

GREY SAUBLE CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
MINUTES
Full Authority Board of Directors
Wednesday, February 24, 2021, at 1:15 p.m.

The Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors meeting was held via the internet on the meeting application, WebEx.

1. Call to Order

Chair Scott Greig called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m.

Directors Present: Chair Scott Greig, Vice Chair Andrea Matrosovs, Dwight Burley, Cathy Moore Coburn, Ryan Greig, Harley Greenfield, Marion Koepke, Cathy Little, Scott Mackey, Paul McKenzie, Paul Vickers (came in at 1:50 p.m.)

Regrets: None

Staff Present: CAO Tim Lanthier, Administrative Assistant Valerie Coleman, Manager of Information Services Gloria Dangerfield, Manager of Financial and Human Resources Service Alison Armstrong, Manager of Conservation Lands Rebecca Ferguson, Operations Manager Morgan Barrie, Forestry Coordinator Mike Fry, Network Administrator Les McKay

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

The Directors were reminded to disclose any pecuniary interest that may arise during the course of the meeting. No disclosures of pecuniary interest were expressed at the time.

3. Call for Additional Agenda Items

None at this time.

4. Adoption of Agenda

Motion No.:
FA-21-028

Moved By: Dwight Burley
Seconded By: Andrea Matrosovs

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the agenda of February 24, 2021.

Carried

5. Approval of Minutes

Motion No.: Moved By: Cathy Little
FA-21-029 Seconded By: Harley Greenfield

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the Annual General Meeting minutes of January 27, 2021.

Carried

Motion No.: Moved By: Scott Mackey
FA-21-030 Seconded By: Dwight Burley

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the Full Authority minutes of January 27, 2021.

Carried

6. Business Out of Minutes

None at this time.

7. Consent Agenda

Member Cathy Little inquired if there was more detail that could be shared about the LiDAR Sales item in the January Receipts. Manager of Information Services, Gloria Dangerfield responded that in 2020 GSCA signed a memorandum of understanding with the Town of the Blue Mountains and Grey County to sell GSCA LiDAR data acquired through a Natural Disaster Mitigation Program (NDMP). This data is sold at \$250 per 1 km tile. The data is sold for commercial purposes only and not municipal, research, or educational purposes, as per this agreement. Vice Chair Andrea Matrosovs asked if private residents could purchase smaller plots of area. Gloria responded that sales are currently limited to 1 km tiles and that there is considerable work required to reduce the area.

Member Harley Greenfield inquired if line 11360, in the January Expenses, represented one project or several. Operations Manager, Morgan Barrie, responded that this expense was related to work done by GSCA staff on the CP Rail Trail, on behalf of Grey County. GSCA was reimbursed this fee.

Motion No.: Moved By: Cathy Moore Coburn
FA-21-031 Seconded By: Ryan Greig

THAT in consideration of the Consent Agenda Items listed on the February 24, 2021, agenda, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the following items: (i) Environmental Planning - Section 28 Permits – January 2021; (ii) Administration - Receipts & Expenses – January 2021; (iii) Correspondence – Stakeholder Notification Letter; (iv) Conservation Ontario; (vi) Recent Media Articles;

Carried

8. Business Items

i. Administration

a. Update on COVID-19

CAO, Tim Lanthier provided an update on GSCA's response to the COVID lockdown and stay at home order, and status post lock down. Staff, for the most part, have returned to the pre-lock down schedule, including working in office, in field, remotely, and a combination thereof. GSCA is being flexible with staff who need to continue to work remotely. All staff are following health and safety procedures.

b. Report on Salary Review RFP

Manager of Financial and Human Resource Services, Alison Armstrong, spoke with respect to the Salary Review RFP that closed at the end of December. Five proposals were received and were reviewed utilizing a grading system. The Gallagher Benefit Services Group Inc provided the highest scoring proposal. The total cost was \$19,345, coming in under the budgeted amount of \$20,000. The completion date may be pushed back as Staff originally anticipated bringing the report forward at the January Full Authority meeting.

Staff recommended awarding the contract to Gallagher Benefit Services Group Inc.

Motion No.:
FA-21-032

Moved By: Cathy Little
Seconded By: Marion Koepke

WHEREAS Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) is required to be in compliance with pay equity legislation;

AND WHEREAS, GSCA Personnel Policy recommends undertaking such a review on a five-year basis;

AND WHEREAS, GSCA last undertook a review of the salary system in 2013-2014;

AND WHEREAS, through the approved budget, GSCA has issued a formal request for proposals to have this review completed,

THAT the Board of Director's authorize staff to award this contract to Gallagher Benefit Services Group Inc.

Carried

c. Q4 Final Budget Update

Manager of Financial and Human Resource Services, Alison Armstrong, spoke with respect to the updated 2020 Approved Budget and Q4 Actuals. Surpluses were noted and explained in both the operating and capital budgets.

Member Paul Vickers joined the meeting at 1:50 p.m.

Alison reviewed the GSCA reserve funds and explained the proposed transfers staff have presented.

CAO, Tim Lanthier, spoke in reference to two specific reserve funds: The Youth Reserve Fund and Capital Lands Reserve Fund. Tim gave a brief review of the Youth Reserve Fund's history and noted that the fund has a \$20,000 balance cap on it. Staff proposed that the board remove the cap, noting that it is not in line with other reserve funds. Additionally, Tim gave a brief history of the Capital Lands Reserve Fund. Tim recommended that the board rename the Capital Lands Reserve Fund to the Conservation Lands Reserve Fund.

Motion No.:
FA-21-033

Moved By: Dwight Burley
Seconded By: Cathy Little

WHEREAS, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) has a "Youth Reserve" established to expand the GSCA Community Relations and Outdoor Education Programming,

AND WHEREAS, at the inception of this fund, a \$20,000 upper limit cap was established for the fund,

AND WHEREAS, the GSCA educational programming is working towards self-sufficiency, such that it is desirable to allow a greater reserve to account for year-over-year fluctuations in revenues and expenses,

THAT the GSCA Board of Directors move to remove the upper limit cap from this reserve.

Carried

Motion No.:
FA-21-034

Moved By: Marion Koepke
Seconded By: Scott Mackey

WHEREAS, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority has a Conservation Lands Capital Reserve,

AND WHEREAS, GSCA's parking and other property-based revenue occur across a multitude of properties and are intended to be a resource to all GSCA lands,

AND WHEREAS, the resources needed to manage these properties extends beyond capital expenditures,

AND WHEREAS the Board of Directors has recently directed GSCA Staff to utilize a portion of the parking revenues to offset lands-based operating costs,

THAT, the GSCA Board of Directors move to rename the "Capital Reserve" to the "Lands Reserve",

AND THAT, the GSCA Board of Directors move that this reserve be utilized for the maintenance and improvement of GSCA's property holdings in accordance with the annually approved budget.

Carried

Motion No.:
FA-21-035

Moved By: Scott Mackey
Seconded By: Dwight Burley

WHEREAS the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) develops an annual budget, approved by the Board of Directors, that includes transfers to and from reserve accounts, AND WHEREAS, the 2020 year-end proposed reserve transfer amounts differ from the budgeted reserve transfer amounts, THAT the GSCA Board of Directors approve the transfer of funds as presented in the 2020 Reserve Continuity Schedule as presented.

Carried

Motion No.:
FA-21-036

Moved By: Cathy Little
Seconded By: Andrea Matrosovs

WHEREAS, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) 2020 year-end operating budget exhibited a surplus of salary dollars in the Conservation Lands Policy Department due to in-year staffing changes.

THAT, the Board of Directors approve the use of approximately \$12,000 of this surplus for the funding of additional assistance for work on the property management plans,

AND THAT, the Board of Directors approve the use of approximately \$7,000 of this surplus for the funding of the printing of GSCA's updated Explore Property Brochure.

Carried

d. CAA Update

CAO, Tim Lanthier, gave an update on the changes to the CAA and the additional proclamations that have been circulated.

Chair and Vice Chair positions are limited to a one-year term with the opportunity for a one-year extension. The Board of Director's may request an exemption from the Minister to allow a Chair or Vice-Chair to hold further successive terms. Staff advised that the Board may wish to consider seeking such an exemption. Staff will bring back a recommendation on this at a later date. Concern is raised regarding succession planning with a limited term. It was clarified that a member holding the Vice Chair position is still eligible to nominated and elected to hold the Chair position.

The Minister may appoint an Agricultural Representative to the Board. The legislation limits what this appointed representative can and cannot vote on. Staff do not expect all CAs to be appointed an Agricultural Representative and do not know if GSCA will be. Member Scott Mackey suggests GSCA establish an Agricultural Advisory Committee. He noted that this would link to the work GSCA is doing with the Stewardship program. Tim informed the Board that the Forestry Coordinator, Mike Fry, has been working on setting this up and have only held off until the changes to the CAA became clearer.

ii. **Water Management**

Nothing at this time.

iii. **Environmental Planning**

Nothing at this time.

iv. **Conservation Lands**

a. **Report on Old Baldy CA Parking Agreements**

Manager of Conservation Lands, Rebecca Ferguson spoke with respect to the situation of several local residents parking overnight in the Old Baldy Conservation Area parking lot during the winter months. GSCA had received complaints of residents parking after hours at this conservation area. Staff contacted the residents in question and were told that this has been a common practice for a significant amount of time during the winter months. There are six households that are not able to access their homes in the winter as the Municipality does not plow the road to their driveways as the plow is unable to access these areas.

Staff have proposed entering into a five-year agreement with those residents affected. The agreement will include indemnity clauses and will have an annual fee of \$500. This fee is based on similar agreements that GSCA has entered into with private landowners for services which are a direct benefit to the subject landowner and not to the greater public.

Motion No.:
FA-21-037

Moved By: Scott Mackey
Seconded By: Cathy Moore Coburn

WHEREAS, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) is the fee-simple owner of the lands known as Old Baldy Conservation Area (herein, Old Baldy) in the Municipality of Grey Highlands,

AND WHEREAS, several property owners have a vested interest in securing a parking arrangement on GSCA’s Old Baldy property to accommodate parking for their personal residences,

AND WHEREAS, under Section 21(1)(n) of the Conservation Authorities Act, GSCA may enter into agreements with individuals,

THAT the Board of Directors agree to Staff negotiating a 5-year agreement with the subject landowners to allow for parking on GSCA’s Old Baldy parking area and that GSCA Staff assign a fee to these agreements of \$500.00 per year.

Carried

The Board recessed for a 5-minute break at 3:06.

v. Forestry

a. Report Back on Bruce Trail Partnership

Forestry Coordinator, Mike Fry, gave a report regarding the expansion of the partnership between the GSCA and the Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC). GSCA has been contacted by individuals looking to donate money for tree planting as a means to offset their personal or family carbon footprint. Staff have fulfilled these requests; however, GSCA does not have a lot of appropriate sites to plant these additional trees on GSCA lands. The BTC owns many properties within the GSCA watershed and preserves these properties in a natural state. As such, Staff approached the BTC to determine if they had areas of land in need of afforestation/reforestation and if BTC would be interested in partnering on this initiative. BTC has expressed an interest in this partnership. Staff is excited to develop this relationship for the benefit of GSCA, BTC and those individuals looking to donate.

Motion No.:
FA-21-038

Moved By: Marion Koepke
Seconded By: Cathy Coburn

WHEREAS Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) plants trees to increase forest cover and improve riparian habitat through our watershed jurisdiction;

AND WHEREAS, GSCA has received interest and donations from private individuals to complete tree planting projects to offset their carbon footprints;

AND WHEREAS, GSCA has an established relationship with the Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC), whose overall goals and mandate align with GSCA’s;

AND WHEREAS, GSCA staff have engaged the BTC to expand our relationship to include tree planting activities on BTC owned lands;

THAT the Board of Director’s receive this report for information.

Carried

b. Report Back on One Tree Planted Partnership

Forestry Coordinator, Mike Fry, spoke with respect to a partnership with the charity, One Tree Planted. Mike was approached by a representative of One Tree Planted, a charitable organization from Vermont, about funding the planting of trees on private lands. The funding provided will help to offset the costs private landowners must cover for tree planting projects. For the 2021 tree planting season, One Tree Planted has committed to the planting of 70,000 with \$55,300 USD in funding. This will reduce the cost of trees for landowners to \$0.02 per tree on average. Staff hope to foster this relationship further. With the loss of vital funding through the Ontario Government, it is imperative that staff seek out alternative funding sources. One Tree Planted has offered to provide professional photographic and video services for promotional purposes.

Motion No.:
FA-21-039

Moved By: Harley Greenfield
Seconded By: Dwight Burley

WHEREAS Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) plants trees to increase forest cover and improve riparian habitat through our watershed jurisdiction;

AND WHEREAS, GSCA completes tree planting projects for private landowners;

AND WHEREAS, the cost to complete tree planting projects has increased faster than the rate of inflation, and GSCA staff identify suitable funding programs to lower landowner costs;

AND WHEREAS, staff have entered into a funding agreement with One Tree Planted, who will provide funds to help offset landowner costs;

THAT the Board of Director's receive this report for information.

Carried

vi. **Communications/Public Relations – Nothing at this time.**

vii. **GIS/IT**

a. **Internet Service Provider**

Network Administrator, Les McKay, spoke with respect to the acquisition of a new internet service provider for the GSCA Administration Centre. Review of current internet service providers and options is a 2020 Operational Plan item. Previous quotes ranged from \$33,000 to \$100,000 to connect a cable from the northwest corner of the arboretum (Forest Heights Subdivision) to the administration building.

In December 2020, GSCA staff contacted GBTel to discuss providing high speed internet, as GBTel had just completed the installation of a new tower. GBTel conducted a site visit and installed service to the facility. The monthly cost is approximately a 30% increase; however, results in a significantly faster and more stable internet service that is necessary to accommodate the new meeting platforms and remote work scenarios that have resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Staff note that this improved connectivity and bandwidth may afford opportunities to improve efficiencies and reduce costs within the phone system, thereby offsetting the increased internet service cost.

viii. **Operations**

a. **Report on CA Washrooms and Gatehouses**

Operations Manager, Morgan Barrie, spoke with respect to the upgrading and building of GSCA Conservation Areas structures. The significant increase of visitors in 2020 demonstrated that additional washroom upgrades and the installation of staff gatehouses were necessary for the 2021 season. Staff were able to source upgrade and replacement options for the Spirit Rock and Bruce's Caves washrooms that are significantly under anticipated budget numbers. As such, Staff propose to reallocate those surplus capital dollars into updating of washroom facilities at Eugenia Falls, and the installation of gatehouse structures at Eugenia Falls, Spirit Rock, and Old Baldy conservation areas.

These projects are expected to begin in mid-Spring of 2021.

Motion No.:
FA-21-040

Moved By: Dwight Burley
Seconded By: Cathy Moore Coburn

WHEREAS, GSCA's 2021 Capital Budget includes provisions for spending \$20,000 on the replacement of washrooms at Bruce's Caves and Spirit Rock conservation areas;

AND WHEREAS, GSCA'S 2021 Operating Budget includes the placement of staff and several conservation areas;

AND WHEREAS, GSCA's Operations Manager has identified a need for sheltering these staff from the elements;

AND WHEREAS, GSCA Staff have identified potential cost savings and efficiencies within the existing capital budget for approved projects;

THAT the Board of Directors authorize Staff to reallocate the surplus capital budget toward the improvement and construction of gatehouses as noted in this report.

Carried

b. Parking By-Law Report

CAO, Tim Lanthier spoke with respect to the increase in nuisance and/or illegal parking along the roadways outside of GSCA properties. Dramatic increases in visitation to GSCA properties is causing increased roadside parking at Bruce's Caves, Inglis Falls, Old Baldy, Eugenia Falls, and Christie Beach. This situation presents a safety risk and causes a nuisance for GSCA's neighbours.

GSCA does not have the jurisdiction to control parking on roadways and local municipalities may not have staff scheduled during busy times or enough staff hours to cover the need.

In seeking a solution, staff have initiated discussions with municipal partners to review the feasibility of GSCA staff providing parking enforcement on behalf of the member municipalities in the locations of concern adjacent to GSCA properties. It is intended that this would be supplemental to the parking enforcement done by the municipality and/or the OPP. This option would require municipalities to pass parking by-laws, if not already in place, and to appoint GSCA staff member(s) as parking by-law officers. Staff are bringing this forward for information at this point. Staff will continue to investigate and negotiate options before bringing a recommendation back to the Board.

Concern was expressed about feasibility.

ix. Education

Nothing at this time.

x. Drinking Water Source Protection & Risk Management

Nothing at this time.

9. Closed Session

Motion No.: Moved By: Cathy Moore Coburn
FA-21-041 Seconded By: Cathy Little

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors proceed into closed session at 3:55 pm to discuss matters related to the following:

- i. Policy Direction on a matter related to personal matters about an identifiable individual including Authority Directors or Authority employees (GSCA Administrative By-Law, Section 4(xvii)(b))**
- ii. CAO Personal Goal Setting for 2021 – closed as it relates to personal matters about an identifiable individual including Authority directors or Authority employees (GSCA Administrative By-Law, Section 4(xvii)(b))**
- iii. Finalize CAO Performance Review – closed as it relates to personal matters about an identifiable individual including Authority directors or Authority employees (GSCA Administrative By-Law, Section 4(xvii)(b))**

AND FURTHER THAT CAO, Tim Lanthier, Administrative Assistant, Valerie Coleman, and Manager of Information Services, Gloria Dangerfield be present for items 9(i) & 9(ii).

Carried

Motion No.: Moved By: Ryan Greig
FA-21-042 Seconded By: Cathy Little

THAT a closed meeting was held, and only closed session items identified were discussed in closed session.

THAT the Board of Director’s provided direction to Staff on Items 9(i) and 9(ii).

AND THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the January 27, 2021 Confidential Closed Session minutes as presented in the closed session agenda

Carried

Members Dwight Burley and Cathy Moore Coburn left the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

10. CAO’s Report

The CAO reported that GSCA was successful in securing two grants through Healthy Lake Huron. GSCA will receive \$50,000 through the Ontario Ministry of Agricultural, Farming and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) over two Provincial Fiscal years. Additionally, GSCA secured \$56,000 for stewardship projects through the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP).

The Arboretum Alliance was successful in receiving a grant through TD Bank's Friend of the Environment. This will allow for new and updated informational signage for each tree within the arboretum. Part of this project will include engaging with local First Nation's communities with a goal of incorporate traditional names, uses, and other information into the plaques.

The CAO let the Board know of some recent staffing changes.

- Lloyd Nichol has been hired as the Assistant Operations Manager.
- The Stewardship Technician position has been filled, more information to come.
- Andrew Sorensen, the Environmental Planning Coordinator, has announced his intent to retire. His final formal day with GSCA will be April 18th.
- The Manager of Environmental Planning position has been posted to backfill this position.
- Jacob Kloeze, Junior Planner, has taken a position with another organization. His last day with GSCA was February 19th.
- The Intermediate Planner position was posted to backfill this position.

The CAO continues to work on developing and strengthening relationships. In conjunction with the North Grey – Owen Sound Public Library, GSCA has donated two Season's Passes for library member's to "check out". For 2022, staff will work on creating outdoor education "toolboxes" or "backpacks" with resources for exploring our conservation areas. The hope is that these will be available to be "checked out" as well. Both initiatives will encourage individuals, families, and adults to get outside and explore.

The Province of Ontario has recently granted Physicians permission to prescribe "Nature Exposure" to patients. The CAO has started to reach out to the local healthcare community seeking opportunities for collaboration in this regard.

11. Chair's Report

Chair Greig attended GSCA's Brand Ambassador training on February 4th. For those who could not attend, the training session was recorded, and the link has been circulated.

On February 11th Chair Greig attended a joint GSCA and GSCF Executive meeting along with Vice Chair Matrosovs, Chair Don Sankey, Vice Chair Al Wilcox, Dick Hibma, CAO Tim Lanthier and Manager of Conservation Lands, Rebecca Ferguson. Volunteer recruitment, the 500 Club, and long term GSCA projects were among the items discussed.

Chair Greig expressed his intention to meet with each board member at a conservation area within their respective municipalities to get to know everyone better and listen to their concerns.

12. Other Business

Nothing at this time.

13. Next Full Authority Meeting

- i. Wednesday March 24th, 2021

14. Adjournment

Motion No.:
FA-21-043

Moved By: Paul McKenzie
Seconded By: Harley Greenfield

THAT this meeting now adjourn.

Carried

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Scott Greig, Chair

Valerie Coleman
Administrative Assistant