

**GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE MEETING  
ON-LINE VIDEO CONFERENCE**

**Thursday, March 31, 2022  
9:00 a.m.**

**A G E N D A**

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**1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**2. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

**3. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR / VICE CHAIR**

**4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

- a) Minutes of the NPCA Governance Committee Meeting dated December 10, 2021

Page # 1

**5. CORRESPONDENCE**

- a) Correspondence from the Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing dated March 24, 2022 RE: Phase 2 Consultation on Urban River Valleys to Grow the Greenbelt: Proposed amendments to the Greenbelt Plan (2017) and Greenbelt Area Boundary Regulation (O. Reg 59/05) and Ideas for Adding more Urban River Valleys to the Greenbelt (For Receipt)

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**6. PRESENTATIONS**

**7. DELEGATIONS**

**8. CONSENT ITEMS**

- a) Report No. GC-01-22 RE: Freedom of Information Statistical Report 2021 (For Receipt)

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- b) Report No. GC-03-22 RE: Customer Service Standards and Guidelines (For Receipt)

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- c) Report No. GC-04-22 RE: Remote Working Arrangement Guidelines (For Receipt)

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**9. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- a) Report No. GC-02-22 RE: Governance Committee – 2022 Work Plan (For Approval)
- b) Verbal Update from M. Ferrusi, Manager, Human Resources RE: Salary Disclosure
- c) Update on NPCA Policies for the Administration of Ontario Reg 155/06 and the Planning Act
- d) Update on Conservation Authority Act Amendments

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**9. NEW BUSINESS**

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

**GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE  
ONLINE VIDEO CONFERENCE  
MEETING MINUTES  
Friday, December 10, 2021  
9:30 a.m.**

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- MEMBERS PRESENT:** R. Foster, Chair  
R. Brady  
J. Ingrao  
B. Mackenzie  
M. Woodhouse (arrived at 9:38 a.m.)
- MEMBERS ABSENT:** B. Clark
- STAFF PRESENT:** C. Sharma, Chief Administrative Officer / Secretary - Treasurer  
G. Bivol, Clerk  
A. Christie, Director, Operations  
M. Ferrusi, Manager, Human Resources  
L. Gagnon Director, Corporate Services  
E. Gervais, Procurement Specialist  
L. Lee-Yates, Director, Watershed  
G. Shaule, Administrative Assistant

Chair Foster called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m..

## 1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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Recommendation No. GC-18-2021

Moved by Member Brady  
Seconded by Member Ingrao

**THAT** the Governance Committee agenda dated Friday, December 10, 2021 **BE APPROVED** as presented.

**CARRIED**

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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None declared.

## 3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

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- a) Minutes of the NPCA Governance Committee meeting dated September 23, 2021

Recommendation No. GC-19-2021

Moved by Member Ingrao  
Seconded by Member Brady

**THAT** the minutes of the meeting of the NPCA Governance Committee dated September 23, 2021 **BE ADOPTED**.

**CARRIED**

#### 4. CORRESPONDENCE

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- a) Correspondence dated September 24, 2021 to the Honourable David Piccini, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks College from Andy Mitchell Chair, Conservation Ontario RE: Conservation Ontario's Governance Accountability and Transparency Initiative

Recommendation No. GC-21-2021

Moved by Member Brady

Seconded by Member Ingrao

**THAT** the correspondence dated September 24, 2021 to the Honourable David Piccini, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks College from Andy Mitchell Chair, Conservation Ontario RE: Conservation Ontario's Governance Accountability and Transparency Initiative **BE RECEIVED**.

**CARRIED**

- b) Correspondence dated November 18, 2021 to Brenda Johnson, NPCA Chair and Chandra Sharma, NPCA CAO-Secretary/Treasurer from the Honourable David Piccini, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks RE: Application Seeking Exception under the Conservation Authorities Act Relating to Chair and Vice-Chair Appointments

Recommendation No. GC-22-2021

Moved by Member Ingrao

Seconded by Member Brady

**THAT** the Correspondence dated November 18, 2021 to Brenda Johnson, NPCA Chair and Chandra Sharma, NPCA CAO-Secretary/Treasurer from the Honourable David Piccini, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks RE: Application Seeking Exception under the Conservation Authorities Act Relating to Chair and Vice-Chair Appointments **BE RECEIVED**.

**CARRIED**

#### 5. PRESENTATIONS

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None.

#### 6. DELEGATIONS

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None.

#### 7. Consent Items

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None.

## 8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

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a) Report No. GC-10-21 RE: Amendments to the Administrative By-law

Recommendation No. GC-23-2021

Moved by Member Brady

Seconded by Member Ingraio

1. **THAT** Report No. GC-10-21 RE: Amendments to the Administrative By-law **BE RECEIVED**.
2. **THAT** the amending by-law attached hereto as Appendix 1 **BE APPROVED** by the Governance Committee and **RECOMMENDED** to the Board of Directors for formal adoption.
3. **AND THAT** the attached By-Law 01-2021 to amend the NPCA Administrative By-Law **BE CIRCULATED** to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks and **POSTED** on the NPCA website in advance of formal Board adoption in order to comply with legislated deadlines.

**CARRIED**

b) Report No. GC-11-21 RE: NPCA Election Period Guidelines

Recommendation No. GC-24-2021

Moved by Member Brady

Seconded by Member Ingraio

**THAT** Report No. GC-11-21 RE: NPCA Election Period Guidelines **BE RECEIVED**.

**CARRIED**

c) Report No. GC-12-21 RE: Environmental and Sustainability Procurement Guidelines – Eric Gervais, Procurement Specialist provided a PowerPoint presentation. Members posed questions. Discussion ensued.

Recommendation No. GC-25-2021

Moved by Member Brady

Seconded by Member Ingraio

1. **THAT** Report No. GC-12-21 RE: Environmental and Sustainability Procurement Guidelines **BE RECEIVED**.
2. **AND THAT** staff **BE DIRECTED** to revise the guidelines with subsequent presentation to the Board to reflect increased detail and accountability framework for inclusion of environmental and sustainability considerations on procurement and organizational processes and policies.

**CARRIED**

d) Report No. GC-13-21 RE: Insurance

Recommendation No. GC-26-2021

Moved by Member Ingraio

Seconded by Member Brady

**THAT** Report No. GC-13-21 RE: Insurance **BE RECEIVED.**

**CARRIED**

- e) Verbal Update from M. Ferrusi, Manager, Human Resources RE: Bill 27, The Working for Workers Act, 2021

Recommendation No. GC-27-2021

Moved by Member Woodhouse

Seconded by Member Brady

**THAT** the verbal update from M. Ferrusi, Manager, Human Resources RE: Bill 27, The Working for Workers Act, 2021 **BE RECEIVED.**

**CARRIED**

## 9. NEW BUSINESS

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None.

## 10. ADJOURNMENT

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Recommendation No. GC-28-2021

Moved by Member Brady

Seconded by Member Woodhouse

**THAT** the Governance Committee meeting **BE** hereby **ADJOURNED** at 10:22 a.m..

**CARRIED**

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Robert Foster,  
Committee Chair

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Chandra Sharma, MCIP, RPP  
Chief Administrative Officer /  
Secretary - Treasurer



March 24, 2022

Dear Stakeholder:

**RE: Phase 2 Consultation on Urban River Valleys to Grow the Greenbelt:  
Proposed amendments to the Greenbelt Plan (2017) and Greenbelt Area  
Boundary Regulation (O. Reg 59/05) and Ideas for Adding more Urban River  
Valleys to the Greenbelt**

I am writing today to announce that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) is launching the next phase in its consultation on Growing the Greenbelt.

In Ontario's 2020 and 2021 budgets, the government committed to protecting and expanding the Greenbelt.

In the spring of 2021, our government held consultations focused on ways to grow the size and enhance the quality of the Greenbelt, which included seeking ideas for adding, expanding and further protecting Greenbelt lands.

Since the close of the [first phase of consultation](#), our government has been undertaking work to identify potential boundaries to grow the Greenbelt that takes a balanced approach to supporting smart growth to create much-needed housing and jobs.

As a result, this phase of the consultation (Phase 2) will seek feedback on both:

1. **Proposed amendments to the Greenbelt Plan (2017) and the Greenbelt Area boundary regulation (O. Reg 59/05)** that includes the addition of 13 new and expanded Urban River Valley areas. The consultation is open for 30 days and ends on April 23, 2022; and
2. **Ideas for adding more Urban River Valleys to the Greenbelt** through new Urban River Valleys and expansions to existing Urban River Valleys that could include tributaries or parcels of publicly owned land. This part of the consultation is open for 30 days and ends on April 23, 2022.

This proposal is about growing the size and quality of the Greenbelt, and the government will not consider the removal of any lands from the existing Greenbelt, nor will it consider any changes that reduce existing policy protections in the Greenbelt.

.../2

For more information on these proposals, please visit [ERO 019-4485 - Proposed Amendment to the Greenbelt Plan - Growing the size of the Greenbelt](#) and [Ontario.ca/Greenbelt](#) where you will find information including the proposed amendments to Greenbelt Plan Schedules 1, 2 and 4, proposed mapping amendments to the Greenbelt Area boundary regulation (O. Reg 59/05) and interactive mapping displaying the proposed URV additions at various scales.

If you have any questions about the consultation, please contact the ministry at [greenbeltconsultation@ontario.ca](mailto:greenbeltconsultation@ontario.ca).

I look forward to receiving your input on this proposal.

Sincerely,



Steve Clark  
Minister



**Report To: Governance Committee**

**Subject: Freedom of Information Statistical Report 2021**

**Report No: GC-01-22**

**Date: March 31, 2022**

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**Recommendation:**

**THAT Report No. GC-01-22 RE: Freedom of Information Statistical Report 2021 BE RECEIVED.**

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to provide statistical information to the Governance Committee and Board of Directors in respect of applications made in 2021 to the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) (the Act).

**Background:**

As a public institution, the NPCA is bound by the provisions of MFIPPA, provincial legislation enacted to provide the public with access to information and to protect the privacy of individuals and organizations. The legislation provides that the NPCA must submit annually by March 31st, a report summarizing the volume, response times, revenues, nature of requests and appeals of decisions made by the institution under the Act. This report, entitled "*Statistical Report of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority for the Reporting Year 2021*" is attached hereto as Appendix 1 for reference.

Under the legislation, the Chair of the NPCA is the Head for purposes of the Act but the day-to-day administration is designated to an F.O.I. Co-ordinator. As of August, 2019, the Board designated the NPCA Clerk / Board Secretariat as the F.O.I. Co-ordinator for MFIPPA.

**Discussion:**

In 2021, the NPCA received 15 new requests under MFIPPA. In normal circumstances, an institution has 30 days to provide an access decision to the requester. Of those fifteen requests received, thirteen requests were addressed in 2021 without issue. One request was appealed to the Information and Privacy Commission, and is currently in mediation. The remaining outstanding request was carried forward into 2022 and is now substantially completed. It is the preference of staff to satisfy requests for records without proceeding to the appeal stage and foremost, where possible, to address initial requests without need to invoke the Act.

It is also important to note that the statistical report is generated from a template provided by the NPCA to the Information and Privacy Commission and completed via an online reporting mechanism. It is a narrow statistical summary based on calendar years and does not correlate well with requests carried over from year to year, ongoing appeals, reformulated requests, the timing of fees received, decisions rendered from the IPC, etc..

### **Financial Implications:**

Requests made under MFIPPA are subject to a non-refundable \$5.00 application fee. Fees for the provision of information thereafter are prescribed in Regulations or through Orders and Practices issued by the Information and Privacy Commission.

The prescribed fees permissible under the Act do not adequately reflect the resources consumed to provide such records. Staff time expended on requests can be very extensive and in particular, appeals can be extremely onerous and costly. Given the time requirements, the nature and complexity of the issues along with the volume and intricacies of relevant IPC orders, the NPCA does not have the dedicated staffing resources and expertise required to thoroughly address all appeals in-house. As a result, when necessary, the NPCA has utilized the firm of Gowling WLG (Canada) LLP to assist in handling appeals. In 2021, \$168+HST was paid for legal fees on an outstanding appeal before the Information and Privacy Commission dating back to 2019. An additional \$296+HST was paid to obtain legal advice on a pending disclosure relating to a request that originated in 2021. The cumulative staff time and resources dedicated annually to addressing FOI requests is generally unpredictable and can vary widely depending on the types and nature of requests received.

The NPCA has also chosen to waive approximately \$112.50 in fees for 2021 relating primarily to requests under the Act for records that are, or ought normally be, made available to the public as a part of routine disclosure.

### **Links to Policy/Strategic Plan:**

None

### **Related Reports and Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Statistical Report of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority for the Reporting Year 2021

#### **Authored by:**

*Original Signed by:*

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Grant Bivol  
NPCA Clerk / Board Secretariat

#### **Submitted by:**

*Original Signed by:*

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Chandra Sharma, MCIP, RPP  
Chief Administrative Officer / Secretary-  
Treasurer



The Year-End Statistical Report  
for the  
Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario

**Statistical Report of  
Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority  
for the Reporting Year 2021**  
**for**  
*Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy  
Act*

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## Section 1: Identification

<b>1.1</b>	Organization Name	Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority
	Head of Institution Name & Title	Robert Foster, Chair of the NPCA Board of Directors
	Head of Institution E-mail Address	rfoster@npca.ca
	Management Contact Name & Title	Grant Bivol/Clerk
	Management Contact E-mail Address	gbivol@npca.ca
	Primary Contact Name & Title	Grant Bivol/Clerk
	Primary Contact Email Address	gbivol@npca.ca
	Primary Contact Phone Number	9057883135 ext. 250
	Primary Contact Fax Number	9057881121
	Primary Contact Mailing Address 1	250 Thorold Road W
	Primary Contact Mailing Address 2	3rd Floor
	Primary Contact Mailing Address 3	
	Primary Contact City	Welland
	Primary Contact Postal Code	L3C 3W2
<b>1.2</b>	Your institution is:	Conservation Authority

## Section 2: Inconsistent Use of Personal Information

<b>2.1</b>	Whenever your institution uses or discloses personal information in a way that differs from the way the information is normally used or disclosed (an inconsistent use), you must attach a record or notice of the inconsistent use to the affected information.	0
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### Your institution received:

- No formal written requests for access or correction
- Formal written requests for access to records
- Requests for correction of records of personal information only

## Section 2: Inconsistent Use of Personal Information

### Section 3: Number of Requests Received and Completed

Enter the number of requests that fall into each category.

- 3.1** New Requests received during the reporting year
- 3.2** Total number of requests completed during the reporting year

	<b>Personal Information</b>	<b>General Records</b>
	0	15
	0	14

### Section 4: Source of Requests

Enter the number of requests you completed from each source.

- 4.1** Individual/Public
- 4.2** Individual by Agent
- 4.3** Business
- 4.4** Academic/Researcher
- 4.5** Association/Group
- 4.6** Media
- 4.7** Government (all levels)
- 4.8** Other
- 4.9** Total requests (Add Boxes 4.1 to 4.8 = 4.9)

	<b>Personal Information</b>	<b>General Records</b>
	0	12
	0	0
	0	1
	0	0
	0	1
	0	0
	0	0
	0	0
	0	14

BOX 4.9 must equal BOX 3.2

### Section 5: Time to Completion

How long did your institution take to complete all requests for information? Enter the number of requests into the appropriate category. How many requests were completed in:

- 5.1** 30 days or less
- 5.2** 31 - 60 days
- 5.3** 61 - 90 days
- 5.4** 91 days or longer
- 5.5** Total requests (Add Boxes 5.1 to 5.4 = 5.5)

	<b>Personal Information</b>	<b>General Records</b>
	0	9
	0	5
	0	0
	0	0
	0	14

BOX 5.5 must equal BOX 3.2

### Section 6: Compliance with the Act

In the following charts, please indicate the number of requests completed, within the statutory time limit and in excess of the statutory time limit, under each of the four different situations:

Section 6: Compliance with the Act

- NO notices issued;
- BOTH a Notice of Extension (s.27(1)) and a Notice to Affected Person (s.28(1)) issued;
- ONLY a Notice of Extension (s.27(1)) issued;
- ONLY a Notice to Affected Person (s.28(1)) issued.

Please note that the four different situations are mutually exclusive and the number of requests completed in each situation should add up to the total number of requests completed in Section 3.2.(Add Boxes 6.3 + 6.6 + 6.9 + 6.12 = BOX 6.13 and BOX 6.13 must equal BOX 3.2)

**A. No Notices Issued**

	<b>Personal Information</b>	<b>General Records</b>
<b>6.1</b> Number of requests completed within the statutory time limit (30 days) where neither a Notice of Extension (s.20(1)) nor a Notice to Affected Person (s.21(1)) were issued.	0	9
<b>6.2</b> Number of requests completed in excess of the statutory time limit (30 days) where neither a Notice of Extension (s.20(1)) nor a Notice to Affected Person (s.21(1)) were issued.	0	0
<b>6.3</b> Total requests (Add Boxes 6.1 + 6.2 = 6.3)	0	9

**B. Both a Notice of Extension (s.27(1)) and a Notice to Affected Person (s.28(1)) Issued**

	<b>Personal Information</b>	<b>General Records</b>
<b>6.4</b> Number of requests completed within the time limits permitted under both the Notice of Extension (s.27(1)) and a Notice to Affected Person (s.28(1)).	0	1
<b>6.5</b> Number of requests completed in excess of the time limit permitted by the Notice of Extension (s.27(1)) and the time limit permitted by the Notice to Affected Person (s.28(1)).	0	0
<b>6.6</b> Total requests (Add Boxes 6.4 + 6.5 = 6.6)	0	1

**C. Only a Notice of Extension (s.27(1)) Issued**

	<b>Personal Information</b>	<b>General Records</b>
<b>6.7</b> Number of requests completed within the time limits permitted under both the Notice of Extension (s.27(1)).	0	3
<b>6.8</b> Number of requests completed in excess of the time limit permitted by the Notice of Extension (s.27(1)).	0	0
<b>6.9</b> Total requests (Add Boxes 6.7 + 6.8 = 6.9)	0	3

**D. Only a Notice to Affected Person (s.28(1)) Issued**

	<b>Personal Information</b>	<b>General Records</b>
<b>6.10</b> Number of requests completed within the time limits permitted under both the Notice to Affected Person (s.28(1)).	0	1
<b>6.11</b> Number of requests completed in excess of the time limit permitted by the Notice to Affected Person (s.28(1)).	0	0
<b>6.12</b> Total requests (Add Boxes 6.10 + 6.11 = 6.12)	0	1

**E. Total Completed Requests (sections A to D)**

	<b>Personal Information</b>	<b>General Records</b>
<b>6.13</b> Total requests (Add Boxes 6.3 + 6.6 + 6.9 + 6.12 = 6.13)	0	14

BOX 6.13 must equal BOX 3.2

## Section 6a: Contributing Factors

Please outline any factors which may have contributed to your institution not meeting the statutory time limit. If you anticipate circumstances that will improve your ability to comply with the Act in the future, please provide details in the space below.

The workload on staff within the departments holding records has created difficulty in the timely search and provision of records and therefore restricts the ability to issue a decision within the statutory time limits. Our organization is undergoing a staffing re-alignment which will hopefully improve staff workloads.

## Section 7: Disposition of Requests

What course of action was taken with each of the completed requests? Enter the number of requests into the appropriate category.

	<b>Personal Information</b>	<b>General Records</b>
<b>7.1</b> All information disclosed	0	2
<b>7.2</b> Information disclosed in part	0	7
<b>7.3</b> No information disclosed	0	0
<b>7.4</b> No responsive records exists	0	3
<b>7.5</b> Request withdrawn, abandoned or non-jurisdictional	0	2
<b>7.6</b> Total requests (Add Boxes 7.1 to 7.5 = 7.6)	0	14

BOX 7.6 must be greater than or equal to BOX 3.2

## Section 8: Exemptions & Exclusions Applied

For the Total Requests with Exemptions/Exclusions/Frivolous or Vexatious Requests, how many times did your institution apply each of the following? (More than one exemption may be applied to each request)

	<b>Personal Information</b>	<b>General Records</b>
<b>8.1</b> Section 6 — Draft Bylaws, etc.	0	0
<b>8.2</b> Section 7 — Advice or Recommendations	0	0
<b>8.3</b> Section 8 — Law Enforcement <sup>1</sup>	0	4
<b>8.4</b> Section 8(3) — Refusal to Confirm or Deny	0	0
<b>8.5</b> Section 8.1 — Civil Remedies Act, 2001	0	0
<b>8.6</b> Section 8.2 — Prohibiting Profiting from Recounting Crimes Act, 2002	0	0
<b>8.7</b> Section 9 — Relations with Governments	0	0
<b>8.8</b> Section 10 — Third Party Information	0	0
<b>8.9</b> Section 11 — Economic/Other Interests	0	0
<b>8.10</b> Section 12 — Solicitor-Client Privilege	0	2
<b>8.11</b> Section 13 — Danger to Safety or Health	0	0
<b>8.12</b> Section 14 — Personal Privacy (Third Party) <sup>2</sup>	0	8
<b>8.13</b> Section 14(5) — Refusal to Confirm or Deny	0	0
<b>8.14</b> Section 15 — Information soon to be published	0	0

## Section 8: Exemptions & Exclusions Applied

<b>8.15</b> Section 20.1 Frivolous or Vexatious	0	0
<b>8.16</b> Section 38 — Personal Information (Requester)	0	0
<b>8.17</b> Section 52(2) — Act Does Not Apply <sup>3</sup>	0	0
<b>8.18</b> Section 52(3) — Labour Relations & Employment Related Records	0	0
<b>8.19</b> Section 53 — Other Acts	0	0
<b>8.20</b> PHIPA Section 8(1) Applies	0	0
<b>8.21</b> Total Exemptions & Exclusions Add Boxes 8.1 to 8.20 = 8.21	0	14

<sup>1</sup> not including Section 8(3)  
<sup>2</sup> not including Section 14(5)  
<sup>3</sup> not including Section 52(3)

## Section 9: Fees

Did your institution collect fees related to request for access to records?

	Personal Information	General Records	Total
<b>9.1</b> Number of REQUESTS where fees other than application fees were collected	0	8	8
<b>9.2.1</b> Total dollar amount of application fees collected	\$0.00	\$65.00	\$65.00
<b>9.2.2</b> Total dollar amount of additional fees collected	\$0.00	\$175.70	\$175.70
<b>9.2.3</b> Total dollar amount of fees collected (Add Boxes 9.2.1 + 9.2.2 = 9.2.3)	\$0.00	\$240.70	\$240.70
<b>9.3</b> Total dollar amount of fees waived	\$0.00	\$112.50	\$112.50

## Section 10: Reasons for Additional Fee Collection

Enter the number of REQUESTS for which your institution collected fees other than application fees that apply to each category.

	Personal Information	General Records	Total
<b>10.1</b> Search time	0	8	8
<b>10.2</b> Reproduction	0	0	0
<b>10.3</b> Preparation	0	8	8
<b>10.4</b> Shipping	0	0	0
<b>10.5</b> Computer costs	0	0	0
<b>10.6</b> Invoice costs(and other as permitted by regulation)	0	0	0
<b>10.7</b> Total (Add Boxes 10.1 to 10.6 = 10.7)	0	16	16

## Section 11: Correction and Statements of Disagreement

Did your institution receive any requests to correct personal information?

	Personal Information
<b>11.1</b> Number of correction requests received	0



Section 11: Correction and Statements of Disagreement

**11.2** Correction requests carried forward from the previous year

0
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**11.3** Correction requests carried over to next year

0
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**11.4** Total Corrections Completed [(11.1 + 11.2) - 11.3 = 11.4]

0
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BOX 11.4 must equal BOX 11.9

What course of action did your institution take regarding the requests that were received to correct personal information?

**Personal Information**

**11.5** Correction(s) made in whole

0
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**11.6** Correction(s) made in part

0
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**11.7** Correction refused

0
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**11.8** Correction requests withdrawn by requester

0
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**11.9** Total requests (Add Boxes 11.5 to 11.8 = 11.9)

0
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BOX 11.9 must equal BOX 11.4

In cases where correction requests were denied, in part or in full, were any statements of disagreement attached to the affected personal information?

**Personal Information**

**11.10** Number of statements of disagreement attached:

0
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If your institution received any requests to correct personal information, the Act requires that you send any person(s) or body who had access to the information in the previous year notification of either the correction or the statement of disagreement. Enter the number of notifications sent, if applicable.

**Personal Information**

**11.11** Number of notifications sent:

0
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**Note:**

This report is for your records only and should not be faxed or mailed to the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario in lieu of online submission. Faxed or mailed copies of this report will NOT be accepted. Please submit your report online at: <https://statistics.ipc.on.ca>.

**Thank You for your cooperation!**

<p><b>Declaration:</b></p> <p>I, Grant Bivol/Clerk, confirm that all the information provided in this report, furnished by me to the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario, is true, accurate and complete in all respects.</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Signature</i> <span style="float: right;"><i>Date</i></span></p>
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**Report To: Governance Committee**

**Subject: Customer Service Standards and Guidelines**

**Report No: GC-03-22**

**Date: March 31, 2022**

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**Recommendation:**

**THAT** Report No. GC-03-22 RE: Customer Service Standards and Guidelines **BE RECEIVED.**

**Purpose:**

With a focus on Customer Service in the NPCA 2021-2031 Strategic Plan, the purpose of this report is to define Customer Service Standards towards striving for excellence and accountability. Further, the Customer Guidelines will provide a framework for staff to provide consistent and effective support to all customers of the NPCA.

**Background:**

The past two years has shown an increasing demand for services across the NPCA. As a public agency, we seek to provide these services to our customers in an effective, informative, and timely manner striving for customer service delivery excellence.

As an organization, we are also committed to an environment of respect and consideration for our customers and our staff. With the recognition that customer service excellence is a top priority, the guidelines provide for a structured assessment and approach to dealing with unacceptable customer behaviour. It is recognized that these situations may be extreme, but also provides for a professional way for staff to ensure they feel respected and safe in any customer facing situation, while still providing an avenue of service for the customer.

Customer Service Standards attached as Appendix 1, will be updated to the NPCA branding standards and will be posted on-line as well as at physical locations.

Customer Behaviour Guidelines attached as Appendix 2 will be provided to staff as an internal guidance document along with related training.

### **Financial Implications:**

There are no financial implications to this report, although staff will receive appropriate customer service and conflict resolution training to aid in providing excellent customer service

### **Links to Policy/Strategic Plan:**

The Customer Service Standards and Customer Behaviour Guidelines link to Strategic Goal 5.3 - Provide high standards of customer service, under the pillar of Organizational Excellence

### **Related Reports and Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Customer Service Standards  
Appendix 2: Customer Behaviour Guidelines

### **Authored by:**

*Original signed by:*

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Misti Ferrusi, CHRL  
Manager, Human Resources

### **Submitted by:**

*Original signed by:*

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Chandra Sharma, MCIP, RPP  
Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer

## Vision:

## Nature for All

## Mission:

To create a common ground for conservation-inspired action and accountability to nature.

## Core Values:

1. Integrity
2. Respect
3. Customer Service
4. Conservation Leadership

The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) aims to conduct our business with professionalism, transparency, and equity to achieve high quality and service delivery standards. These customer service standards will ensure a consistent practice that reflects the NPCA's commitment to customer service excellence and accountability.

### Who are our customers?

- Clients of all programs and services
- The public, including visitors to NPCA conservation areas
- Landowners, legal staff, real estate staff, engineering firms & consultants
- Key stakeholders from the agricultural, environmental and development communities
- Municipal, provincial and federal governments
- Members of the NPCA Board of Directors and Staff

### In our commitment to our customers, we will:

- Provide customer service that is timely, welcoming and helpful
- Provide knowledgeable, professional and courteous service
- Treat customers with respect, fairness, openness and equality
- Ensure it is easy and convenient to contact us
- Maintain customer confidentiality and abide by all privacy legislation
- Work to provide accessible services and to the provision of alternate formats consistent with the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service
- Ensure our customer service locations are accessible, safe and healthy environments
- Provide a clear process to manage and resolve issues

### For our customer service standards, we will:

- Answer telephone calls in person whenever possible during office hours
- Outside of office hours or when it is not possible to answer a call in person, ensure that messages are forwarded to appropriate staff within two business days
- Ensure all staff provide a courteous and accurate voicemail greeting indicating when they will be available to respond to messages
- Acknowledge receipt of mail, voicemail and email within two business days
- Review NPCA Permit (Section 28) applications per timelines specified in the Client Service Standards and planning applications per municipal and provincial guidelines
- Keep customers informed of timelines and advise if there will be a delay
- Post notice of service disruptions on our website, telephone system and within our email signatures
- Respect our customers' time by keeping scheduled appointments, and strive to attend to general counter queries from customers without appointments within three business days
- Use plain language wherever possible, and provide more detail or explanation when asked
- Post tools online, including NPCA regulated area maps and open data, policies, procedures and guidelines, technical checklist for planning applications, complete application requirements for Section 28 NPCA permit applications, fee policies and schedules, and the NPCA Client Service Standards for Plan and Permit Review
- Explain our processes and provide a time estimate on all work

### For continuous improvement, we will:

- Ensure that all customers have the opportunity to provide feedback on the service received through an NPCA feedback form
- Monitor feedback, review performance regularly, and provide an annual report to our customers via our website
- Respond to all feedback (when required) if accompanied by contact information
- Continuously review our commitments and customer service standards at least annually

### What we expect from our customers:

We ask that you please:

- Behave courteously towards our Board of Directors, Staff and other customers
- Be respectful of posted rules including those regarding parking, entry fees, smoking, motorized vehicles, wildlife, pets, etc.
- Respect our 'no gifts' policy
- Refrain from unwelcome verbal and/or physical actions including profanity and attempts at coercion
- Refrain from engaging in any act that gives rise to the concern for personal or public safety

### What we additionally expect from our customers for Plan & Permit Reviews:

- Active participation in pre-consultation meetings
- Provide quality technical submissions and complete applications
- Provide requested information or technical resubmissions within the mutually agreed timeframe

Customer Behaviour Guidelines			
Developed by:	Human Resources		
Policy Applies To:	NPCA Employees and Volunteers		
Date Created:		Approved By:	
Version #:	2022-1	Last Review Date:	March 2022

## **1.0 PURPOSE STATEMENT**

This guideline provides a positive, safe, and supportive approach to promoting acceptable and appropriate customer conduct. The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) encourages respectful and considerate relationships between the NPCA and its customers.

This guideline also establishes customer standards for staff in promoting an environment of customer service delivery excellence and a process that aids in managing challenging customer behaviour.

## **2.0 SCOPE**

This guideline applies to all forms of customer service by NPCA employees and volunteers and includes but is not limited to online, electronic, print, and verbal communications. These internal guidelines are supplemental to upholding our Customer Service Standard Commitment and our Client Service Standards for Conservation Authority Plan and Permit Review.

## **3.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Providing excellent customer service is important to the NPCA in delivering high-quality programs and services. NPCA employees, volunteers, and anyone acting on behalf of the NPCA are expected to conduct themselves respectfully and follow a set of guiding principles in interacting with customers:

### **3.1 User-friendliness and Accessibility**

We will reduce the customer's effort to contact our staff and get a solution. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Using recorded voicemail greetings and email signatures to provide up-to-date notifications

- Voicemail
  - Staff will ensure voicemail messages contain the staff member's name, title, request for customer information, and alternate contact information, if necessary
  - Staff should check voicemail daily
  - In the event of an extended absence, staff should update the voicemail message accordingly and provide appropriate alternate contact information
- Email
  - Staff will ensure a staff signature in line with corporate standards is included on all corporate emails, including those sent from mobile devices (template attached as Appendix A)
  - Staff should be accessible via email during regular work hours
  - Out of office notifications should be enabled when a staff member is out of office for more than one (1) business day (templated attached as Appendix A)
  - All generic email addresses should have an auto-reply enabled to confirm receipt. Additionally, all generic email addresses should have an appropriate staff response within two (2) business days
- A robust informational section on our website, with self-serve options where possible and easy to find contact information
- Staff with mobile phones, having devices on and accessible, and responding to emails and voicemails promptly during business hours
- NPCA (and affiliated) webpages and voicemail systems will be compliant with Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act requirements, including offerings to provide information in an accessible format upon request
- When in the field, at a project site, or an event, staff should be easily recognizable as NPCA staff, with appropriate attire and/or name badges. If approached by a customer with an inquiry/issue, staff should respond and/or obtain the customer's contact information along with a summary of the issue to provide to the appropriate staff person for follow-up

### 3.2 **Respect**

Every customer deserves to be treated with respect. It is acknowledged that some customers may be confused or frustrated about an issue. Staff should empathize and respond to customers in an informative, knowledgeable, and patient manner. Use this understanding and knowledge to influence the tone of the interaction.

### 3.3 **Respond Promptly**

No one likes to be kept waiting. Timeliness in serving customers is one of the key determinants of customer satisfaction.

- Emails should be responded to within two (2) business days
- Voicemails should be responded to within two (2) business days
- Written letters/mail should be responded to within five (5) business days, and if a written letter/response is provided, this should be on NPCA letterhead
- In-person appointments should be responded to at the agreed-upon appointment time
- Walk-in customers should be serviced promptly and in the order in which they arrive
- All planning and permit inquiries and responses should be in line with the NPCA Client Service Standards for Conservation Authority Plan and Permit Review

### 3.4 **Take Ownership**

To the best of their ability, staff should take ownership of a situation and facilitate finding a solution for a customer. When the subject is out of your area of expertise, facilitate finding a solution by introducing the customer to a colleague who can give them an answer.

If at any time, staff member feel there is a knowledge gap that impedes them from providing the best service to customers, they should advise their immediate supervisor. The supervisor will ensure staff members have the appropriate information and knowledge.

### **3.5 Do Not Make Promises**

Be honest when you do not have an answer for a customer but let them know that you will find the right person to address their question. Remember never to make promises about a solution that cannot be kept.

## **4.0 UNACCEPTABLE CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR**

The NPCA recognizes customers are unique with varying interests and concerns. Staff should always try to uphold our commitment to customer service excellence and apply the guiding principles in section 3.0. The NPCA also strives to ensure our staff are treated respectfully. This section applies to customers whose behaviour is deemed unacceptable.

Unacceptable customer behaviour is any action by a customer, which because of its nature or frequency, has a disproportionate and unreasonable impact on the NPCA, employees, other customers, services, time, and/or resources and that causes distress or disruption without reasonable or justified cause.

It is understood that certain positions will encounter more conflict when engaging with customers. Staff in these identified positions will be provided appropriate training and/or PPE..

Some examples of what may be considered unacceptable behaviour are listed below. The list is not exhaustive, nor does one single action on its own necessarily imply that the customer behaviour will be regarded as unacceptable. Each situation is considered on a case-by-case basis.

### *Examples of unacceptable behaviour*

- Verbal remarks: includes threats, profanity, rude or inappropriate language, attempts to goad or incite anger in others, harassment and/or discrimination
- Physical threats: includes aggressive or intimidating actions towards another individual, throwing articles deliberately or aggressively, and/or physical striking of another individual
- Engaging in or referencing participation in illegal activity: including illegal consumption of alcohol or drugs, theft, possession of weapons, and/or vandalism
- Any act that violates NPCA permits, policies, or procedures
- Any action that gives rise to concern for personal or public safety
- Making unjustified complaints about employees who are trying to deal with an issue appropriately or filing complaints about employees that are frivolous or vexatious
- Exhibiting coercive tactics to obtain a desired result including political pressure, offering gifts or other benefits

The NPCA recognizes that determining a customer's behaviour or request for information as unacceptable could have significant consequences. As such, this procedure outlines a non-



exhaustive list of examples of unacceptable behaviours and steps for employees to follow before determining any customer behaviour to be “unacceptable.”

## **5.0 GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING UNACCEPTABLE CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR**

Every effort possible should be made before determining a customer’s behaviour as “unacceptable.” However, this section should be applied only in rare and extreme circumstances. When dealing with unacceptable customer behaviour, the below steps should be followed:

1. Give the customer a polite warning that their behaviour is unacceptable, stating why it is not acceptable.
2. If the customer continues the unacceptable behaviour, let them know that if the behaviour continues, you will have to end the conversation (whether in person or by phone) until they can appropriately conduct themselves.
  - At this step, it is also appropriate to consider if there is a senior staff member more suited to deal with the customer (example: a political issue, a “hot topic,” or concerning a high-level project).
3. If the customer continues with the unacceptable behaviour, advise them you will be ending the conversation/interaction due to the inappropriate behaviour. Encourage the customer to review the Customer Service Standards, located on the website and posted at each NPCA location, and advise them we will continue with the (request/action) when they can respect the Customer Service Standards.
4. End the conversation/interaction politely.
5. Let your immediate supervisor know that you have just had to end a conversation/interaction with a customer and describe/document the situation and details of the conversation.
6. The supervisor will manage future interactions either directly or by assigning another team member as a point of contact until the situation is resolved. A situation is determined resolved at the supervisor's discretion, in consultation with the department director.

## APPENDIX A:

### **Sample Voicemail Greeting:**

*Thank you for contacting the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority. You have reached NAME, POSITION. I am unavailable to take your call at the moment, but if you will leave your name, phone number and a brief message regarding your reason for calling, I will return your call within two business days. If your matter is urgent, please dial extension ### for immediate assistance.*

*Thank you for contacting the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority. You have reached NAME, POSITION. I will be out of the office returning on DATE. If you leave your name, phone number and a brief message regarding your reason for calling, I will return your call within two business days of my return. If your matter is urgent, please dial extension ### for immediate assistance.*

### **Email Signature Template to be applied to new messages:**

**Name, Designations - (Bold, Arial 10pt)**

**Title - (Bold, Arial 10pt)**

Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) - (Arial 10pt)

Street | City, ON Postal Code - (Arial 10pt)

Tel: ###-###-#### | extension ### - (Arial 10pt)

[email@npca.ca](mailto:email@npca.ca) - (Arial 10pt)

[www.npca.ca](http://www.npca.ca) - (Arial 10pt)

### **Email Signature Template to be applied to replies:**

**Name, Designations - (Bold, Arial 10pt)**

**Title - (Bold, Arial 10pt)**

### **Out of Office Template to be applied to internal/external emails**

Thank you for your email.

Please be advised that I will be away from the office until DATE. I will respond to your email as soon as possible upon my return. If your matter is urgent, please contact [ALTERNATE@npca.ca](mailto:ALTERNATE@npca.ca).

Email Signature Template

**Report To: Governance Committee**

**Subject: Remote Working Arrangement Guidelines**

**Report No: GC-04-22**

**Date: March 31, 2022**

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**Recommendation:**

**THAT** Report No. GC-04-22 RE: Remote Working Arrangement Guidelines **BE RECEIVED.**

**Purpose:**

The Board has expressed interest in understanding how the NPCA will approach return to the office along with addressing emerging workplace trends of on-going remote work. This report will provide an overview of the NPCA remote working arrangement guidelines.

**Background:**

When the COVID-19 pandemic began two years ago, the NPCA successfully shifted, where possible, to a remote work environment. With contemplation of how to return to the workplace in a safe and productive manner, a survey was completed to engage staff in the discussion.

With a response rate of 85%, results of the survey indicated 56% of respondents were in favour of a hybrid model, with the remaining 44% fairly evenly split between a desire to work fully in-office and fully remote. In considering staff comments, monitoring local and sectoral trends, NPCA made the decision to work towards implementation of a voluntary hybrid work model when returning to the workplace. The guidelines attached as Appendix 1, were prepared with the goals of: sustained employee productivity; innovation and effort; decreased employee turnover and absences; increased ability to attract and retain top talent; improved employee satisfaction; effective use of physical space; improved employee well-being, health, and work-life balance and, in support of NPCA's Sustainability Initiatives.

The NPCA has begun discussions with staff on the model and has consulted with the union. There is a target return to office date for staff of mid-April with a target date in May to open administrative offices to the public. The remote work guidelines will be reviewed and evaluated after six months of implementation.

**Financial Implications:**

There are no financial implications to this report.

**Links to Policy/Strategic Plan:**

The Remote Working Arrangements Guidelines link to Strategic Goal 5.1 - Attract, retain, and invest in high caliber, diverse talent to deliver superior outcomes, under the pillar of Organizational Excellence

**Related Reports and Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Remote Working Arrangement Guidelines

**Authored by:**

*Original signed by:*

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Misti Ferrusi, CHRL  
Manager, Human Resources

**Submitted by:**

*Original signed by:*

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Chandra Sharma, MCIP, RPP  
Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer



Remote Working Arrangement Guidelines			
Developed by:	Human Resources		
Policy Applies To:	All Employees		
Date Created:	December 2021	Approved By:	
Version #:	2021-01	Last Review Date:	March 2022

**1.0 DETERMINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES**

The remote working arrangement is considered an alternative way of working to meet the goals and objectives of the organization. While remote working arrangements may advance a commitment to, and a culture of employee well-being and engagement, it is not considered an entitlement and must be supported by the employee’s manager.

Remote workers are expected to meet all responsibilities, perform all duties and comply with all the policies that apply to any employee in similar positions, regardless of location.

All remote working requests from employees will be reviewed and approved at the sole discretion of the NPCA and may be terminated at any time with reasonable notice. The NPCA has the right to refuse remote work requests and to terminate remote work arrangements.

The NPCA reserves the right to determine the workspace (e.g. Remote/On-site). With any changes to workspace determination, NPCA will provide reasonable notice and explanation.

This guideline provides a general framework for NPCA’s approach to remote working. While employees and managers have the flexibility to develop arrangements tailored to employee and departmental needs, the basic requirements set forth must generally be met.

Employees are expected to comply with the conditions outlined in the Remote Work Policy and in this guideline.

**2.0 RESPONSIBILITIES**

Employees

- Request access to remote working arrangements

- Comply with the conditions outlined in the Alternative Working Arrangements policy and in this guideline
- Maintain a strong connection with their manager, work team and the organization through active participation in activities such as meetings, discussions, and training
- Attend to in person meetings and/or site visits as required

#### Managers

- Ensure that all employees within their work team are aware of the Remote Work Policy and guidelines
- Conduct the remote work assessments as required, based on a request, for a remote working arrangement
- Work in collaboration with Human Resources/Health & Safety and Information Management division resources to implement remote work arrangements
- Check that appropriate precautions are being taken in accordance with the prescribed control measures to reduce any risks that may arise due to remote working arrangements
- Ensure necessary records are kept related to remote working arrangements
- Continue to manage the performance of the remote worker, including documenting any issues resulting from the remote work arrangement
- Ensure employees who are working remotely are well connected with the work of the team and the organization

#### Human Resources/Health & Safety

- Provide HR/H&S related training and advice where required on the implementation of this policy
- Provide clear guidelines for the assessment and determination of eligibility for remote working
- Create HR/H&S related practices that support remote working i.e., physical and equipment requirements
- Provide advice and opinions on questions related to human rights, accommodation, and equity as they relate to remote working arrangements
- Monitor the remote working process to ensure human rights, equity and accommodation needs are respected and met
- Ensure necessary records are kept related to remote working arrangements
- Assist with conducting assessments related to remote working situations that may impact the ability of the employee to safely perform their job, or that may put others at risk
- Support the process of incident/accident reporting

#### Information Management Services

- Provide training and advice on technological support and/or issues, where required on the implementation of the Alternative Working Arrangement policy and this guideline
- Support the ability of remote employees to perform their remote work effectively and safely through the provision of approved technology resources, tools, software, and access
- Provide guidelines, expectations, and requirements to maintaining the organization's confidential data, system integrity and security
- Provide resource aids to the employees to learn how to use certain technologies to aid in remote working
- Resolve access issues as they occur

#### CAO

- Ensure the Authority maintains a safe, healthy and positive workplace culture

- Hold all employees accountable for established policies including designated roles and responsibilities

### **3.0 ELIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

Not all positions are appropriate for remote working arrangements. When considering which types of positions are eligible for a remote working arrangement, consideration will be given to set criteria such as requirements for face-to-face interactions; workflow and communication; use of specific equipment; field work etc. Eligibility will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

It should also be noted that critical situations outlined in the Alternative Working Arrangement policy may require remote work to be performed even for positions that might not otherwise be suited for remote work.

### **4.0 GENERAL PRICIPLES**

#### Duties

Employees must be able to carry out the same duties, assignments, and other work obligations at their home or other remote location, in a similar manner as they do when working on NPCA premises

#### Terms and Conditions of Employment

Remote work will not change existing salary, benefits, compensation, vacation, or other benefits of the employee, unless specifically outlined in the offer of employment. For unionized workers, the terms and conditions of employment and/or the Remote Working Arrangement will abide by the respective Collective Agreement. Remote work will not alter the requirements to comply with employee duties and responsibilities or to comply with NPCA's policies.

#### Employee Eligibility

To be considered for remote working arrangements, employees must:

- Be in good standing (such as: no related disciplinary action in process)
- Demonstrate and possess the competencies, knowledge and skills required to perform the job remotely
- Have written approval from their manager

#### Out of Province/Country

It is our expectation that employees perform their work within Ontario and in the general vicinity of the assigned NPCA site. Out of area remote work will only be considered in rare and exceptional circumstances at the approval of the CAO.

#### Availability

Employees are expected to be available to their manager and co-workers during agreed upon work hours and make their availability clear using agreed work status tools. Employees are expected to ensure that they can be reached using NPCA approved software and communication tools and methods. Remote working does not excuse employees from attending mandatory "in-person" meetings or training that has been identified as mandatory "in-person" attendance by the manager.

#### In-Office Availability

Employees must be available to attend scheduled meetings and participate in other required departmental or team activities in-office as needed, and will be given advance notice where possible, although exceptions can apply in extraordinary circumstances.

#### Substitution Days

The alternative working arrangement request form will outline the day(s) of the week that an employee is permitted to work from a remote workplace. Employees will be permitted to work a maximum of three (3) days per week remotely.

There may be occasions where an employee's presence is required at the workplace for a business-related need on a day when the employee is scheduled to work remotely. If this happens, the Authority will not provide a substitute day for the employee to work remotely in the same week and the employee will not be compensated for mileage for their drive to work, nor for travel time.

Should the scheduled remote workday fall on an approved vacation, sick, lieu or statutory holiday, staff will not be permitted to substitute another day to work remotely.

### Inclement Weather

Should an Authority facility be closed due to inclement weather on an employee's designated remote workday, the employee will not be eligible to receive any time off or lieu time and is expected to continue working for the remainder of the day.

If inclement weather is forecasted, at the manager's discretion, an employee may work from home. In this situation, an employee would not be eligible to receive any time off or lieu time should any Authority facility close due to weather.

### Professionalism

NPCA expects the same level of professionalism and responsiveness from its remote employees as it would from employees working in-office.

### Dependent or Child Care

Employees must arrange for childcare or dependent care during their agreed work hours except in cases of extraordinary extenuating circumstances which should be discussed and agreed to by the employee's manager. Any Human Rights accommodation requests should be brought to the attention of Human Resources and will be addressed through the accommodation process.

### Data Security

Employees must ensure the same, if not greater, level of security for all company network and data access; physical documents and any sensitive information that may be displayed on a home/remote office computer screen or on a laptop used for work purposes. Employees must follow all guidelines, requirements and policies set out by NPCA that guide and direct security and confidentiality.

### Appropriate Use and Asset Protection

The use of equipment, software, and data supplies provided by NPCA for use at the remote work location is limited to the designated employee and for purposes of completing work activities. The employee has the responsibility to ensure that all items in their possession are properly transported, used and the employee must take reasonable precautions to protect NPCA's equipment and resources from loss, theft, damage and/or unauthorized access, applying the same standards of care in the remote location as when regularly working at NPCA's locations

### Workspace Safety

The employee's home workspace (or other approved remote work location) will be considered an extension of the NPCA workspace; as a result, appropriate safety measures must be in place to ensure the protection of the employee in the course of carrying out work activities on behalf of NPCA. Managers and employees must work with the NPCA to assess and ensure that workplace standards related to health, safety, the management of risks and the reporting of incidents and accidents that



occur in the remote location, are met. Please refer to Appendix C-Remote Work self-assessment checklist for more information.

The safety of employees at a remote working location, whether at home or elsewhere is important to NPCA. In instances where employees and/or managers have concerns about staff personal safety or identify any risk situations that could impact the ability to work safely or put staff at risk, the employee and/or manager should inform NPCA.

Employees are not to permit colleagues, couriers, clients etc. to attend their remote work location as such meetings should be held on NPCA premises. The employee remains liable for injuries to third parties that occur on the employee's property.

### Workplace Safety Insurance

During work hours and while performing work functions in the designated work area of the home/remote workplace, should the employee experience a work-related injury or incident, employees are covered by NPCA's Workplace Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) insurance coverage in the same manner as if they were working on-site. Employees have an ongoing obligation to report any workplace injuries or illnesses.

### Employer Responsibilities and Liability

The employee's home/remote workplace will be considered an extension of NPCA's workspace while the employee is working, therefore, NPCA will maintain all of its responsibilities as the employer for matters occurring during the performance of the employee's duties. NPCA assumes no liability for injuries or losses occurring in the employee's remote workplace that is not directly attributable to the employee's performance of expected work duties.

### Agreed Working Hours

Managers and employees must document the agreed hours of work. Employees must work the agreed working hours, with a clear understanding that they will not incur overtime hours unless they have advance permission from their manager to do so. Except for extenuating circumstances, the employee's work hours will be as agreed upon as part of the employment contract or as noted in the Collective Agreement.

Employees must ensure that they follow all applicable employment legislation including hours of work, breaks and eating periods.

### Tax Implications

It is the employee's responsibility to determine any income tax implication of maintaining a home/remote office. NPCA will not provide tax guidance nor will it assume any additional tax liabilities. The employee is encouraged to consult with a tax professional to discuss any income tax implications of working remotely. Where remote working is approved, NPCA will issue tax forms in accordance with its legislated responsibility and guidance from the Canada Revenue Agency.

### Performance Standards

Employees and their manager must define and agree on performance measures and performance reporting expectations prior to the implementation of the remote working arrangement.

### Dress Code

Whilst in a remote working arrangement, employees must maintain a minimal standard related to an acceptable dress code. Employees are expected to present themselves on video as they would in a face to face/in person interaction/meeting.

## Provision of Tools and Resources

Where the employee is making the request for remote working arrangements, the employee is responsible for the costs of furnishing, equipping, and maintaining their home/remote offices so that they have a safe, secure, healthful, and comfortable work environment and can accomplish their work in an efficient and expeditious manner. In instances where however, the remote working arrangement is required by NPCA, the manager will conduct the Remote Working Assessment and determine what, if any, equipment is required for the employee to effectively perform the responsibilities of their position and the costs may be borne by NPCA.

Any equipment, software, data supplies, and furniture provided by NPCA to staff for remote work must be returned to NPCA upon request. It is the employee's responsibility to protect NPCA's equipment while in the employee's care. Remote employees who leave NPCA (voluntarily and non-voluntarily) will be expected to return equipment in person or via an agreed delivery service. Note that any costs related to remodeling, furnishings (such as chairs, desks, filing cabinets, printers, etc.) or maintaining (such as electricity, internet, heat, hydro, etc.) for remote workspaces are the responsibility of the employee.

## **5.0 ELIGIBILITY AND APPROVAL**

Except for the circumstances outlined in the Alternative Working Arrangement policy (Critical situation), employees must make a formal request to their manager for a remote working arrangement, and undergo an assessment of the request circumstances, remote working readiness (review of the position, operational requirements, interdependencies, etc.) and other eligibility considerations specific to the type of remote working arrangement, in order to determine the most appropriate option and to receive approval. All requests should be assessed by considering the nature of the position, the employee's current standing and, weighing the needs of the department, and any operational efficiencies.

Remote working arrangements as laid out in this guideline are at the request of the employee and not as a workplace accommodation. Any accommodation requests should be brought to the attention of Human Resources.

### Commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Managers should strive to achieve the commitment NPCA makes to equity, diversity and inclusion when considering requests for remote working. Although not all positions are eligible for remote working, managers should ensure that all positions are assessed fairly, that operational needs are considered and that no bias exists when approving remote working arrangements or determining supports required. Additionally, when managing remote working interactions, consideration should be given to diverse working styles, and team engagement activities.

### Denial of Remote Work Request

When for whatever reason an employee is denied a remote working arrangement request, the manager will, in consultation with Human Resources, inform the employee, explaining the decision in a timely manner.

### Monitoring and Review

Managers and employees should review the remote working arrangement semi-annually, during which they would assess whether the remote working arrangement is meeting the needs of NPCA. Suggested review criteria can include work performance (productivity, quality of work, ability to meet deadlines, team cohesiveness and collaboration, customer satisfaction/service), Relationships (working relationships, employee satisfaction, sense of commitment and belonging, reliability), impact on organization (absenteeism, availability, reputational impact, impact on unit goal and objectives, impact

on departmental efficiencies). The review may result in changes to the remote working arrangement, including termination of the arrangement, if it is so determined by the manager.

## **6.0 GENERAL**

### Remote Working Culture

Creating a flexible and positive remote work culture, managers must demonstrate focused effort to build an ideal flexible working culture that heightens communication, collaboration, personal responsibility, and performance. This can be done through multiple methods such as: daily or regular team meetings, one-on-one check-ins, coaching, fun and engaging team activities and building a philosophy of shared ownership.

### Managing Expectations

Managers should openly discuss the pros and cons of working remotely with employees, including the potential for extended sitting, prolonged screen time, stress on eyes, and the overall impact on work-life balance prior to approving remote working arrangements and should encourage employees to seek supports available through NPCA to manage these challenges if they arise.

**Report To: Governance Committee**

**Subject: Governance Committee – 2022 Work Plan**

**Report No: GC-02-22**

**Date: March 31, 2022**

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**Recommendation:**

1. **THAT** Report No. GC-02-22 RE: Governance Committee – 2022 Work Plan **BE RECEIVED**.
2. **THAT** the Governance Committee - 2022 Work Plan attached as Appendix 1 **BE APPROVED** with additional and revised Committee meeting dates as noted therein.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to present the 2022 Work Plan to the Governance Committee for approval with additional dates to reflect forthcoming requirements stemming from the Conservation Authorities Act amendments and NPCA Planning Policy update.

**Discussion:**

The 2022 Governance Committee Work Plan identifies key initiatives and establishes timelines for the year ahead. With the timing of various amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act now more clearly established, and Phase 2 Planning Policy update workplan established, staff proposes the following revisions to the approved NPCA annual calendar of meetings as it applies to the Governance Committee:

Added Dates:           May 12, 2022  
                              September 15, 2022  
                              October 13, 2022  
                              November 10, 2022

Deleted Dates:         September 29, 2022

The deletion of the previously approved September 29 meeting date is recommended as this timeslot would now be bookended by Governance Committee meetings on both September 15 and October 13, 2022.

The previously approved Committee meeting dates of June 29 and December 15, 2022 would remain unchanged as originally established by the Board. For the purpose of clarity, within the

attached Appendix 1, the revised Governance Committee schedule as proposed is laid out in its entirety with dates bolded. It is further noted that on December 17, 2021, the Board also directed a reversion to a 9:30 a.m. commencement once in person meetings were able to resume.

Implementation of the work plan will ensure proper governance oversight and direction, in particular with respect to changes necessitated by amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act and NPCA planning policies update. Additionally, the Committee Work Plan enables staff to efficiently integrate Board objectives into the daily operations and administration of the NPCA.

**Financial Implications:**

The additional meetings will likely result in modest cost increases in the form of per diems and mileage expenses.

**Links to Strategic Plan:**

Approving a Governance Committee Work Plan with predetermined dates supports the Strategic Plan's Core Value of conducting business with transparency to achieve high quality Customer Service.

**Related Reports and Appendices:**

Report No. FA-74-21 RE: Board of Directors' 2022 Meeting Schedule

Appendix 1: Governance Committee – 2022 Work Plan (Draft)

**Authored by:**

*Original Signed by:*

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Grant Bivol  
Clerk/Board Secretariat

**Submitted by:**

*Original Signed by:*

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Chandra Sharma, MCIP, RPP  
Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-  
Treasurer

# Appendix 1 to Report No. GC-02-22

## Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority

### Governance Committee Annual Work Plan - 2022

<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; font-weight: bold;">DRAFT</div>	Quarter 1			Quarter 2			Quarter 3			Quarter 4		
	JAN-2022	FEB-2022	MAR-2022	APR-2022	MAY-2022	JUN-2022	JUL-2022	AUG-2022	SEP-2022	OCT-2022	Nov-2022	DEC-2022
<b>Governance Committee</b>			31-Mar		12-May	30-Jun			15-Sep	13-Oct	10-Nov	15-Dec
Full Authority Board		18-Feb	25-Mar	22-Apr	20-May	17-Jun	15-Jul		16-Sep	21-Oct	18-Nov	
<b>1. Work Plan</b>												
Workplan Approval			X									
<b>2. Legislative Updates</b>												
Conservation Authorities Act Amendments			X			X			X			X
Administrative By-Law Review												X
<b>3. Board Training</b>												
Training Schedule						X						
<b>4. Board Self-Evaluation</b>												
Board Skills Matrix					X							
<b>5. Corporate Policies and Procedures</b>												
NPCA Policies for the Administration of Ontario Reg 155/06 and the Planning Act			X		X	X			X	X	X	X
Indigenous Engagement Guidelines									X			
Customer Service Guidance			X									
Talent Management Strategy									X			
<b>6. Other</b>												
Salary Disclosure			X									
FOI Statistical Reporting			X									