

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mississippi Valley Conservation Centre
Carleton Place

MINUTES

September 9, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT:

C. Lowry, Chair;
P. Kehoe;
W. King;
J. Mason;
P. Sweetnam.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

E. Burke;
E. El-Chantiry;
T. Fritz;
G. Gower;
G. McEvoy.

STAFF PRESENT:

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

C. Lowry called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

FAAC09/09/20-1

MOVED BY: P. Sweetnam

SECONDED BY: P. Kehoe

Resolved, That the agenda for the Finance & Administration Advisory Committee meeting be adopted as presented.

“CARRIED”

BUSINESS:

1. Minutes – Finance & Administration Advisory Committee Meeting – February 7, 2020

FAAC09/09/20-2

MOVED BY: J. Mason

SECONDED BY: P. Sweetnam

Resolved, That the Minutes of the Finance & Administration Advisory Committee meeting held February 7, 2020 be received and approved as printed.

“CARRIED”

2. Budget Control Report

A. Millar presented Staff Report 3067/20, attached. She provided a comparison of year-to-date expenditures and revenues to the approved 2020 Budget.

She advised that to date the projection is a deficit of approximately \$72,000 which is consistent with earlier projections. She noted funds from the operating reserve can be used to offset the loss.

3. Job Evaluation & Salary Review

A. Millar gave a presentation in regard to Staff Report 3072/20, attached. She advised that when the 2020 budget was developed it was anticipated the much of the information prepared in 2006 would be available. However, during preparation of the Requests for Quotation (RFQ) it became evident that a significant amount of work was not on file and the RFQ would need to address gaps in information, likely at a greater cost than budgeted. Three quotes were solicited and two firms responded, both well above the \$10,000 budget. Based upon a value for money evaluation of the submissions, the preferred firm is Cornerstones Management Solutions Limited. The Cornerstone quote came in at \$24,850 plus HST, which was below the other competitor's price.

J. Mason asked whether the deficit presented in the previous agenda item included the extra \$14,000 required for the salary review. A. Millar indicated it did not.

P. Kehoe expressed his concerns about the salary review process. He noted much of the information provided in the review will be information the authority knows already or that they could acquire in house. He noted that the money could be better spent on things like programming that are a priority.

W. King voiced his agreement with Mr. Kehoe's statements.

In response to a question, S. McIntyre advised that the authority does not have the skills, knowledge or bandwidth to perform the review in-house. She further explained when the salary review files from 2006 were reviewed, it was apparent that it was more than a salary review as several new and amended job evaluation descriptions were lacking. This new review will address those gaps and provide the ability to create a matrix/scoring protocol. There are real pressures being identified through this process.

FAAC09/09/20-3

MOVED BY: P. Sweetnam

SECONDED BY: J. Mason

Resolved, That the Finance and Administration Committee recommend that the Board of Directors increase the Operating Budget by \$14,850 plus HST, and approve use of the Operating Reserve to address the gap between budgeted and bid prices received for the Job Evaluation and Salary Review project.

**“CARRIED”
3 In Favour, 2 Opposed**

W. King and P. Kehoe opposed the motion.

4. 10-Year Capital Needs Assessment

S. McIntyre gave a presentation regarding Staff Report 3069/20, attached. She outlined the purpose of the Needs Assessment; to set out the full range of capital pressures facing MVCA to allow for priority setting, updating of the 10-year Capital Plan, and to inform development of the 2021-2023

Interim Financial Plan.

J. Mason suggested that moving forward, the Board should be given all available options (both preferred and basic) for projects so that the board can determine the best solution within its budget limitations.

P. Sweetnam expressed that members and the authority need to keep pressing the province to increase the WECI funding.

FAAC09/09/20-4

MOVED BY: P. Kehoe

SECONDED BY: P. Sweetnam

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

a) apply criteria to support priority setting within and amongst the asset categories;

b) recommend updates to the 10-year Capital Plan for tabling with the 2021 Budget; and

c) integrate capital plan recommendations into the Draft 2021-2023 Interim Financial Plan.

“CARRIED”

5. Interim Financial Plan

S. McIntyre reviewed operational and capital trends and needs and other matters that represent financial pressures to MVCA to initiate a discussion of priorities and options in a manner that supports development of the 2021 Budget and an Interim Financial Plan for the period 2021-2023 (see Staff Report 3070/20).

P. Sweetnam commented that our fee structure for planning and development should be on a complete cost recovery basis. He also noted the importance of Conservation Areas and that perhaps there could be an opportunity to raise the cost of fees to access those areas.

J. Mason commented that the crux of the issue is facing a mandate that the municipalities can't afford. Discussions need to address how the Authority can address legislated requirements that it currently can't afford. She noted that debt financing is an option, but with the City paying 90% of the municipal levy, it's really the City that is paying for that cost over an extended period of time.

P. Sweetnam advised he agrees with Ms. Mason's statement, but that over time, other municipalities may experience growth making the amount the City would have to pay less for financing.

There was a discussion regarding staffing of long-term projects. P. Sweetnam asked if MOUs could be entered into with other Conservation Authorities for those purposes. S. McIntyre advised that she is meeting with other General Managers to discuss that option.

FAAC09/09/20-5

MOVED BY: J. Mason

SECONDED BY: P. Kehoe

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

- a) **Prioritize and quantify 2021-2023 operating and capital pressures.**
- b) **Identify a revenue and financing approach to address priority needs; and**
- c) **Draft an Interim Financial Plan 2021-2023 that sets out the above for consideration by the Board.**

“CARRIED”

6. Carp River Conservation Area Licence of Occupancy

S. McIntyre advised that the Licence of Occupancy with the City of Ottawa has almost been finalized and should be brought to the Board in September or October to ratify.

7. Snowmobile Club Licence of Occupancy

S. McIntyre advised that the snowmobile club had notified owners that they want to change their use of the K&P trail. Some conservation authorities and other owners did not renegotiate due to the terms that were proposed. The new licence would increase liability and risk to the Authority with no compensation. She noted she is hopeful to get an agreement where there is a fair division of risk. The licence is being actively pursued and the Authority is trying to collaborate with other CAs and the local club to find a solution before the snow mobile season starts.

8. Bell Easement on K&P

R. Fergusson advised that the 5-year lease agreement with Bell Canada is up for renewal. He advised that we asked the yearly fee to be increased to include Cost of Living and are currently waiting for Bell to advise if they agree to the increase or not.

9. Dedicated Internet

A. Broadbent advised that when the new office was built in 2013, dedicated internet wasn't available. In 2017, service was improved with Bell Mobility by use of its towers. In the last few months, Bell installed fiber cable along Highway 7. Through negotiation, the fees to access the fiber have been waived and the authority is now able to acquire dedicated internet.

10. Boardroom A/V System

A. Broadbent noted challenges with the A/V system, many of which were brought to light with the COVID-19 pandemic. He advised that the Authority's needs will be reviewed as the system is now 7 or 8 years old and current demands are greater than what was allowed for in the original design.

11. Council Fall Presentations

S. McIntyre reminded members about her presentations to councils this fall regarding the Watershed Plan. She noted she was also using the opportunity to focus on the WECI funding initiative as well. To date, the City of Ottawa is the only municipality not on her schedule, but she had been speaking to Glen Gower about the three partner CAs to potentially meet with the City soon.

12. Other Business

J. Mason commented that the Finance and Administration Committee does not typically discuss items 6-11 on agenda as it has today. She noted that these items likely don't need to be included when they will be presented to the Board of Directors at a later date. She questioned whether the agenda should be limited to financial matters so as not to hold up items that need to be addressed at the Board level.

S. McIntyre noted that the Administrative Bylaw doesn't speak to the more contractual items, however she brought these forward to make use of the administration role given the name of the committee. She advised she was open to whatever worked for everyone.

P. Sweetnam noted that non-financial items shouldn't be held up at Committee before proceeding to the board for approval.

W. King agreed with the Ms. Mason and commented that anything to reduce duplication would be appreciated since meetings are quite long as it is.

C. Lowry agreed with the members in limiting the number of non-financial agenda items.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:52 am.

FAAC09/09/20-6

MOVED BY: P. Kehoe

SECONDED BY: J. Mason

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

“CARRIED”

“E. Levi, Recording Secretary

C. Lowry, Chair”