

RIDEAU VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
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APPROVED MINUTES

Board of Directors **8/14** **November 27, 2014**

Present:	Jim Anderton Pat Barr Barclay Cormack Ed Hand Andy Jozefowicz Scott Moffatt Ray Scissons	Lee Armstrong Vince Carroll Ken Graham Rick Henderson Magda Kubasiewicz Lyle Pederson
Staff:	Ferdous Ahmed Dan Cooper Rudy Dyck Ewan Hardie Michelle Paton	Sommer Casgrain-Robertson Terry Davidson Kristy Giles Don Maciver
Guests:	Tom Scott, RVCA Alternate Board Member	
Regrets:	Jim Boldt Brian Campbell Steve Curtis Tom Dewey Bradley Wing	Gerry Boyce David Chernushenko Rob Dunfield Sharon Mousseau

Prior to the meeting, a YouTube video highlighting RVCA's forestry department was played.

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson addressed the issue of municipal appointment terms of office which typically expire on November 30. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson explained that section 14.1 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* states:

“Members of an authority shall be appointed by the representative councils of the participating municipalities..., and each member shall hold office until the first meeting of the authority after the term for which he or she was appointed has expired.”

Ms. Casgrain-Robertson added that she had sent a letter to all member municipalities advising them of this.

Ms. Casgrain-Robertson stated that she will contact municipalities whose representatives currently sit on RVCA's Executive Committee to advise them of a need for an Executive Committee meeting (Hearing) in December.

Motion 3-141127

Moved by:

Ed Hand

Seconded by:

Jim Anderton

That the RVCA Board of Directors receive the Jock River Fish Habitat Embayment Creation Project activity report.

Motion Carried

6.0 Brewer Park Pond Restoration Construction Update 2014

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson explained that the Brewer Park Pond Restoration Construction was a compensation project and funding for it came from a developer.

Barclay Cormack asked for an explanation of “root wad revetment”. Staff will have Jennifer Lamoureux, RVCA’s Aquatic and Fish Habitat Biologist respond to Mr. Cormack directly. Sommer Casgrain-Robertson added that she would like to have Jennifer Lamoureux speak to the Board regarding her programs in 2015.

Note: A root wad revetment is a shoreline treatment to mitigate potential erosion by using trees cut above the root mass. The trunk part of the tree is inserted into the bank and the root mass sits along the shoreline as a means to create roughness along the shoreline and minimize erosion. This application has been used as a more natural approach to shoreline erosion mitigation as compared to engineering practices like rip rap

Motion 4-141127

Moved by:

Lyle Pederson

Seconded by:

Andy Jozefowicz

That the RVCA Board of Directors receive the Brewer Park Pond Restoration Construction Update 2014 activity report.

Motion Carried

7.0 Energy East Pipeline

Rick Henderson observed that the RVCA has a unique role to play with respect to the Energy East Pipeline adding that he would like to see the RVCA seek intervener status. Mr. Henderson explained that the gas pipeline travels through the Marlborough Forest and the Oxford Aquifer, and crosses the Rideau River at Baxter Conservation Area all of which are ecologically sensitive areas. Mr. Henderson expressed concern with the gas pipeline being flipped to transport diluted bitumen. Magda Kubasiewicz echoed Mr. Henderson’s concerns and stated that she would like to see a timeline set for addressing issues associated with the Energy East Pipeline.

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson responded that RVCA staff met with TransCanada staff on November 19, 2014 to learn more about the recently filed application and the additional information that will be filed as supplementary information to the application. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson added that a decision regarding RVCA's options for participating will be made by the Board once the National Energy Board has outlined their consultation process. Lyle Pederson added that Ontario and Quebec have identified broader issues which may significantly delay the process. Jim Anderton stated that there is growing concern over pollution particles being released into the atmosphere at the head of the pipeline and the associated health risks.

Ken Graham suggested that the topic could be the subject of a future Board meeting.

Motion 5-141127

Moved by:

Scott Moffatt

Seconded by:

Lyle Pederson

That the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority Board of Directors receive the report for information.

Motion Carried

Note: Agenda order revised to address reserve funds

10.0 Auditor's 2014 Recommendations

2013 Reserves

As "business arising from the minutes", Sommer Casgrain-Robertson gave a description of the different types of reserve accounts and their uses (2013 Reserves (audited) sheet attached). Ken Graham responded to concerns about the existence of the reserve accounts by stating that the reserve accounts are not new; he suggested that the list may be new to some members.

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson confirmed that the auditors have expressed concern that the current RVCA reserves are very low for an organization of our size. Their recommendation is to grow the Program and Working Fund Reserves to a point where, if necessary, they could sustain the organization for a length of time. The need for a discussion on the management of the reserve accounts was identified. This discussion would include identifying appropriate target levels and a strategy for meeting them, as well as the process for allocation and authorization of reserve account funds. This discussion also relates to the strategic planning process and the identification of program priorities.

Rick Henderson expressed concern with the overall budget process and, in particular, how staff heavy the organization is. Mr. Henderson stressed that the budget is largely comprised of costs relating to staffing and suggested that a moratorium on staffing be considered as the organization cannot continue to rely on levy increases. Members responded that the nature of the work that the RVCA does requires people not inventory to build things or expensive equipment. Ken Graham confirmed that salaries are always a large part of the cost of an organization like this. Mr. Graham added that staff have responded to all previous requests to trim expenses in order to keep levy increases to a minimum. This has resulted in an operating budget where 75% is salary costs while the remaining 25% covers all other expenditures.

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson went on to address the Auditor's 2014 Recommendations:

SAGE Financial Statements

RVCA's current financial reporting system involves the inputting of information into Excel spreadsheets which is very labour intensive and subject to error. The budgeting process is also a manual one which does not lend itself to either the production of real time reporting or "scenario" reporting. The Auditors have recommended the purchase of financial software which would ensure the integrity of reporting information.

Tangible Capital Assets

Current policies need to be reviewed and updated if necessary.

Chart of Accounts

The current chart of accounts needs to be revised as it contains too many accounts. The creation of a new chart of accounts is paramount if the purchase of new financial reporting software is approved. Senior managers would work with finance staff to design the new chart of accounts which could then form the basis for templates in SAGE Budgeting and Reporting. This process will likely take up to six months with the new chart of accounts being implemented in 2016

Purchasing Policy

Current policies need to be reviewed and updated if necessary.

Audit Committee

The auditors recommended that a small audit committee of Board members be created who would meet annually with the auditor independent of the General Manager. This would allow the auditors an opportunity to more easily raise any concerns with senior management.

Lyle Pederson suggested that the Audit Committee might also want to meet with the auditors prior to the audit to identify any concerns. Magda Kubasiewicz recommended that the practice of having the auditor attend the Annual General Meeting continue.

Motion 6-141127 **Moved by:** Lyle Pederson
Seconded by: Ed Hand

That the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority Board of Directors appoint the members of the Executive Committee to act as the RVCA's "Audit Committee" which will meet annually with the Auditor prior to the RVCA's Annual General Meeting.

Motion Carried

8.0 **RVCA Expenditure and Revenue Report as at September 30, 2014**

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson responded to questions regarding the RVCA Expenditure and Revenue Report.

Motion 7-141127 **Moved by:** Jim Anderton
Seconded by: Magda Kubasiewicz

That the Rideau Valley Conservation Board of Directors approve the Expenditure and Revenue Report as at September 30, 2014.

Motion Carried

9.0 **LiDAR Elevation Data**

In response to questions from members, Sommer Casgrain-Robertson explained that the proposed motion to approve the use of reserves to purchase LiDAR Elevation data had been drafted should a year-end surplus not be realized. If possible the purchase would be paid for from program reserves and, in particular, from Planning & Regulations and Watershed Science & Engineering.

Ewan Hardie advised that Digital Terrain Model data costs approximately \$120 per square kilometer whereas LiDAR data costs approximately \$128 per square kilometer and is far more accurate.

Ms. Casgrain-Robertson expressed her appreciation that the City of Ottawa had allowed the RVCA to piggy-back on their purchase of the LiDAR data.

Lyle Pederson suggested that Ms. Casgrain-Robertson's email with the subject line "Urgent Staff Report – Board Decision Required" dated

November 10, 2014 (attached) was an excellent example of a proper business case and recommended the adoption of this for future use.

Motion 7-141127

Moved by:

Ray Scissons

Seconded by:

Andy Jozefowicz

That the Rideau Valley Conservation Board of Directors approve the use of reserves to purchase LiDAR Elevation Data to an upset limit of \$60,000.

Motion Carried

11.0 2015 Preliminary Budget

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson explained that assessment growth is new assessment in an area over the previous year (e.g. new construction) and does not include reassessment. The assessment growth figure for the Rideau Valley watershed is 1.28%. A tax increase of no more than 2%, as requested by the City of Ottawa, would result in a levy increase of 3.28%.

In response to a question from Rick Henderson, Ms. Casgrain-Robertson indicated that municipal staff clearly stated that reassessment is not included in assessment growth. Scott Moffatt concurred stating that a municipality cannot profit from reassessment. Lyle Pederson confirmed that Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley prepares their budget using this approach.

Barclay Cormack noted Motion 10-141023 had directed staff to bring, for review in November 2014, a revised 2015 Preliminary Budget showing the impacts of a 2% total levy increase. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson indicated that senior staff had met numerous times with the goal of producing the requested budget. They determined that all discretionary expenses had already been cut leaving only salary related costs. They had also looked at programming and determined that most programs are inter-connected and any cuts would have consequences on other programs or unintended consequences for member municipalities. It was decided that the requested budget could not be produced by senior staff in the short time frame provided – decisions regarding programs and services should come out of the strategic review being undertaken in 2015. Scott Moffatt stated that the revised preliminary budget did in fact meet the City of Ottawa's request for a 2% levy increase over growth. Ken Graham pointed out that the RVCA does not gain directly from assessment growth unless it increases its levy. Mr. Graham added that the proposed levy increase is only \$150,000, of which the City of Ottawa pays \$135,000, on an \$8,000,000 operating budget.

Lyle Pederson expressed support for the proposed budget with the associated levy increase of 3% but recommended that \$10,000 for website redesign be added. This previously identified need had been cut from the proposed budget dated October 10, 2014. Mr. Pederson agreed that the current RVCA website seems very cumbersome and outdated when compared to other conservation authority and municipal websites. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson advised that adding this communication line item would bring the proposed levy increase to 3.2% still below the 3.28% target set by the City of Ottawa (2% plus assessment growth of 1.28%). Rick Henderson expressed dissatisfaction with the process of changing budget parameters at this late date. Members stated that this need was identified by staff in October when the first draft budget was presented.

Motion 9-141127

Moved by:

Lyle Pederson

Seconded by:

Ray Scissons

That the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the revised preliminary budget and levy apportionment sheet for circulation to member municipalities for their review and consideration prior to the RVCA's Annual General Meeting on February 26, 2015.

Motion Carried

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson confirmed that a revised preliminary budget and levy apportionment sheet would be distributed to member municipalities for comment. The budget would then be brought back to the Board for approval at the Annual General Meeting on February 26, 2015.

12.0 Meetings

a) A.D. Latornell Conference: November 18-20, 2014

Magda Kubaciewicz, Pat Barr, and Jim Anderton provided their personal observations on attending the Latornell Conference.

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson advised that RVCA staff had been active at this year's conference participating in a group presentation on RVCA's watershed report card process and the successful link to stewardship. Jennifer Lamoureux had also presented on the Brewer Park Pond Restoration Project. Shelley Macpherson also served on the Organizing Committee again.

Upcoming:

b) Ottawa River Hazard Mapping Open House (East), Queenswood Heights Community Centre

- c) Ottawa River Hazard Mapping Open House (West), Ron Kolbus Lakeside Centre
- d) Conservation Ontario Council Meeting: September 29, 2014 (Toronto)
- e) RVCA Board of Directors Meeting: Thurs, February 26, 2015 (7 pm, Manotick)
- f) RVCA Board Member Orientation Session
Sommer Casgrain-Robertson suggested that an orientation session for new and returning Board members be held in early February 2015. Members were asked to advise staff of any dates to be avoided. Topic ideas for the orientation session should also be forwarded to staff.

12.0 Member Inquiries

Britannia

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson advised that the City of Ottawa was still negotiating easements with property owners. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson confirmed that the bid bond from the tender process had expired. Rick Henderson suggested that the website be updated to reflect more current information.

Maple Syrup Opportunity

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson advised that staff had arranged a meeting to visit the maple syrup operation at the Kemptville College campus but it had been cancelled. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson pointed out that the venture would not be core to our operation and, while we support the opportunity philosophically, we may not have the capacity to move forward without engaging partners.

Standard of Care Training – *Safe Drinking Water Act*

Vince Carroll informed the Board about the Standard of Care Training that his municipal council had been given regarding their responsibilities under the *Safe Drinking Water Act*. Sommer Casgrain-Robertson clarified that this is not the act that governs source water protection – that is the *Clean Water Act*.

Ken Graham explained that the training course developed by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change under Section 19 of the *Safe Drinking Water Act* was designed with significant guidance and input from an advisory group of councillors and mayors. The Ministry did not make the training course mandatory but insurance companies have made the training course a requirement for municipal insurance. Completion of the course, which costs \$150, demonstrates that municipal councillors have exercised the required due diligence.

13.0 New Business

Lyle Pederson thanked Ken Graham for his service as Chair of both the Board and the Executive Committee. Mr. Pederson spoke to Mr. Graham's level of commitment and spoke highly of being challenged by the Chair to exceed the level of trust placed in him by his municipality. Mr. Pederson added that the Board has progressed and become more participative under Mr. Graham's chairmanship.

Ken Graham responded that it has been a pleasure and a privilege to serve on the RVCA Board both with the current complement of members and with mentors like Alan Arbuckle, David Crowley, and John Miller. Mr. Graham complimented the Board on their ability to work cohesively adding that differences of opinion are a good thing. He then cited favorite quotes – "we can agree to disagree" and "we can disagree without being disagreeable". Mr. Graham also spoke highly of staff and their commitment.

14.0 Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 9:17 p.m. This was moved by Andy Jozefowicz and seconded by Jim Anderton.

Ken Graham
Chair

Michelle Paton
Recording Secretary