



Finance and Administration Advisory Committee

Virtual Meeting BY ZOOM

10:00 am

April 29, 2022

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83198580242>

by Phone: 1-780-666-0144

Meeting ID: 831 9858 0242

AGENDA

ROLL CALL

Adoption of Agenda

Declaration of Interest (written)

1. Approval of Minutes – April 11, 2022, Page #2
2. Per Diems & Honoraria, Report 3220/22 (S. McIntyre), Page #7
3. Managing Stress in the Workplace, Report 3221/22 (S. McIntyre), Page #10

Other Business

ADJOURNMENT



FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Via Zoom

MINUTES

April 11, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT:

C. Lowry, Chair
P. Sweetnam, Vice-Chair
J. Atkinson
E. El-Chantiry
J. Mason
B. King
P. Kehoe

MEMBERS ABSENT:

J. Atkinson
A. Tennant

STAFF PRESENT:

S. McIntyre, General Manager
R. Fergusson, Operations Supervisor
A. Millar, Treasurer
E. Levi, Recording Secretary

GUESTS PRESENT:

G. & M. Bucci, Resident North Frontenac
K. Greaves, County of Lanark
R. Allen, County of Frontenac

C. Lowry called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m.

FAAC04/11/22-1

MOVED BY: B. King
SECONDED BY: P. Kehoe

Resolved, That the Agenda for the April 11, 2022 Finance & Administration Advisory Committee meeting be adopted as presented.

“CARRIED”

BUSINESS

1. Approval of Minutes

After a brief discussion regarding mileage rate, the committee agreed there was conflicting intent of how the revised mileage rate was to be applied for Board members versus MVCA staff. The

committee agreed the motion in the minutes of February 8, 2022 should be amended to reflect use of the provincial "Travel, Meal, Hospitality Expenses Directive" for Board member mileage and approve an increase in the corporate mileage rate to \$0.57/km effective January 1, 2022.

FAAC04/11/22-2

MOVED BY: P. Sweetnam

SECONDED BY: P. Kehoe

Resolved, That the Minutes of the Finance & Administration Advisory Committee meeting held February 8, 2022 be received and approved as amended.

"CARRIED"

2. Election of Officers

FAAC04/11/22-3

MOVED BY: B. King

SECONDED BY: J. Mason

Resolved, That Sally McIntyre be appointed as Chair for the Election of Chair for 2022

"CARRIED"

S. McIntyre declared all offices vacant. P. Kehoe nominated Christa Lowry for the position of Chair of the Finance & Administration Advisory Committee for 2022. S. McIntyre asked three times for further nominations. No further nominations were received.

FAAC04/11/22-4

MOVED BY: P. Sweetnam

SECONDED BY: J. Mason

Resolved, That nominations for the position of Chair be closed.

"CARRIED"

C. Lowry agreed to let her name stand for the position of Chair. She was duly elected by acclamation.

J. Mason nominated Phil Sweetnam for the position of Vice-Chair of the Finance & Administration Advisory Committee in 2022. C. Lowry asked three times for any further nominations. No further nominations were received.

FAAC04/11/22-4

MOVED BY: B. King

SECONDED BY: J. Mason

Resolved, That nominations for the position of Vice-Chair be closed.

"CARRIED"

P. Sweetnam agreed to let his name stand for the position of Chair. He was duly elected by acclamation.

3. Bucci Offer to Purchase

S. McIntyre reviewed Glen & Marthe Bucci's offer to purchase a segment of the K&P Trail as outlined in Staff Report 3212/22. She reviewed history of the property and interactions between MVCA and Bucci's to date, including court proceedings and Minutes of Settlement. Bucci's have yet to acknowledge the validity of the 2017 Reasons for Judgment, the Survey and the resulting Reference Plan, and to fulfill the terms of the Reasons for Judgment and Minutes of Settlement.

Sale of the land to Bucci's was not recommended as the Board has already approved, and the counties of Lanark, Renfrew and Frontenac are actively pursuing purchase of MVCA's section of the K&P Trail to facilitate a continuous ring trail in Eastern Ontario so that it remains in public hands, for public use. Additionally, precedent of a private sale could set negative feedback from a multitude of trail users and partner organizations.

K. Greaves and R. Allen both confirmed that they were actively working on files to acquire the entire parcel of K&P owned by MVCA to preserve this recreational asset.

G. Bucci spoke to the committee. He stated they were disappointed in the negative tone of the report just presented, that there was no discussion regarding the financial consequences of refusing the offer, and that they were offering twice the appraised value.

G. Bucci stressed that they have stipulated on numerous occasions that it is not their intention to block the trail and they haven't done so for the past 60 years. He feels that the staff report is defamatory and bordered on slander. He noted that the draft easement document provided by MVCA was totally unacceptable.

J. Mason asked why they wish to purchase the property. G. Bucci advised that they wish to end the legal back and forth with MVCA which has been ongoing for 10 years. He stated if they aren't able to purchase the property, they will return to court to appeal the current judgement.

After 12 minutes, C. Lowry informed G. Bucci that he had been given more than double the allotted time and that the meeting would now move In Camera for discussion.

FAAC04/11/22-5

MOVED BY: P. Kehoe

SECONDED BY: P. Sweetnam

Resolved, That the Finance & Administration Advisory Committee move to in-camera discussion to address a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the Authority; and further

Resolved, That staff remain in the room.

"CARRIED"

5 in favour, 1 opposed

FAAC04/11/22-6

MOVED BY: E. El-Chantiry

SECONDED BY: B. King

Resolved, That the Finance & Administration Advisory Committee move out of in-camera discussion.

“CARRIED”

C. Lowry reported the committee was in closed session to discuss potential disposition of land.

FAAC04/11/22-7

MOVED BY: P. Kehoe

SECONDED BY: P. Sweetnam

Resolved, That the Finance & Administration Advisory Committee recommend that the Board decline the Bucci offer.

“CARRIED”

5 in favour, 1 opposed

4. Management of Reserves

S. McIntyre presented staff report 3213/22 regarding the current state of MVCA reserves, policies of other jurisdictions, and MVCA’s Operating Reserve in particular. She reviewed a risk-based approach to setting a minimum Operating Reserve balance. Using this approach a targeted level of \$700,000 was identified. Going forward the same approach to calculating the target would be used, with the actual value changing as the Authority’s depending upon the outcome of the risk assessment. This minimum balance in the Operating Reserve combined with healthy capital reserve funds provide the Authority with good financial buffer against the most likely risks to face the organization.

E. El-Chantiry asked about timing to approach the Board with recommendation of the new strategy. S. McIntyre stated that staff would aim to table draft policies at the Committee and then to the Board in July.

P. Sweetnam commented that MVCA takes a very conservative approach when it comes to investment returns. He suggested looking at community-based investment approaches.

FAAC04/11/22-8

MOVED BY: J. Mason

SECONDED BY: P. Sweetnam

Resolved, That the Finance and Administration Committee recommend that the Board direct staff to:

- 1. Prepare and table draft policies governing the Operating Reserve and restricted Reserve Funds.**
- 2. Report to the Board each Fall on the state of the Operating Reserve and Reserve Funds concurrent to seeking budget/levy direction.**
- 3. Update the 5-year Capital Needs Assessment and assess the health of Reserve Funds.**

4. Update the 10-year Capital Plan including a schedule of projected capital levies and reserve contributions.

“CARRIED”

5. Insurance Inspection

S. McIntyre commented on Staff Report 3214/22 apprising the committee of key findings and opportunities for improvement based on the December 6, 2021 visit from Marsh Canada to Morris Island, the Mill of Kintail, and Purdon Conservation Areas.

S. McIntyre highlighted a table in the report referencing a plan to mitigate liability. She noted it will likely take 3-4 years to address all identified risks.

6. Grants

S. McIntyre discussed Staff Report 3215/22 reviewing the approach the Authority is going to implement moving forward with respect to grants.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:23 pm.

FAAC04/11/22-9

MOVED BY: B. King

SECONDED BY: E. El-Chantiry

Resolved, That the Finance and Administration Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned.

“CARRIED”

“E. Levi, Recording Secretary

C. Lowry, Chair”

REPORT

3220/22

TO:	Finance & Administration Advisory Committee
FROM:	Sally McIntyre, General Manager
RE:	Member Per Diems and Chair Honorarium
DATE:	April 22, 2022

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Finance & Administration Committee recommend that the Board continue to pay per diems to all Board Members, and an honorarium to the Board Chair.

1.0 BACKGROUND

It has been the tradition of MVCA to provide per diems to Board Members and an honorarium to the Chair. Section 13 of the MVCA 2018 Administrative By-Law, 2018 states the following:

The general membership shall pass a motion annually at the Annual General Meeting specifying a per-diem rate to be paid to members for attendance at general meetings and advisory board or committee meetings and at such other business functions as may be from time to time requested by the Chair, through the Secretary-Treasurer. In addition, an honorarium may be approved by the Authority for the Chair and Vice-chair as compensation for their additional responsibilities. A single per-diem will be paid for attendance at more than one meeting if they occur consecutively on the same day.

In February, the Board directed staff¹ to bring forward a report regarding per diems and honoraria paid at conservation authorities for consideration. Table 1 provides the results of an informal survey conducted of other conservation authorities earlier this month regarding the rates paid to Board Members for participating in meetings, and chairing or vice chairing the Board. It shows that while most conservation authorities pay a per diem for Members to attend meetings, there is significant variation in the value. And, of the 25 CA that responded, just over half provide an honorarium to their Board Chairs, and only 5 to their Vice Chairs.²

¹ Staff Report 3190/22 as amended.

² Outliers highlighted.

Table 1: Board Per diems & Honoraria, 2022

Conservation Authority	Per Diems Rate - Meeting	Chair Honorarium	Vice Chair Honorarium	Notes
Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority	\$76.10			
Long Point Region Conservation Authority	\$100.00	\$2,500.00	\$1,000.00	Single Per diem paid for attendance at more than 1 meeting on the same day
Grand River Conservation Authority	\$156.71	\$156.71	\$156.71	
Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority	\$50.00	\$2,500.00		
Kettle Creek Conservation Authority	\$86.09	\$1,120.09		
Saugeen Conservation Authority	\$75.00	\$3,000.00		
Redeau Valley Conservation Authority	\$70.00			
Kawartha Conservation	\$60.00			
Otonabee Conservation	\$65.00	\$2,000.00	\$1,000.00	
Hamilton Conservation Authority	\$75.00			
Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority	\$95.88			
Catfish Creek Conservation Authority	\$50.00			Increase \$20 for second meeting in the same day
Ganaraska Conservation	\$55.00	\$1,600.00	\$550.00	Assuming chair honorarium is a lump sum for the year
Conservation Sudbury	\$72.00	\$4,050.00		Chair does not receive meeting per diems; honourarium only
Grey Sauble Conservation Authority	\$76.00	\$1,500.00		Half day is \$52.25 per diem
Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority	\$100.00	\$10,000.00	\$3,000.00	Paid for 15/18 members; 3 don't get benefits at descretion of their municipality
Toronto and Region Conservation Authority	\$86.20			
Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority	\$82.03			
Crowe Valley Conservation				No per diem rate
Raisin Region Conservation Authority	\$81.60	\$2,871.60		Chair honorarium is monthly at \$239.30
Quinte Conservation	\$45.00			
Cataraqui Conservation		\$1,200.00		
Sault Ste. Marie Region Conservation Authority	\$40.00	\$350.00		For the chair from Prince Township
Lower Trent Conservation	\$50.00			
South Nation Conservation Authority	\$91.00			
MVCA	\$73.12	\$1,827.84		Same for 2020, 2021, and 2022.
Median (half more than, half less than)	\$75.00	\$2,000.00	\$1,000.00	Excludes organizations that provide no compensation.
Average	\$75.59	\$2,526.80	\$1,141.34	Excludes organizations that provide no compensation.

2.0 DISCUSSION

Good governance requires a competent, active, and representative Board. Elected officials are busy, and public volunteers difficult to secure. For both these reasons, providing compensation helps to attract people to sit on the Board and supports their participation, particularly when they must attend during normal working hours at personal expense to themselves.

Traditionally, nine of MVCA's municipalities have appointed municipal councilors to sit on the Board. Recently, Greater Madawaska appointed a councilor as a result of amendments made to Section 14 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* that requires 70% of a municipality's members to be elected members of council.

In order to fill its five seats, it has been the practice of the City of Ottawa to appoint three members of the public to serve alongside two municipal councilors. Going forward, the City plans to request an exception to the 70% rule³ and hopes to continue to fill two or more of its seats with members of the public.

Continued use of the per diem rates is recommended for the following reasons:

- It will help the City to attract unelected members to sit on the Board;
- It will compensate Members who must leave paid positions to attend Board meetings;
- The current rate is in line with what is in place elsewhere in the province; and
- The province will be paying Agricultural Reps a per diem of \$150/day.

Given the demands of the Chair position, both this past term and anticipated next term, it is recommended that an honorarium continue to be provided. As with the per diem, it is an acknowledgement of the time and effort required to oversee governance of the organization, and to manage the legislative agenda of the Authority.

There is nothing preventing Members from declining the per diem and honorarium.⁴

3.0 STRATEGIC PLAN

Providing fair compensation for governing the organization aligns with the following Strategic goal and objective.

Goal 2: Community Building – engage local partners to foster connections, leverage our resources, and strengthen our “social license” to operate.

a) Demonstrate MVCA to be a trusted, client-centered, resourceful, and helpful partner.

³ Per section 14 (1.2) of the Act.

⁴ There is precedent for both being declined by sitting members.

REPORT

3221/22

TO:	Finance & Administration Advisory Committee, Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority
FROM:	Sally McIntyre, General Manager
RE:	Managing Stress in the Workplace
DATE:	April 22, 2022

RECOMMENDATION

That the Finance & Administration Advisory Committee recommend that the Board:

- a) approve the Action Plan for reducing and mitigating workplace stressors;**
- b) direct the General Manager to provide a status update in October with any potential budget implications for 2023; and**
- c) direct that the *StressAssess* survey be carried out in spring 2023 to re-evaluate workplace psycho-social health.**

1.0 BACKGROUND

Shortly before the pandemic outbreak, members of the Joint Health & Safety Committee (JH&SC) raised concerns regarding the psycho-social health of the organization. Several actions were carried out to address issues raised, and a commitment was made to take further actions including completion of a psycho-social survey of employees by a third party.

In August 2021, a confidential psycho-social survey of employees was carried out by Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers Inc. (OHCOW). Employees were provided a month to complete the survey and all communications with staff were from OHCOW.

Subsequently, a Work Plan was developed by the Management Team and JH&SC that included retaining a Public Services Health & Safety Association (PSHSA) to facilitate a series of small focus groups to flesh out key issues and identify specific actions to reduce workplace stressors. As well, the PSHSA contract provided for a confidential email and phone support to employees wishing to share issues, concerns, or ideas privately.

The November 2021 Work Plan and survey results were shared with the Authority's Executive Committee that month, with members expressing concern regarding the degree of stress and the

issues identified by employees. The Committee supported implementation of the Work Plan and directed the GM to return to the Board with an Action Plan following the workshops.

Five workshops were held with employees over a 1-week period in February. As with the on-line survey, workshop results were shared with all employees; and the consultant met with the JH&SC and management team to discuss results and potential next steps. Workshop and survey results were provided in-camera at the April Board meeting, with members expressing concern and support for tabling an Action Plan at the F&A Committee for elevation to the Board in May.

2.0 DRAFT ACTION PLAN

The Draft Action Plan (Attachment 1) was prepared in consultation with the JH&SC and the management team, and was circulated to all employees for comment. It is structured around the following key issues that bridged several of the themes identified during the employee survey and subsequent workshops:

- Communications
- Roles and responsibilities
- Task and workload management
- Social cohesion

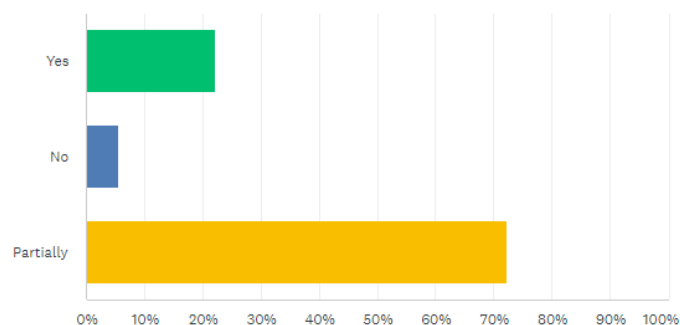
Though “vertical trust” was a theme identified by the consultants, it is not listed because it is what is earned, or lost, through a host of actions by employees, supervisors, all levels of management, and members of the Board. All of the actions identified in the Plan will help to support trust in the workplace.

2.1 Employee Feedback regarding the Draft Action Plan

Survey Monkey was used to obtain input from staff regarding the draft plan, specifically to identify gaps and help set priorities. Approximately 55% of employees responded.

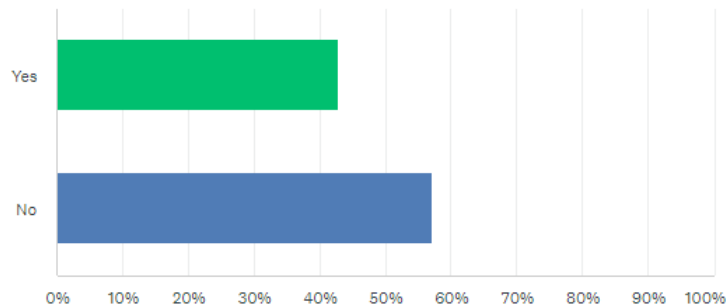
Do you feel the actions outlined the Action Plan adequately address the psychosocial issues identified in the workplace

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



Are there additional actions you wish to see included in the Action Plan?

Answered: 14 Skipped: 4



While 43% of responding employees felt additional actions should be included in the Plan, only four suggestions/comments were received via the survey plus one email (see Attachment 2 for details.) Concerns raised were the following:

There is not a section called Vertical Trust. The actions set out in the Action Plan are designed to address root cause issues that can cause psycho-social stress and a decline in vertical trust. Trust within the organization will improve by addressing root cause stressors.

The Plan includes actions already being carried out. Where existing actions have been identified as mitigating measures, they have been included because time and resources will be required to maintain and build-on them; and, to ensure they are not lost over time.

The Plan does not address the lack of a H&S Coordinator. This is not a regulatory requirement but is recognized as a valuable aid to management, the JH&SC, and employees. The size and resources of the MVCA do not support a full-time position. None of the staff have sufficient available time to do it as a secondary responsibility, which is why the former Coordinator requested to be relieved of that responsibility.

The Authority has just begun trialing a partnership with South Nation Conservation and it is premature to say it won't work. Discussions with the Town of Carleton Place are planned for May to learn about how they manage H&S Coordinator functions; and other options will be investigated that have been added to the Action Plan such as contracting to a specialty firm.

The Plan contains actions that are considered bureaucratic and unnecessary. Discussions with staff indicate that the lack of corporate documentation is the root cause of much of the stress in the workplace because it leads to misunderstandings in roles and responsibilities and how things are to be done. This can cause confusion, lead to errors and feelings of unease. It also places a burden on more senior employees to explain matters and answer questions to new and less

experience staff. There is also concern that inadequate documentation and consistency in approach could lead to liability in the delivery of programs and services.

Corporately, there is little documentation of business processes, work flows, work instructions, and check-lists to ease work and the training and integration of new employees. Efforts to implement have been met with resistance, in part, due to the perception that documented processes etc. are unnecessarily bureaucratic and constitute micro-management. It is hoped that by including these measures in the Action Plan that everyone will recognize the connection between good documentation and managing stress in the workplace.

The Plan does not address concerns regarding micro-management. Concerns regarding micro-management are shared by both managers/supervisors and employees alike. Given work volumes and deadlines, work planning tools are needed to allocate and monitor work. Some staff view use of these tools as micro-management, however, their intent is to facilitate discussion of work priorities, time management, and level of effort expected. Work planning and time management training will be provided to staff and management to support a shared understanding of the tools and how to use them effectively.

3.0 NEXT STEPS

The management team will implement the Action Plan and continue to monitor workplace stressors and psycho-social health. An interim report will be provided to the Committee and Board in the fall, at which time any potential budget implications will be identified for 2023. Where possible, any cost pressures experienced this year will be managed in accordance with the spending authority of the GM. The *StressAssess* survey will be retaken in Spring of 2023 to assess and report on progress.

4.0 STRATEGIC PLAN

Development and implementation of the attached Action Plan supports achievement of Goal 3: People and Performance of the *Corporate Strategic Plan*:

Support the operational transformations required to achieve MVCA's priorities and to address legislative changes.

- a) Staff the organization to allow for: delivery of mandatory programs and services, priority projects, and fulfillment of commitments made under memoranda of understanding (MOUs) and other agreements
- b) Monitor the quality, efficiency and impact of what we do and modify to improve operational effectiveness.

- c) Promote an engaging and inclusive environment that attracts and retains passionate and highly skilled people, and optimizes their expertise and contributions.



ACTION PLAN (draft)
 Reducing and Mitigating Workplace Stressors
 April 2022

1.0 PURPOSE

In February 2020, several issues were raised by the JH&SC regarding stress in the workplace. Over subsequent months, a variety of actions were taken to help understand the issues and to mitigate stressors, as summarized in Schedule 1. Building on the results of a 2021 *StressAssess* survey, and recent workshops facilitated by Public Services Health & Safety Association (PSHSA), this Action Plan sets out next steps for addressing stressors in the workplace.

2.0 KEY ISSUES

Discussions held between the Joint Health & Safety Committee and Management Team identified the following key issues that bridged several of the themes identified by the employee survey and subsequent workshops:

- Communications
- Roles and responsibilities
- Task and workload management
- Social cohesion

Work in all of these areas will help to support trust in the workplace.

3.0 ACTIONS

The following are key issues raised and actions to be taken. Items that are **bolded and shaded** represent the top-10 actions identified by the 18 out of 32 staff that participated in the survey (actions that received between 6 and 12 votes.) Actions that received 4-5 votes are **bolded only**. *Italicized* actions have already been initiated and will continue.

3.1 Communications

Interpersonal communications and information sharing are by far the areas requiring greatest attention. These actions are the core of the plan as they will help to improve awareness, understanding, and trust in the workplace.

Issue	Action
Awareness and understanding of corporate direction, special projects, changes within the organization	1. <i>GM is attending Unit/Department team meetings in April and May to ensure common level of understanding of the Corporate Strategic Plan, the Implementation Plan, and next steps in the Transition Plan mandated by Regulation 687/21.</i>
	2. Following each bi-weekly Management Team meeting, a summary will be prepared for managers to share at subsequent Department meetings.

Issue	Action
	<p>3. Every spring and fall, a staff meeting will be held specifically to review the annual work plan, changes in the organization, and to answer questions of staff.</p> <p>4. <i>E-mails to all staff, and the Water Cooler Update will continue to be used to provide updates on key matters and celebrate successes.</i></p> <p>5. All staff will be copied on Board and Committee agenda packages.</p>
Context for directions and opportunity to provide feedback	<p>6. The management team and supervisors have been sensitized to this need and will make greater effort to ensure that work directions include context / “the why” for the assignment / requested approach.</p> <p>7. New staff orientation will include a discussion on how to elevate questions, and dealing with uncertainty and problem solving.</p> <p>8. <i>Continue holding 1:1 bi-weekly meetings and expand to Operations Unit.</i></p> <p>9. Develop sample agenda for 1:1 and Unit Meetings that prompt and facilitate 2-way communication.</p>
Language, tone, body language, delivery method	<p>10. All employees to attend training in “Respect in the Workplace”, “Telephone, email & Social Media Etiquette”, “Workplace Diversity & Inclusion”, “Workplace Violence and Harassment”, “Conflict Resolution”, and “Effective Communication”.</p> <p>11. Managers and Supervisors to attend “Providing Effective Feedback”, “Handling Difficult Conversations”, “Coaching and Mentoring” and “Progressive Discipline” training.</p> <p>12. <i>All annual performance reviews will continue to consider and evaluate how an employee’s communications affect others.</i></p>
Inconsistent employee engagement and development	<p>13. Management Team to attend “Leadership Essentials”, “Supervisor Essentials”, “Remote HR Management” and “Managing a Distributed Workforce” training.</p> <p>14. Supervisors to attend “Supervisor Essentials” and “Remote HR Management” training.</p> <p>15. <i>Continue to use bi-weekly meetings and Annual Performance Reviews to allow for two-way communication regarding work assignments, desired outputs and outcomes, and training/development and growth opportunities.</i></p>

3.2 Roles & Responsibilities

Changes in organizational design and staff turn-over have led to situations where there is uncertainty regarding who is to carry out certain tasks. While some business processes have been mapped, significant additional work is needed in this area. As well, some feel that they are being asked to perform work outside their designated responsibilities and comfort level.

Issue	Action
Health & Safety Coordinator	<i>16. Trial and assess H&S Coordinator support from South Nation Conservation or other partner organization.</i>
	17. Explore options for obtaining private sector H&S support.
	18. Explore potential creation of a new position to support H&S matters.
	19. Prepare RACI ¹ table for H&S tasks.
Communications Support	20. Management to work with Rideau Valley Conservation Authority to confirm scope of services and propose business processes.
	21. Prepare RACI table for Communication matters
GIS Support	22. Management and GIS staff to review and update previous task schedule.
	23. Prepare RACI table for GIS matters.
Managing staff turn-over	<i>24. Meet with affected staff to identify potential gaps and need for work reassignment.</i>
	25. Develop transition plans to discuss and clarify short and long-term changes in roles and responsibilities.
New staff on-boarding and training	<i>26. Prepare check-list that identifies roles and responsibilities for supporting new staff to the organization.</i>
Procurement	27. Prepare RACI model and where required business process that clarifies roles and responsibilities and expectations for each purchasing level.
Core Operations	28. List and prioritize core business and project activities.²
	29. Prepare RACI models for core business functions.
	30. Prepare detailed business processes where appropriate.

¹ RACI stands for Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed. The table helps to define how people will be engaged in a project/process and set expectations regarding levels of effort and involvement. The Co-op Business Analysis will support permanent employees in documenting current state to mitigate additional workload burden.

² Refer to 2021-2025 Corporate Strategic Plan Implementation Plan. Further annual priority setting needed.

Issue	Action
Change initiatives and special projects	31. A RACI model will be used to indicate how stakeholders within and outside the Authority are to be engaged for key types of initiatives and special projects.
	32. Project Charters ³ will be used more consistently to ensure that all stakeholders are identified and appropriately engaged.
	33. Review and amend approach to Annual Performance Reviews and provide training to managers, supervisors, and functional supervisors to ensure consistent understanding and application.
	34. <i>Continue to use Annual Performance Reviews to review employee skill set and abilities/opportunities to support or lead special assignments.</i>
Annual Training Plan	35. Expand use of the Annual Training Plan to ensure it captures growth opportunities for staff, and not just mandatory job-specific training.
	36. Investigate use of Cognitive Demand Risk Assessment and Psychological Safe Leaders Assessment to support identification and mitigation of job-specific stress hazards.

3.3 Task and Workload Management

Workloads have been increasing each year since the 2017 flood. Changes in staffing were made to address this need (e.g. conversion of summer student positions to full-time contract technical support, and most recently the hiring of additional staff per the *Workforce Plan*) however challenges remain with ensuring the fair distribution and completion of work and an appropriate pace of work.

Amongst employees, there are concerns regarding the level of oversight to some activities/tasks and autonomy and trust in their work. Amongst supervisors, there are concerns about meeting regulatory and other deadlines while meeting quality and other performance standards. Work management tools facilitate discussions between employees and supervisors and amongst departments by documenting a shared understanding of priorities, timelines, and other matters.

Issue	Action
Changing priorities within Water Resources (WR) and Planning &	37. <i>The Director of WR and Manager of P&P will continue to meet a minimum of once per week to document and review applications, set priorities, and allocate assignments.</i>

³ Project Charters set out the background, purpose and scope, major tasks and milestones, schedule, and project team and stakeholders.

Issue	Action
Regulatory (P&R) groups	38. A process will be put in place to allow for timely and efficient response to pre-consultation questions and small follow-up queries regarding active files.
	39. <i>Work assignments will continue to be shared for staff to view.</i>
Workloads and pace	40. <i>Management are working to fill current vacancies by the end of May / early June (WR Engineer, EIT, and Property Manager.)</i>
	41. Review standard task timelines with affected staff for standard types of work to assess reasonableness.
	42. Review and compare per employee workloads and outputs and reassign workloads where appropriate.
	43. <i>Expand use of check-lists and templates to document standard expectations for outputs and timelines.</i>
	44. <i>Website messaging and social media posts will continue to inform applicants of workloads and potential timelines.</i>
	45. Management will monitor the impact of additional staff on workloads, pace, and distribution.
	46. <i>Conservation Ontario and Planning Act timelines will continue to be used to monitor overall workloads and the ability to meet regulated and unregulated timelines.</i>
Micromanagement and Quality Control	48. Work plans will continue to be used to set priorities, document and track progress of assignments, and to identify points of oversight and input.
	49. Management/supervisors and staff will be trained in the use of work plans and time management.
	50. A RACI model will be developed to document quality assurance and quality control responsibilities for key external facing activities.
Succession Planning	51. The Annual Training Plan will be expanded to include cross-training opportunities to improve overall corporate resiliency and facilitate promotion from within where appropriate.

Issue	Action
	52. <i>Co-op students will continue to be used to support staff in the documentation of current business activities and processes.</i>
Work-life balance	53. Continue to trial work-at-home and other alternative work arrangements.
	54. Draft policies and procedures, and amend the <i>Employee Manual</i> to modify the approach in consultation with legal counsel.

3.4 Social Cohesion

Social disconnection has been a growing issue since 2014 when the Authority changed offices, and has been exacerbated due staff turnover and the pandemic. This has been felt amongst all employees, but also between staff and the Board. The following actions will be carried out to facilitate social interaction and fun in the workplace.

Issue	Action
Staff interaction	55. Reinstate summer BBQs.
	56. Facilitate reformation of a Social Committee to organize fun events.
	57. Hold 2 staff events off-site per year.
	58. Identify special assignment that can be used as team builders.
Board interaction	59. Reinstate the June Board tours and allow varying levels of staff to participate; and plan joint events—e.g. Christmas luncheon, BBQs.
	60. Investigate opportunity for “Rapid Fire” staff presentations at the beginning of each Board meeting (per SNC approach.)
	61. Ensure that each department is given the opportunity to present to the Board regarding its work at least once per year.
Management cohesion	62. Hold at least one management retreat per year.
Celebrating successes / special dates	63. Celebrate work anniversaries and birthdays each month.
	<i>64. Continue and expand celebration of successes in the Water Cooler Update and at staff meetings/events.</i>
Caring organization	65. Issue regular reminders regarding the scope of EAP (employee assistance program) services available to all employees.
	66. Ensure staff lunchroom has basic selection of standard beverages, milk and cream now that normal operations are resuming.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The following actions will be carried out in addition to those already underway, identified in italics above.

Task	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
1. Circulate Draft Action Plan to staff for comment	✓				
2. Amend Action Plan and table at F&A Committee.	✓				
3. Amend as needed and table Action Plan at May Board meeting					
4. Priority actions - Communications					
a) Implement Mgt Team Highlights for Dept mtgs					
b) More consistently explain “why” regarding methodologies/tasks to provide more context					
c) Hold Spring Staff Meeting					
d) Identify priority training for first 6-months					
e) Training delivery					
5. Priority actions – Roles & Responsibilities					
f) Identify and document changes in job roles and responsibilities occurring as a result of changes in the organization					
g) Prioritize 2022-23 business and project activities					
h) Identify priorities for documenting business processes and RACI for first 6-months					
i) Document priority processes and RACI matrices					
6. Priority actions – Task & Workload Management					
j) Monitor impact of new positions on workload volumes, pace, and allocation					
k) Limit grant applications to work that can be performed by existing staff or that fund additional positions to complete the project.					
l) Expand <i>Training Plan</i> to include cross-training					
m) Update the <i>Employee Manual</i> to provide for alternative work arrangements					

Task	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2
7. Priority actions – Social Cohesion					
n) Plan off-site staff event for June					
o) Restock and maintain kitchen supply					
8. Monthly review of progress by Management Team with JH&SC.					
9. Six-month review and report to the F&A Committee and Board					
10. Plan next 6-months' activities					
11. Continue to implement					
12. Repeat the <i>StressAssess</i> survey, evaluate impact of Action Plan, and identify next steps					
13. Report to F&A Committee and Board with findings and recommendations					

SCHEDULE 1

Actions taken February 2020-February 2022

2020

1. Two vacancies were filled by April 2020: Director of Water Resources and an Environmental Planner.
2. Bi-weekly 1:1 meetings began to be held between most staff and their managers to discuss current and assigned tasks and to regularly review deadlines and update work priorities.
3. Managers and the GM receive updates of overtime, TOIL, and vacation leave balances to identify potential areas of concern.
4. Meetings end at 4:30 pm unless there is a deadline and/or mutual agreement to continue.
5. *Delay Send* is used wherever possible to minimize after hours email.
6. Any emails sent after hours that require attention will be marked as Urgent, with the expectation that all others can be dealt with during normal working hours.
7. The GM and Managers share their Outlook schedules with each other and front desk staff to support awareness of schedules.
8. Annual Performance Review forms were updated to facilitate discussion of a wider scope of matters than simply work performance e.g. career objectives.
9. An Annual Training Plan was developed (though challenging to implement during the pandemic.)
10. All-staff email updates have been provided throughout the pandemic regarding changes in time tracking, office attendance, screening, masking and vaccination polices, etc.
11. Erin and Sally meet weekly to review meeting schedules, upcoming agenda, deliverables and deadlines and associated administrative needs.
12. Staff have received reminders regarding the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to obtain counselling support for workplace and other stressors.
13. The Director of Water Resources and Manager of Planning & Regulations began meeting at least weekly to review workloads, set priorities, and identify potential issues.
14. Fall staff event held at the Mill of Kintail.
15. Updated staff on contents of Bill 228/21.
16. The 0.5-day vacation that had traditionally been given Christmas Eve was reinstated.

2021

17. Legislative Agenda schedule prepared to support managers and administrative staff in preparation of Committee and Board reports.
18. Enhanced project tracking tool to better coordinate and track work shared by P&P and WR.
19. A *Water Cooler Update* was introduced that is now regularly used to share news amongst staff and to celebrate achievements and milestones.
20. Shared final Strategic Plan with all employees.
21. Website update completed that allows for easier access to documents by the public and employees.
22. Website messaging added to manage response time expectations.
23. A survey was commissioned and completed by OHCOW in August 2021.
24. The JH&SC and management team met with OHCOW to review results.
25. Meetings of JH&SC and management team were used to develop an interim work plan.
26. Survey results provided to all employees.
27. OHCOW presentation and Q&A for staff.
28. High level results were communicated to the Board with a request for more resources as part of the *Workforce Plan*.
29. Fall staff event held at the Mill of Kintail.
30. The Regulations Officer was relieved of his H&S Coordinator responsibilities and a Regulations Technician hired to ease workload burden.
31. Other CAs contacted to obtain H&S Coordinator support.
32. Updated staff on three new regulations under the CA Act.
33. The Board Chair received a detailed walk-thru of the survey results.
34. Survey results were provided to the Executive Committee with the interim workplan.
35. Procurement was carryout to have a third-party facilitate staff workshops.
36. The Draft 2022 budget was tabled that included 4 additional FTEs to address staff shortages.
37. Commenced discussions of longer-term implementation of alternative work arrangements and began research in opportunities and constraints.
38. Transitioning to lap-top work environment to support long-term move to alternative work arrangements.
39. A thank-you gift voucher was issued to staff in lieu of the annual Christmas luncheon that had to be cancelled due to COVID.

2022

40. A co-op student was hired to support change initiatives including supporting collection of corporate knowledge from the Operations Manager (to retire end of May.)
41. Five staff workshops with Public Services Health & Safety Association (PSHSA) were held.
42. Shared workshop results with all employees.
43. Shared transition plan with all employees.
44. Following budget approval, a Junior Planner, Planning Technician, Water Resource Engineer and Co-op student were hired.
45. Hired co-op student for summer session to continue to support implementation of this document, H&S matters more broadly, and change initiatives arising from new regulations.

Attachment 2:

Employee Comments re: Draft Action Plan (verbatim)

As a result of the comments received, some numbering and descriptors have changed from what are referenced below.

1. The H&S Coordinator vacancy needs to be filled and with a dedicated person. Shared resources with other CAs is not practicable given the workload and what is required. A new H&S Coordinator/Human Resources position should be explored.
2. Overall impression is that the plan reads very much like a corporate strategy for a large firm, rather than a plan suited to a small organization like MVCA. There are so many actions presented it detracts from the key issues that emerged time and again in the consultations leading up to this.
3. Micromanagement don't seem to address the pressure this places on staff or the time consumed by responding to micro-management work tracking activities. Rather it seems to justify micro-management work tracking and reflection requests instead of addressing staff's need to have time to do their work within expected working hours.
4. Many of the items listed in the action plan are things that are already being completed within the office, and aren't new measures to address the ongoing issues.
5. Section 2.0 Key Issues - Vertical Trust – this was identified through the stress assess survey as well as the report from PSHSA; however, it is not included in the action plan. This a huge stressor and issue and one that is resulting in undue stress and staff turnover.
6. Action Point 2 - The "highlights" from the management meetings are not effectively communicated which leaves staff unengaged and unaware of what has actually been decided. Furthermore, individual managers convey concepts and information very differently; this results in unclear directions and possible misinformation being disseminated to staff. Minutes should be taken at the managers meetings and the minutes sent to staff for clear and concise information to ensure staff are all informed in the same manner as to what is happening corporately.
7. Action Point 6 - There also needs to be further attention and an understanding by managers of the fact that the work directions being given to staff may not be fully understood by that staff person. Also, the staff person may have not received the proper training and information to adequately complete the work task; this results in unneeded stress on staff trying to determine what and where is the information needed to complete the assigned information. Work tasks are also "thrown" at staff, mainly new staff, without the proper training and direction on how to undertake the task. This results in frustration, undue stress and an unnecessary dependence on senior staff (not the manager) to assist with what they have been assigned.
8. Action Point 15 – H&S Coordinator - What is the status on this? The vacancy has been there for months with no movement on sharing resources with SNC. With a number of new staff being hired, who is looking after ensuring that are receiving all of the required training, both legislated and corporate, to ensure they will be doing their jobs safely and also to ensure they have access to the required resources.
9. Action Point 21 - Similar comments as Action Point 6 - A clear, concise and documented work flow and organization chart needs to be created and stuck with. Changes to work

responsibilities, job assignments and tasks need to be updated as soon as the changes are made so staff are aware of who is responsible for what. Work procedures and processes need to be documented and all staff be made aware and known of them. This prevents staff from “doing their own thing” and gaps in information. Concise work processes and procedures will ensure that the corporation is functioning as one cohesive unit and prevent unnecessary work and stress for others.

10. Action Point 22 - Reiterate comments from Point 21. Would also add that documentation of work processes and procedures and all staff adhering to them would result in easier onboarding of new hires. It may also result in a reduction in staff turnover and JR staff training JR Staff with no real experience as to what the Authority even does.
11. Action Point 35 - Implementation of the process for pre-consultation questions and follow-up queries is good; however, how or who will ensure that the staff being tasked with administering the process and answering the questions have the knowledge, resources and expertise to accurately answer and provide information on the subject matters (i.e. tasking jr staff to respond to inquiries/questions from the public in order to just get workload off of others with no indication that the staff person actually knows what they are doing?). The latter can result in misinformation to the public that has the potential to cause major impacts or issues for staff.
12. Action Point 42 - Comments are similar to what has already been mentioned under points 6, 21, 22 and 35. This has an immense impact on Senior Staff that are already overloaded to supervise new hires; IMO the impact it has on Senior Staff (non-management) is not recognized or acknowledged. Furthermore, lack of corporate work procedures can result in varying degrees of information (both accurate and not accurate) being provided to new hires. Additional staff do help with alleviating the workloads (issuance of permits, answering inquiries, etc.) however, there is a large burden and a ton of staff time required to ensure that the new staff are doing the job effectively. A large amount of staff time is required to mentor which adds workload and stress to Senior Staff.