



Essex Region Conservation Authority

Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025

Time: 6:00 pm

Location and Details: Council Chambers, County of Essex Civic Centre
360 Fairview Avenue West, Essex, ON

Attendance

Members Present:	Molly Allaire (Chair)	Michael Akpata
	Peter Courtney	Anthony Abraham
	Jason Matyi	Larry Verbeke
	Katie McGuire-Blais (@6:09pm)	Angelo Marignani
	Thomas Neufeld	Kieran McKenzie
	Tracey Bailey	Jim Morrison (Vice Chair)
	Ryan McNamara	

Absent: Mark McKenzie

Regrets:	Sue Desjarlais	Dayne Malloch
	Dennis Rogers	Joe Bachetti
		Tania Jobin

Staff Present

Tim Byrne, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer
Nicole Kupnicki, Corporate Services, Manager, HR & Council Services
Shelley McMullen, CFO/Director Finance and Corporate Services
Kevin Money, Director Conservation Services
James Bryant, Director Watershed Management Services

Others

Councillor Bill Dunn, Leamington

1. Call to Order

Good evening and welcome to the February 13, 2025, meeting of the ERCA Board of Directors. I will call the meeting to order. Thank you all. We have regrets this evening from:

- Mayor Dennis Rogers, Kingsville
- Councillor Sue Desjarlais, Lasalle
- Deputy Mayor Joe Bachetti, Tecumseh
- Councillor Tania Jobin, Tecumseh

2. Land Acknowledgement

I'd like to begin by acknowledging that this land is the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, comprised of the Ojibway, the Odawa, and the Potawatomi Peoples.

We value the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original Peoples of Turtle Island - North America who have been living and working on the land from time immemorial.

3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

4. Approval of Agenda

A. ERCA Board of Directors

Resolution 17/25 Moved by Angelo Marignani
Seconded by Ryan McNamara

THAT the Agenda of the February 13, 2025, meeting of the ERCA Board of Directors be approved. **Carried**

5. Hearings

None

6. Adoption of Minutes

A. ERCA Board of Directors

Resolution 18/25 Moved by Larry Verbeke
Seconded by Jason Matyi

THAT the Minutes of the January 23, 2025, Annual General meeting of the Board of Directors and the recommendations therein be approved as distributed. **Carried**

7. Business Arising from the Previous Minutes

None.

8. Announcements

Before we begin, I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge the sad passing of ERCA staff member Tim Baxter on February 6, 2025. Tim had been a valuable member of the Conservation Services Team serving as a Conservation Services Technician since 2015. During his years with ERCA, he used his considerable skills to help maintain ERCA's conservation areas and greenways, control invasive species, and lead tree planting crews, along with many other duties. He will be remembered for his kindness, humour and mentorship of newer staff. On behalf of the Board, I express my sincere condolences to Tim's family, friends and colleagues.

I'll keep the rest of my comments purposefully brief as we have a full agenda this evening, including a presentation on the Hillman Marsh Restoration Plan and our important Budget discussion and weighted vote.

Much has taken place in the short weeks since our Annual General Meeting.

Staff have been taken the lead in a regional initiative to develop plans to control invasive Phragmites and are currently seeking funding support on behalf of all member municipalities.

Tree orders for large stock trees will continue until early March. Please feel free to share details about ERCA's tree planting program with property owners within your municipality.

We are also gearing up to host the First Taste of Spring Maple Syrup Festival on March 8 & 9th and 15 & 16th at the John R. Park Homestead. I hope members will be able to attend this iconic Canadian celebration.

9. Delegations

None

10. Presentations

A. Hillman Marsh Restoration Plan

Resolution 19/25 Moved by Kieran McKenzie

Seconded by Anthony Abraham

THAT the Hillman Marsh Restoration Plan presentation be received for Members' information.

Carried

11. Reports for Approval

A. BD01/24 ERCA 2025 Budget Approval and Municipal Cost Apportionment

Resolution 20/25 Moved by Jim Morrison

Seconded by Thomas Neufeld

THAT the 2025 Draft Budget totalling \$12,215,958 be approved as the 2025 Final Budget, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 402/22 and Bylaw A-1: Administrative Procedures, and further,

THAT the Board of Directors approve the municipal cost apportionment of \$3,053,491, for mandatory programs and services (+2.8%, \$82,403); and further,

THAT the Board of Directors approve the municipal cost apportionment of \$327,262, restricted to the seven unanimously supported Category 3 non- mandatory programs and services (3.2%, \$10,000); and further,

THAT the vote to approve Recommendation 1, by the Board of Directions, be carried by a weighted majority and recorded, satisfying Sections 16 and 23 of O. Regulation 402/22.

Recorded Vote:

Support - Councillor Peter Courtney, Amherstburg
Support - Councillor Jason Matyi, Essex
Support - Councillor Katie McGuire-Blais, Essex
Support - Councillor Thomas Neufeld, Kingsville
Support - Mayor, Tracey Bailey, Lakeshore
Support - Councillor Ryan McNamara, Lakeshore
Support – Deputy Mayor Mike Akpata, Lasalle
Support - Councillor Anthony Abraham, Leamington
Support - Deputy Mayor, Larry Verbeke, Leamington
Support - Councillor Angelo Marignani, Windsor
Support - Councillor Kieran McKenzie, Windsor
Support - Councillor Jim Morrison (Vice Chair), Windsor
Support - Councillor Molly Allaire (Chair), Amherstburg

Carried

Resolution 21/25 Moved by Ryan McNamara
Seconded by Anthony Abraham

THAT the Board of Directors accept the 2025 voluntary municipal contributions of \$184,221 to the Category 3 Land Acquisition & Securement fund, and any additional voluntary contributions if directed by any nonparticipating member municipality, and included in its revised Agreement with the Authority. **Carried**

B. BD02/25 Recommended Changes to HBCA Cottage Rental Rates

Resolution 22/25 Moved by Peter Courtney
Seconded by Tracey Bailey

THAT the recommended increases to the HBCA Cottage rental rates, as described herein, be approved; and further,

THAT the recommended increases to the HBCA Cottage rental rates, be noted as maximum rates and that Administration may employ a dynamic pricing strategy, similar to hotels and vacation properties, that will allow flexibility in applying discounts from the maximum rate, to stimulate demand/bookings when necessary; and further,

THAT Administration post the revised Fee Schedule on ERCA's website; and further,

THAT Administration continue to monitor booking activity and property reviews and evaluate future cottage amenities to capitalize on travel and tourism trends, as they evolve. **Carried**

12. Reports for Information

A. BD03/25 Pelee Coastal Resilience Committee Project and NRCAN Funding Summary

Resolution 23/25 Moved by Larry Verbeke
Seconded by Jim Morrison

THAT the Pelee Coastal Resilience Committee and NRCAN Funding Summary be received for Member's information. **Carried**

B. BD04/25 Watershed Management Services Activities Report for December 2024 and January 2025

Resolution 24/25 Moved by Peter Courtney
Seconded by Anthony Abraham

THAT the review of Regulations and Planning Applications, as presented in Report BD04/25 be received for Members' information. **Carried**

C. Environmental Registry Reports
None

D. Correspondence

- i. Email from MECP regarding Amendments to the Species at Risk in Ontario List regulation made under the Endangered Species Act, 2007 dated January 28, 2025

Resolution 25/25 Moved by Thomas Neufeld
Seconded by Angelo Marignani
THAT correspondence be received for Members' information. **Carried**

13. Committee of the Whole
None

14. New Business

A. BD05/25 Financial Entities' Verification Requirements & Legal Compliance

Resolution 26/25 Moved by Angelo Marignani
Seconded by Peter Courtney
THAT the following municipal councillors be recognized, by way of Board Resolution, as the appointed Directors of the Essex Region Conservation Authority Board, as at February 13, 2025:
Molly Allaire (Chair)
Jim Morrison (Vice Chair)
Peter Courtney
Jason Matyi
Katie McGuire-Blais
Dennis Rogers
Thomas Neufeld
Tracey Bailey
Ryan McNamara
Michael Akpata
Sue Desjarlais
Anthony Abraham

Larry Verbeke
Joe Bachetti
Tania Jobin
Dayne Malloch
Angelo Marignani
Kieran McKenzie
Mark McKenzie **Carried**

15. Other Business.

A. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Thursday, April 10, 2025, at 6:00pm in Council Chambers at the Civic Centre in Essex, ON.

16. Adjournment

Resolution 26/25 Moved by Peter Courtney
Seconded by Jim Morrison

THAT the February 13, 2025 meeting of the Essex Region Conservation Authority Board of Directors be adjourned. **Carried**



Molly Allaire, Chair



Tim Byrne, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer