

Minutes: Board of Directors Meeting

July 14, 2025

Hybrid Meeting via Zoom and MVCA Office Boardroom

Roll Call

Members Present

- Roy Huetl, Chair
- Paul Kehoe, Vice Chair
- Allan Hubley (remote)
- Bev Holmes
- Cathy Curry (remote)
- Cindy Kelsey
- Dena Comley (remote)
- Glen Gower (remote)
- Helen Yanch
- Janet Mason
- Jeannie Kelso (remote)
- Mary Lou Souter
- Richard Kidd
- Steven Lewis
- Taylor Popkie
- Wayne Baker

Members Absent

- Clarke Kelly
- Jeff Atkinson

Staff

- Sally McIntyre, General Manager
- Stacy Millard, Treasurer
- Juraj Cunderlik, Director of Engineering
- Ben Dopson, Manager of Planning and Stewardship
- Scott Lawryk, Properties Manager
- Alex Broadbent, Manager of I&CT
- Kathryn Starratt, Water Resources Specialist
- Kelly Hollington, Recording Secretary

R. Huetl called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Declarations of Interest

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

There were no amendments or discussion regarding the agenda.

BOD25/07/14 - 1

MOVED BY: T. Popkie

SECONDED BY: M. Souter

Resolved, that the agenda for the July 14, 2025 Board of Directors Meeting be adopted as presented.

“CARRIED”

Main Business

1. Approval of Minutes: Board of Directors Meeting, May 12, 2025

There were no amendments or discussion regarding the minutes.

BOD25/07/14 - 2

MOVED BY: P. Kehoe

SECONDED BY: H. Yanch

Resolved, that the minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting held on May 12, 2025 be received and approved as printed.

“CARRIED”

2. Receipt of Minutes:

- a. Finance and Administration Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes, June 26, 2025.
- b. Policy and Planning Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes, July 3, 2025.

Draft minutes of the Finance and Administration Advisory Committee and the Policy and Planning Advisory Committee were provided for information. There was no discussion regarding the draft minutes.

3. Staff Presentation: Low Water Response Plan, Kathryn Starratt & Juraj Cunderlik

K. Starratt presented MVCA’s *Low Water Response Plan*. She summarized the regulatory context and MVCA’s responsibilities for low water/drought monitoring and

management. She provided the definition of low water and explained the status levels. Triggers/indicators under the *Ontario Low Water Response (2010)* were also reviewed.

K. Starratt noted changes to the drought monitoring system, namely replacement of manual data capture and analysis to an automated process with improved quality assurance and quality control. The new monitoring system also distinguishes between the Mississippi and Carp watersheds, and reports on them separately. Future project phases for drought monitoring and system improvements were reviewed. Finally, the current low water status for the Mississippi and Carp watersheds were reviewed, which were at *Normal* status.

J. Cunderlik presented on summer flood forecasting and warning. He provided an overview of historical summer flood events in the watershed. He described the factors that increase vulnerability to summer flooding. He highlighted the impacts of climate conditions and the unpredictable nature of storms and weather events. He reviewed MVCA's flood forecasting and warning strategy: Monitor, Observe & React. He reviewed the new tools used to inform MVCA's flood forecasting and warning strategy.

R. Kidd asked how many MVCA staff are working on the Low Water Response Plan. S. McIntyre responded that K. Starratt was the staff member responsible for the automated low water/drought response system on MVCA's DPC. R. Kidd asked how many staff members monitor the system. S. McIntyre explained that multiple staff members are trained to monitor the system and more staff have been identified for training. The automated monitoring system allows MVCA to make the calls to assemble a drought response team to meet legislative and regulatory requirements. K. Starratt added that the automated system allows staff to gain an understanding of watershed conditions from a glance.

R. Kidd asked how many droughts the watershed has experienced in the past 5 years. K. Starratt responded that the watershed went to a Level 3 status in 2016, and to Level 1 in 2018 and 2020. She noted that the data from these droughts were used to test against drought status thresholds and to build decision making plans.

W. Baker asked if the lakes in the watershed have individual thresholds and response times for flood and drought mitigation actions. J. Cunderlik explained that each lake has individual thresholds for flooding which informs how many stoplogs to remove. K. Starratt added that the thresholds are directly tied to water levels of the lakes.

M. Souter asked for the current water levels of the upper lakes in the watershed. J. Cunderlik explained that the levels are within target summer levels and still have remaining storage capacity. K. Starratt added that the water levels are generally below historical average for this time of year.

4. GM Update, Report 3503/25, Sally McIntyre.

S. McIntyre reviewed the GM Update report topics and highlighted:

- Bill 5 and Appointment of a provincial Chief Conservation Executive – Hassaan Basit has been appointed Deputy Minister and Chief Conservation Executive for a period not exceeding three years. The functional role and scope of this position have yet to be confirmed.
- Education Program – Enrollment in the summer camp program is up 70% as compared to 2024.
- Lanark Dam Safety Improvements – MVCA has received approval from the Township of Lanark Highlands for an easement agreement to allow access to property for the purpose of installing the new boom and anchor. Staff have also received approval-in-principle from the owners of Centennial Truss Fabricators Ltd. for a similar agreement. Works are planned for August 2025.
- K&P Trail – The County of Frontenac has decided that it does not want to lease portions of the trail that MVCA cannot turn over immediately. Staff are reviewing the agreement to determine any implications.
- National Standard of Canada – J. Cunderlik participated in the development of a new National Standard with the Canadian Standards Association (CSA Group) that focuses on *Developing and Interpreting Intensity-Duration-Frequency (IDF) Information Under a Changing Climate*. This standard helps to inform flood forecasting and has a focus on climate change. She highlighted that J. Cunderlik was the only participant from an Ontario conservation authority.
- Staffing – Spencer Pye joined MVCA as a Civil Engineer. Rikke Brown joined MVCA as a Water Resources Engineer. R. Brown is a shared resource jointly funded by Rideau Valley and South Nation Conservation Authorities.
- Conservation Leaders – Latornell Leadership Awards – Nominations are open to recognize individuals who have made outstanding contributions to environmental conservation.
- Clean & Drain & Dry Promotion – S. McIntyre encouraged sharing the promotion across all municipalities to help mitigate the spread of invasive species.

R. Kidd asked how the K&P Trail sale process is affected by the change in position from Frontenac County. S. McIntyre explained that review of specific clauses related to

MVCA's financial responsibility concerning lease hold improvements and costs to resolve land title registration.

R. Kidd asked if there are financial implications relating to legal council on this matter. S. McIntyre responded that if the agreement requires significant rewording that legal council may be needed. R. Kidd expressed concerns regarding the extension of the timeline of the sale to the counties. S. McIntyre highlighted the importance of all three parties clarifying and agreeing to the terms of the agreement prior to signing.

M. Souter asked for more details regarding MVCA's acceptance into the Canadian Conservation Institute's (CCI) on-site assessment program. S. Lawryk explained that MVCA applied at the beginning of 2025 and the initial assessment took place in June. A formal report from CCI is expected in September that is to provide a summary of findings and outline possible areas of improvement for the museum collection. A follow-up on-site assessment is scheduled for June 2026.

5. In Camera – Job Evaluation (JE) Results, Report 3499/25, Sally McIntyre.

The Job Evaluation (JE) Results report was reviewed and discussed in-camera.

BOD25/07/14 - 3

MOVED BY: H. Yanch

SECONDED BY: M. Souter

Resolved, That the Board of Directors move in-camera for discussion of the following matter:

- *Labour relations or employee negotiations.*

And further resolved, That:

- *Sally McIntyre remain in the room; and*
- *Remaining MVCA staff leave the room.*

“CARRIED”

BOD25/07/14 - 4

MOVED BY: T. Popkie

SECONDED BY: C. Kelsey

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

“CARRIED”

BOD25/07/14 - 5

MOVED BY: J. Mason

SECONDED BY: P. Kehoe

Resolved, That the Board of Directors approve:

1. *Changes to Job Ratings as recommended by the General Manager; and*
2. *Updates to the Salary Grid as recommended by the General Manager.*

“CARRIED”

6. Corporate Strategic Plan Update, Report 3504//25, Sally McIntyre.

S. McIntyre summarized the facilitator’s findings from the June meeting held to discuss update of MVCA’s *Corporate Strategic Plan*. Draft priorities and objectives were reviewed with suggested recommended deletions and additions made by the GM.

R. Kidd asked why modeling rural water quality and quantity and assessing vulnerability is an objective. S. McIntyre responded that it was identified as an objective by members of the Board and senior staff who attended the facilitated discussion.

J. Mason expressed her strong disagreement with the drafted vision statement. She suggested that the term *sustainable development* be adjusted to *sustainable landscape*. She asked if she could provide suggestions of alternative vision statements offline after the meeting. S. McIntyre agreed.

R. Kidd asked if staff members added items to draft objectives. S. McIntyre responded that staff comments were considered in the drafting of the objectives for the board report.

R. Kidd asked for more information on objectives related to rural water quality/quantity. S. McIntyre explained that modelling helps MVCA with water budgeting at a watershed level.

R. Kidd asked if there is still a source water protection committee. S. McIntyre confirmed the Source Water Protection Committee is still in place but they do not undertake studies. R. Kidd asked if MVCA is mandated to do studies relating to rural water quality/quantity. S. McIntyre responded that MVCA is mandated to support the municipalities in areas of source water protection.

R. Kidd asked for a background on rural water quality/quantity and why it’s an objective for the *Corporate Strategic Plan*. S. McIntyre explained that there is a gap in the

regulatory framework to ensure source water protection for private wells and intakes, particularly in the rural area. The goal of this objective is to better understand the vulnerability of private wells and intakes to hazards, droughts, etc. at a watershed level. A basic analysis was completed ~10 years ago. Updates are needed to address impacts of climate change, development, septic system failures, etc.

R. Kidd expressed concerns with MVCA taking on a project that is not mandated by the Province. He highlighted that rural wells are private. He expressed concern regarding the public perception of a rural clean water program.

C. Curry asked if the province has put forward anything that would prevent MVCA from being able to take on the listed objectives. S. McIntyre confirmed all objectives are possible from a provincial lens. S. McIntyre explained that if the Board moves forward on the studies of water budget, it would require additional funding and be considered a category 2 program.

J. Mason explained that the listed objectives were identified by members of the Board who attended the discussion session in June. She noted that not all the members of the Board were in attendance and asked for the process by which members can submit their comments.

C. Curry commented that rural source water protection studies are what a conservation authority needs to focus on. She highlighted the importance of ensuring safe and clean drinking water across the watershed. She commented that this type of work is critical and will be perceived by the Province as highly valuable and important. She noted that it is important to understand the impacts of development on wells in rural areas within the watershed. She commented that it is important to discuss the rural clean water objective with all member municipalities to confirm interest and funding support for rural clean water studies throughout the watershed.

G. Gower commented that discussion is needed surround the rebranding of MVCA from a *conservation authority* to a *watershed authority* to improve community engagement and perception. He asked if rebranding is a part of the communications plan. S. McIntyre explained that she reached out to Hassaan Basit, Deputy Minister and Chief Conservation Executive, to congratulate him on his appointment and presented the idea of rebranding as a *watershed authority*. The idea was well received. Rebranding is not a part of the communications plan objective. G. Gower highlighted the importance of focusing on community engagement and education regarding MVCA's role.

B. Holmes expressed concerns regarding a rural water program and how it will be received by the agricultural community. She highlighted the importance of public consultation regarding this matter.

R. Kidd commented that rural subdivision applications require geotechnical studies which are peer-reviewed by the municipality and approving agency, Lanark County. He commented that doing work with rural wells will be counter productive in achieving positive community engagement and improving communications. S. McIntyre explained that it is not proposed to monitor water quality/quantity or to become engaged in individual projects, but to model water systems at the watershed level.

S. Lewis commented that severances require a water study by an engineer to be submitted for municipal review. He asked why the data from these water studies and other municipal level studies are not being used to inform rural water quality/quantity in the watershed. He highlighted the importance of consulting agricultural groups within the community to discuss this topic. S. McIntyre responded that while municipalities and the health unit undertake discreet studies, there is a need for a system-wide analysis to provide watershed-wide modeling to inform municipalities and help aid in their reviews.

P. Kehoe commented that well data is site-specific and complex. He noted that due to the geographic nature and complexity of the watershed, it is difficult to analyze from a watershed-wide lens. He commented that ground water issues are too complex to resolve.

P. Kehoe expressed concerns regarding the public perception of the term *Watershed Authority*. He noted that other organizations are associated with watersheds including Watersheds Canada, Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Natural Resources. He recommended keeping the term *Conservation* to stay aligned with MVCA's mandate.

J. Kelso expressed her support for rural source water protection studies. She asked if there is an estimate of the cost to the municipalities to implement this type of program. She highlighted the importance of consulting with all member municipalities to gain an understanding of their appetite for a rural source water protection program. S. McIntyre explained that Rideau Valley Conservation (RVCA) is lead agency under the Mississippi-Rideau Source Water Protection Authority. Staff at RVCA have scoped out the work needed to update the water budget. S. McIntyre will follow up with J. Kelso to provide cost estimates.

H. Yanch expressed concerns about implementing a rural source water protection program. She commented that there are enough agencies looking at source water protection.

J. Mason asked how comments can be submitted to staff for review and the deadline for consideration for the draft *Corporate Strategic Plan*. S. McIntyre responded that comments can be submitted by email and that the deadline is mid-August.

BOD25/07/14 - 6

MOVED BY: B. Holmes

SECONDED BY: J. Mason

Resolved, That the Board of Directors direct staff to draft the 2026-2030 Corporate Strategic Plan based upon the recommendations set out in report 3504/25 and comments received by mid-August.

“CARRIED”

7. **Mill of Kintail Strategic Plan Update, Report 3502/25, Sally McIntyre**

S. McIntyre reviewed background information regarding the museum strategic planning and budget. She highlighted that no sustainable funding alternatives have been identified. She noted that MVCA was unsuccessful in obtaining federal student grants and will likely have a deficit in 2025. She reviewed the proposed updated vision statement and museum objectives, and noted that the proposed vision and objectives align with Board Direction in the *Land Conservation and Resource Strategy* and recent planning sessions for the update of MVCA's *Corporate Strategic Plan*. She reviewed the proposed transition approach and next steps. She highlighted the importance of the public engagement process and working with the Municipality of Mississippi Mills.

B. Holmes commented that she has received negative reactions to the proposed changes to the museum. She noted that the three museums within the Municipality of Mississippi Mills are all inadequately funded.

M. Souter expressed concerns regarding the proposed changes and the potential of negative public perceptions. She commented that the Mill of Kintail property was entrusted to MVCA to protect the property and the associated artifacts.

R. Kidd expressed concerns regarding the financial viability of the proposed changes, the transition of the Museum from a Category 3 program to a Category 1 program, and the potential for negative public perceptions. He commented that there is a lack of interest

and funding supporting students participating in field trips for education purposes. He expressed concerns regarding the cost-recoverability of MVCA's education program.

B. Holmes commented that follow up is needed to determine why MVCA has not received federal grants for museum summer students.

S. McIntyre explained that participation in MVCA's Education Program has increased. She noted that approximately 1,900 students from across the watershed have visited the museum since January and that Ontario Power Generation (OPG) has sponsored bussing for schools to participate in MVCA's program. She highlighted the potential for growth of the education program.

P. Kehoe expressed concerns regarding the ability for the R. Tait McKenzie and James Naismith collections to draw support for the museum. He recommended relocating the collections to another local museum. He noted his support for the proposed updated vision of an educational centre to draw students to the site.

M. Souter recommended collaborating with the Mississippi Valley Field Naturalists to provide watershed education. She highlighted the value of the Mill of Kintail site as a whole and the potential to expand MVCA's education program. She noted that the R. Tait McKenzie collection is valuable and needs protection.

J. Mason explained that the municipal levy used to pay for MVCA's education program prior to regulatory changes. She noted the importance of sharing the reasons behind the funding changes with the community.

R. Kidd expressed concerns regarding the costs associated with the education program. He asked for staff to provide a detailed budget of the education program for consideration. He expressed his opinion that MVCA staff lack educational programming and event coordination expertise.

W. Baker expressed his support for adapting the museum to a category 1 education program.

B. Holmes highlighted the importance of protecting the R. Tait McKenzie and James Naismith collections. She noted that both figures are recognized on a local and international level.

R. Huetl asked S. Millard to prepare a detailed budget of MVCA's education program for consideration in drafting the *Mill of Kintail Strategic Plan*.

BOD25/07/14 - 7

MOVED BY: P. Kehoe

SECONDED BY: T. Popkie

Resolved, That the Board of Directors direct staff to:

- 1. Engage with Mill of Kintail Museum patrons and the broader community regarding the draft changes, Vision Statement and Objectives set out in report 3502/25; and*
- 2. Return to the Committee and Board in the fall with findings and recommendations for update of the Mill of Kintail Strategic Plan.*

“CARRIED”

8. Fee Update, Report 3500/25, Stacy Millard.

S. Millard presented updates to MVCA’s Fee Schedule including splitting into individual program areas and fees for items such as HQ boardroom rentals, Mill of Kintail rentals and stewardship plants.

M. Souter commented that the reduction in the minimum rental time from four to two hours will make rentals more attractive to the public. S. Millard commented that the goal is to increase rentals at the Mill of Kintail site.

BOD25/07/14 - 8

MOVED BY: W. Baker

SECONDED BY: B. Holmes

Resolved, That the Board of Directors approve:

- 1. Revision of MVCA’s 2025 Fee Schedules as outlined in Report 3500/25;*
- 2. Posting of the new fees in accordance with MVCA’s Fee Policy; and*
- 3. That the new fees take effect September 1, 2025 pending no major concerns regarding the proposed changes.*

“CARRIED”

9. Reserve Policies, Report 3501/25, Sally McIntyre.

S. McIntyre reviewed the reserve policy and the issues identified by staff. The current wording restricts the treasurer from being able to move funds under the scope of the approved annual budget. She reviewed the proposed wording changes.

BOD25/07/14 - 9

MOVED BY: P. Kehoe

SECONDED BY: J. Mason

Resolved, That the Board of Directors approve amendment of the Reserve Policies as set out in report 3501/25 as amended by the Finance and Administration Advisory Committee.

“CARRIED”

10. Review and Revisions of MVCA’s Regulatory Mapping, Report 3505/25, Juraj Cunderlik.

J. Cunderlik provided a background of MVCA’s regulatory mapping process. He reviewed the formal business process for regulatory mapping review and revision requests. He summarized 2024 revisions including wetland and hazard mapping.

11. 2025 Land Inventory Update, Report 3506/25, Scott Lawryk.

S. Lawryk provided a background on MVCA’s Land Inventory and recent updates. He reviewed pending property divestments of the K&P Trail and beach property at Palmerston-Canonto Conservation Area. He reviewed property ownership updates surrounding dams including the Lanark Dam, Kashwakamak Lake Dam and Shabomeka Lake Dam.

Adjournment

BOD25/07/14 - 10

MOVED BY: P. Kehoe

SECONDED BY: T. Popkie

Resolved, That the Board of Directors meeting be adjourned.

“CARRIED”

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

K. Hollington, Recording Secretary