



MINUTES

Via Zoom and In Person Policy and Planning Committee Meeting

May 1, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT

J. Mason
B. Holmes
J. Karau
S. Lewis
H. Yanch
C. Kelsey (remote)
T. Popkie
G. Gower (remote)
D. Comley

MEMBERS ABSENT

J. Atkinson, Vice-Chair
C. Kelly

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
B. Moy, Planning Technician
J. Perkins, Planning Technician
K. Stiles, Biologist
A. Symon, Watershed Planner
M. Craig, Manager of Planning and Regulations
R. Clouthier, Recording Secretary

J. Atkinson was absent from the meeting. As such, S. McIntyre called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm.

S. McIntyre proposed to hold the election for the position of Chair and Vice Chair of the 2023 Policy and Planning Advisory Committee prior to the review of the agenda. No objections were received.

PPAC23/05/01-1

MOVED BY: D. Comley

SECONDED BY: H. Yanch

Resolved, That Sally McIntyre be appointed as Chair for administering the Election of Officers for the Policy and Planning Advisory Committee for 2023.

“CARRIED”

S. McIntyre declared both positions of Chair and Vice Chair as vacant.

J. Mason nominated B. Holmes for the position of Chair. B. Holmes accepted the nomination.

S. McIntyre asked members 3 times if there are any other nominations. None received.

PPAC23/05/01-2

MOVED BY: J. Karau

SECONDED BY: H. Yanch

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

“CARRIED”

B. Holmes moved to the Chair’s seat in the Boardroom and proceeded with the election for Vice Chair.

J. Mason nominated D. Comley for the position of Vice Chair. D. Comley accepted the nomination.

B. Holmes asked members 3 times if there are any other nominations. None received.

PPAC23/05/01-3

MOVED BY: J. Mason

SECONDED BY: J. Karau

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

“CARRIED”

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 May 1, 2023 meeting.

PPAC23/05/01-4

MOVED BY: H. Yanch

SECONDED BY: D. Comley

Resolved, That the agenda for the May 1, 2023 Policy and Planning Advisory Committee Meeting be adopted as presented.

“CARRIED”

MAIN BUSINESS

1. Approval of Minutes: Policy and Planning Advisory Committee Meeting, February 17, 2022

PPAC23/05/01-5

MOVED BY: J. Karau

SECONDED BY: J. Mason

Resolved, That the minutes of the Policy and Planning Advisory Committee Meeting held on February 17, 2022 be received and approved as printed.

“CARRIED”

2. Natural Systems Monitoring & Reporting Program Review, Report 3322/23 (K. Stiles)

K. Stiles described the importance of natural systems monitoring and reporting and what such monitoring can indicate about environmental health. Report 3322/23 provides a review of the current program and proposed changes. Included in the report is a detailed Program Review document.

J. Mason asked how this will be affected when the new regulation changing the funding to category 2 and 3 programs and services comes into play.

K. Stiles responded that some things were not fitting the previous definitions of categories 2 and 3 as MVCA does only has an MOU with the City of Ottawa for the City Baseline Surface Water Quality Sampling program, everything else does not have an MOU. MVCA is suggesting

that programs and services such as the lake and stream biotic monitoring be bumped up to category 2 and MOUs be created with the member municipalities.

J. Karau commented that he understands why the focus of the monitoring is on water quality however when we look at issues like climate change, water quality is not a sole indicator that gets analyzed. J. Karau suggested that section 6.6.5 should be reviewed as it may discredit the value of citizen science and the importance of building relationships with volunteers.

K. Stiles thanked J. Karau for his feedback and replied that this is still a draft document and any suggestions will be reviewed and potentially changed.

G. Gower asked K. Stiles what kind of stakeholders or organizations typically request data and how this could expand in the future.

K. Stiles replied that data is typically requested by lake associations, the Ottawa River Keeper, neighbouring universities and engineering firms.

J. Karau asked where are we in terms of open GIS data.

S. McIntyre replied that we do not have any policies on open data yet, although we are making sure that our regulations mapping and water level maps are up to date and available on our website. We recognize that this is an area of improvement and the authority needs to work towards an efficient data sharing process.

J. Mason commented on Section 6.6.2, the Ontario Power Generation. The bio blitz is for a whole year and not just a point in time. The Ontario Field Naturalists do have some experts in their field, and the sections should be reviewed as their results will be very useful to MVCA.

PPAC23/05/01-6

MOVED BY: G. Gower

SECONDED BY: D. Comley

Resolved, That the Policy and Planning Committee recommend that the Board approve continuation of MVCA’s monitoring and reporting program with the recommended changes set out in this report and the attached Program Review document.

“CARRIED”

3. Section 28 Compliance Strategy, Report 3323/23 (M. Craig)

M. Craig summarized the Section 28 Compliance Strategy and the regulations. M. Craig also detailed the steps employees follow to ensure compliance and the requirements of enforcement officers.

S. Lewis asked if it is possible to build a house or a structure in a floodplain.

M. Craig explained that some areas in the watershed, such as Mississippi Lake and Constance Bay, have a 2-zone policy differentiating between a flood way and a flood fringe. In the 2-zone policy areas you cannot build on a vacant lot in the flood way but you can in the flood fringe. This line is determined by depth of flooding and flood.

S. Lewis inquired about MVCA comments during the City of Ottawa Committee of Adjustment hearings and asked what, if anything, will be changing with Bill 23.

M. Craig replied that Bill 23 has been pretty prescriptive of the authority's ability to comment. We still comment on natural hazards however we cannot comment on the ecological impact. We still comment on wetlands but only from a natural hazard perspective and not an ecological perspective.

S. Lewis highlighted that the ecological comments take the same amount of work because we can determine a lot of the ecological impact based on the natural hazards impact. The workload will not be lessening for the conservation authority.

M. Craig replied that a lot of the changes are affecting the municipalities and we are continuously working with them as much as we can.

S. McIntyre explained that the formal side of commenting in our work has changed, we don't write normal comments but this does not mean that municipalities are not asking us questions. One of the things the authority is concerned about is that municipalities are not circulating documents for comments.

G. Gower asked about communications and if there is a standard practice and how the authority approaches public notice about enforcement activities.

M. Craig replied that generally when we are completing an investigation on a property, we do not notify the public besides the fact that we are in the process of investigating as to not jeopardize the investigation. If we are successful in court, which is the last option for the authority, we release a notice to the public as it is a public court record. We are very guarded when people ask for information over the phone as the vast majority of offenders work with the authority.

G. Gower suggested that staff add a small section or paragraph that would outline and explain the general approach of public consultation.

J. Karau asked if people submit photographs or if we are seeking photographs of violations.

M. Craig responded that people do submit photographs often and we accept them on our online reporting tool. If the report requires an investigation, the officer will take their own photographs so we know they are authentic. Community photographs need to be validated so there is a chance that we do not use submitted photographs.

J. Karau asked if the authority replies when someone submits a concern or a complaint.

M. Craig replied that we generally follow up and let them know that we are investigating, but these matters tend to be long and we do not give out information pertaining to the investigation.

4. Conservation Strategy; Scope & Methodology, Report 3324/23 (S. McIntyre)

S. McIntyre summarized the Conservation strategy and the Mississippi River Watershed Plan and their recommendation of a Land Conservation Plan.

J. Mason is concerned that the thresholds of non –shield was set too high on the map of Core Areas as the City of Ottawa has documents their core areas and there are items missing on this chart, for example the Constance Creek Corridor and the South Marsh Highlands, and more. A second concern that the whole scope is very broad. There could be too many outcomes and with resource restraints, staff should consider narrowing it down to more specific topics. There are topics that could be out of the authority's scope.

J. Karau suggested that one way to tackle the scope or use mechanisms for prioritizing is to do site-specific collaboration and create a list of the partnerships we have. This could assist with the workload and the resources and create collaborations with other organizations. Another idea for collaboration is the bio-sphere model.

J. Mason noted that she is also concerned about the restrictions placed on the authority, for example with the new regulations, the authority is no longer the lead on the Carp River Conservation Area. If the authority is required to distance themselves from a high-profile project, there is a chance this can happen with other projects. J. Mason is part of a group that is trying to make Ottawa-Gatineau become one of Canada's first urban bio-sphere reserves.

S. McIntyre highlighted that there is no plan for conservation at the scale that we are doing it. The thought is that this is a service that the authority can provide to municipalities to provide a framework to point you in the right direction.

J. Karau restated that the two major stressors right now are development pressure and climate change adaptation. This could also help with the scope allowing the authorities to create agreements.

ADJOURNMENT

PPAC23/05/01-6

MOVED BY: S. Lewis

SECONDED BY: J. Karau

Resolved, That the Policy and Planning Advisory Committee Meeting be adjourned.

“CARRIED”

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 pm.

R. Clouthier, Recording Secretary

B. Holmes, Chair