



Grand River Conservation Authority Agenda – CA Act Regulations Committee

Date: October 29, 2021
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Location: GRCA Zoom Virtual Meeting
Members Present: John Challinor II, Susan Foxtan, Michael Harris, Helen Jowett, Chris White
Staff: Samantha Lawson, Karen Armstrong, Sonja Radoja, Eowyn Spencer

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Certification of Quorum

Quorum was certified with all Members present.

3. Chair's Remarks

None.

4. Review of Agenda

Moved by: John Challinor II

Seconded by: Michael Harris

THAT the agenda for the Conservation Authorities Act Regulations Committee Meeting be approved as circulated.

Carried.

5. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest

None.

6. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Moved by: Helen Jowett

Seconded by: John Challinor II

THAT the minutes of the previous Conservation Authorities Act Regulations Committee Meeting held on September 9, 2021 be approved as circulated.

7. Discussion Items:

7.1. Draft Transition Plan

7.1.1. Part 1 – 2021-2022 Timeline & Transition Plan

7.1.2. Part 2 – 2022-2024 Timeline & Transition Plan

S.Lawson provided a brief overview of the three regulations recently released as Phase 1 of regulatory changes under the CA Act.

The mandatory programs and services regulation stipulates that conservation authorities must create an inventory of all current programs and services, and for each one determine which of three defined categories they fall into.

The categories as defined in the regulation are:

1. Levy funded/Mandatory programs and services
2. Municipal driven programs funded through municipal agreements or sources other than the general levy
3. Other programs and services offered at the discretion of the Conservation Authority and funded with external sources, partnerships, government grants or self-generated revenue

The transition plan and agreements regulation stipulates six key deliverables and associated timelines for Conservation Authorities to come into conformance with the updated legislation.

S.Lawson provided a detailed overview of the first draft transition plan, which consists of a draft timeline for completing major milestones identified in the regulation, and highlighted next steps and anticipated work plans for GRCA staff and Board through the transition process. The purpose of the transition plan is to illustrate to the Province the plan for meeting compliance by the Provincial due date of January 1, 2024.

The finalized transition plan is due to the province at the end of 2021. The first draft has been provided to the Committee for review and input, with the intention of bringing the draft before the full Board at the November meeting. Following Board approval, the transition plan will be circulated to participating (levy paying) watershed municipalities for information. To allow time for any suggested changes or updates, a finalized transition plan will be presented to the full Board for approval at the December meeting.

The Committee thanked Samantha for the effort in pulling together the draft plan in a short period of time, and continued discussing the impacts of the regulatory changes with respect to the transition plan and estimated timelines.

There was thorough discussion related to presenting the information to participating municipalities, engaging municipal staff and council, and providing information to GRCA Board members to act as drivers within council meetings. There was concern noted in regard to getting feedback from councils within the end of year timeline.

Samantha noted that at this stage, the transition plan is required to be circulated to municipalities for information only, and feedback is welcome but not required. Further, if changes are required after the plan has been submitted by December 31, 2021, they will be discussed with the Board, and if approved, will be submitted to the Ministry as part of the regularly scheduled updates. It is anticipated that a presentation for municipal councils will be prepared following the submission of the transition plan, however, staff are not yet prepared to engage council. At this time, preliminary

meetings with senior level staff at participating municipalities are being scheduled in order to identify key contacts, and discuss initial processes, timelines and deliverables.

The Committee offered suggestions for implementing the sharing of information and highlighting the importance of a collaborative effort between the CA and municipalities. Suggestions included preparing an executive summary, or informational letter to be distributed to heads of council, and to highlight GRCA Board members as representatives, to bring information or notices of motion, if needed, before respective councils at the appropriate time. It was agreed that sufficient notice would be provided to municipal councils at any time where motions or endorsements are required.

The proposed next steps are to receive endorsement of the draft transition plan from the full board in November, and then circulate the draft and cover letter to all participating municipalities. Should changes be suggested, they can be incorporated into the finalized transition plan to be approved by the Board in December.

7.2. Proforma Budget 2022 – Preliminary New Regulations Levy Estimates

S. Radoja provided a detailed overview of current programs and services and their respective funding sources. The Committee discussed the separate categories and the breakdown as provided, noting that this estimated breakdown of services will require much consideration and discussion at both the staff and Board level prior to finalization.

Moved by: John Challinor II

Seconded by: Helen Jowett

THAT the Conservation Authorities Act Ad-hoc Committee endorse the draft transition plan as presented, and recommend to the General Membership that the draft timeline and transition plan be circulated to participating municipalities following the November meeting of the General Membership.

Carried.

8. Other Business

Committee Members inquired about available resources for managing the increased workload associated with the new regulations, including creation of workplans, land management and natural hazard management strategies, and other tasks as required by the legislation. Samantha indicated that it is being discussed, and additional resources may be required as the workload evolves and the scope of the various projects becomes clearer.

9. Next Meetings – At the Call of the Chair

10. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:19 a.m.