



MINUTES

Via Zoom and In Person

Board of Directors Meeting

April 17, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT

J. Atkinson, Chair
J. Mason, Vice-Chair
B. Holmes
J. Karau
P. Kehoe
C. Kelly
S. Lewis
M. Souter
H. Yanch
A. Vereyken
C. Curry
R. Huetl
C. Kelsey (remote)
A. Kendrick
T. Popkie

MEMBERS ABSENT

D. Comley
R. Kidd
G. Gower

STAFF PRESENT

S. McIntyre, General Manager
J. Cunderlik, Director of Engineering
J. North, Engineering Technologist
S. Lawryk, Property Manager
A. Broadbent, Manager of Information, Communications and Technology
D. Post, Full Stack Developer
C. Watson, Legal Counsel (remote)
K. Stiles, Biologist
M. Craig, Manager of Planning and Regulations
R. Clouthier, Recording Secretary

J. Atkinson called the meeting to order at 1:03 pm.

Declarations of Interest (written)

Members were asked to declare any conflicts of interest and informed that they may declare a conflict at any time during the session. No declarations were received.

Agenda Review

Board members had no comments on the agenda for the April 17, 2023 meeting. No consent agenda items were pulled and no comments received.

B23/04/17-1

MOVED BY: P. Kehoe
SECONDED BY: M. Souter

Resolved, That the agenda for the April 17, 2023 Board of Directors Meeting be adopted as presented.

“CARRIED”

MAIN BUSINESS

1. Approval of Minutes: Board of Directors Meeting March 13, 2023

B23/04/17-2

MOVED BY: J. Karau
SECONDED BY: H. Yanch

Resolved, That the minutes of the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority Board of Directors Meeting held on March 13, 2023 be received and approved as printed.

“CARRIED”

- a) Receipt of Finance and Administration Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes, November 21, 2022

B23/04/17-3

MOVED BY: J. Mason
SECONDED BY: T. Popkie

Resolved, That the minutes of the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority Finance and Administration Advisory Committee Meeting held on November 21, 2022 be received as printed.

“CARRIED”

2. Fiduciary Responsibility, Report 3306/23 (C. Watson)

C. Watson (Bell Baker LLP) gave a presentation to Board members on the fiduciary responsibilities related to being a member of MVCA's Board of Directors. No questions were received after the presentation. See Attachment 1 for presentation slides.

3. State of the Watershed Update, Report 3307/23 (J. North)

J. North confirmed that a flood warning is still in effect for Dalhousie Lake and Clyde Rivers. MVCA mitigated flooding by replacing logs in the upper watershed and releasing water in the lower watershed. There was above average flooding on the Mississippi River but it could have been much worse. Flows and water levels should drop in the next few weeks.

The Ottawa River is just beginning its freshet with water levels and flows increasing due to snowmelt over the southern part of the basin. Levels and flows are expected to increase gradually over the next few weeks.

4. STAFF PRESENTATION: Daily Planning Cycle (DPC), Report 3308/23 (D. Post)

D. Post displayed a new flood forecasting and warning web tool to Board members developed and now in use by MVCA's Flood Forecasting and Warning team. The Daily Planning Cycle (DPC) tool allows for easy checking of water levels, flows, weather (observed and forecasted), snowpack and other parameters on a daily basis.

R. Huetl asked how the tool would be maintained if D. Post were to leave MVCA. D. Post replied that meticulous documentation and notes were recorded throughout the development of the tool.

J. Mason asked if the tool could be useful to other conservation authorities. D. Post replied that he believes it can be, it is very customizable and easy to use while providing a lot of data visualization and manipulation. A presentation to Conservation Ontario may be pursued further.

J. Karau commented that as we can no longer truly rely on historical data and the DPC tool is very useful. MVCA should consider publishing results and the tool.

M. Souter asked if any copyright or trademark has been applied to the tool as an intellectual right. S. McIntyre noted that MVCA has ownership of the tool and that we are looking to present a paper at Latornell. Monetization has not been a top priority however we will still investigate.

***ITEMS ARISING FROM THE FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING, MARCH 28, 2023***

5. Update to 10-Year Capital Plan, Report 3309/23 (S. McIntyre)

S. McIntyre overviewed Report 3309/23 detailing proposed updates to the 10-year Capital Plan and planned capital levy increases.

C. Kelly asked S. McIntyre to clarify when the plan does not have an estimate beside the project. For example, the Glen Cairn Detention Basin and more. S. McIntyre replied that the structures have ambiguous ownership or operations. We need to resolve these issues before providing an estimate as we do not have clear ownership or operation.

S. Lewis asked if we have generators for the EV vehicles if the power goes out and cautioned against moving to EV too quickly. S. McIntyre noted that MVCA agrees and we are taking a measured approach to the ownership of the vehicles and we will be returning to the Board about this at a later date.

S. McIntyre noted that the proposed capital increases are not as high as previous proposals.

A. Kendrick asked S. McIntyre to explain how the conservation authorities deal with borrowing and also how the reserves build up during times of inflation. S. McIntyre replied that conservation authorities are not allowed to directly take out loans; we have to be sponsored by a member municipality, or a municipality may provide a loan themselves.

S. Millard noted that we are behind the ball with our reserves and have grandfathered accounts that earn a higher interest rate. We do not pursue risky investments and only invest in GICs. We are not keeping up with inflation, mainly due to inflation related to construction.

S. McIntyre noted that the HQ Building Sewer and Water Connection estimate does not include the cost of bringing water and sewer service to the property line. It is unclear how those costs are to be address and the people who originally negotiated the agreement between MVCA and the Town are no longer with their organizations. The original agreement stipulated that we must connect to water and sewer within 10 years.

B23/04/17-4

MOVED BY: J. Mason

SECONDED BY: P. Kehoe

Resolved, That the Board of Directors approve the 10-year Capital Plan update and schedule of capital levy increases.

“CARRIED”

6. Tangible Capital Asset Policy Amendment, Report 3310/23 (S. Millard)

S. Millard presented Report 3310/23 pertaining to amendments proposed to the Tangible Capital Asset Policy. The report suggests to update the schedule of assets classes, capitalization

thresholds and authorization periods. Key changes are proposed to items 2, 3 and 4 of the original policy.

B23/04/17-5

MOVED BY: J. Mason
SECONDED BY: B. Holmes

Resolved, That the Board of Directors approve amendment of Appendix 6 Accounting for Tangible Capital Assets of MVCA’s Administrative By-law as set out in this report.

“CARRIED”

7. City of Ottawa Flood Plain Mapping Contract, Report 3311/23 (S. McIntyre)

S. McIntyre gave a presentation on Report 3311/23 and offered her support for the Flood Plain Mapping project with the City of Ottawa. City provides 50% funding to map within their jurisdiction to mitigate costs.

B23/04/17-6

MOVED BY: J. Mason
SECONDED BY: P. Kehoe

Resolved, That the Board of Directors approve execution of a five-year Flood Plain Mapping agreement with the City of Ottawa.

“CARRIED”

8. Sale of K&P Trail, Report 3312/23 (S. Lawryk)

Report 3312/23 was tabled in open session at the direction of the Finance and Administration Advisory Committee meeting held on March 28, 2023.

S. McIntyre noted that there are provincial regulations on how conservation authorities divest and acquire land.

S. Lawryk added that currently the trail is maintained to a “recreational” standard and that investment at the county level will be needed to bring the trail to the same standard as other sections of the trail.

B. Holmes asked if the trail was used by logging. S. Lawryk confirmed that the trail is still used for logging.

B23/04/17-7

MOVED BY: J. Mason
SECONDED BY: H. Yanch

Resolved, That the Board of Directors:

- 1. Reconfirm authorization to sell the K&P Trail to the counties of Lanark, Renfrew, and Frontenac for a nominal sum; and**
- 2. Direct staff to:**
 - (a) Seek coordinated disposal of the asset to the three counties; and**
 - (b) Propose terms and conditions if there are cost implications to MVCA in excess of \$5,000; and**
 - (c) Fulfil mandatory notification requirements.**

“CARRIED”

9. Long-Term Disability Benefit Amendment (Discussion in Camera), Report 3313/23 (S. Millard)

B23/04/17-8

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

Resolved, That the committee move to in-camera session for discussion of the following matter:

- Personal matters about an identifiable individual, including employees of the Authority;**

And further Resolved, That:

MVCA staff remain in the room (including in person and/or virtual attendance).

“CARRIED”

B23/04/17-9

MOVED BY: P. Kehoe
SECONDED BY: C. Kelly

Resolved, That the committee move out of in-camera discussions.

“CARRIED”

B23/04/17-10

MOVED BY: J. Mason
SECONDED BY: B. Holmes

Resolved, That the Board of Directors approve amendment of Section 8.2.1 Long Term Disability of the Employee Manual as set out in this report.

“CARRIED”

10. Psycho-Stress Assessment Results, Report 3314/23 (S. McIntyre)

S. McIntyre provided background regarding a previous psycho-social stress assessment undertaken in 2021 with the results identifying many problems and changes required in the workplace. Since that time, concerted effort was made to improve working conditions and the survey was re-issued in March 2023 to gauge progress. Survey results indicate improvement in almost all areas compared to 2021 results. MVCA still has many improvements to make but are working to address issues.

A. Kendrick asked S. McIntyre if she knows of other indicators that might help ground some of the self-perceptions. S. McIntyre noted that overtime is a considerable stress indicator. A small number of employees took a period of stress leave over the period 2021 to date.

J. Karau commented that the report provides a very clear journey and he is pleased with the progress and the significant changes, and that we are acknowledging additional changes that we need to make.

C. Curry noted that the Board and management should be clearer and that communications from the top down should be solidified.

C. Kelly asked if S. McIntyre has a sense of productivity change compared to the original survey year. S. McIntyre noted that while the first assessment was carried out during the pandemic the issue had been identified pre-pandemic. Permitting and applications have started to decrease and our senior staff have a lot of involvement in day to day tasks and projects.

11. Wetland Overview and Regulations, Report 3315/23 (K. Stiles & M. Craig)

K. Stiles presented on wetlands, the provincial and federal differences in definitions and how they are evaluated. Some types of wetlands include: swamps, marshes, bogs, fens and vernal pools. Regardless of type, wetlands are significant water control features that can mitigate the impacts of flood and drought.

M. Craig outlined changes to the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System (OWES) methodology and how the changes and reduced provincial oversight may impact the administration and protection of wetlands. Specifically, with the enactment of Bill 23, the province will no longer require for the “complexing” of wetlands or include scoring and evaluation of endangered and threatened species.

J. Karau asked K. Stiles and M. Craig what are the trends for wetland health and coverage. K. Stiles noted that it is difficult to tease out that information our data set, but that climate change will likely impact the water regime and create drought conditions that will change the local ecosystem.

J. Karau commented that the provincial and federal governments are not necessarily in agreement with each other on wetland management policy.

C. Curry asked S. McIntyre if there is any advocacy from all conservation authorities or opportunities for federal intervention. S. McIntyre explained that these are matters of provincial jurisdiction and there is limited ability for the federal government to intervene. However, some allies have approached the federal government. Conservation authorities are being cautious in their response due to further regulatory changes for CAs anticipated later this year.

C. Curry requested that a list of supporters be shared with Board members. S. McIntyre took this direction.

S. McIntyre noted that most changes under Bill 23 directly impact the member municipalities and their staff to assess applications. MVCA is looking into the option of providing “peer review” services to offset municipal consultant costs. C. Curry indicated support for the peer review idea as many organizations and planners respect the conservation authority’s expertise.

12. Conservation Ontario AGM Briefing, Report 3316/23 (S. McIntyre)

S. McIntyre summarized the Conservation Ontario Annual General Meeting that she attended and outlined the type of support CAs receive from Conservation Ontario.

BY CONSENT

No consent agenda items were pulled out by Board members and no comments received. Report 3317/23 and Report 3318/23 were carried.

13. Kashwakamak Lake Dam Funding Motion, Report 3317/23 (J. Cunderlik)

14. Registered Use of the K&P, Lanark Highlands Township, Report 3318/23 (S. Lawryk)

15. GM Update, Report 3319/23 (S. McIntyre)

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:09 pm.

B23/04/17-11

MOVED BY: P. Kehoe

SECONDED BY: R. Huetl

Resolved, That the Board of Directors meeting be adjourned.

“CARRIED”

R. Clouthier, Recording Secretary

J. Atkinson, Chair