



## MINUTES

Minutes for the Board of Directors Meeting held **Thursday, January 21, 2021**, at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom Web Conferencing

<b>Members Present</b>	Tania Jobin (Chair)	Laura Lucier	Trevor Jones
	Kieran McKenzie (Vice Chair)	Larry Patterson	Larry Verbeke
	Marolyn Morrison	Tracey Bailey	Dayne Malloch
	Peter Courtney	Len Janisse	Joe Bachetti
	Morley Bowman	Mark Carrick	Jeewen Gill
	Chris Vander Doelen	Sue Desjarlais	Jim Morrison
			Ed Sleiman

### Member Regrets

**Members Absent** None

**Staff Present** Tim Byrne, Interim General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer  
Nicole Kupnicki, Corporate Services, Executive Assistant  
Shelley McMullen, Interim CFO/Director, Finance & Corporate Services  
Kevin Money, Director, Conservation Services  
Danielle Stuebing, Director, Community Outreach Services  
James Bryant, Interim Director, Watershed Management Services  
Aaron Zimmer, Multimedia Specialist

**Guests** Assorted Media

## 1. Call to Order

Good evening and welcome to the January 21, 2021 meeting of the ERCA Board of Directors.

I will call the meeting to order and we will start by taking a roll call of all Board Members to confirm attendance. We have no regrets this evening.

We will begin in alphabetical order by municipality. Please be prepared to unmute your microphone when your name is called and return to mute after you have answered:

- Councillor Peter Courtney, Amherstburg
- Marolyn Morrison, Amherstburg
- Councillor Morley Bowman, Essex
- Councillor Chris Vander Doelen, Essex

- Councillor Laura Lucier, Kingsville
- Councillor Larry Patterson, Kingsville
- Deputy Mayor Tracey Bailey, Lakeshore
- Councillor Len Janisse, Lakeshore
- Councillor Mark Carrick, LaSalle
- Councillor Sue Desjarlais, LaSalle
- Trevor Jones, Leamington
- Deputy Mayor Larry Verbeke, Leamington
- Councillor Dayne Malloch, Pelee Island
- Deputy Mayor, Joe Bachetti, Tecumseh
- Councillor, Tania Jobin, Tecumseh
- Councillor Jeewen Gill, Windsor
- Councillor James Morrison, Windsor
- Councillor Ed Sleiman, Windsor

Thank you all.

## 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 Potawatomie 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. Comments from the Chair

Good evening, everyone, and welcome to our Annual General Meeting. Thanks to everyone for joining us this evening, especially to our Conservation Award Winners and their guests, who will be more suitably introduced later this evening.

I would also like to acknowledge and welcome our elected officials, members of the Essex Region Conservation Foundation, ERCA staff members and those that may be watching this meeting via live-stream. Welcome, everyone!

Before vacating the Chair, I would like to express to each of you what a privilege it has been to serve with you all on this Board. While at this time last year none of us could have predicted what 2020 would bring, I believe that together, we have still been able to make a positive impact in advancing environmental sustainability the Windsor-Essex region.

We will have the opportunity to reflect on some of our many accomplishments later this evening with our annual report video, but there are a few notable highlights that I will take with me from my time as Chair.

During this period of sustained record high water levels, I was pleased to have gained more insight into the factors that impact flooding in our most vulnerable areas, how it impacts people and development within those areas, and to have made important strides in the climate change work we are undertaking.

I was extremely proud to have had the opportunity to break ground for the new Heritage Centre at the John R. Park Homestead, which will provide a legacy of accessible and equitable experiential learning.

It was rewarding to see the surge in use at our conservation areas this year, and to see the notes of gratitude for keeping them open for the physical and mental health of our community members. This reinforced to me that while there is much we can live without, our need for connecting with nature is essential.

To the members of the Board, I thank each of you for your dedication, commitment, and support. One of the most important elements of this Board is our relationships – with each other, with all levels of government, volunteers, organizations and many others. I am pleased that we had the opportunity to strengthen our relationships and carry on our important watershed management work to ensure the sustainability of the communities we serve.

I look forward to continuing to work with you all for years to come.

It definitely has been my honour and privilege to serve the community in this role. I have deep respect for the Authority, including its current and former members of Administration, for the people who have served on the Boards both present and past as well as those supporters of our work throughout the community. It has been a highlight of my term in office thus far to have the opportunity to serve in this capacity and I want to thank each and every one of my colleagues, who have supported me in this role and supported us as an organization through a challenging time but as we have heard a very exciting time for the Conservation Authority to continue our work. Lastly, I would like to acknowledge our staff. To put it in a word, I am awed by each and every one of you. I've been inspired by both the passion you have for your work and the professionalism you have in service to your community. Thank you for remaining steadfast in those commitments. With all sincerity, thanks.

We do have some regular business of the Authority to conduct this evening in addition to recognizing some of our staff and Conservation Award Winners from 2020. With that, we will continue with this evening's agenda.

#### **4. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest**

None

#### **5. Approval of Agenda**

**THAT the Agenda for the Thursday, January 21, 2021 Meeting of the Board of Directors be approved.**





i. Members Allowing Name to Stand

I will now ask if Tania Jobin will accept the nomination for the position of Chair.'

Councillor Jobin accepted the nomination and absent any other nomination, was accepted by acclamation.

**THAT Tania Jobin is the new Chair of the Essex Region Conservation Authority for the next two years**

Resolution 06/2021

**Acclaimed**

(d) Election of Vice Chair

Similar to the process for electing the Chair, we will be conducting the election of our Vice-Chair from a member of the City of Windsor.

In keeping with our procedures, I will call three times for nominations for the position of Vice-Chair. We do not require a seconder for any of the nominations:

So, I would invite any nominations for the position of Vice-Chair.

Kieran McKenzie was nominated by Jim Morrison

For a second time, are there any nominations for the position of Vice-Chair?

No nominations put forth.

And, for a third and final time, are there any nominations for the position of Vice-Chair?

No nominations put forth.

(i) Motion to Close Nominations for Vice Chair

**THAT the nominations for the position of Vice Chair be closed.**

Resolution 07/2021

Moved by Marolyn Morrison

Seconded by Mark Carrick

I will now ask if Kieran McKenzie will accept the nomination for the position of Chair

With no additional nominations, I will declare the Councillor Kieran McKenzie is the new Vice-Chair of the Essex Region Conservation Authority for the next two years.

Congratulations and thank you. That concludes my brief term as Acting Chair of the Authority. I will resume my position and invite our new Chair, Councillor Jobin to assume the Chair.

I will now ask if Kieran McKenzie will accept the nomination for the position of Vice-Chair. Councillor McKenzie accepted the nomination and absent any other nomination, was accepted by acclamation.

**THAT Kieran McKenzie is the new Vice-Chair of the Essex Region Conservation Authority for the next two years**

Resolution 08/2021

**Acclaimed**

## 9. Remarks for the In-coming Chair

Thanks to all of you for your confidence in electing me as Chair – I look forward to serving this Board and the Windsor-Essex-Pelee Island community in this role.

Congratulations also to Kieran McKenzie on his election.

Before we move on, on behalf of the Board of Directors, I'd like to extend my sincerest appreciation to Councillor McKenzie for his leadership as our Chair over the past year. While the year held many unanticipated challenges, you took the reigns to help navigate us through, and we are truly grateful.

As a token of our thanks and in recognition of your service, when we are able to come together again, I will be pleased to present you with a beautiful photograph of Devonwood Conservation Area, which we know is a special place for you in your riding.

To all of the Members of the Board, I look forward to working with you as we explore the impact of the changes to the Conservation Authorities Act and the required Transition Plan.

There's no question that a healthy economy, healthy citizens and healthy environment are linked together, and the decisions we make will ultimately affect our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren as we strive to create a future of environmental sustainability for this region.

## 10. Presentation - None

## 11. Actions

(a) Appointment of ERCA Auditor, Financial Institutions, Solicitor and Insurance Company for 2020

(i) Auditor

**THAT the firm of Hicks, MacPherson, latonna and Driedger LLP be appointed as the Authority's Auditor for 2021.**

Resolution 09/2021

Moved by Larry Verbeke

Seconded by Marolyn Morrison

**-CARRIED**



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.

Resolution 13/2021      Moved by      Dayne Malloch

Seconded by      Mark Carrick

**-CARRIED**

(c) Correspondence

- i. Letter to the Honourable Doug Ford from the Town of Tecumseh regarding Bill 229, Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act, Schedule 6, Conservation Authorities Act dated December 10, 2020
- ii. Letter to Tim Byrne from Town of Kingsville regarding Resolution Bill 229 and the Conservation Authorities dated December 21, 2020
- iii. Letter to Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority from Town of Amherstburg regarding Bill 229 "Protect, Support and Recover from COVID19 Act – Schedule 6 – Conservation Authorities Act" dated December 22, 2020
- iv. Email to Tim Byrne from The Honourable Jeff Yurek, Minister, MECP regarding Ontario Moves Forward with Conservation Authorities Working Group dated January 11, 2021

THAT correspondence be received for Member's information.

Resolution 14/2021      Moved by      Laura Lucier

Seconded by      Trevor Jones

**-CARRIED**

## 12      2020 ERCA Annual Report

Each year, we endeavour to provide a snapshot of the accomplishments of the past year. ERCA, like virtually every organization across the globe, experienced challenges that we could not have imagined when we came together at last year's Annual Meeting.

However, despite these challenges, there were also revelations about the true value that nature has to our mental and physical well-being. We also learned more about our individual and organizational resilience.

For those viewing at home, copies of this year's Annual Report can be found on our website, and I invite you to please enjoy this brief video of highlights from the past year.

**THAT the 2020 ERCA Annual Report be received for Member's information.**

Resolution 15/2021      Moved by      Ed Sleiman

Seconded by      Kieran McKenzie

**-CARRIED**

### 13. **ERCA Staff Service Awards**

This year, staff were required to figure out how to undertake the critically important watershed management protection they provide remotely, virtually overnight and without interruption. We are so fortunate to have staff who, over many years, continue to contribute to the sustainability of the region. These people are among the most dedicated staff members I have had the pleasure of working with.

To them, the protection of our environment is not just a job, but a way of life. We have undertaken the practice of recognizing special milestones, and planting a tree to signify years of service. To those staff tuning in tonight, on behalf of the Board, I would like to say 'thank you'.

- Tim Baxter, 5 years of Service
- Bevin Martin, 5 years of Service
- Ashley Gyori, 5 years of Service
- Kris Ives, 20 years of Service
- Dan Lebedyk, 30 years of Service

Thanks to all of you for your contributions, and Dan Lebedyk, for three decades of incredible work, on behalf of the entire community, we say: 'thank you'.

We have another special milestone to recognize tonight, and that's Tim Byrne, who we recognize tonight for 35 years of service to this organization.

### 12. **ERCA Conservation Awards Presentation**

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.

Conservation Awards have been presented annually since 1992, and once again, we are delighted to recognize those who have made a difference in enriching and sustaining our region.

To all of the winners tuning in tonight, on behalf of the Board I extend my most sincere Congratulations, and look forward to presenting you with your plaque, in person, when it is safe to do so.

But for tonight, we celebrate these incredible organizations and individuals who have taken significant action to protect and restore our local environment with this video:

But for tonight, we celebrate these incredible organizations and individuals who have taken significant action to protect and restore our local environment

### **Homestead Award Winner – Don Waffle**

We first met Don Waffle many years ago when, after cross country skiing along the lakeshore, he presented staff with a stunning photographic image of the 1842 house taken from the frozen lake. This was a rare treasure, as few images of the house have been taken from the Lake Erie vantage point.

Over the years, Don became an active Homestead volunteer and supporter. Importantly, he was the Chair of the Homestead Advisory Committee during the Homestead's transfer of ownership from the Province to the Conservation Authority.

In addition to his many years of volunteer work and other contributions to support the Homestead, Don also has used his talents to preserve and promote the human and natural history of the Essex Region. As a photographer, Don captured beautiful images of the Homestead's interior for the site's first 'virtual tour'. Don also photographed a variety of stunning local wildlife which has been used to help educate thousands of students and visitors.

Don is an accomplished artist. He has immortalized a diverse set of important local scenes through his stunning artwork. As a museum, the Homestead treasures the several paintings he has created capturing the historic buildings, grounds and events. He has also captured many other scenes of Essex County history and daily life. These include The Fruit Stand along County Road 50, the Essex Kent Scottish at the Liberation of Dieppe (1944), Leamington's Municipal Marina, various local historic homes, and old wooden barns that eventually will be lost to time.

Thank you Don, for your important contributions to preserving and promoting the John R. Park Homestead, and the remarkable history of our region. It is our pleasure to honour you with this award.

### **Youth – Emily Browne**

Emily Browne is an Environmental Science student at the University of Windsor. A member of ERCA's Youth Environment Ambassador program and the How-To-Crew, she has significantly contributed to many outreach events and initiatives. As a member of the

How To Crew, she advances the quality of community restoration projects across the region, which ensures long term growth and survival of the native plant and trees. She has assisted with many Earth Day community plantings, TD Tree Days celebrations and other ERCA-led stewardship initiatives.

Last winter, Emily became an Outreach Assistant intern with ERCA and the Detroit River Canadian Cleanup. As part of her internship, Emily participated in planning, coordinating and executing a number of events including ERCA's Conservation Awards celebration, the DRCC's Annual Film Screening and the John R. Park Homestead's Maple Syrup Festival. Emily also provided support in orienting and mentoring new Youth Environment Ambassadors and How To Crew members. In addition, she participated on the local planning committee focusing on the Great Global Cleanup initiative to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Earth Day with numerous local environmental organizations.

As Emily completes the final year of her studies, she is part of the Healthy Headwaters Lab, completing a two-term thesis course as a research assistant. Her thesis is being researched in partnership with Nature Conservancy Canada evaluating a wetland restoration on the Marianne Girling Nature Reserve in Essex. She also serves as a lab assistant to process soil samples for agricultural soils study.

Emily always maintains a positive attitude and excellent work ethic, both independently and , as a true team player. She sets a positive example for other youth and students across the Windsor-Essex, and we congratulate her on this award.

### **Volunteer – Xander Campbell**

Xander is an up-and-coming environmentalist and conservationist with a passion for birds and wildlife, and protecting their habitat. He began volunteering at the early age of twelve at Wings Wildlife Rehabilitation. As an early teen, he also volunteered at Jack Minor's Migratory Bird Sanctuary where he grew his passion and knowledge. This led to future opportunities as a student to create a native species garden, host Owl Prowls and Kennedy Woods Walk & Talks, where he shared his passion for local birds and wildlife and their habitats, and encouraged others to get outside and to connect with nature.

He also participated in many volunteer activities at Point Pelee National Park, removing invasive species such as garlic mustard, participating in beach clean-ups and planting milkweed for the beach restoration project. He helped host the park's Young Naturalist Club, volunteering his time to work teach children about plants and animals and how to protect the park for the future. He also helped with the maintenance of the frog ponds. And routinely recruits friends and family to participate in conservation and restoration projects.

In his free time, Xander routinely looks for opportunities to help the environment by visiting all our local conservation areas and removing trash and recyclables. He has participated in tree planting and seed collection for ERCA. He also has rescued and

replanted milkweed has saved and planted seeds to distribute for free to others interested in helping our Monarch butterfly population. He has volunteered on numerous occasions to come into kindergarten classrooms at Kingsville Public School to do nature talks and activities with local students, sparking their interests in nature and wildlife.

This past summer, Xander became one of the youngest students to be accepted into Point Pelee's summer work program because of his passion and enthusiasm. He worked removed invasive species from the marsh and wetlands, vaccinated ash trees to protect them from the ash borer beetle, tracked and tagged fox snakes and released native species turtles from protected nesting sites, He is currently pursuing a post-secondary education at Fleming college in the Fish & Wildlife Program with hopes of making a career out of his passion.

One of his nominators states: "Xander is a young person who deeply cares about the environment and shows dedication to helping care for nature and wildlife and conserve its beauty for future generations." We thank Xander for his volunteerism in protecting and conserving habitats and wildlife, and sharing that passion with others, and are pleased to present him with this award.

### **Education – Freshwater Restoration and Ecology Centre (FREC)**

The Freshwater Restoration Ecology Centre, often referred to by its acronym FREC, combines ground-breaking research while engaging the public in Great Lakes biodiversity education. FREC has spearheaded many innovative programs to engage the public in research-based best practices to counteract imminent threats to biodiversity. It aims to better understand key stressors and threats to our freshwater biodiversity like climate change, habitat alteration, and urbanization.

FREC began as a partnership between the Town of LaSalle and the University of Windsor in 2010, with the transformation of the Riverdance property along the Detroit River. Under the leadership of Dr. Trevor Pitcher, major funding from national and provincial sources have allowed for improvements and expansions over the past decade. FREC demonstrates how challenging common objectives can be met through consultation and imaginative problem-solving. Its contributions were recognized with the prestigious Canada 150 Service Award for educating the public regarding Great Lakes Environmental Issues.

An integrated team of high school student volunteers, undergraduate and graduate students conduct research and engage the public using a multi-faceted approach. Some highlights include offering tours and open houses; partnering with "Let's Talk Science" to produce pamphlets on freshwater biodiversity issues; engaging with government officials; co-hosting popular fishing tournaments where sustainable fisheries practices are encouraged; and visiting local schools. Prior to the restrictions imposed by the pandemic,

the number of visitors grew steadily in recent years. In 2019 alone, over 1,500 people visited FREC, and this trend is expected to continue.

FREC is committed to continuous growth, and has engaged with elders and students from the Walpole Island First Nation to seek their input to improve programming. Working together, a facility at Walpole Island was established to help manage species with cultural importance like Lake Sturgeon, as well as game fish that are important traditional food sources.

FREC has also reared endangered freshwater fish species for protection and education. Notably, visitors to FREC are able to see the only captive population of endangered Redside dace in Canada, as well as other species like the imperiled Lake Sturgeon. Exciting new research has shown how this species can be effectively bred in captivity for reintroduction back to the wild. Beyond our local region, FREC has provided endangered Redside dace to Ripleys Aquarium to further expand its educational reach. By partnering with successful local commercial operations, FREC is able to further its mission to educate the public about important issues of freshwater biodiversity.

These examples highlight how FREC has effectively used citizen science to integrate cutting-edge research and public education and develop new solutions to important local and global environmental problems. We congratulate them with the 2020 Conservation Award for Education.

### **Environmental Achievement – Dr. Ken Drouillard**

Dr. Ken Drouillard's passion for the environmental health and sustainability the Great Lakes may stem from the many youthful days he spent fishing on the Detroit River. Now a professor with the Great Lakes Institute for Environmental Research at the University of Windsor, he is an expert in modelling pollutants in the food web for a variety of species. These models are used to assess Great Lakes water and sediment quality and perform ecological assessments.

Dr. Drouillard returned to the University of Windsor as a postdoctoral fellow in 2000 and became an active member of the Detroit River Canadian Cleanup. He regularly advises on the status of beneficial uses within the Detroit River Area of Concern, including providing expertise on zooplankton populations, fish consumption advisories, and the health of the benthic invertebrate community. Dr. Drouillard's research directly bridges the science-to-practice gap and supports decision-making to ensure our food and water are safer.

Dr. Drouillard also collaborates on bi-national projects, lending his expertise to the US government (EPA) to identify areas for sediment remediation within the Detroit River. Further, he is part of Friends of the Detroit River – a local US group that tackles Detroit River issues on the American side. Additionally, he has participated in the 2019 Harmful Algal Bloom (HABs) Grab, a bi-national multi-agency, multi-university initiative to collect water samples to generate scientific knowledge about algal bloom conditions in the

western basin of Lake Erie. Dr. Drouillard's work has also been translated for other freshwater systems around the world, including China and Dubai.

Dr. Drouillard trains the next generation of aquatic biologists in courses in aquatic Great Lakes issues and Pollution Ecology. He is always willing to share his expertise with the community, and is a frequent source for local media. He also volunteers his time and lab resources in a wide variety of ways.

Most recently, Dr. Drouillard is leading a team of UWindsor scientists to help the Windsor-Essex Sewing Force produce better homemade masks, using scientific equipment to identify fabrics most capable of keeping healthcare workers safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal is to determine quality control measures and standardize the masks to a design that can be reused after laundering and sterilization in hospitals.

Dr. Drouillard is also lending his expertise to an UWindsor GLIER research project in partnership with wastewater treatment plants in Amherstburg and Lakeshore to study viral loads of COVID-19 in sewage before and after processing. The research will also delve into how long the virus can survive in the environment should it be discharged into Lake St. Clair or the Detroit River.

Dr. Drouillard's contributions to protecting and restoring the local environment are inspiring, and we are honoured to present him with the 2020 Conservation Award for Environmental Achievement.

### **Environmental Achievement - Essex Power Corporation**

Essex Power Corporation strongly believes in sustainability and works cohesively with its affiliate companies, Essex Powerlines Corporation and Essex Energy Corporation, to provide reductions in its carbon footprint and offer solutions for a low carbon future.

EPC has implemented many environmental initiatives that have helped reduce carbon emissions in the Windsor-Essex region and beyond. One of their successful energy conservation endeavors is to provide Conservation and Demand Management programs through the Independent Electricity System Operator's *Conservation First* Framework. Because of the program, EPC exceeded its 6-year conservation target, achieving 119% almost 2 years ahead of the program end date.

In an effort to reduce carbon emissions, Essex Power Corporation has increased its fleet of solar photovoltaic - or PV assets and infrastructure in Windsor-Essex and across the province. A rooftop solar PV system installed on its operations building produced over 120,701 kWh (Kilowatt hours) of clean energy, exceeding the 2020 target by 100%! EPC has invested in additional solar PV assets and has built over 130 similar projects across the province, furthering its impact on a cleaner environment in the local community and beyond!

Essex Powerline Corporation encourages their customers to switch to paperless billing. As a result, over 9,500 customers signed up saving approximately 340,000 pieces of paper, and reducing the cradle-to-grave emissions by nearly 14 tonnes. Its goal is to increase its

paperless customer base to over 50 % by the end of 2021. An internal digital transformation increased efficiencies and reduced paper use across all departments. Most recently, Essex Powerlines Corporation has applied for funding through Natural Resource Canada's Zero Emissions Vehicle Infrastructure Program to help strengthen and transform the region's transportation sector. If successful, Essex Powerlines Corporation will support the process to install electrical vehicle charging stations across the region. Essex Power Corporation and its affiliate companies have demonstrated their commitment to improving environmental and sustainable conditions in our region and Ontario, and we are pleased to present them with the award for Environmental Achievement.

### **Robert Pulleyblank Award for Municipal Environmental Achievement – County of Essex**

In 2019, the County of Essex Council unanimously declared a climate emergency, which supported 'permanent and robust changes' to the way the County does business. Following that declaration, in 2020 the County spearheaded a number of climate action projects on behalf of the region.

Over the last 8 years, the County of Essex has promoted healthy and active lifestyles through the construction of more than 415 km of active transportation corridors through the County Wide Active Transportation System (CWATS). CWATS links our seven local municipalities with an active transportation network spanning hundreds of kilometers. Not only do connected trails play an important role in supporting mental and physical health, tourism and sustainable residential development but it is a big part of the climate change solution. By encouraging residents to bike, walk, and roll, the County is addressing one of the biggest contributors to climate change – greenhouse gas emissions from transportation. This program also helps educate residents on bike safety and etiquette. The ambitious goal to have a connected network spanning over 800km will provide a safe, comfortable, bicycle and pedestrian friendly environment for all of us.

In January 2020, the County initiated the Essex County Regional Energy Plan. The plan will help the community to better understand current energy consumption, identify opportunities for energy efficiency, help to meet the community's climate priorities, and strengthen the local economy. Through this plan, a 30-member Community Task Force was established and led by Warden McNamara. The task force brings together a team of community leaders from all municipalities, local businesses, government, utilities, school boards and community groups to advise and champion the energy plan and implementation process. The strategy directly supports Council's climate emergency declaration by providing clear and achievable goals with ambitious targets to significantly lower community greenhouse gas emissions and improve our overall energy efficiency while creating jobs and opportunities for investment.

The County has also taken strong action on climate adaptation through initiating a floodplain mapping prioritization study. With changing weather patterns, variable lake

levels, and increased flooding and erosion, identifying vulnerable areas and assets is a critical step in protecting residents and ensuring safe, responsible, and sustainable development practices. Additionally, the County's Emergency Management Department continues to coordinate and support climate action and adaptation planning through continually improving flood and heat response and supporting municipal climate adaptation planning across the region.

For these reasons and more, it is an honour to present them with the Robert Pulleyblank Award for Environmental Achievement.

### **Dennis Chase Staff Award – Bevin Martin**

*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.*

Bevin Martin is one of ERCA's Conservation Area Technicians. He maintains Conservation Areas, restoration sites and trails across the Windsor-Essex region and also supports construction, tree-planting, and development projects. Bevin is always cheerful, optimistic, and regularly mentions how much he enjoys working for the Conservation Authority. He often says, "It's the best job for me." He continuously arrives with a smile on his face and a happy greeting for his co-workers.

He is a walking encyclopedia of knowledge and is always happy to share. As well, he is interested in the projects of his fellow staff members and likes to learn more about their work. Despite a significant workload, Bevin consistently finds ways to help his co-workers. He makes himself available to help troubleshoot equipment, even if it is not in person. He has helped train many contract, full-time and seasonal employees on various pieces of equipment, and he does so with patience and kindness. He reminds staff constantly about following proper health and safety practices when working out in the field.

Bevin has shared his experiences in caring and stewarding the many hundreds of acres of ERCA lands while stressing the importance of doing the work properly, to ensure the safety of visitors. Bevin also takes seriously the important aspect of customer service while representing ERCA as a front line staff. He is friendly and welcoming to anyone who may have questions and cheerfully welcomes those using conservation areas and trails.

Bevin is dedicated to the work that he engages in each day at ERCA as he is conscientious, hard-working, thoughtful and compassionate to his colleagues, guests and the environment. He has contributed tremendously to the sustainability of the region and does so with kindness, optimism and humour, and we are pleased to honour him with this award.

**Closing Comments:**

Congratulations to all Award Winners, and thank you to everyone who joined us virtually for tonight's Annual General Meeting. Traditionally at this time, I'd invite you to join us for a reception to celebrate tonight's honourees, but for tonight, I'll send you all wishes to stay safe and well, and look forward to the time when we can come together again safely in person.

From all of us, your gestures of continued interest in our communities is greatly appreciated.

**14. Other Business**

(a) Waive Procedural By-Law

**THAT the Chair and Vice-Chair's request to waive procedural by-law in order to call a Special Meeting of the Board of Directors to deal with a Personnel matter with three days' notice, rather than the required five days' notice be approved.**

Resolution 16/2021      Moved by      Morley Bowman

Seconded by      Trevor Jones      **-CARRIED**

(b) Committee of the Whole

i. Confidential matters related to personnel issues

**THAT the meeting move from Board of Directors to Committee of the Whole related to personnel matters.**

Resolution 17/2021      Moved by      Dayne Malloch

Seconded by      Chris Vander Doelen      **-CARRIED**

ii. Resume Open Session

**THAT the actions of the Committee of the Whole be endorsed.**

Resolution 18/2021      Moved by      Kieran McKenzie

Seconded by      Trevor Jones      **-CARRIED**

(b) The next meeting of the ERCA Board of Directors will be held on Thursday, February 18, 2021 starting at 6:00 p.m. in

## 15. Adjournment

THAT the January 21, 2021 Meeting of the Essex Region Conservation Authority Board of Directors be adjourned.

Resolution BD 19/2020 Moved by

Peter Courtney

Seconded by

Larry Verbeke

**-CARRIED**



Chair



**Tim Byrne**

Interim General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- |                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| February 18, 2021 | <b>Board of Directors Meeting</b> via Zoom Web Conferencing                                |
| April 8, 2021     | <b>Board of Directors Meeting</b> via Zoom Web Conferencing                                |
| May 13, 2021      | <b>Board of Directors Meeting (*At the Call of the Chair)</b><br>via Zoom Web Conferencing |
| June 17, 2021     | <b>Board of Directors Meeting</b> via Zoom Web Conferencing                                |