



NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
April 24, 2026, 10:00a.m.
Carolinian Hall
3350 Merrittville Hwy., Thorold ON

MEMBERS PRESENT: R. Foster, Chair
S. Beattie
D. Cridland
J. Metcalfe, Vice Chair
P. O'Neill
M. Seaborn
M. Tadeson
A. Witteveen (arrived at 10:12a.m.)

REGRETS: B. Clark
B. Grant

STAFF PRESENT: L. Lee-Yates, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer
E. Baldin, Manager, Land Planning
A. Christie, Director, Conservation Areas
C. Coverdale, Manager, Financial Services
Z. Dadson, Manager, Grants & Project Coordination
M. Davis, Manager, Office of the CAO & Board
D. Deluce, Director, Planning & Development
M. Ferrusi, Manager, People & Performance
L. Gagnon, Director, Corporate Services
N. Green, Director, Watershed Strategies & Climate Change
E. Navarro, Communications & Media Relations Specialist
K. Royer, Conservation Areas Land Planning Specialist
G. Shaule, Administrative Assistant
S. Zavarella, Manager, Communications & Public Relations

The meeting was called to order at 10:09 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Resolution No. FA-33-2026

Moved by: Donna Cridland

Seconded by: Mark Tadeson

THAT the agenda for the Full Authority Special Meeting held April 24, 2026 **BE AMENDED** to address Item 9.2. immediately following Item 6.1.

CARRIED

2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Resolution No. FA-34-2026

Moved by: Stew Beattie

Seconded by: John Metcalfe

THAT the Minutes of the Full Authority Meeting dated March 27, 2026 **BE APPROVED.**
CARRIED

4. CHAIRS UPDATE

- NPCA's first tree planting of 2026 was a great success in Fort Erie on Wednesday, April 22. Chair Foster thanked the Town of Fort Erie, Niagara Community Foundation, NPCF, staff and volunteers for kicking off the season with such a wonderful event.
- Chair Foster invited Board Members and members of the public to take part in open houses throughout the first week of May to learn more about the Lake Ontario Coastal Resilience Pilot Project, where residents can ask questions, provide input, and learn more about local shoreline risks in their community.
- Chair Foster yielded the floor to Member Cridland to provide a Foundation update. Member Cridland noted that NPCF was awarded a \$65,000 grant to support NPCA's Trees for All program.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

Resolution No. FA-35-2026

Moved by: Michelle Seaborn

Seconded by: Mark Tadeson

THAT the Correspondence dated April 10, 2026, from the Ontario Public Service Employees Union RE: Provincial Plan to Consolidate Conservation Authorities **BE RECEIVED.**

CARRIED

6. PRESENTATIONS

6.1. Audited Financial Statements and Audit Findings Report for the 2025 Fiscal Year

David Marks, Lead Audit Engagement Partner, KPMG, provided a brief presentation on 2025 Audit Findings.

Resolution No. FA-36-2026

Moved by: Michelle Seaborn

Seconded by: Albert Witteveen

THAT the Audited Financial Statements and Audit Findings Report for the 2025 Fiscal Year Presentation **BE RECEIVED**.

CARRIED

9.2. Report No. FC-05-26 RE: 2025 Audited Financial Statements and Audit Findings Report

Resolution No. FA-37-2026

Moved by: Stew Beattie

Seconded by: Donna Cridland

THAT Report No. FC-05-26 RE: 2025 Audited Financial Statements **BE RECEIVED**;

AND THAT the 2025 Audited Financial Statements and the 2025 Audit Findings Report attached hereto as Appendices 1 and 2 respectively **BE APPROVED**.

CARRIED

6.2. Bill 97, *Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures)* and proposed amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act*

CAO/Secretary-Treasurer, Leilani Lee-Yates, provided a presentation on the above noted item. Discussion ensued regarding land acquisitions and grant funding ensued.

Further discussion ensued pertaining to the level of activity expected for the Transition Committee and its members.

Resolution No. FA-38-2026

Moved by: Michelle Seaborn

Seconded by: Donna Cridland

WHEREAS Bill 97 – Plan to Protection Ontario Act (Budget Measures) 2026, Schedule 3, includes amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act to enable the statutory amalgamation of Ontario’s conservation authorities into nine Regional Conservation Authorities;

WHEREAS Bill 97 has passed Third Reading and Royal Assent is imminent;

WHEREAS within 90 days from the date of Royal Assent, the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority will be required to appoint two members to the Transition Committee for the Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority;

Now Therefore It be Resolved THAT the Bill 97, *Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures)* and proposed amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* presentation **BE RECEIVED**;

AND THAT the Board of Directors **APPOINT** the Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer, Leilani Lee-Yates and Board Chair, Robert Foster to the Transition Committee for the Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority;

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of the resolution be sent to the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, the Ontario Chief Conservation Executive, and the participating municipalities of Niagara Region, City of Hamilton and Haldimand County.

CARRIED

7. DELEGATIONS

None.

8. CONSENT ITEMS

Resolution No. FA-39-2026

Moved by: Albert Witteveen

Seconded by: Stew Beattie

THAT the following items **BE RECEIVED**:

8.2. Report No. FC-04-26 RE: Banking and Investments – 2025 Activity; **AND**

8.3. Report No. FC-03-26 RE: Procurement – 2025 Activity.

CARRIED

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS

9.1. Report No. FC-01-26 RE: Finance Committee Workplan

Resolution No. FA-40-2026

Moved by: John Metcalfe

Seconded by: Michelle Seaborn

THAT Report No. FC-01-26 RE: Finance Committee – 2026 Work Plan **BE RECEIVED**;

AND THAT the Finance Committee - 2026 Work Plan attached as Appendix 1 **BE APPROVED**.

CARRIED

9.3. Report No. FC-02-26 RE: Financial Report – Q4 – 2025

Director, Corporate Services, Lise Gagnon, provided a brief overview of the above noted report. Discussion ensued regarding accumulation of interest in Reserves.

Resolution No. FA-41-2026

Moved by: Stew Beattie

Seconded by: Donna Cridland

THAT Report No. FA-02-26 RE: Financial Report – Q4 – 2025 **BE RECEIVED.**

CARRIED

9.4. Report No. FC-06-26 RE: 2026 Operating and Capital Budgets and Municipal Levies

Resolution No. FA-42-2026

Moved by: Mark Tadeson

Seconded by: John Metcalfe

THAT Report No. FC-06-26 RE: 2026 Operating and Capital Budgets and Municipal Levies **BE RECEIVED;**

AND THAT in accordance with the Board approved Reserves Policy, the amount of \$912,317 **BE ALLOCATED** from Reserves (Capital, Operating and Land Securement) to fund ongoing initiatives carried over from 2025 as per details provided in this report;

AND FURTHER THAT the 2026 Unfunded Budget Priorities list attached as Appendix 1 **BE ADOPTED** and staff **BE AUTHORIZED** to update the list and address critical pressures as funding becomes available through external funding sources and/or within the approved budget.

CARRIED

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Resolution No. FA-43-2026

Moved by: Michelle Seaborn

Seconded by: Mark Tadeson

THAT the Governance Committee minutes, dated March 27, 2026 **BE APPROVED.**

CARRIED

11. MOTIONS

11.1. Coordinated Phragmites Management Strategy

Member Tadeson provided a brief overview of the motion brought forward and noted that a complimentary motion would be brought forward at Hamilton City Council for consideration.

Resolution No. FA-44-2026

Moved by: Mark Tadeson

Seconded by: Stew Beattie

WHEREAS Phragmites (*Phragmites australis*) is an invasive plant species that spreads rapidly, displacing native vegetation and negatively impacting biodiversity, wetland function, agricultural drainage, and infrastructure;

WHEREAS unmanaged phragmites growth can contribute to increased fire risk, reduced sightlines along roadways, and impacts to municipal drains and stormwater systems;

WHEREAS phragmites is present across lands within the City of Hamilton, including municipal lands, conservation authority lands, and private properties;

WHEREAS effective phragmites management requires coordinated, landscape-scale approaches involving multiple landowners and agencies;

WHEREAS City of Hamilton natural area management is primarily undertaken through Parks Operations and in partnership with conservation authorities, other agencies, and landowners, and current active management includes limited invasive species control activities, including phragmites;

WHEREAS phragmites management within the City is also addressed through project-specific work, including environmental assessments and detailed design processes that apply best management practices, rather than through a single coordinated municipal program;

WHEREAS there is an opportunity to improve coordination, prioritization, and alignment of phragmites management efforts across agencies;

WHEREAS the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority has ongoing invasive species management expertise and programming relevant to phragmites control;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT NPCA staff BE REQUESTED to:

- a)** Engage with the City of Hamilton and the Hamilton Conservation Authority to explore opportunities for a coordinated, multi-agency approach to phragmites management across Glanbrook and Stoney Creek Mountain;
- b)** Work collaboratively with the City of Hamilton to identify opportunities for improved coordination, including shared mapping, treatment planning, and resource alignment;
- c)** Explore potential partnership models, including the potential for a formalized inter-agency phragmites management strategy or memorandum of understanding (MOU);
- d)** Consider approaches used by other municipalities and jurisdictions, including best practices and program models, to help inform coordinated phragmites management efforts within the watershed; AND

e) Work collaboratively with the City of Hamilton to identify a pilot project location within the NPCA watershed on City-owned land where phragmites are present and where coordinated removal efforts could be undertaken.

AND THAT the City of Hamilton BE REQUESTED to participate in and support collaborative phragmites management efforts with the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority and the Hamilton Conservation Authority, including shared mapping, planning, and pilot project development where feasible;

AND FURTHER THAT correspondence pertaining to this request **BE CIRCULATED** to the City of Hamilton and the Hamilton Conservation Authority.

CARRIED

11.2. Exploration of Technological Advancements in Ecotoilets

Discussion ensued regarding a misprint of the final motion drafted for consideration. Manager, Office of the CAO & Board, Melanie Davis, read the motion as written below for the Board to consider.

Resolution No. FA-45-2026

Moved by: Mark Tadeson

Seconded by: Stew Beattie

WHEREAS Binbrook Conservation Area Beach is located on land owned and operated by the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA);

AND WHEREAS there are picnic areas in the park that are regularly used but are a significant walking distance from accessible washroom facilities;

AND WHEREAS NPCA is committed to sustainable environmental practices;

AND WHEREAS Eco-toilets provide an innovative, sustainable, obstacle-free, accessible self-sufficient, odor-free, comfortable, hygienic experience for users;

AND WHEREAS there are Ward 11 specific reserve funds available that could be utilized to help defer costs;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT NPCA Staff explore the feasibility, and operational requirements for installing an ECO toilet or other similar outdoor toilet at the Binbrook Conservation site through contact with various vendors;

AND THAT NPCA Staff explore the performance history and functional reliability of ECO Toilets used outdoors in other jurisdictions and Conservation Areas;

AND FURTHER THAT staff report back to the NPCA Board of Directors with the findings of their investigations on an ECO-Toilet concerning initial set up and on-going maintenance costs by September 2026.

CARRIED

12. NOTICES OF MOTION

None.

13. NEW BUSINESS

- Member Seaborn inquired about a plan for alternative paths at Beamer Memorial Conservation Area due to extreme weather conditions impacting the staircase. Director, Conservation Areas, Adam Christie, noted that staff have commissioned a geotechnical study that will determine options and timelines for resolution.
- Member Beattie indicated that he is available to join the Finance Committee if it is of interest to the Board, since the last meeting was cancelled due to lack of quorum.

Resolution No. FA-46-2026

Moved by: Mark Tadeson

Seconded by: Michelle Seaborn

THAT Member Beattie **BE APPOINTED** to NPCA's Finance Committee for the 2026 business year.

CARRIED

14. CLOSED SESSION

Resolution No. FA-47-2026

Moved by: Michelle Seaborn

Seconded by: Stew Beattie

THAT the Full Authority Meeting scheduled on April 24, 2026 **NOW** move into closed session at 11:46 a.m.

CARRIED

Resolution No. FA-48-26

Moved by: John Metcalfe

Seconded by: Stew Beattie

THAT the Full Authority meeting scheduled on April 24, 2026 **RESUME** open session at 12:26 p.m.

CARRIED

Resolution No. FA-49-2026

Moved by: Donna Cridland

Seconded by: Michelle Seaborn

THAT staff **PROCEED AS DIRECTED** in closed session regarding Report No. FA-11-26 RE: Land Acquisition Update.

CARRIED

Resolution No. FA-50-26

Moved by: Mark Tadeson

Seconded by: Donna Cridland

WHEREAS the Board has received correspondence from the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), as the bargaining agent representing employees of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) expressing concern regarding the Province of Ontario's proposal to amalgamate conservation authorities;

WHEREAS the Board recognizes the critical role of NPCA staff in delivering programs and services that support watershed protection, natural hazard management, environmental stewardship, and public safety, grounded in strong partnerships, and local knowledge;

WHEREAS the Board acknowledges the uncertainty created for employees by the provincial plan to amalgamate conservation authorities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the NPCA Full Authority Board **AFFIRMS** the importance of retaining organizational capacity, local subject matter expertise, and institutional knowledge in the delivery of conservation authority programs and services;

AND THAT the NPCA Full Authority Board **EXPRESSES ITS INTENTION TO SUPPORT**, as appropriate and within its mandate, through established channels including the Transition Committee, and the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) for:

1. The continued effectiveness and sustainability of conservation authorities through local workforce knowledge and subject matter expertise; AND
2. Consideration of workforce impacts associated with any proposed consolidation model;

AND FURTHER THAT correspondence pertaining to this matter **BE CIRCULATED** to OPSEU, OPSEU Local 212, and all NPCA staff.

CARRIED

15. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Foster adjourned the meeting at 12:30 p.m.