



MINUTES

Minutes for Meeting of the Board of Directors held Thursday, January 18, 2018, at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, Essex County Civic Centre, 360 Fairview Avenue West, Essex, ON.*

Members Present:	Steve Bjorkman	Len Janisse	Hilary Payne
	Terry Burns	Tania Jobin	Jeff Renaud
	Susanne Coghill	Irek Kusmierczyk	Ed Sleiman
	Al Fazio	Rick Masse	Larry Snively
	Fred Francis	Rita Ossington	Ron Sutherland
	Rick Fryer (<i>Chair</i>)	Larry Patterson	Larry Verbeke

Absent:

Regrets: John Jacobs

Staff: Richard Wyma, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer
Candice Kondratowicz, Corporate Services: Administrative Associate
Tim Byrne, Director, Watershed Management Services
Shelley McMullen, Director, Finance & Corporate Services
Kevin Money, Director, Conservation Services
Danielle Breault Stuebing, Director, Community Outreach Services
Corinne Chiasson, Resource Planner
Sydney Clackett, Surveyor/Technical Assistant
Michael Dick, Agricultural Technician
Ashley Gyori, Regulations Technician
Kris Ives, Curator/Education Coordinator
Dan Jenner, Regulations Analyst
Sam Keller, Interpreter
Laura Monforton, Risk Management Assistant
Gina Pannunzio, Partnerships & Outreach Coordinator
Lisa Pavan, WMS: Administrative Associate
Jess Rose, Environmental Educator
Claire Sanders, DRCC Remedial Action Plan Coordinator
Katie Stammler, Water Quality Scientist/Project Manager SWP
Filip Szaferowski, Graphic Designer

Guests: Assorted Media
Paul Anthony, Director of Parks & Rec, Town of Tecumseh
Paul Bourque, Friends of Cedar Creek
The Chase Family
Sue Desjarlais, Town of LaSalle/JRPHAC
Gord Faas, Rotary Club of Windsor (1918)
Janet Kelley, Rotary Club of Windsor (1918)

Mayor Gary McNamara, Town of Tecumseh
Heather McNamara, Town of Tecumseh
Susan Stockwell Andrews, ERCF
Claire Wales, ERCF
Marty & Karen Amlin
Linda Andrejicka
Mayor Ken Antaya, Town of LaSalle
Ron Arkell, Rotary Club of Windsor (1918)
Deputy Mayor Joe Bachetti, Town of Tecumseh
Peter Berry, WPA
Cynthia Blanchard, Rotary Club of Windsor (1918)
Darlene Burgess
Rick Caron, Rotary Club of Windsor (1918)
Karina Cerniavskaja, MNRF
Sean Collier, ERCF
Rochelle Deslippe
Bill Dunn, Mun. Leamington
Gordon Drake, Rotary Club of Windsor (1918)
Bill Dukes, SPC Member
Louie Fiorino
Tom Fuerth, Chair SPC
Adam Gault
Tom & Kathleen Goebel, Rotary Club of Windsor (1918)
Tony Haddad, CAO, Town of Tecumseh
John Hammond, Mun. Leamington
Tom Henderson, PAC, DRCC
Mary-Ann Keefner, Shibley Righton LLP
Vivian Kennedy
Dave Langford, Rotary Club of Windsor (1918)
Ann Laprise
Rick Laprise
Hilda MacDonald, LTVCA
Mayor Ron McDermott, Town of Essex
Linda McKinlay, LTVCA
Gordon Orr, TWEPI
Mark Peacock, GM, LTVCA
Trevor Pitcher, GLIER
Heather Pratt, U of W
Wendy Pulleyblank
Tamara Stomp
Pete Thomas, Unifor 200
Dave Tarrento
Tom Touralias, CAO, Town of Lakeshore
Randall Van Wager, LTVCA
Walter Wilms, Rotary Club of Windsor (1918)

Tracy Windibank
Shelby Wye

1. Call to Order

Good evening members and special guests. It is my honour to welcome you tonight to our Annual General Meeting celebrating the accomplishments of 2017, and also to honour the Conservation Award Winners, who will be more suitably introduced later this evening.

I'd also like to take a moment to recognize all of the special dignitaries who have joined us this evening, and Board members from the Essex Region Conservation Foundation.

We do have a few business items to attend to before we move into that very special part of this evening's celebration.

We have regrets from Councillor John Jacobs tonight.

But, first, I'd like to first take a moment to reflect upon this past year. It has been my privilege to serve as the Chair of the Essex Region Conservation Authority, and I look forward to beginning my second year as Chairman.

In reviewing our Annual Report, which you will see this evening, it is exciting to see all that we, as the Authority, have accomplished in striving to make our region the Place for Life!

It's been quite a year, with the launch of our Place for Life policies, the long-awaited updates of the Conservation Authorities Act being passed into law, and an improved focus on improving our region's resiliency in the reality of a changing climate.

As well, we've planted over 92 thousand trees, and created 15 acres of new wetland habitat. We've also assisted over 1,000 landowners this year in ensuring their new developments are protected from flooding and erosion. More than 12,000 students participated in our outdoor education programs. It is truly exciting to celebrate these many successes.

None of these would have been possible without the support of our municipal partners as well as our senior levels of government. I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank all of the volunteers who have worked so vigilantly in making these changes happen.

As well, because we have so many in attendance tonight, I'd like to personally express my sincere appreciation, on behalf of all of the Board of Directors, to our ERCA staff. Your dedication and expertise are the reason for these successes, and you should be so proud of all that has been accomplished. We thank you for all that you do.

2. **Declarations of Pecuniary Interest**

Councillor Francis noted that he will be abstaining from voting on section 6 (c) (ii) due to family at WFCU.

3. **Approval of Agenda**

Resolution BD01/18 Moved by Larry Patterson

Seconded by Al Fazio

THAT the Agenda for the Thursday, January 18, 2018 Meeting of the Board of Directors be approved. - CARRIED

4. **Adoption of Minutes**

(a). **ERCA Board of Directors**

Resolution BD02/18 Moved by Larry Verbeke

Seconded by Ed Sleiman

THAT the Minutes of the Thursday, December 14, 2017 Meeting of the Board of Directors and the recommendations therein be approved as distributed. - CARRIED

5. **Presentation**

(a). The Dennis Chase Smile Walk Cheque Presentation to the Essex Region Conservation Authority and Foundation

We have a very special presentation tonight, and at this time, I'd like to welcome Mrs. Jeannette Chase and the entire Chase family, to come forward. And, I'd like to invite Susan Stockwell Andrews, the President of the Essex Region Conservation Foundation, to please join me at the front.

6. **Actions**

(a) Election of Chair – Based on ERCA practice, there will be no elections tonight.

(b) 2018 ERCA Committee Membership

Resolution BD03/18 Moved by Len Janisse

Seconded by Jeff Renaud

THAT the 2018 Committee memberships remain status quo until new Committee Structures and Terms of Reference are presented and approved

- CARRIED

(c) Appointment of ERCA Auditor, Financial Institutions, Solicitor and Insurance Company for 2018

(i) Auditor

Resolution BD04/18 Moved by Larry Verbeke

Seconded by Al Fazio

THAT the firm of Hicks, MacPherson, Iatonna and Driedger LLP be appointed as the Authority's Auditor for 2018.

- CARRIED

(ii) Banker

Resolution BD05/18 Moved by Ron Sutherland

Seconded by Tania Jobin

THAT the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and the Windsor Family Credit Union be appointed as the ERCA financial institutions and utilized for banking, including borrowing and short-term investments, for 2018.

- CARRIED

(iii) Solicitor

Resolution BD06/18 Moved by Larry Patterson

Seconded by Rick Masse

THAT the firms of Shibley Righton, LLP, and M. Gordner Law Professional Corporation be appointed the ERCA Solicitors for 2018.

- CARRIED

(iv) Insurance Company

Resolution BD07/18 Moved by Jeff Renaud

Seconded by Susanne Coghill

THAT ERCA continues to participate in the Conservation Ontario Group Insurance program for its insurance coverage for 2018.

- CARRIED

(d) Approval of ERCA Borrowing Resolution for 2018

Resolution BD08/18 Moved by Irek Kusmierczyk

Seconded by Rick Masse

THAT ERCA adopt for 2018, the following resolution:

WHEREAS it is necessary for the Essex Region Conservation Authority (hereinafter called the "Authority") to borrow the sum of up to 1,500,000 dollars required for its purposes until payment to the Authority by participating municipalities, designated as such under the Conservation Authorities Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter C.27, and grant payments received from senior levels of government.

Be It Therefore Resolved;

THAT the Authority borrow, at the lowest effective interest rate, from any one of its appointed financial institutions or participating municipalities, a sum not to exceed in the aggregate 1,500,000 dollars at any one time necessary for its purposes by way of loans, advances, overdrafts, or promissory note, or notes of the Authority until payment to the Authority of any grants and of sums to be paid to the Authority by participating municipalities.

- CARRIED

(e) Designation of Signing Officers for 2018

Resolution BD09/18 Moved by Fred Francis

Seconded by Steve Bjorkman

THAT the Chair, Vice Chair, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer, and Director of Finance and Corporate Services be designated as ERCA's Signing Officers for 2018.

- CARRIED

7. Reports for Approval

(a) BD01/18 2018 Board Meeting Schedule

Resolution BD10/18 Moved by Larry Snively

Seconded by Susanne Coghill

THAT the 2018 ERCA Board of Directors meeting schedule as outlined in Report BD01/18 be approved.

- CARRIED

8. 2017 ERCA Annual Report

Each year, we endeavour to provide a snapshot of the accomplishments of the past year. While there are hundreds of successes we could feature, we choose to concentrate on just a few.

You will find a printed copy of this year's report at your desks, and I invite you to please enjoy this brief video of highlights from the past year.

A link to the electronic copy of the report and video www.erca.org/agm

9. ERCA Conservation Awards Presentation *(speaking notes & presentation attached)*

Taking the time to honour those organizations and individuals who have made significant contributions to protecting and improving our region's natural environment is one of the most exciting elements of each year's annual meeting.

At this time, I'd like to invite Vice Chair Irek Kusmierczyk and Danielle Breault Stuebing, ERCA's Director of Communications and Outreach Services, to assist in recognizing this year's award winners.

<Chair & Vice Chair hand out awards>

Congratulations to all Award Winners, and a final reminder that immediately following the conclusion of our meeting, please gather in the centre of Council Chambers for a group photograph.

We hope all guests will join us for a reception in the lobby to celebrate a year of outstanding successes.

Again, thanks to everyone for joining us tonight on this special occasion, and for your contributions toward making our region the Place for Life.

10. New Business

None

11. Other Business

- (a) The next meeting of the ERCA Board of Directors will be held on Thursday, February 15, 2018 starting at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, Essex County Civic Centre, 360 Fairview Avenue West, Essex, ON.

12. Adjournment

Resolution BD11/18 Moved by Al Fazio

Seconded by Susanne Coghill

THAT the Meeting be adjourned.

- CARRIED



Richard J.H. Wyma
General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer

2017 ERCA Conservation Award Winners

Good evening. Conservation Awards have been presented annually since 1992, and once again, we are delighted to recognize organizations and individuals who have made a difference in enriching and sustaining our region as the Place for Life.

Scientist Leroy Hood encourages us to *"not underestimate the power of your vision to change the world."* Those we honour tonight did not underestimate their power, and in fact, have made a tangible contribution in implementing our community's vision of a cleaner and healthier environment.

Conservation Farm Award Winner – Jerome Deslippe

The Conservation Farm Award is presented in conjunction with the Essex Soil & Crop Improvement Association and is awarded each year to the farming operation which best displays conservation minded farming practices. This year, the award was presented posthumously to Jerome Deslippe of Amherstburg, who passed away on August 16, 2017.

Jerome was a past President of the Essex Soil & Crop Improvement Association, and was a director for over 30 years. He was a proud supporter of many agricultural community projects, including the Essex County Plowing Match and the Ontario Plowman's Association. He was actively involved with the Essex County Steam and Gas Association, a past Leader of the local 4H and past President of the Essex Conservation Club. In 1997, Jerome was inducted into the Essex County Agricultural Hall of Fame.

Jerome was instrumental in the establishment of the Essex County Demonstration Farm at Holiday Beach Conservation Area. He participated in its management, assisting with the planting and harvesting of demonstration and research field plots for many decades. He was also an early adopter of conservation tillage practices on his own farm.

Jerome Deslippe's dedication and passion for both agriculture and his community make him a deserving recipient of the Essex County Conservation Farm Award. We are pleased to welcome Jerome's daughter, Rochelle, to receive this award on his behalf.

Homestead Award Winner – Iler Family

The John R. Park Homestead Award recognizes outstanding contributions to the preservation and interpretation of human and natural history in the Essex Region. Recognized for their longstanding contributions toward the preservation and promotion of local history in our community, this year, we are pleased to honour Earl and Greg Iler.

Earl Iler, the family patriarch, and his son Greg and family, live in the historic Iler Settlement, which was established over 200 years ago. As farmers, Earl and Greg have a deep connection with the land, and they lead by example in agriculture. Earl and Greg were honoured with the Conservation Farm Award in 1994, and their innovative and environmentally conscious approach to farming continues to this day.

The Ilers often welcome visitors to study their ancient pear tree, believed to be descended from a Jesuit Pear. Earl is always eager to recount the history of the planting and growth of this special tree. Last year, in hopes of preserving this specific tree's stock, the Ilers donated a sapling to the John R. Park Homestead,

where it is hoped that it will grow, flourish and educate visitors about the pioneering history of our area for generations to come.

Earl is highly regarded for his incredible memory and ability to vividly recount historical details of the last 90 years. This includes valuable personal memories of the people who lived in the local community. Earl has partnered with our curatorial staff to narrate his memories of the Fox Family's time at the Homestead. He has also been instrumental in helping to document land use and changes to the Homestead site, providing valuable historical detail that, otherwise, would have been lost to time.

Earl was an original member of the John R. Park Homestead Advisory Committee when it was established 40 years ago. Since that time, the Iler Family has provided significant support for operations, education programs and special events at the John R. Park Homestead Conservation Area. Their ongoing support is critical to the success of the conservation area's activities and special events.

For the Iler Family's continued dedication to preserving and promoting human and natural, we are delighted to recognize Mr. Earl Iler and Mr. Greg Iler with the John. R. Park Homestead Award.

Unfortunately, the Ilers were unable to join us this evening, but sent the following message:

Thank you for this honour. We are sorry that we could not be there in person to accept this award. The Homestead and the Ilers make good neighbours. We have a common interest in conservation and together we have our connections to the past. Together we can provide a link to the history and culture that shaped our community.

We agree, and look forward to a special visit to the Iler family to present them this award.

Education – Peter Berry

Since 2009, when Peter Berry was appointed Harbourmaster by the Windsor Port Authority, he has been a staunch advocate for environmental improvements along the Detroit River. He has used his role to help educate and engage the community. Peter has organized countless cleanups, tree plantings and ecological activities. He has worked closely with community groups including the Sandwich Teen Action Group, the Windsor Police Service, Crimestoppers, ERCA and the City of Windsor.

The Windsor Port Authority has been an active partner with the Detroit River Canadian Cleanup since its inception and Peter serves on the Steering and Implementation Committee. He utilizes this unique position to engage industry partners in stewardship and habitat projects along the river. He was instrumental in identifying the partners and funding to restore and improve over 300 metres of river shoreline in 2013. Peter also sought funding to make shoreline improvements for fish, turtles and other wildlife at the new HMCS Hunter site at Mill Street and he was a strong advocate for the community park at Mill Street, which includes a native plant garden, among many other projects.

Peter uses his role as Harbourmaster to help reinforce to volunteers and residents of Sandwich Town that we're all connected, and what humans do to the land in this area can impact the Detroit River, which is an incredibly important resource for humans and wildlife.

One of Peter's most significant accomplishments has been the port authority's program to reduce crime in Ojibway Shores and the surrounding lands by using environmental design to discourage illegal activities and protect sensitive natural areas.

Peter understands that during this time of climate change, protection and preservation of forest woodlands must be a priority. His continued personal commitment to various environmental initiatives inspires others to connect and engage. In Peter's words, we must 'respect the Detroit River for what it provides to all of us and take the time to teach the youth its heritage and importance to our future. With understanding the importance comes a commitment to protect it.'

We are delighted to recognize Peter Berry with the Conservation Award for Education.

Darlene Burgess – Volunteer Award

Darlene Burgess is a local monarch enthusiast and citizen scientist who raises butterflies on her property just outside of Point Pelee National Park, which is registered as Monarch Waystation 10275. She volunteers for Friends of Point Pelee, Wings Rehabilitation Center, the Voices of Youth Committee, and a number of other organizations.

Her love and curiosity for monarchs began as a young girl in Northern ON and while living in Hawaii. Her passion for this species at risk deepened as she discovered a milkweed sanctuary on her property when she moved there in 2010. Now, she is helping to boost their declining population by raising the insects from egg through their metamorphosis into the monarch butterfly. By ensuring the eggs hatch and mature, they have a better chance of surviving their winter migration of about 4,000km, to the mountains of Mexico. In fact, some of the monarchs that she has reared and tagged have been reported at the winter location. What started as a hobby has evolved and it is estimated that to date, Darlene has reared several thousand monarch butterflies.

As a citizen scientist, she tracks the monarchs she hatches and releases for organizations such as Monarch Watch and Journey North. She is certified to raise monarchs through the Toronto Entomologists Association and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. She also shares her knowledge with Point Pelee National Park as part of the migration count.

Milkweed is integral to the life cycle of the Monarch butterfly. This is the only plant upon which monarchs will feed and lay their eggs. She has taken special care to fence off the milkweed oasis on her property and has created a monarch house, where she raises the monarchs and releases them as mature butterflies. This ensures they are protected from spiders, ants and other insects that feed on monarch eggs. She has also been a keen volunteer in helping to establish the Monarch Trail, which is a restoration project led by the Municipality of Leamington.

Darlene has helped to raise awareness about the critical importance of protecting endangered monarchs and our region's locale as part of the migration route. Her dedication to these monarchs has increased their survival rates to 97%, and we are pleased to honour her with the Conservation Award for a Volunteer.

Environmental Achievement – Dr. Doug Haffner

Dr. Doug Haffner is a Founding Director of the Great Lakes Institute of Environmental Research (GLIER) and a Senior Canada Research Chair on Great Lakes Environmental Health. His research involves studying the effects of persistent organic chemicals on food webs and amphibian populations. He researches harmful algal blooms, develops models on energy and contaminant flows, and has been developing new techniques for testing water quality at area beaches.

Dr. Haffner has been an active contributor to the clean up efforts of the Detroit River since its designation as an Area of Concern in the 1980s. He helped to establish the Detroit River Canadian Cleanup Committee and was co-chair of the Monitoring & Research Work Group, where he ensured a scientifically sound, ecosystem approach to the clean up effort. His contributions to the DRCC are truly too numerous to list; but his large body of research continues to support decision-making to ensure our food, water, and beaches are safer. His efforts have also helped to protect the world's largest commercial fishery in Lake Erie; and Dr. Haffner continues to partner on international water-related issues.

Doug teaches hundreds of students each year with an emphasis on Great Lakes and local water quality issues. He provides training for the next generation of large lake scientists and mentors a number of graduate students annually, many of whom conduct their own research in the lakes and rivers around Essex County. Further, Dr. Haffner is always willing to share his expertise with the community. He volunteers his time and lab resources for presentations, attend public science symposiums, and sit on expert panels. Doug retired from GLIER in 2017 but his important research will leave a lasting legacy in supporting the management of Canada's Great Lakes. For these many reasons, it is an honour to present Dr. Doug Haffner with the Conservation Award for Environmental Achievement.

Volunteer Organization – Rotary Club of Windsor (1918)

The Rotary Club of Windsor (1918) has a long history of service to our community, and this year, the club celebrates its 100th anniversary. *Service above self* is the motto of Rotarians worldwide, and the volunteer members of the Rotary Club of Windsor (1918) have been consistently serving the environmental needs of this community.

The club has its own Environment Committee which meets regularly to pursue environmental projects for the betterment of our region. They make it easy for the over 130 members of the club to recycle batteries, light bulbs, and other hazardous or hard to recycle materials, by allowing Rotarians to bring these items to meetings, where committee members then ensure they are properly recycled.

Our regional environment has benefitted from the annual Earth Day Cleanups organized and implemented by the club's members for the past five years, particularly in the Little River watershed. Since 2014, the club has been undertaking tree planting events at City of Windsor parks, which have included McKee Park, Atkinson Park and lands adjacent to the Gordie Howe Bridge. In 2015 and 2016, they worked with the Sandwich Teen Action Group to help create a parkette at the end of Mill Street. Club members are raising funds to plant trees along the Rotary (1918) Centennial Hub, and have been the driving force to fulfil Rotary International's goal of ensuring a tree is planted by every Rotarian this year. Globally, the club has significantly invested in clean water and sanitation projects in Tanzania, Ghana and other developing nations.

The club's Art in the Park events have raised more than \$1.3 million dollars over the years to help restore Willistead Manor, ensuring this important part of our local cultural heritage remains protected.

In 2016, the Rotary Club of Windsor generously helped to fund a new Community Outreach Trailer for Essex Region Conservation. This trailer allows us to engage more than 2,000 volunteers annually in tree planting and restoration events across the Essex region, contributing to a future of environmental sustainability.

The Rotary Club of Windsor (1918) served as the lead donor to our Place for Life campaign with a remarkable contribution to create the Rotary (1918) Centennial Hub. A parkette will be created at this location this year to complement the critical section of trail that brings our community's vision of a region connected by trails to reality, and serves as a legacy of the Club's 100th year of service. For these many efforts, we are delighted to recognize the volunteers of the Rotary Club of Windsor (1918) with the Conservation Award for a Volunteer Organization.

Robert Pulleyblank Municipal Environmental Achievement – Town of Tecumseh

The Town of Tecumseh has invested significantly in creating a future of sustainability and ensuring our region is the Place for Life. Beginning more than a decade ago, the Town worked vigilantly to protect Fairplay Woods to ensure this 117 acre forest would be protected in perpetuity. The Town also demonstrated environmental leadership when acquiring Lakewood Park in 2010, where they have created a natural, ecologically sensitive community park. Lakewood Park's many amenities include a winding water channel, sandy beach access to Lake St. Clair, and a naturalized area.

Annually as part of their Earth Day celebrations, the Town plants trees in the park to re-establish green cover and habitat benefits. Tecumseh has been a long-term partner in the protection and maintenance of McAuliffe Woods Conservation Area, which features 9 hectares of Carolinian Forest, soccer pitches, and a playground.

In 2010, the Town of Tecumseh has invested in one of the largest roof top solar systems, which was the first of its kind in Canada. This project was built on the roof of Tecumseh Arena and to date, has resulted in an annual energy savings equivalent to the impact of operating 500 vehicles.

The Town of Tecumseh has also been an early and enthusiastic supporter of the Regional Climate Strategy. Following two major storm events within a one year period, the Town is developing a flood mitigation strategy which includes investments in storm and wastewater infrastructure, considers green infrastructure, mandatory downspout disconnection and significant education and outreach to residents. ERCA looks forward to continuing to work with the Town to implement these projects.

In 2014, Tecumseh created Oldcastle Heritage Park, planting trees to honour those lives lost in the bus tragedy of 1966. This park also expands its trail network, and it is hoped that eventually, this will be another connecting link to the trail system that provides active transportation throughout the municipality.

Over the past year, the Town of Tecumseh took a leadership role in the development of the Rotary (1918) Centennial Hub. This partnership began with a joint grant application for \$325,000 to the Ministry of Transportation to build this critical 3 km link between multiple municipalities. Tecumseh Council and administration's involvement was crucial in the complex acquisition of the many lands required to build the trail. The Town of Tecumseh was instrumental in ensuring this project came to fruition. It was truly a community celebration in October when the Town of Tecumseh, Rotarians and the community at large gathered to open the Rotary (1918) Centennial Hub. With this connection, we are fully connected through off road trails, enriching our region as the Place for Life.

For these many reasons, we are pleased to recognize the Town of Tecumseh with the Robert Pulleyblank Award for Municipal Environmental Achievement.

Dennis Chase Staff Award – Vivian Kennedy

The Dennis Chase Staff Award honours longtime staff member Dennis Chase and recognizes those who demonstrate the traits that Dennis upheld: dedication, commitment, conscientiousness, kindness to colleagues, enthusiasm, pride in a job well done, and good humour.

Tonight, we are delighted to honour Vivian Kennedy who began her career at ERCA in 1999. While her job title has changed over the years, her kindness, compassion, sense of humour and vigilant work ethic has not. Vivian served as the Administrative Associate for the Community Outreach Services Department, and her duties encompassed a wide range of program areas. She was the main liaison for our hunting program, undertook graphic design duties, was a key part of the customer service team, provided support to our forestry and restoration programs amongst a wide variety of 'other duties as required'.

Vivian is a most genuine and kind-hearted individual. Her willingness to lend a hand and to assist others is paramount in all that she does. Vivian has always been able to cheerfully respond to requests from a wide audience of customers, both internal and external, including everyone from part-time student staff to long-time partners. If there's something you don't know, but need to know, Vivian is a great starting point. She always made it a special effort to spend time with new staff, encouraging and making them feel welcome.

Vivian is a myriad of knowledge. She always makes herself available and is eager to point you in the right direction – who to speak to, where to start, or where something may be hidden away. She is our compass in many ways, helping to chart our path and keeping us on course in the rough seas of our busiest seasons.

She has put her heart and soul into her role, volunteering for events and staying late hours to ensure all materials are loaded, printers poised, and all areas cleaned up. She epitomizes the essence of teamwork, which means never leave a member behind.

Here's what her colleagues had to say:

"Vivian is a kind and generous soul who takes her job seriously and did it well. There will be some big shoes to fill in the coming months and not just the mechanics of what she does, but the personality and warmth that she brought to our entire office."

"On many days she was like the mother that I always wanted and the friend who always listened and laughed at my jokes."

"Viv has acted as our office mom, sister, friend, for almost 20 years."

"Vivian enlightens in quirky, humorous ways, shines with a smile, and comforts with a hug. She leads by example in how to make the world a kinder place. She is forever optimistic and has faced every challenge life has dealt her. The love she pays forward is unconditionally the ripple that effortlessly expands across the lake."

Vivian looks at life as an adventure. She does not shy away from a new page or chapter, or new travel, or a new person to meet. She's inspiring in her simple kind gestures, and is priceless for her enthusiastic and charming spirit she feels for life, and we are blessed that she has shared it with all of us. Vivian retired from ERCA two weeks ago, and what a great privilege it is to honour her tonight with this coveted award.