

The Board of Directors Meeting of the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority was held on the above date, at the Administration Office at the hour of 10:00 a.m.

Present: Steve Arnold, Chair; Terry Burrell, Vice Chair; Bill Bilton, David Boushy, Tony Bruinink, Joe Faas, Norm Giffen, Anne Gilbert, Rod Glen, Betty Ann MacKinnon, Don McCallum, John McCharles, Netty McEwen, Steve Miller, Frank Nemcek, John Romlewski

Absent: Elizabeth Davis-Dagg, Anne Marie Gillis, Kevin Marriott, Ben Phay

Also present for all or part of meeting: Brian McDougall, General Manager; Rick Battson, Director of Communication; Patty Hayman, Director of Planning, Dallas Cundick, Environment Planner/Regs Officer; Kevan Baker, Director of Conservation Areas; Tracy Prince, Director of Finance; Marlene Dorrestyn, Administrative Assistant

The Chair requested that each Director declare a conflict of interest at the appropriate time, on any item within this agenda in that a Director may have pecuniary interest.

**BD-14-112**

**Glen - Bruinink**

**“That the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting, held June 26, 2014, be approved as distributed.”**

**CARRIED**

The General Manager’s Report was presented:

- Keith McLean Conservation Lands
  - this week or early next week, the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation will finally begin to see some progress with regards to Keith McLean’s estate
  - documents were executed this week to have the property transferred into the Foundation’s name
  - a portion of the financial settlement of the estate will be provided to the Foundation next week in the amount of \$1 million
  - the Estate has maintained a holdback that it expected to more than cover any remaining costs and tax issues
  - the balance of this holdback will be provided to the Foundation upon final approval from the Canada Revenue Agency
- Operating Grants Received
  - although delayed by the Provincial election, the Authority received it’s annual transfer payment from the Province in the order of \$310,003.00 in late August
  - the transfer payments support flood and erosion control maintenance, flood forecasting and warning, planning and administrative functions
  - this transfer payment is the basis for the matching levy contributed by all member municipalities
- Corporate Compensation Strategy Review
  - the Corporate Compensation Strategy recommends a review of the overall compensation plan every 5 years to ensure market competitiveness
  - we are fortunate that two other Authorities, both of which are good comparators to the SCRCA, are undertaking in depth reviews in 2014

- these two reviews are expected to be completed this month and will be provided to the Authority to assist in undertaking our own comparison which will also include local and regional comparators
- the General Manager and Director of Finance will review the 2010 Compensation Plan, compare the collected updated information and will provide a report at the November 2014 Board Meeting for review and potential implementation in 2015

**BD-14-113**

**Nemcek - MacKinnon**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the General Manager’s report, dated September 3, 2014.”**

**CARRIED**

A report regarding alternative sources of natural gas and electricity was considered.

- with ever increasing costs, Authority staff are constantly looking for opportunities to control costs with the objective of controlling increases in fees and levies
- energy costs are expected to climb significantly over the next 5 years
- when you combine all our electricity usage, we are a moderate volume user and we wanted to investigate any potential savings due to that usage
- Canadian Energy Wholesale (CEW) provides an alternative to our current supplies of electricity and natural gas
- CEW has been supplying energy to moderate and large volume users in and around Toronto for over 30 years
- CEW has provided a quotation (attached) which could see a savings of over \$32,000 over a 5 year period
- references have been requested to establish long term viability, customer service and confirmation of savings and no hidden fees
- comparables will be sought to determine if there are other options to achieve this type of savings

**BD-14-114**

**Bilton - Faas**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report, dated September 3, 2014 regarding alternative sources of natural gas and electricity and supports the transition of energy supply subject to available comparables and positive references.”**

**CARRIED**

Conservation Ontario minutes of the June 23, 2014 meeting were reviewed.

**BD-14-115**

**Miller - Bruinink**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the minutes of the June 23, 2014 Conservation Ontario Council meeting minutes.”**

**CARRIED**

A report on the business arising from the last meeting was discussed.

- send planning services fees to all municipalities as soon as possible so they can incorporate the information into their 2015 budgets – *to be sent after today’s meeting.*
- corrected 2013 Directors’ per diem and mileage – *attached to meeting package*

**BD-14-116****Romlewski - McCallum****“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the updates on business arising from the June 26, 2014 meeting.”****CARRIED**

A staff report on Communications was discussed.

- Conservation Education
  - with the Conservation Education Program about to launch into its season, a promotional flyer was produced highlighting the numerous programs available to students. The flyers were distributed to each teacher in the region highlighting the 23 outdoor and 6 in-classroom programs offered that are free of charge as the costs for these programs are covered by sponsors.
- Conservation Scholarships
  - the five scholarships approved at the June meeting were presented in July by Steve Arnold. The students (and parents) were all very appreciative.
- Union Gas Supports Keith McLean Conservation Lands
  - Union Gas donated \$1,000 and supplied volunteer labour to plant 30 Carolinian Trees at the McLean’s Conservation Lands near Rondeau Bay through the Helping Hands In Action Program.
- Coming Events
  - McKenzie and Blundy Memorial Forest Dedication: Wawanosh Wetlands Conservation Area, September 21, 2:00 pm – greetings will be provided by Steve Arnold
  - A Geocaching Adventure: Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area, Sunday, September 21, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
  - St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation Memorial Forest Dedication: Lorne C. Henderson Conservation Area, September 28, 2:00 pm – Speakers – Duncan Skinner, president, St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation and Terry Burrell.

**BD-14-117****McCharles – McEwen****“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Communications Report, dated August 30, 2014, including information regarding Conservation Education, Coming Events and Conservation Scholarships.”****CARRIED**

A staff report on water levels, current and flood conditions was presented.

- Highlights:
  - seasonal water levels across the watershed
  - above average precipitation with no significant storm impact through the summer months
  - lake levels significantly improved over 2013
- Watershed Precipitation and Streamflow Conditions
  - seasonal flows stabilized into the summer months with only one significant event in the early part of July. By comparison with 2013 there were average flows throughout the watershed with an even distribution of rain events over the reported period. This resulted generally a lower impact on water levels in 2014 over the period compared to last year when there was a greater number and intensity of weather systems and rainfall events in 2013. Rain was distributed evenly over the period however Sarnia received only 81% of the normal while Strathroy received additional rain with 108.5% and Windsor and south

central areas of the watershed were wetter than normal. Subsequently, regional three month averages remain 8% higher while six month numbers remain down due to a relatively dry March this year. Overall the twelve month precipitation amounts remained very close to the average at 100.5%.

- Flood Threat
  - with the trend toward seasonal flows throughout the summer months there were no significant rain events with the exception of an event in July mostly in the Strathroy and upper watershed areas that increased flows downstream for approximately one week. During the remaining periods watercourses continued to have sufficient capacity to handle the average 20 to 30 mm rain events which lasted a few days moving runoff into the watercourses and lowering the chance any significant impact. The trend in the past few years has been that many events tend to develop in smaller pockets or thunderstorm cells which are often not evenly distributed across the region resulting in impact on flows in smaller sections of the system. This pattern however has not been as evident in our watershed this year but there remains the risk of potential sudden localized overbank conditions when intense rainfall cells develop unexpectedly as has been the case in recent years. No flood advisories have been issued since May 16<sup>th</sup>.
  - these changing conditions are carefully monitored to assess potential localized flood situations as we move into summer. Advisories will continue to be provided as watershed conditions dictate.
- Weather Forecast
  - September – sunny with slightly below average temperatures and precipitation
  - Fall – average temperatures and precipitation are expected to be below normal into the winter season
  - a comparison of conditions 2013 to 2014 indicated notably cooler temperatures through the summer where maximum daily temperatures tended to be lower across the region especially in July although there was no significant deviation year over year in June and August. The general perception was of a cooler summer period overall and this is evident with only three days above 30 C and sixteen days below 20 C in 2013 compared with eight and seven days in 2013 respectively. The number of actual days with precipitation was however very similar during the same period in 2013.
- Great Lakes Levels (Canadian Hydrometric Service – July 2014 data)
  - Lake levels in 2014 continued to improve significantly compared to 2013 in both Lake St. Clair and Lake Huron. Lake Huron levels now exceed the 10 year long term average although this average continues to be based on an extended period of lower levels. In addition, current levels are now much closer to average levels for the Period of Record (95 years) which continues to be reassuring but tenuous. As we move into another winter season levels are impacted by the extent of ice pack limiting evaporation and the extent of snowpack in northern areas of the province. The impact of higher lake levels has been evident with reduced beach areas following several years of lower levels.

**BD-14-118**

**Boushy - Faas**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated September 4, 2014, on the current watershed conditions, flood risk and Great Lakes water levels.”**

**CARRIED**

A staff report on Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure Projects submitted for funding in 2014-2015.

- Authority projects have scored between 90 and 115 points in Repair Projects and between 20 and 70 points for Safety Projects.
- Authority had previously secured funding of WECEI funding of \$40,000 for repair work along the floodway
- projects in the waiting list have been reviewed by a committee of provincial and Conservation Authority staff representatives last month and the projects have been ranked in comparison to all submitted projects from across the Province.
- another \$30,000 have been granted towards McKeough Dam Drop structure repair work following the review
- projects with emphasis on flood control has secured most of the funding

**BD-14-119**

**Burrell - McCharles**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated September 4, 2014 on the ongoing Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure projects across the watershed including the confirmation of funding for projects previously left unfunded.”**

**CARRIED**

A staff report regarding Municipal Drain Review activities was explained.

- since January, 2014, 142 drain files have been submitted to SCRCA for review. 84 files have been reviewed under the DART protocol and proponents have received Standard Compliance Requirements permissions. 34 files have been reviewed by staff and have received Letters of Review. Letters of Review are issued when the project does not fall under the DART protocol. In most cases these are engineer’s reports under section 78 of the Drainage Act for improvements, and advice is provided to further the conservation and management of the existing natural heritage features of the designated watershed. Currently six files are still in need of review.

Categories of Drain Review	January – April 2014	April – June 2014	July- September 2014	Total
DART Protocol – SCR issued	16	13	55	84
Letter of Review Issued	17	4	13	34
Requires Letter of Review	4	7	6	17
Other Types of Files (e.g., Environmental Assessment, sign-off, Assessment changes)	5	1	1	7
Total Files from January to June 2014	42	25	75	142

**BD-14-120**

**Nemcek - Bilton**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the status report dated September 2, 2014, summarizing Municipal Drain Review activities, and continuing funding opportunities for drain enhancement activities in the St. Clair River AOC.”**

**CARRIED**

A staff report regarding the Healthy Watersheds Programs was reviewed.

- Lambton Shores Healthy Lake Huron Program
  - Lambton Shores Tributaries (LST) Watershed received funding from Ontario Ministry of

the Environment and Environment Canada as part of the Healthy Lake Huron – Clean Water, Clean Beaches campaign, for immediate action to improve beach and inland surface water quality.

- **Water Quality Monitoring:** ongoing on a monthly and storm event basis to contribute to long-term data
- **Outreach and Education:**
  - CA staff met up with the Lambton Shores Steering Committee, a group of local volunteers who meet four times a year to brainstorm ways CA staff should undertake in the Lambton Shores Watershed in an effort to connect with landowners and spread the stewardship message with the local community. Suggestions included the shoreline postcard, sending newsletters to the beach associations and attending the Forest Fall Fair.
  - just over 1000 postcards were sent to shoreline residents in Lambton Shores announcing grants we have available for erosion, tree planting, and septic system upgrades. To date, we've had ~20 interested landowners contact us and of those a number of them are moving forward with projects
- **Healthy Sydenham Headwaters Initiative (HSHI)**
  - SCRCA and Middlesex Stewardship Council have partnered on this Initiative to guide conservation and restoration efforts in the Headwaters of the Sydenham River.
    - **water quality monitoring:** ongoing on a monthly basis to contribute to long-term data
    - **outreach and education:** staff hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Stewardship bus tour (July 17) with Middlesex Stewardship Council. Twenty CA staff (including staff from other CAs), council members, landowners, and funders attended and the tour included a stop at a restored wetland, a wetland project before construction, a 10 acre tree planting project and a 40 acre wetland/tree planting project.
- **SCRCA Bus Tour (June 26)**
  - this year's annual SCRCA bus tour stopped by a wetland project that went in the ground a few years ago. The Bolton's shared with us their enjoyment of having a wetland on their property.
  - this summer, 5 wetland projects have been implemented in the Sydenham Headwaters, resulting in ~15 acres of restored habitat!
- **Upcoming events:**
  - *September 6, 2014:* Centre Ipperwash Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup 9:00-11:00 a.m. – come volunteer and clean up one of Lake Huron's most beautiful beaches!
  - *September 19-21, 2014:* Forest Fall Fair – come visit our booth!
  - *November 2014:* Fall workshop –location and topic TBD
- **Stewardship projects – \*Grants available\*** SCRCA secures funding to support landowner implemented stewardship projects including riparian buffers, block tree planting, windbreaks, wetlands, and erosion control measures. Staff meet with landowners and offer advice and project design and where applicable, support projects with grants. Call today for more information.

**BD-14-121****Glen - McCharles**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the status report dated September 2, 2014, regarding the Healthy Watershed programs in Lambton Shores and the Sydenham Headwaters, including outreach events and mailings to encourage stewardship actions, and water quality enhancement grants for agricultural BMPs and residential septic upgrades.”**

**CARRIED**

A staff report regarding the Aquatic Inventory and Education Outreach Program in the Lake Huron watersheds was reviewed.

- thanks to a major grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, aquatic education, outreach and inventory work continues on Lambton County streams and creeks flowing into Lake Huron. Partners on the project include Carolinian Canada Coalition, St. Clair Region Conservation Authority and Kettle & Stony Point First Nation.
- in late August, a fish survey demonstration at Kettle and Stony Point, taught participants about various aquatic monitoring techniques.
- SCRCA staff emphasized connections between habitat and aquatic health. Several community members attended, as well as students from the Sarnia area who were looking to gain inventory experience.
- St. Clair Conservation staff also conducted mussel surveys as part of this program. Biology staff visited creeks and rivers to identify and measure mussels before releasing them back to the water.
- mussels are excellent indicators of water quality because they are long-lived and sessile making them susceptible to pollution. Thus, the presence of fresh water mussels helps indicate a healthy system. Aquatic inventory data will be published in Watershed Report Cards which summarize the current state of St. Clair Region’s watersheds. The report cards track and report on the surface and groundwater quality, and forest conditions in the watersheds.

**BD-14-122****Miller - Burrell**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated September 2, 2014 on the fish and mussel surveys, and recent outreach activities for the Aquatic Inventory and Education Outreach Program in our Lake Huron watersheds, providing information on the watershed health and engaging residents in stewardship actions.”**

**CARRIED**

A report on the Reptiles at Risk program was discussed.

- Butler’s garter snake sighting. The Butler’s garter snake is threatened under both the Ontario Endangered Species Act, 2007 and the federal species at risk act.
- continued sightings of the eastern fox snake in various locations throughout the SCRCA watershed through the use of coverboard monitoring, and both staff and public sightings.
- road signs were installed at the McKeough Dam to remind drivers that it is important to “brake for snakes”. Road mortality causes significant losses to populations of our Ontario snake species.
- in partnership with the Ontario Junior Rangers, staff from SCRCA conducted a reptile and amphibian inventory in the Lambton County Heritage Forest on August 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014. A tail clipping was obtained from an unknown species of mole salamander and identification will be determined by Jim Bogart at the University of Guelph. However, it is likely that the unknown mole salamander is a complex mix between the Jefferson and blue-spotted salamander species. Additionally, several Eastern red-backed salamanders were found.
- Jim Bogart, a professor from the University of Guelph positively identified the previously

unknown mole salamanders from Bowen's South Wetland as a complex mix of Jefferson and blue-spotted salamander species.

- kids from the Camp Blast program at Our Lady Immaculate School in Strathroy heard a talk by SCRCA staff on reptile and aquatic species at risk of the Sydenham River on July 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Participants were able to handle snake skin, turtle shells, mussel shells, and view pictures of the many reptile and aquatic species of the Sydenham River.
- on July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2014, participants in the "Discover Sydenham" program at the Strathroy Museum also heard a talk on aquatic and reptile species at risk of the Sydenham River by SCRCA staff. Kids were able to view the same materials as the participants from Camp Blast along with a stuffed eastern fox snake.
- female northern map turtles were observed laying eggs on roadways by SCRCA staff in the month of June 2014. Due to the risk of loss from human activity, and predation, these eggs were collected and sent for incubation. Many predated nests have been observed on these roadways. The eggs have now hatched and 23 hatchlings were released on site on August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014.
- thanks to staff at McKeough Dam, brush has been placed in a pile to be used as a habitat enhancement for snakes. An informative sign is to be installed to inform people on what a brush pile is and its benefits to snakes.
- Upcoming Events:
  - continued snake monitoring of coverboards, hibernaculum, and nesting boxes.
  - on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2014 students at the Hillside School of Kettle and Stony Point will be given the opportunity to learn about aquatic and reptile species at risk. The program will include a guest speaker from Sciensational Ssnakes who will bring in live specimens for students to handle and observe.
  - signage will be created/installed to raise awareness of reptiles and roads, and the importance of brush piles (a habitat enhancement).
  - coverboards will be deployed at new locations to monitor for presence/absence of snake species at risk.

#### **BD-14-123**

#### **McCharles - McCallum**

**"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated September 2, 2014 on the Reptiles at Risk program, including recent site surveys for turtles, snakes and lizards on properties owned or managed by St. Clair Conservation."**

#### **CARRIED**

A staff report on spring 2014 tree planting was discussed.

- for most of the summer, conservation-forestry staff worked on an 80 acre poplar tree plantation restoration project on the Waste Management property in Warwick Township, alternating work weeks in conjunction with the larvicide treatment program for Lambton County.
- the winter of 2013-2014 resulted in severe rodent damage to their large poplar plantation that was planted in 2009 and caused mortality to nearly 60,000 poplar trees that were established and approaching a "free to grow" stage.
- removal of the dead and dying trees was the only way to promote rapid suckering of the trees in order to re-establish the site, maintaining necessary requirements under Waste Management's operations permit with MOE.
- staff have also continued to provide vegetation control on two very large corporate reforested projects – Enbridge properties and Lambton County Bowen Creek property in St. Clair Twp.
- brush control work continues in Southwest Middlesex under the drainage act and staff have been spraying several "brushed" drainage works



- the search for funding for the Lambton Shores Coastal Wetland – Phragmites control work continues as well on the ground control work up this summer, up to as much funding that is currently available.

**BD-14-124**

**Boushy - McEwen**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the status report dated September 5, 2014 regarding Conservation Services Spring Tree Planting Projects.”**

**CARRIED**

A staff report regarding the West Nile Virus – Lambton County Mosquito Control Program was presented.

- staff have been busy again this summer treating 16,000 catch basins in Sarnia and Lambton County with methoprene-larvicide pellets to control west nile virus carrying mosquito population a minimum.
- treatments started in late June this year and continued into mid-August. Treatment of catch basins are completed every 21 days throughout the summer with 3 crews of two people each. Approximately 7 to 8 days is required per treatment cycle.
- applications for permits were approved by Ministry of Environment in late June along with 2 separate permits to treat Aamjiwnaang-Sarnia First Nation and the Dupont plant located in Corunna.
- efficacy testing is planned again this year to monitor how well pellets and briquettes are controlling mosquito populations.

**BD-14-125**

**Giffen - McCallum**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the status report dated September 5, 2014 regarding West Nile Virus – Lambton County Mosquito Control Program.”**

**CARRIED**

Regulations Summary Reports dated June 30, July 31 and August 31, 2014 were reviewed.

**BD-14-126**

**Faas - MacKinnon**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges and concurs with the Regulations Activity Summary Reports on "Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses" (Ontario Regulation 171/06), dated June 30, July 31, and August 31, 2014 and further in regard to Cores vs. SCRCA, MLC Refer Our File CA 002-14, that the Board of Directors acknowledges the Authority solicitor seek to mediate a solution acceptable to the SCRCA and all parties.”**

**CARRIED**

**BD-14-127**

**McCharles – McEwen**

**“That the Board of Directors reconsider the square footage of motion #BD-14-017.”**

**CARRIED**

**BD-14-128**

**Glen – McEwen**

**That the Board of Directors, in regard to Cores vs. SCRCA, MLC Refer Our File CA 002-14, direct staff and Authority solicitor to mediate a solution on the permissible development area acceptable to the SCRCA and all parties within the following limits;**

- **maximum habitable square area (the total area of all floors above grade measured between the outside surfaces of exterior walls, excluding interior parking) not greater than 140 sq. m;**
- **attached garage construction as per original application not greater than 50 sq. m;**
- **total square area not greater than 190 sq. m.;**

**CARRIED**

Planning Activity Summary Report for June, July and August 2014 were reviewed.

**BD-14-129**

**Miller - Faas**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority’s monthly Planning Activity Summary Reports for June, July and August, 2014.”**

**CARRIED**

A staff report regarding the July and August 2014 municipal drain activity report associated with the Drainage Act and Conservation Authorities Act Protocol (DART) was reviewed.

**BD-14-130**

**Faas - Boushy**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report on Drainage Act and Conservation Authority Act Protocol (DART) Municipal drain activities for July and August 2014.”**

**CARRIED**

A staff report regarding SouthWestern Ontario Ortho Photography (SWOOP) was explained.

- **Background:** in the year 2010, the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA) obtained its most recent aerial imagery as a partner in the SWOOP 2010 Project. This project, led by the Ministry of Natural Resources (Land Information Ontario), consisted of a partnership of over 70 agencies to cover most of Southwestern Ontario. These partnerships in the past have allowed for significant cost savings for a common product that has been an invaluable mapping tool for all involved. The funding required by each partner varies and is proportional to the number of partners that wish to acquire imagery for a given area. As part of Ontario’s Imagery Strategy, a new round of imagery is set to be acquired in the spring of 2015.
- **Project Costs**
  - there are obvious significant cost savings through participation in this project. At this early stage it is estimated that the SCRCA’s partnership will cost the same or less than previous projects. The cost of SWOOP 2010 totalled \$27,683.90 and it was recommended that the SCRCA budget a similar amount for 2015. If the SCRCA were to undertake this project on our own it would cost well over \$150,000.00. Additional costs to this project would include the necessary storage space for digital deliverables. Land Information Ontario has developed new access policies to encourage organizations to participate in acquisition projects while providing an equitable approach for all. Each organization pays only for their individual area of interest, with a minimum contribution of \$1,000. The total number of kilometres ordered by all organizations is used to calculate the overall ‘shared’ cost.

- if the SCRCA does not participate, not only will the SCRCA not have the most up to date imagery and base as the clients it works with, but the cost for the partners (including Upper/Lower Tier Municipalities) will increase.
- Timelines and Next Steps: on September 24<sup>th</sup> SCRCA staff will attend a partners meeting to gather further information. As in previous years, the SCRCA would be expected to sign a letter of intent to participate pending final SCRCA budget approval.
- Recommendation: that the SCRCA continue to be a partner in the SWOOP 2015 project with an upset cost of \$30,000.

#### **BD-14-131**

#### **Glen - Giffen**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated August 29, 2014, regarding SouthWestern Ontario Ortho Photography (SWOOP) and supports the SCRCA continuing to be a partner in the SWOOP version 2015 project with an upset cost of \$30,000 and further make the necessary budget preparations and directs the General Manager or his designate to authorize and sign the required “Participant Agreement”.”**

#### **CARRIED**

A staff report regarding AOC activities was presented.

- Celebrating the Removal of the Degradation of Aesthetics Beneficial Use Impairment (BUI)
  - a great day is planned for September 10, 2014, cruising on the St Clair River to help celebrate BPAC’s recommendation to remove the Degradation of Aesthetics BUI. In the 1980s and 1990s the river was plagued by persistent slicks of oil, foul odours and sewer overflows following rain events. Kids would not swim in the river and some people actually feared being nearby. With the support of government, industry, volunteers and the public in general, that scene no longer occurs. The river is now enjoyed by all citizens and it has become a magnet attracting all who wish to recreate, swim, fish or simply enjoy a beautiful day by the river. The river has regained its beauty and attraction. Over 75 people celebrated and enjoyed cruising the river to get a full view of this beautiful resource. This is the third use impairment that has been removed in 4 years  
there will be more to come in the next several months
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Biennial St. Clair River Area of Concern Symposium
  - September 18, 2014 is the date of the second biennial St. Clair River Area of Concern Symposium sponsored by the Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC) at the Double Tree by Hilton Hotel in Port Huron, Michigan. The theme of this year’s symposium is “Bridging the Environment and Economy”. Presentations cover topics such as recent research on St. Clair River species and population dynamics, fisheries of the St. Clair River, drinking water monitoring, invasive species and new and emerging challenges facing the river. It is unfortunate that the date conflicted with the SCRCA September Board of Directors meeting. We will report back on how it went at the next Board of Directors meeting.
- Beneficial Use Impairment (BUI) Re-Designation Update
  - Restrictions on Dredging Activities: the “Restrictions on Dredging Activities” BUI status assessment was accepted by CRIC at their January, 2014 meeting. It recommends that this BUI be re-designated from “impaired” to “not impaired”. Community consultation has been completed with Aamjiwnaang First Nation and it is currently under review by Walpole Island First Nation. Guidance on further community consultation is

expected soon. If our partners agree, this should be the next BUI to be re-designated to "not impaired".

- **Beach Closings:** a draft report is currently being prepared for the "Beach Closings" BUI for the St. Clair River which is identified as "impaired". The report will look at local remedial actions, *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) levels at beaches and swimming areas as well as comparisons between AOC and non-AOC beach closing frequencies. In addition, results of a DNA source track-down study at Centennial Park in Sarnia will be analysed. The source of *E. coli* was unclear at this site so a track-down study was designed to distinguish between human and avian sources (geese) of *E. coli*. Three years of beach monitoring data were collected through partnerships between the SCRCA, Lambton Public Health Unit, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change and the City of Sarnia.
- **Bird and Animal Deformities or Reproductive Problems:** studies conducted by Environment Canada scientists over the past few years and as recently as this past July have found that the incidence of contaminants and deformities in young turtles and leopard frogs (*Lithobates pipiens*) are generally similar to other non-AOC sites in the Great Lakes Basin. Further sampling and analysis needs to be completed before a definitive conclusion is reached, but preliminary results look promising.
- **Fish Tumours or Other Deformities:** the collection of Brown Bullhead (*Ameiurus nebulosus*) that began in 2013, continued at Walpole Island this summer to assess the prevalence of liver tumours. Currently 46 of the 100 fish required have been collected and livers processed and frozen until histological analysis. Next steps are currently being considered and may include using electrofishing equipment to catch the additional fish later in the Fall.
- **Great Lakes Sustainability Fund (GLSF) Announcement:** on July 23, 2014, Dr. Colin Carrie, Member of Parliament for Oshawa and Parliamentary Secretary to the Environment Minister announced at Canatara Park, in Sarnia, Ontario, the 2014-15 funding provided to support projects in Canadian AOCs through the Great Lakes Sustainability Fund (GLSF). Many projects benefitting the St. Clair River are being supported this fiscal year including the "shoreline softening" project at Cathcart Park led by the SCRCA. Other recipients included the Rural Lambton Stewardship Network (RLSN) for wetland and riparian buffer creation and the City of Sarnia for implementation of their pumping-station real-time monitoring system to reduce overflows and bypasses to the St. Clair River.

#### **BD-14-132**

**Romlewski - Nemcek**

**"That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated September 4, 2014 on the St. Clair River Area Of Concern program."**

**CARRIED**

A staff report regarding the progress to date on the Planning Advisory Services Memorandum of Agreement between the County of Lambton and the Authority was presented.

- it is important to note and as presented at the June Board meeting, only Natural Hazards provincial policy (including the hydrologic protection of wetlands) has been delegated to Conservation Authorities. Natural Heritage protection under the PPS is the responsibility of the municipalities. The municipalities are the "approval authority" with upper tier conformity to Lambton County's Official Plan.
- Summary of Progress to date on Memorandum of Agreement:

- Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) was discussed and circulated by the parties. This template follows similar area CA/Municipal MOA's. Minor comments have been received to date from Lambton County Planning Department. Comments are forthcoming from the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (Note – ABCA has a small area in Lambton County; North Lambton Shores which includes Port Franks and Grand Bend).
- as per discussions with the County, services for Natural Heritage planning advice and technical report review will be itemized and the municipality may indicate the services required.
- in formulating the appropriate planning application fees for Natural Heritage, technical and administrative staff met to discuss and assign appropriate rates and times. For the report reviews, staff researched consulting fees for Natural Heritage technical report review and have recommended an appropriate fee schedule based on the SCRCA retaining biologic and hydrologic expertise in house.
- for the purposes of Planning applications circulated to the SCRCA, a minimal increase in fee for Natural Heritage commenting and advice is noted.
- a presentation of the Memorandum of Agreement is scheduled for the Lambton County Clerks Association meeting September 25, 2014.
- Natural Heritage cost recovery
  - Planning Applications (ie. consents, ZBA's, OPA's)
    - Noncomplex: generally, if a consent (severance) or ZBA/OPA is not complex, the additional Natural Heritage review is not a significant review beyond the CA's delegated responsibility, if a Natural Hazard (CA Regulation) is present as well. However, applications with only Natural Heritage features/adjacent lands present, (ie. significant woodlands/adjacent lands) require the initial file startup plus more detailed screening of provincial databases, mapping and reference to the provincial Natural Heritage technical manual and interpretation.
      - Biologist/Ecologist review
        - Rate = \$45.00/hr (includes benefit/payroll costs)
        - Time required
          - 1.5 hour screening/review of documents
          - 2 hour site inspection (incl travel return)
          - 3 hours drafting report including technical reference review, phone calls/emails with applicant, planner etc.
        - = ~\$300.00
      - Complex: Official Plan Amendment – includes complex natural heritage review, ie 4 season inventory reviews, in depth botanical site inspection initially particularly if encroachment into heritage feature, multiple cross peer reviews; ie engineering, hydrogeology, geotechnical
        - Biologist/Ecologist or review
          - Rate = \$45.00/hr (includes benefit/payroll costs)
          - Time required
            - 3 hour screening/review of documents
            - 2 hour site inspection with municipal staff and technical team (including travel return)
            - 6.5 hours substantial technical report with higher potential risk (ie challenges, OMB), includes preconsultation meetings, technical meetings with review team, phone calls/emails with applicant, planner etc.
          - = ~\$500.00

- Technical report review  
 Scoped or Screening type Environmental Impact Studies (EIS) or Development Assessment Reports (DAR) reviews  
 Same rate as above in #1  
 2 hours meeting with municipal staff/proponent consultant  
 2 hours review of report  
 2 hours drafting technical review report  
 = ~\$300.00
- Full EIS or DAR review  
 Same rate as above in #1  
 this may be consulted out for peer review by the municipality. Quotes obtained indicate a minimum \$3,000.00-\$3,500.00 required for Full EIS or DAR review. A thorough knowledge of the site, plus detailed review of reports in length of typically 200-300 pages.  
 Multiple meetings, preconsultation, peer review team, municipal staff, proponent, proponent's consultant.  
 Internal Biologist, Planner, Engineering, Hydrogeologist, Regulations = \$2,000.00  
 External based on quote; quotes received for ecology/biology only expertise to date = minimum \$3,000.00 -3,500.00 (ie. quotes received for 2014 full DAR's - Strathroy Caradoc Metcalfe St and Petrolia Glenview Estates).  
 =~\$2,000.00
- recommendation: that the SCRCA continue to confirm natural heritage commenting services with member municipalities through an updated Memorandum of Agreement and that these costs be recovered by the proponent.

**BD-14-133**

**Bilton - Giffen**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the progress to date on the Planning Advisory Services Memorandum of Agreement between the County of Lambton and the SCRCA as recommended by Conservation Ontario and further acknowledges the cost to the SCRCA for Natural Heritage commenting and that these costs be recovered by the proponent as noted in the Planning and Regulations Fee Schedule and further note that it is a decision of the municipality whether or not this service is retained as outlined in a Memorandum of Agreement.”**

**CARRIED**

Authority revenue and expenditures to June 30, 2014, were reviewed.

**BD-14-134**

**MacKinnon - McCharles**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the revenue and expenditure report to June 30, 2014, as it relates to the budget.”**

**CARRIED**

June and July 2014 disbursements totaling \$1,055,144.42 were considered.

**BD-14-135**

**Faas - McEwen**

**“That the Board of Directors approves the June to July 2014 disbursements as presented in the amount of \$1,055,144.42”**

**CARRIED**

A status report on general levy received to date was discussed.

**BD-14-136**

**Faas - McEwen**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the status report on the 2014 general levy receipts to September 3, 2014.”**

**CARRIED**

The 2015 preliminary forecast was reviewed. To date the Authority has not received the Modified Current Value Assessment calculations from the Ministry of Natural Resources so the numbers from last year have been used.

**BD-14-137**

**Faas - Bruinink**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the 2015 preliminary draft budget of \$6,085,641 with a proposed municipal general levy of \$705,060 and further that this preliminary budget be revised subject to receipt of the Modified Current Value Assessment calculations from the Ministry of Natural Resources and circulated to member municipalities for information and input based on our budget review process.”**

**CARRIED**

Director’s Comments:

- requested a comparative column for budget to last year.
- as soon as CVA numbers come in, can the updated budget be sent to municipalities.

Minutes of the March 20 Joint Health and Safety meeting were reviewed.

**BD-14-138**

**Burrell - McCharles**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Joint Health and Safety Minutes of March 20, 2014.”**

**CARRIED**

A staff report regarding updating the Health and Safety Manual was considered.

**BD-14-139**

**Nemcek - Miller**

**“That the Board of Directors approves the Staff Report, dated September 3, 2014, combining Sections 3.5.2 & 3.5.6 and further that the update be incorporated into the Health & Safety Manual.”**

**CARRIED**

An Investment Policy Statement was discussed.

**BD-14-140**

**Glen - Faas**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Investment Policy Statement, dated September 2014 for discussion.”**

**CARRIED**

**BD-14-141**

**Burrell – Bruinink**

**“That the Board of Directors make an amendment to Investment Policy Statement motion to delegate “Standard of Care” to the General Manager and Chairman for safety reasons.”**

**DEFEATED**

A staff report regarding the status of the accessibility improvements and renovations were reported.

- on August 25<sup>th</sup> the concrete construction started by removing the old concrete steps and sidewalk, grading for the accessible ramp to the driveway, foundation for new entrance and accessible ramp to front door.
- as of September 5, 2014, the concrete work for the renovated entrance to the front of the building on Mill Pond has been completed.
- the large boulder that is the mounting for our historic plaque, has a new prominent location in front of the main door and can be seen from both the new ramp and the sidewalk leading up to the door. The expectation is that the railings and the line painting for the parking lot will all be complete by the September Board meeting and you will have had the opportunity to use.
- the next stage will be to landscape with low maintenance scheme. Once the landscaping is completed the new sidewalk and ramp will provide an inviting path to all visiting the Conservation Authority building.
- we are in the process of securing the architect to complete the inside drawings and providing a detailed listing of the materials to meet the accessibility requirements to renovate the main entrance, bathrooms, and kitchen facilities. Currently we are still planning for a December 31, 2014 finish of the accessibility upgrades.

**BD-14-142**

**Boushy - Miller**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the report dated September 5, 2014 regarding the status of the accessibility improvements and renovations to the Authority’s Administrative offices.”**

**CARRIED**

A staff report regarding draft 2015 fees was explained.

**BD-14-143**

**Romlewski - Bruinink**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Draft 2015 fees to assist municipalities with their budget deliberations.”**

**CARRIED**

The Conservation Lands Update was reviewed.

- Conservation Areas:
  - Camping Statistics:
    - 419 full and half seasonal campers have registered in our 3 campgrounds, up from 406 in 2013. 188 seasonal campers are registered at Warwick (189 in 2013), 123 at LC Henderson (118 in 2013) and 108 at A.W. Campbell (99 in 2013).
    - our 3 regional campgrounds have been busy this year, gross revenues to date are \$912,000 (up 3%), with net revenues up 5% (end of July financials summary).



- Warwick Conservation Area:
  - access roadway project is moving along; currently all survey's and easements have been completed, still ongoing are land negotiations, road and drainage agreements; it is now anticipated that the roadway will be constructed in the spring on 2015
  - 15 new picnic tables and 3 new benches have been constructed and distributed
  - a new 300 metre bike cross trail has been constructed (funded through Foundation bingo)
  - a new 620 metre trail has been developed; work included chip & dust surfacing, signage and installation of vehicle gates (funded through St. Clair Conservation Foundation)
  - a 500 metre section of the Blue Flag trail was resurfaced with chip & dust; also a number of dead ash trees were removed along the trail
- L.C. Henderson Conservation Area:
  - a new property identification sign has been installed
  - 15 new picnic tables and 2 benches have been constructed and distributed
  - 5 new folding tables have been purchased for the visitor centre (funded through Foundation bingo)
  - the main reservoir weir has been reconstructed with new cable concrete surfacing and additional rip rap protection
  - 600 metres of existing trail have been surfaced with chip & dust; two sections of boardwalk have been upgraded to improve accessibility on this trail
  - a bird house tree has been constructed
- A.W. Campbell Conservation Area:
  - new counter top and sinks have been installed in the women's pool washroom
  - 15 new picnic tables have been constructed and distributed
  - new campsite indicators have been installed on 20 campsites
  - new carpet has been installed on the mini golf course (funded through Foundation bingo)
  - 5 new tables have been purchased for the visitor centre (funded through Foundation bingo)
  - a new bike cross trail has been constructed (funded through Foundation bingo)
  - sections of the main lake trail have been surfaced with chip & dust
- Wawanosh Conservation Area:
  - a new property identification sign has been installed
  - 4 picnic tables have been installed in the pavilion
- Strathroy Conservation Area:
  - Bonduelle Foods donated \$10,000 to improve trails and picnic tables within the conservation area; this donation included 4 new picnic tables with concrete pads (one accessible table) and 375 metres of new trail surfacing
  - 2 new trail signs have been installed
  - due to stream bank erosion, the main trail bridge over the Sydenham River was enlarged
- C.J McEwen & Highland Glen Conservation Areas:
  - Highland Glen - a new property identification sign has been installed; the boat ramp and harbour area has been dredged

- C.J. McEwen – renovations to the washrooms have been completed, they included new washroom partitions and ceilings; and floors and walls have been painted.
- Marketing Initiatives in 2014:
  - Our conservation areas have been marketed in the following publications or events in 2014:
    - Sarnia Lambton Tourism Guide, Middlesex County Guide and Chatham-Kent Guide
    - Camping ads have been placed on MyFm, Strathroy-Middlesex Chamber of Commerce, Sarnia Chamber of Commerce and Victoria Playhouse websites
    - Blue Water Tourism Guide (in partnership with other Conservation Authorities)
    - Middlesex Home & Leisure Show (Strathroy Gemini Complex – April 26<sup>th</sup> )
    - Sarnia Art Walk (Downtown Sarnia, June 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>)
    - Our Conservation Area visitor guides are located at many of the municipal offices or libraries and tourist centres throughout the watershed
    - Conservation Ontario has prepared a new “Conservation Areas of Ontario” guide, we purchased advertising space in the guide.
- McKeough Upstream Lands:
  - Property 79/80 – a wetland has been developed (Conservation Services Department)
  - Property 97 – wildlife shrubs have been planted around the wetland (Conservation Services)
  - Properties 38, 39, 40, 83 north, 95 north – grass buffers strips have been planted along drains and natural water courses
  - A wetland will be constructed on property 38 this fall.
  - Tenants in residences on properties 38 & 39 have been served with rent termination notices, these homes and outbuildings are scheduled for demolition early in 2015
- Lambton County Lands:
  - Lambton County Heritage Forest:
    - staff regularly inspect and perform maintenance on the 8 kms of trail
    - Forestry staff have inventoried, marked and tendered a section of the woodlot for commercial thinning; two proposals have been received and thinning operations will be scheduled for this fall
  - Marthaville:
    - A new trail sign has been installed
    - 200 feet of property line fencing to be installed along the north side of the property
    - Staff regularly inspect and perform maintenance
  - Bowens Creek:
    - 8,100 seedlings were planted and 43,000 previously planted seedlings to be sprayed with herbicide to control grass and weeds
  - Perch Creek
    - Trail improvements to include widening and extending the existing trail
    - 1,000 seedlings have been planted to replace ash trees affected by the Emerald Ash borer

**BD-14-144**

**Nemcek - McEwen**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the Conservation Lands Update, dated August 25, 2014 on Conservation Areas, McKeough and Lambton County Lands including capital improvements, trail development and camping trends in 2014.”**

**CARRIED**

A draft agreement between the Authority and the Foundation regarding maintenance of the Keith McLean Conservation Lands was discussed.

**BD-14-145**

**Faas - Boushy**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the draft agreement between the Authority and the St. Clair Region Conservation Foundation regarding maintenance of the Keith McLean Conservation Lands, and further supports the signing of the agreement and the forwarding of the agreement to the Board of Directors of the Foundation for their review and endorsement.”**

**CARRIED**

Directors' Comments:

- that the formal definition of lands be mentioned in the agreement.

A staff report regarding the Source Water Protection Assessment Report updates and plans were reviewed.

- the Assessment Report for the St Clair Region Source Protection Area was approved by the Minister of Environment in 2011. Since that time we have been working on developing the Source Protection Plan for the Thames-Sydenham and Region. Both these documents will soon be the subject of consultation. In advance of the formal consultation period, we will be pre-consulting with municipalities on the proposed amendments to policies in the Source Protection Plan.
- additional technical work has been undertaken regarding the Intake Protection Zone (IPZ) for the Petrolia Water Treatment Plant Intake in Bright's Grove which has resulted in an expansion of Intake Protection Zone 3 along watercourses between Aberarder Creek and Hickory Creek. The additional work involved modelling for spills of fuel in various locations and various volumes of spills.
- additional technical work has also been undertaken regarding the Intake Protection Zone (IPZ) for the Wallaceburg Municipal Water System Intake which has resulted in an expansion of Intake Protection Zone 3. The additional work involved modelling for spills of fuel and fertilizer in various locations and various volumes of spills. This additional work for these intakes has resulted in an update to the St. Clair Source Protection Area Assessment Report. In August, we undertook local informal consultation on the technical work which is being incorporated into the Updated Assessment Report for the St Clair Region Source Protection Area.
- the Assessment Report is also being updated to include the Intake Protection Zones for the Chippewas of Kettle & Stony Point First Nation Drinking Water Source. The technical work completed by the First Nation on their drinking water source is being incorporated into the Assessment Report.
- in advance of formal consultation on the revised Source Protection Plan in October, we held three open houses to highlight changes to IPZ-3: Clearwater Arena, Thursday August 14; Wallaceburg Municipal Office, Tuesday August 19; and at the Camlachie Community Centre, Thursday August 21. All of the Open Houses ran from 3:00 pm – 7:00 pm.

**BD-14-146**

**McCharles - Bilton**

**“That the Board of Directors acknowledges the status report date August 22, 2014 regarding the Source Water Protection Assessment Report updates and plans for partner and public consultation in preparation for submission of the revised Source Protection Plan in December.”**

**CARRIED**

**BD-14-147**

**Miller - Faas**

**“That the meeting be adjourned.”**



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Steve Arnold  
Chair



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Brian McDougall  
General Manager