



NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
March 27, 2026, 10:00a.m.
Carolinian Hall
3350 Merrittville Hwy., Thorold ON

MEMBERS PRESENT: R. Foster, Chair
S. Beattie
B. Clark
D. Cridland
B. Grant
J. Metcalfe, Vice Chair
P. O'Neill
M. Seaborn
M. Tadeson
A. Witteveen

STAFF PRESENT: L. Lee-Yates, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer
A. Christie, Director, Conservation Areas
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
J. Nelson, Niagara River RAP Coordinator
G. Shaule, Administrative Assistant
G. Verkade, Senior Manager, Integrated Watershed Strategies

OTHERS PRESENT: Sharon Pfeifer, Investment & Donor Relations Officer, NPCF
Phillipe Murphy-Rhéaume, Chief Operations Officer, Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

The meeting was called to order at 10:08 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Resolution No. FA-19-2026

Moved by: Mark Tadeson

Seconded by: Stew Beattie

THAT the agenda for the Full Authority Special Meeting held March 27, 2026 **BE AMENDED** to address Item 8.1. immediately following Item 6.1.

CARRIED

2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Resolution No. FA-20-2026

Moved by: John Metcalfe

Seconded by: Michelle Seaborn

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

CARRIED

4. CHAIRS UPDATE

- Chair Foster joined CAO Lee-Yates for a briefing regarding the provincial announcement on March 10, 2026, and noted that Bill 97, *Plan to Protect Ontario (Budget Measures) Act* presented on March 26, 2026 includes proposed amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act*.
- Our restoration and Trees for All staff are preparing for another busy planting season, Chair Foster encouraged those around the table to take a morning or afternoon to volunteer with the team and plant some trees in the watershed. Staff will follow up with Board members about upcoming events scheduled.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

Resolution No. FA-21-2026

Moved by: Brad Clark

Seconded by: Albert Witteveen

THAT the following correspondence items **BE RECEIVED:**

5.1. Correspondence dated March 10, 2026, from the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks RE: Plan to transition to regional conservation authorities; AND

5.2. Correspondence dated March 10, 2026, from the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks RE: Minister's direction for conservation authorities regarding fee changes associated with planning, development, and permitting fees.

CARRIED

6. PRESENTATIONS

6.1. Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Cities Initiative Ally Program

Phillipe Murphy-Rhéaume, Chief Operations Officer, provided a brief presentation on the Great-Lakes St. Lawrence Cities Initiative and it's Ally Program. Discussion

ensued regarding consideration to invasive species in the great lakes and collaboration with various levels of government on both sides of the border.

Resolution No. FA-22-2026

Moved by: Donna Cridland

Seconded by: Brian Grant

THAT the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Cities Initiative Ally Program presentation **BE RECEIVED.**

CARRIED

8.1. Report No. FA-06-26 RE: Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Cities Initiative – Allies Program Membership

Resolution No. FA-23-2026

Moved by: Donna Cridland

Seconded by: Brian Grant

THAT Report No. FA-06-26 RE: Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Cities Initiative – Allies Program Membership **BE RECEIVED.**

CARRIED

6.2. Niagara River Remedial Action Plan Ecosystem Impairment Removed

Director, Watershed Strategies & Climate Change, Natalie Green, provided a brief introduction. Niagara River RAP Coordinator, Jessi Nelson, provided a presentation on the above noted item.

Discussion ensued regarding level of coordination between RAP programs in Canada and US.

Resolution No. FA-24-2026

Moved by: Stew Beattie

Seconded by: Michelle Seaborn

THAT the Niagara River Remedial Action Plan Ecosystem Impairment Removed presentation **BE RECEIVED.**

CARRIED

8. CONSENT ITEMS

Resolution No. FA-25-2026

Moved by: Mark Tadeson

Seconded by: John Metcalfe

THAT the following items **BE RECEIVED:**

8.2. Report No. FA-04-26 RE: Human Resources – 2025 Annual Update; AND

8.3. Report No. FA-07-26 RE: 2025 Planning and Development Statistics.

CARRIED

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS

9.1. Report No. FA-01-26 RE: Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Committee Terms of Reference and Recruitment

Resolution No. FA-26-2026

Moved by: Brian Grant

Seconded by: Donna Cridland

THAT Report No. FA-01-26 RE: Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Committee Terms of Reference and Recruitment **BE RECEIVED**;

AND THAT staff **BE AUTHORIZED** to proceed with Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Committee member recruitment;

AND FURTHER THAT staff **REPORT BACK** on progress made by the Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Committee at progress points established in the Committee's forthcoming work plan.

CARRIED

9.2. Report No. FA-03-26 RE: Appointment of Regulations Officers – Section 30 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*

Resolution No. FA-27-2026

Moved by: Brad Clark

Seconded by: Albert Witteveen

THAT Report No. FA-03-26 RE: Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) – Appointment of Regulations Officers **BE RECEIVED**;

AND THAT the NPCA staff named below **BE APPOINTED**, under Section 30 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* for the terms of their employment with the NPCA, as Officers of the NPCA and Provincial Offences Officers.

CARRIED

9.3. Report No. FA-08-26 RE: Delegation of Authority – Section 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*

Resolution No. FA-28-2026

Moved by: John Metcalfe

Seconded by: Stew Beattie

THAT Report No. FA-08-26 RE: Delegation of Authority – Section 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* **BE RECEIVED**;

AND THAT the Board **DELEGATE AUTHORITY**, under Section 28.4 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*, to the Director, Watershed Strategies and Climate

Change as a signatory on Section 29 permits beginning March 27, 2026, for the term of their employment with the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA).

CARRIED

9.4. Report No. FA-10-26 RE: St. Johns Centre Heritage Designation

Director, Conservation Areas, Adam Christie, provided a brief overview of the report.

Resolution No. FA-29-2026

Moved by: Mark Tadeson

Seconded by: Brad Clark

THAT Report No. FA-10-26 RE: St. Johns Centre Heritage Designation **BE RECEIVED;**

AND THAT the NPCA Board of Directors **ENDORSE** the City of Thorold's issuance of a Notice of Intention to Designate St. Johns Centre Conservation Area as a property of cultural heritage value or interest under Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;

AND FURTHER THAT Report No. FA-10-26 **BE CIRCULATED** to the City of Thorold.

CARRIED

9.5. Report No. FA-09-26 RE: 2026 Corporate Workplan Priorities

CAO/Secretary-Treasurer, Leilani Lee-Yates provided a brief overview of the 2026 corporate priorities and notable ongoing work, such as the Lake Ontario Coastal Resiliency Pilot Project, secondary watershed plans, asset management plan and land management planning priorities.

Resolution No. FA-30-2026

Moved by: Albert Witteveen

Seconded by: Donna Cridland

THAT Report No. FA-09-26 RE: 2026 Corporate Workplan Priorities **BE RECEIVED;**

AND THAT the Board **APPROVE** the 2026 Corporate Workplan Priorities.

CARRIED

9.6. Report No. FA-02-26 RE: Provincial Announcement – Next Steps to Improve Ontario's Conservation Authority System

CAO/Secretary-Treasurer, Leilani Lee-Yates, provided a presentation related to Report No. FA-02-26. Discussion ensued regarding appointment criteria for the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency Board and anticipated timeline for implementation of guardrails.

Further discussion regarding consideration of proposing an alternate solution ensued. Members requested a recorded vote on the recommendation presented.

Resolution No. FA-31-2026

Moved by: Stew Beattie

Seconded by: Michelle Seaborn

WHEREAS on October 31, 2025, the provincial government announced a proposal to establish the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) to lead the implementation of a new regional conservation authority framework;

AND WHEREAS on November 6, 2025, Bill 68, *Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2025 (No.2)* was introduced in the Ontario Legislature, which proposed amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* to establish OPCA, and on November 27, 2025, Bill 68 received Royal Assent;

AND WHEREAS on November 7, 2025, the provincial government posted a policy proposal on the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO #025-1257) to consolidate Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into seven regional conservation authorities and provided a 45-day commenting period on proposed boundaries and the criteria applied to inform the proposed boundaries;

AND WHEREAS on December 5, 2025, the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) Board of Directors passed Resolution No. FA-131-2025, that stated the Board does not support the "Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority" boundary configuration as the proposal lacks sufficient justification, would significantly diminish local governance, and fails to recognize the effectiveness and efficiencies already achieved within existing watershed-based models;

AND WHEREAS NPCA's participating municipalities of Niagara Region, City of Hamilton and Haldimand County, and several watershed lower-tier municipalities passed Council resolutions and submitted comments to the provincial government demonstrating support for the position of the NPCA Board of Directors;

AND WHEREAS on March 10, 2026, the provincial government announced their decision on the boundaries for Ontario's new nine regional conservation authorities, with the "Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority" boundaries remaining unchanged, and provided further information related to governance and the transition process;

AND WHEREAS amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act*, and implementing Regulations will be required to facilitate the statutory amalgamation of regional conservation authorities;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved:

THAT Report No. FA-02-26 RE: Provincial Announcement – Next Steps to Improve Ontario's Conservation Authority System **BE RECEIVED**;

AND THAT the NPCA Board of Directors **REAFFIRMS** their position stated through Resolution No. FA-131-2025;

AND THAT should the provincial government proceed with implementing the proposed regional conservation authority framework and “Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority”, the NPCA will be committed to working constructively with OPCA, local area MPPs, neighbouring conservation authorities, municipalities, sector partners and interested partners to ensure local voices, municipal representations, and unique watershed characteristics continue to guide decisions;

AND THAT the Board requests that OPCA engages meaningfully and collaboratively with affected municipalities, conservation authorities, and local First Nations before advancing any consolidation, to ensure that any changes reflect both local needs and the practical realities of implementation;

AND THAT this resolution and Report No. FA-09-26 be forwarded to Niagara Region; the lower-tier municipalities within Niagara Region; City of Hamilton; Haldimand County; Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation; Six Nations of the Grand River; Niagara Peninsula Source Protection Committee; Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks; Ontario’s Chief Conservation Executive; local area MPPs; Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO); Conservation Ontario; and all conservation authorities in Ontario.

Member	In Favour	Opposed
Stew Beattie		X
Brad Clark	X	
Donna Cridland	X	
Brian Grant	X	
John Metcalfe	X	
Michelle Seaborn	X	
Mark Tadeson	X	
Albert Witteveen	X	
Robert Foster	X	

CARRIED

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

Resolution No. FA-32-2026

Moved by: Stew Beattie

Seconded by: Donna Cridland

THAT the Public Advisory Committee minutes, dated March 10, 2026 **BE APPROVED.**

CARRIED

11. MOTIONS

None.

12. NOTICES OF MOTION

Member Tadeson advised the Full Authority Board that he will be bringing two motions forward at the April 24, 2026 meeting.

One motion will speak to management of Phragmites within the City of Hamilton, and one focuses on the exploration of implementing innovative sustainable technologies, such as ecotoilets, at Conservation Areas.

13. NEW BUSINESS

- Niagara Peninsula Conservation Foundation attended David Suzuki's Stronger Together event at the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, which was highly attended by community members passionate about the environment, and had the opportunity to present David Suzuki with a Comfort Maple Pen.

14. CLOSED SESSION

15. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Foster adjourned the meeting at 12:15 p.m.