are. Foxton says VC is "not very taxing" role.

Billings re-asks if the 5 minutes is per agenda item, or 5 minutes total for all topics?  
Armstrong says that's never come up before, so board can offer direction.

White says the system of 1 and 1 works well, used to be more exec meetings btw chair and vice-chairs but not in 20 years. On delegations, when things are loose in the bylaw and things get combative, that's a recipe for trouble.

Coleman notes that the 2 VC structure was because one VC oversaw admin subcommittee and the other oversaw finance. That structure is no longer in effect.

Armstrong asks to confirm that the direction is to bring this back for next month with clarification: Clean up language on delegation policy, only one vice-chair, and take no action on term limits. Foxton says that seems to be consensus.

Recommendation:

THAT By-law 2-2024 be read a first and second time;

AND THAT staff be directed to make amendments based on discussion at the meeting.

Approved!

Cash and Investment Status report approved.

Next, we have Phil Pothén, who was the other delegate. He's with Environmental Defence and he's here on behalf of residents who are concerned about the land management policy. He wants board to defer approval of policy until some specific choices can be discussed in detail.

Phothén says that the GRCA policy is too broad and goes beyond what was mandated by ONgov. Example: No mandate to meet compliance with terms of acquisition when reviewing

applications for disposition. Things like when gov't funds used to acquire land.

He also says that a lot of the choices in the doc are not sourced in ONgov changes, Enviro Defense doesn't want to let this become a precedent for other CAs when crafting policy, and want board to get a line-by-line opinion.

Back to the agenda:

-Financial Summary approved.

-Quarterly Permits issued under Ontario Regulation 41/24 received as info.

Next, Land Acquisition and Disposition Policies. Lawson notes that there are 6 deliverables that have to be complete by the end of the year, including this. The updates are meant to come into conformance with ONgov changes. Can't expropriate land being biggest.

In terms of disposition, GRCA had no formal policy since that was overseen by MNR. GRCA consulted with lawyer to review process, which was approved by board in 2023, and enhanced public consultation. (45 day input period)

They need to have up-to-date reference plan, terms of acquisition, legal constraints on the land, and other items when considering a disposition. Lawson says they're not the first to go forward with this and this is a similar policy to those CAs.

Member Challinor asks if they're in compliance with ONgov regulations. Lawson says 100%.

Shantz asks about wildlife and habitat protection. Lawson says that's not a requirement for CAs, but ecologically sensitive or ON protected lands are a consideration.

Billings asks about benefit to the original contributing municipality for disposed lands. Lawson says 99% of GRCA land received through ONgov funding, but land sale reserve is the only place the money can be allocated to in a disposition.

Lawson says they own over \$1 billion in flood management infrastructure, and serving that can come from that reserve. Billings seeks clarification: can land sold in a municipality be used on infrastructure in that municipality? Lawson says no.

Recommendation:

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority approve the Land Acquisition Policy.

THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority approve the Land Disposition Policy.

Motion to defer tabled instead.

Member says that they don't doubt they're in compliance, but is it possible that they are too compliant? Don't want to set a bad precedent.

Motion to defer fails.

Billings asks to separate the two recommendations.

Motion to approve acquisition plan approved.

Motion to approve disposition plan approved with at least 2 no votes.

Next, Draft Conservation Areas Strategy. Megan Kitchen, Land Management Analyst, will present. This other one of those 6 deliverables under ONgov for end of year.

Purpose:

## Purpose of the Strategy

- High-level framework that helps guide and inform decision making on GRCA-owned lands
- Direct programs and resources on all GRCA landholdings
- Provides future direction and actions to meet objectives
- Satisfy Provincial Regulations



Requirements:

- inform decision making
- mandatory and non-mandatory services
- assessment of how land integrate and/or augment natural heritage
- establish land use categories.

What's in the strategy:

## What's in the Strategy

### Introduction

- Vision, Mission, GRCA Strategic Priorities
- Purpose

### The Grand River Watershed

- A Canadian Heritage River

### GRCA Landholdings

- History of Land Acquisition
- Current Landholdings & Land Use Categories
- Contribution to Watershed Health
- Challenges and Pressures
- Land Disposition

### Objectives

- Outcomes
- Future Direction & Actions

### Programs and Services

- Program 1, 2 and 3

### Looking Forward

- Updates to the Strategy & Consultation



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There are 4 land use categories:

- Water management
- Conservation Areas
- Conservation lands
- Controlled or limited access areas.

5 objectives to guide management of lands:

## Strategy Objectives



1

Manage GRCA landholdings in compliance with relevant Federal, Provincial and Municipal regulations, policies, and guidelines.

2

Consider ecosystem health and resilience when making land management decisions.

3

Provide sustainable outdoor recreational and educational opportunities and connections with the natural environment.

4

Enhance community partnerships on GRCA properties.

5

Manage GRCA landholdings in a strategic, fiscally responsible, and sustainable way.

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Draft strategy will be posted on the GRCA website in the coming days, and there will be two webinars for public input. Completed Strategy will come back for board approval after that.



Recommendation:

THAT Report Number GM-08-24-66 – Draft Conservation Areas Strategy be received as information;

AND THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority direct staff to undertake public consultation on the draft Strategy;

AND THAT the Grand River Conservation Authority send a letter to participating municipalities, Six Nations of the Grand River, and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation to advise them of the consultation period for the draft Strategy.

Recommendation is approved.

Next: City of Guelph Well Monitoring Agreement.

Recommendation: THAT the GRCA enters into an agreement with the City of Guelph for the construction, operation, and maintenance of monitoring well(s) located within the Township of Guelph/Eramosa, County of Wellington.

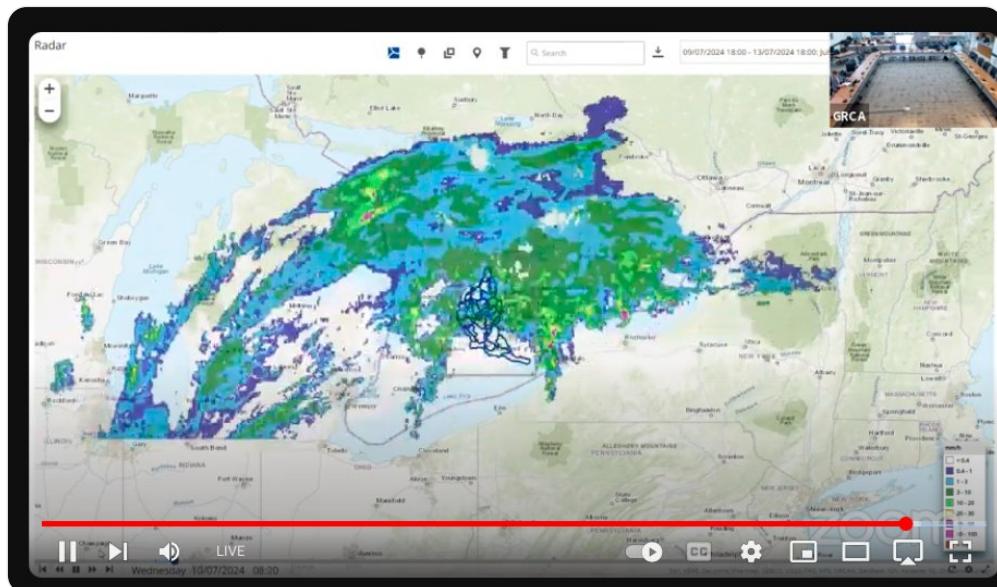
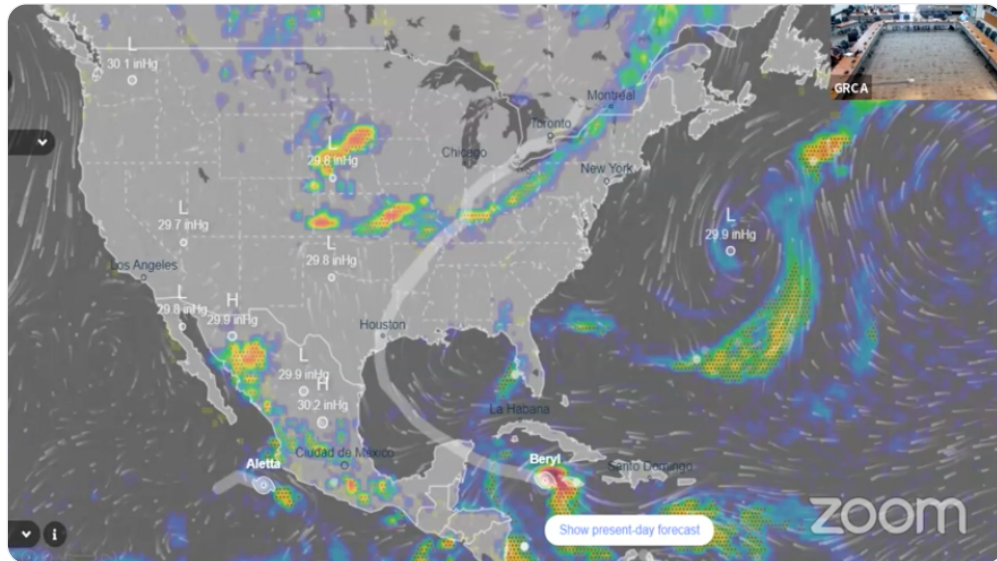


That one is approved.

Next, the report on July 2024 Flood Event.

First, dams are used on safety signage instead of weir. That's a clarification from a point made earlier.

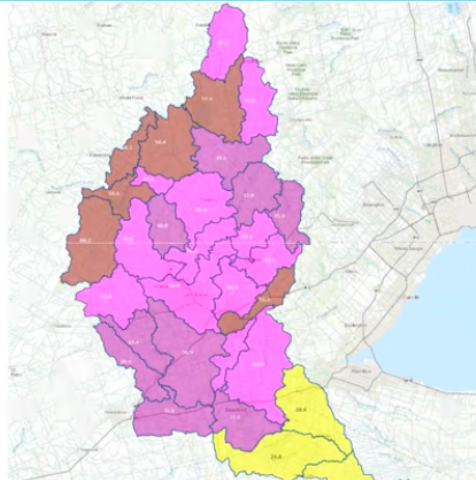
Katelyn Lynch, manager of water infrastructure is presenting this flood event report. She notes it was a "wetter than normal July" thanks to Hurricane Beryl.



They get warning based on the three-hour forecast, up to 2 inches was received as Beryl moved through the watershed. Hot and humid weather also created instability.

## Total Rainfall From Hydromaster

- Total Rainfall from  
July 10<sup>th</sup> July 14<sup>th</sup>  
based on Radar

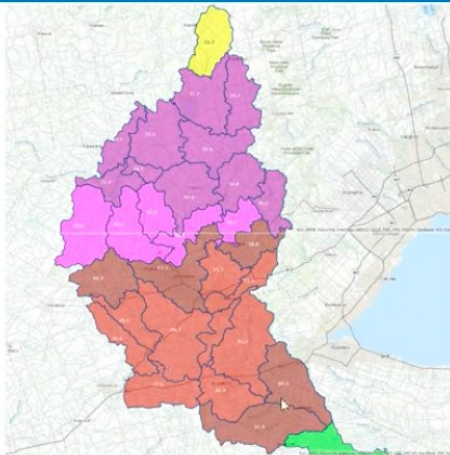


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From the second system, and the red areas are where there was the most rain, downstream from most flood control measures too.

## Total Rainfall From Hydromaster

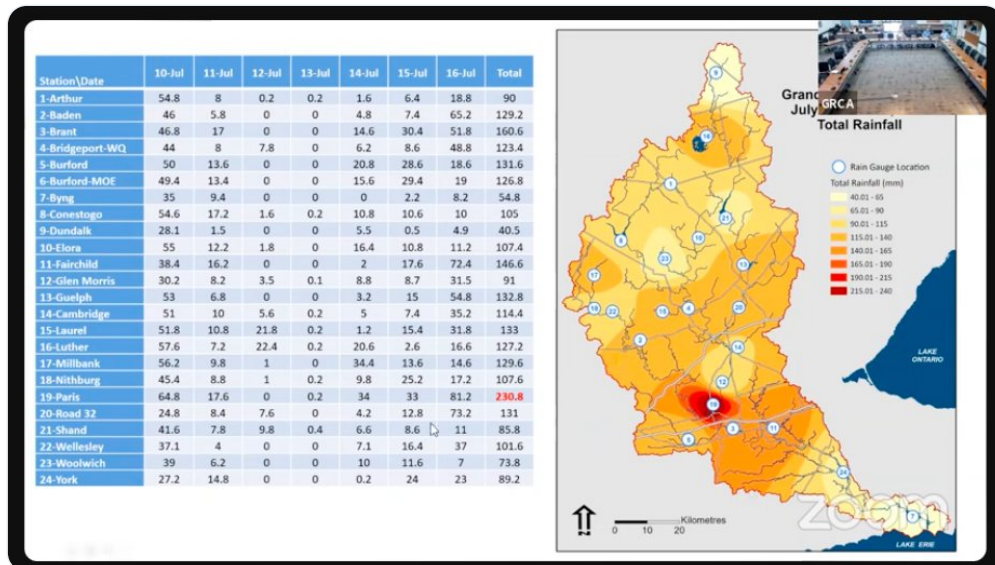
- Total Rainfall from  
July 14<sup>th</sup> to July 17<sup>th</sup>  
based on Radar



zoom

Rain totals. Paris got the worst of it, but Guelph was up there too.  
(For historical reference: Hurricane Hazel was 285 mm)





Flood operations centre sent out six messages during this period. One of those was a warning about a lake surge event on Lake Erie.

Shirton asks if there are any areas around Paris where reservoirs can be built. Lynch says they've reviewed that possibility, but the potential reservoirs they've looked at in the past might not have helped here.

Miller says his gauge got 5.5 inches of rain from Beryl, and all told it about a foot of rain. That tells him something's changed, and Toronto's had three 100-year storms in 11 years. How quickly can reservoirs be drained?

Lynch notes that they had 50% of flood storage at the start of this event, typically June is the lowest point and it refills over the summer. They did have capacity and could have slowly released after passing the peak.

Staff also notes that the system mitigate flooding, but it doesn't eliminate it. Some flooding is bound to occur with a storm system this big.

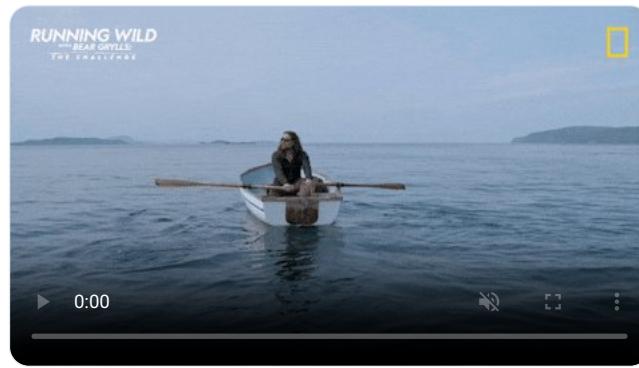
Also, reservoir operation policy will be coming back to the board in September. There could be some additional info in there.

Motion THAT Report Number GM-o8-24-68 – July 2024 Flood Event be received as information is approved.

Motion THAT Report Number GM-o8-24-73 – Current Watershed Conditions as of August 13, 2024 be received as information is also approved.

Minutes from the last closed meeting approved.

That's a wrap for this GRCA board meeting. Next one on September 27.



@threadreaderapp unroll please!

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