

Board Meeting Highlights

April 23, 2021

Announcements:

- a) Chair Emmerson advised that at Conservation Ontario's Annual General Meeting held on April 14th, Andy Mitchell, the Mayor of Selwyn Township and Chair of Otonabee Conservation, was elected as Conservation Ontario Chair.

Presentations:

a) 2020 Draft Audited Financial Statements

Mr. Adam DelleCese, the Authority's Auditor from BDO Canada LLP, provided an overview of the Authority's 2020 Audited Financial Statements, as well as the audit process and findings. He advised that BDO Canada LLP, an independent auditor audited the Authority's financial statements as at December 31, 2020 and found that they present fairly in all material respect the financial position of the Authority, in accordance with auditing standards. He advised it was a clean audit with no internal control issues identified and he reviewed the financial statements.

He advised that the Auditor's report was essentially complete, no internal control deficiencies found, and no adjusted differences. During the audit, he was not made aware of any fraud and asked the Board if they were aware of any fraud.

Findings included two significant risk areas: management override of controls but no issues were found; and grant revenue recognition and pressure to maintain funding. These are standard risk areas for most organization, and the audit focused on these areas, and no significant items noted in testing these areas of control.

b) The Chief Administrative Officer's Vision – 2021 and Beyond

Chief Administrative Officer, Rob Baldwin, provided an overview of his vision for the Authority for the remainder of 2021 and beyond. Some highlights included:

- Continued response to Covid-19 and keeping staff safe, planned office renovations for the return to physical office space, as well as taking what we've learned and creating an emergency preparedness plan;
- Details of Bill 229 and its changes to the Conservation Authorities Act are rolling out and defining core and non-core programs. This will continue to evolve for the next 18 months and will also have impacts on budgeting and Administrative Bylaws. Non-core programs will require memorandums of understanding with our municipal partners;

- The Lake Simcoe Protection Plan – 10-year review is underway and separates the Authority from the other conservation authorities when determining core and non-core activities;
- Timing of the Authority's new Strategic Plan is lining up nicely with new Bill 229 requirements, and he was pleased to report that the strategic plan development is being led internally by Communications department and will be a plan built by staff for staff. He noted it's also the right time for rebranding, time for change and an updated, shorter name with new logo;
- Another initiative is better watershed awareness, which includes: implementing metrics and indicators to report the full value of watershed restoration projects; modernizing subwatershed planning; developing focused subwatershed targets and key performance indicators; exploring innovative approaches for engagement and information exchange; as well as we well focused issues management;
- Significant flood relief opportunities exist with an increase in climate change considerations, as well as lots of opportunities for public-private partnerships on infrastructure improvements and stormwater optimization;
- Another area for expanding partnerships is having dedicated sediment and erosion control inspectors for all development covering the entire watershed, with an opportunity for cost sharing across the municipalities. This initiative will help to reduce the burden on bylaw inspectors and enforcement officers. Stormwater inspection and maintenance, using our expertise to assist in environmental compliance approvals, again reducing costs to municipalities, maximizing stormwater facility performance, and reducing liability and flood risk;
- Accelerating restoration and among other things looking to increase the focus on private lands in urban areas and evaluating opportunities ahead of municipal infrastructure projects;
- Bill 229 clarifies land management, focusing on managing the right lands and efficient disposition of lands not meeting core responsibilities, addressing municipal needs and reducing the Authority's corporate liability;
- An area that continues to evolve and something that the Authority looks at in all activities is climate change adaptation and mitigation. A lot has already been done in reducing the Authority's carbon footprint, and we will continue to walk the talk to mitigate the effects of climate change and exploring opportunities for carbon offsetting;
- Development and regulations excellence and increasing reporting and transparency, as well as additional transitions to digital e-transmissions and e-commerce is also something being worked on and improving;

- Outdoor education programs have continuously evolved throughout the pandemic and they remain critical to this and every watershed, and teaching the next generation must continue;
- Fiscal stability and growth, and building strong reserves, an asset management plan, more detailed short- and long-term financial plans, comprehensive fee review focusing on cost recovery are all initiatives and improvements the Authority continues to work on;
- Great governance and some changes as a result of Bill 229 will ensure full transparency, refined hearing procedures, increased opportunities for Board education sessions and mandatory watershed advisory board.

To view this presentation, please click this link: [A Look into the Future](#)

Correspondence and Staff Reports:

Correspondence

The Board received a copy of the Authority's letter dated April 1, 2021 to the Honourable Jeff Yurek, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks in response to his request regarding the Authority's Board composition.

2020 Draft Audited Financial Statements

The Board received Staff Report No. 19-21-BOD regarding Authority's 2020 Draft Audited Financial Statements and approved the 2020 Audited Financial Statements, as well as the Appropriations to and from Reserves as outlined in Schedule 8 – Statement of Continuity of Reserves, of the 2020 Draft Audited Financial Statements. The 2020 Audited Financial Statements will be distributed to the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and the Authority's banker, and will be made available on the Authority's website.

Summary of 2021 Provincial Funding Agreements – Lake Simcoe Protection Plan

The Board received Staff Report No. 20-21-BOD regarding recently secured Provincial funding in support of the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan.

Purchasing Policy – Stormwater Management Optimization Blueprint Preparation

The Board received Staff Report No. 21-21-BOD regarding the Stormwater Management Optimization project and directed staff to establish an agreement with Freeman Associates Ltd. for delivery of services in accordance with a recently approved Lake Simcoe Protection Plan funding agreement with the Authority.

For more information or to see the full agenda package, visit [LSRCA's Board of Directors' webpage](#).