



MINUTES

Via Zoom & In Person

Board of Directors

May 18, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT

J. Atkinson, Chair
J. Mason, Vice-Chair
F. Campbell
R. Darling
E. El-Chantiry
G. Gower
J. Inglis
J. Karau
P. Kehoe
B. King
S. Lewis
C. Lowry
C. Rigelhof
P. Sweetnam
A. Tennant
K. Thompson

MEMBERS ABSENT

C. Kelsey
B. Holmes

STAFF PRESENT

S. McIntyre, General Manager
A. Millar, Treasurer
A. Moore, Regulations Officer
T. Vukovic, Planning and Regulations Technician
J. North, Water Resources Technologist
J. Cunderlik, Director of Water Resources Engineering
R. Fergusson, Operations Supervisor
M. Craig, Manager of Planning and Regulations

GUESTS PRESENT

T. Slot
C. Joli-Coeur

J. Atkinson called the meeting to order at 1:04pm

J. Atkinson welcomed Steven Lewis, the new Agricultural Representative, to the MVCA Board of Directors.

B05/18/22-01

MOVED BY: F. Campbell

SECONDED BY: E. El-Chantiry

Resolved, That the agenda for the May 18, 2022 Board of Directors Meeting be adopted as presented.

“CARRIED”

BUSINESS ARISING

1. Approval of Minutes – Board of Directors, April 20th 2022

B05/18/22-02

MOVED BY: C. Rieghof

SECONDED BY: P. Sweetnam

Resolved, That the Minutes of the Mississippi Valley Board of Directors Meeting held on April 18, 2022 be received and approved as printed.

“CARRIED”

2. Receipt of Minutes – Executive Committee, November 12th 2021

The Board of Directors received the minutes of the Mississippi Valley Executive Committee Meeting held on November 12, 2021. There was no motion passed.

3. Watershed Conditions Report, Report 3223/22

J. North presented the Watershed Conditions Report, Report 3223/22. She noted that flows in all tributaries are close to normal for this time of year and that dams are being operated in the upper watershed to achieve summer levels by end of May. The long-range forecast shows a warmer, dry June.

4. Action Plan for Reducing & Mitigating Workplace Stress, Report 3221/22

S. McIntyre presented Report 3221/22 regarding an Action Plan for Reducing & Mitigating Workplace Stress. She explained that the issue was raised by the Joint Health and Safety Committee in February 2020, with a response developed in March 2020 – however the implementation of this response was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic. S. McIntyre went on to explain the external and internal variables that have led to these operational challenges. She explained Tuckman’s Stages of Team Development noting that due to constant external pressures, there may have been a protracted period of “storming”. She expressed her confidence in the organization that as we move out of COVID, the organization will be able to resume operations in a positive manner. Finally, S. McIntyre noted that the issue of Vertical

Trust is not singled out in the Action plan, however, all actions are designed to address this issue.

S. McIntyre welcomed Christine Joli-Coeur and Teagan Slot from Public Services Health and Safety Association (PSHSA), who have been working with MVCA as it pertains to the psychosocial health of the organization. C. Joli-Coeur made a presentation regarding their work to identify and assess MVCA workplace stressors. She noted key findings such as: emotional demands, vertical trust, work pace, predictability of work, and role conflicts. She noted priorities for actions such as: communication, workload, connections and interactions between staff members. She encouraged MVCA to put actions into place to decrease psychological impacts.

S. McIntyre identified the top ten action items identified by employees as highlighted in the proposed Action Plan, noting that these are to be implemented immediately.

G. Gower asked C. Joli-Coeur what the responsibility of the Board of Directors is in this matter. C. Joli-Coeur responded that the board is responsible for holding supervisory staff accountable for following through on the proposed Action Plan. G. Gower asked what they can do as a Board to support the efforts in carrying the Action Plan forward. S. McIntyre responded that the prescribed actions will likely meet with varying success and outcomes, and that adjustments will be needed. The Board's understanding of the complexity and needs of the organization is and will continue to be appreciated.

E. El-Chantiry asked if the current report of discussion (Report 3221/22) was related to the next report on the agenda regarding the Disconnect from Work Policy. S. McIntyre explained that it is now a requirement under the *Employment Standards Act* (ESA), however, this policy addresses some of the stress experienced by employees.

Regarding the proposed Action Plan, E. El-Chantiry asked if MVCA has a policy in place to have an exit meeting regarding the matter to be able to measure its success. S. McIntyre explained stated that there is no policy in place and it is not consistently done, especially when it comes to retirements and for people quitting for personal reasons such as moving.

E. El-Chantiry asked if there is currently sufficient funding in the training and development budget available for supervisors. S. McIntyre responded that HR Downloads is used for basic training but more specific management consultant training has in not in the 2022 budget. E. El-Chantiry noted that a budget may be required to be considered as this would be pro-active training.

J. Karau asked C. Joli-Coeur and T. Slot if there are any benchmarks/objectives to assist the Board in supporting the Action Plan as well as an overall healthy workplace. T. Slot suggested tracking successes in the Action Plan by re-evaluating its progress within a set timeframe. She also suggested considering a Psychological Health and Safety Program to coincide with the existing Health and Safety program – it was suggested to build on these by identifying gaps and ensuring areas of need are addressed. She noted that if this is done, the PSHSA could provide additional trainings and resources to assist the process. J. Karau thanked T. Slot for the

additional guidance. T. Slot said she would provide S. McIntyre with a program guide for Psychological Health and Safety that includes resources that would be of use.

P. Sweetnam observed that there is a more positive attitude at the MVCA office. He pointed out to S. McIntyre his hope for staff to support her in her efforts.

J. Inglis suggested that management consider online training to assist in decreasing the amount of time required. J Atkinson noted that most training is already online, and that it is the training itself that is difficult to catch up on due to the prior absence of employees working from the office. He mentioned the importance of pacing these future trainings out as employees get back to a new routine.

J. Atkinson noted the amendments made to the proposed motion as it pertains to the awareness of the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

B05/18/22-03

MOVED BY: E. El-Chantiry

SECONDED BY: J. Mason

Resolved, 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 *Stress Assess* survey be carried out in spring 2023 to re-evaluate workplace psycho-social health.**
- d) **receive quarterly minutes of the JH&SC as part of the General Manager’s Update; and**
- e) **receive an annual report from the JH&SC in Spring 2023 concurrent to receiving the second psycho-social survey results. (As amended by the Finance & Administration Committee, April 29, 2022.)**

“CARRIED”

5. Employee Manual Amendment – new Disconnect from Work policy, Report 3224/22

S. McIntyre presented the policy definition and proposed policy as it pertains to Report 3224/22.

B05/18/22-04

MOVED BY: F. Campbell

SECONDED BY: R. Darling

Resolved, That the Board of Directors:

- a) **approve the “Disconnecting from Work” policy contained herein;**
- b) **direct staff to amend Section 2.3 Hours of Work of the *Employee Manual* to add a new section 2.3.3: Disconnecting from Work; and**

c) direct that all employees receive a copy of the new policy within 30 days of approval.

“CARRIED”

6. Administrative By-law Amendments, Report 3222/22

S. McIntyre presented Report 3222/22 regarding Administrative By-Law Amendments.

E. El-Chantiry asked if these amendments include the initiation of virtual meetings. S. McIntyre clarified that the Administrative By-law had been previously amended to reflect this.

B05/18/22-05

MOVED BY: C. Rieghof

SECONDED BY: G. Gower

Resolved, That the Policy & Priorities Advisory Committee recommend that the Board of Directors approve:

a) amendment of MVCA’s *Administrative By-law* as set out in Attachment 1.

b) recruitment of members to the new Mississippi Watershed Public Advisory Committee.

“CARRIED”

7. Per Diems & Honoraria, Report 3220/22

S. McIntyre discussed report findings and recommended maintenance of the current approach and funding levels. She noted it is at the individual’s discretion whether they choose to decline or receive the honourarium and per diem.

J. Inglis asked why the per diem/honourarium amount is not rounded and recommended that it be. S. McIntyre explained that the numbers are inflated with the cost of living increase and have not been rounded.

B05/18/22-06

MOVED BY: E. El-Chantiry

SECONDED BY: F. Campbell

Resolved, That the Board of Directors continue to pay per diems to all Board Members, and an honorarium to the Board Chair.

“CARRIED”

2 opposed

8. Appointment of new Regulations Official, Report 3225/22

S. McIntyre introduced T. Vukovic to be appointed as the Regulations Officer for the Authority.

B05/18/22-07

MOVED BY: P. Kehoe

SECONDED BY: A. Tennant

Resolved, That the Board of Directors appoint Tatyana Vukovic to enforce Ontario Regulation 153/06 and Ontario Regulation 120/90 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*.

“CARRIED”

9. Staff Presentation – Compliance Management Updated

A. Moore and T. Vukovic made a presentation on Compliance Management. This included review of Regulations, along with definitions as well as examples of violations and non-compliance. They presented statistics from 2019-2021 that indicated number of permits issued, inspections conducted, and permit compliance. They also noted challenges such as: wetlands abutting Stittsville, Kanata and Carleton Place; interagency investigations, and potential changes to the Section 28 Regulations.

J. Inglis asked if the department are only responding to complaints made or if there is active search for non-compliance issues. A. Moore explained that the work is complaint driven however non-compliance issues are occasionally discovered by the Authority staff.

S. Lewis asked if the MVCA has its own legal department to take on matters that are taken to court. A. Moore replied that there is a budget set aside for legal counsel to support and represent MVCA, however, the majority of the legal leg work is completed in-house.

S. Lewis asked if MVCA is awarded costs upon winning. A. Moore replied only if the matter is appealed are costs awarded to MVCA.

J. Karau was happy to see most of compliance issues are resolvable. He then asked A. Moore if there has been a shift in compliance trends due to the increase in volume. A. Moore noted that overall compliance has been improving. He noted however that legal action had to be undertaken in order to be taken seriously. He went on to express that with the sheer volume of permits being issued and urban expansion, workload continues to be a challenge.

G. Gower asked what kind of notification (formal or informal) there is to municipalities when a violation occurs. A. Moore responded that it is dependent on the nature of the issue. Some issues involve the local building or road departments, however, violations that do not involve the *Planning Act* or *Building Code* are not generally brought to the municipality's attention. G. Gower suggested exploring publicizing issues of non-compliance/violation to bring attention to the public that there is oversight and consequences to violations.

P. Sweetnam commented that courts are an expensive way to come to resolve. He asked if after the Goulbourn resolution if the wetland had been restored. A. Moore confirmed that the wetland is recovering well now. P. Sweetnam suggested notifying offenders or publicizing cases as an awareness tool that action is taken by the authority for offenses.

F. Campbell asked what role the Regulations Committee has in terms of cases that go to court. A. Moore responded that the Regulations Committee is only responsible for addressing permit applications that staff are not authorized to approve. The committee is not responsible for addressing permit violations.

10. Conservation Ontario Annual Report and Update

J. Atkinson presented the Conservation Ontario Annual Report and Update. He informed the Board that the chair of Conservation Ontario changed to Alan Revill. J. Atkinson explained the changes to the Conservation Authorities Act highlighting that MVCA had put many of the changes in place already, leaving the Authority in a good position as the regulations came into play. He highlighted the reconciliation actions with First Nations groups throughout the Conservation Authority. Finally, he noted the value that Conservation Ontario provides to its members.

P. Sweetnam expressed his satisfaction with the work done by Conservation Ontario. He also asked that MVCA Board meetings be scheduled on days when Chair and Vice-Chair can attend – particularly not scheduling MVCA meetings on the same day as Conservation Ontario meetings.

J. Karau explained that Eastern Ontario has been left out of previous Conservation Ontario initiatives. He asked if this has changed. J. Atkinson noted that the new chair (Alan Revill) is a member of Cataraqui Conservation Authority which lies within Eastern Ontario, which he believed would help this case. He went on to mention that collaboration with Conservation Ontario has been increasing and he believed that getting back to meeting in person will also help. S. McIntyre added that there is representation from Eastern Ontario on each Conservation Ontario committee.

11. Budget Control Report, Report 3226/22

A. Millar presented Report 3226/22 regarding Budget Control. She highlighted that Planning and Regulations revenues are quite high. The reason being that many planning applications/reviews were initiated in 2021 however completed in the first quarter of 2022. She noted that although there were the same number of planning applications over the same time period in 2021, the applications received in 2022 were more complex (i.e.; larger residential and commercial developments) which have higher fees leading to larger revenues.

A. Millar explained that an error by our insurer in 2021, has resulted in a significant increase in 2022 of 54%. The good news is that they have not back charged the Authority for its 2021 rate error. She hoped for the next Budget Control Report to have some operational savings in order to offset the unexpected increase in cost. She suggested that if this is not the case, staff may bring forward a motion to draw funds from the operating reserve if operational savings are not achieved before year end.

12. General Manager Update & 2021 Annual Report, Report 3219/22

S. McIntyre shared that long-time employee, R. Fergusson, is to retire in the next month. She acknowledged his tremendous contributions to the organization. S. McIntyre went on the present Report 3219/22 - the General Manager Update and 2021 Annual Report. She noted the implementation of the Transition Plan had begun and that she has been meeting with municipalities within the watershed (including Addington Highlands, North Frontenac, and Central Frontenac).

F. Campbell asked if the LiDAR flight lines were complete. S. McIntyre confirmed that the entire watershed had been flown, and that the first round of data was expected this fall. P. Sweetnam commented that the LiDAR imagery has been well worth the cost as it is good value for a great resource.

J. Atkinson announced that the meeting on June 15th 2022 see reinstatement of the annual Board Tour, and will be a full-day event.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:07p.m.

B05/18/22-08

MOVED BY: S. Lewis

SECONDED BY: R. Darling

Resolved, That the Board of Directors meeting be adjourned.

“CARRIED”

“L. Williams, Recording Secretary

J. Atkinson, Chair”