

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday, March 20, 2025

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Boardroom
Morrison Dam Conservation Area

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Ray Chartrand, Adrian Cornelissen, Steve Herold, Joey Groot, Dave Jewitt, Dave Marsh, Wayne Shipley, Marissa Vaughan

DIRECTORS ABSENT

Jaden Hodgins

STAFF PRESENT

Geoff Cade, Tina Crown, Cassie Greidanus, Abbie Gutteridge, Davin Heinbuck, Brian Horner, Daniel King, Nathan Schoelier, Julie Stellingwerff, Erik Strahl, Ellen Westelaken.

OTHERS PRESENT

Paul Seebach, *Seebach & Company*

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ray Chartrand called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m., welcomed everyone in attendance, and read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION #BD 19/25

Moved Joey Groot

Seconded by Dave Jewitt

“RESOLVED, THAT the agenda for the March 20, 2025, Board of Directors Meeting be approved.”

Carried.

DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest at this meeting or from the previous meeting.

DISCLOSURE OF INTENTION TO RECORD

None.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Abbie Gutteridge reported that there had been a spelling error on a name in the previous minutes, which would be corrected in the finalized minutes.

MOTION #BD 20/25**Moved by David Marsh****Seconded by Adrian Cornelissen**

“RESOLVED, THAT the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on February 20, 2025, and the motions therein be approved as amended.”

Carried.BUSINESS OUT OF THE MINUTES

None.

PRESENTATION

Paul Seebach, of Seebach and Company, presented the 2024 audited financial statement for the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority. There were no audit issues found or unusual transactions. The statements of financial position and operations were reviewed. The Drinking Water Source Protection program audit was also reviewed at this time.

MOTION 21/25**Moved by Wayne Shipley****Seconded by Dave Jewitt**

“RESOLVED, THAT the 2024 audited financial statement be approved as presented.”

Carried.PROGRAM REPORTS**1. (a) Development Review**

Ellen Westelaken, Water & Planning Technician, presented the Development Review report pursuant to Ontario Regulation Ontario Regulation 41/24 *Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits*. Through the application process, proposed developments within regulated areas are protected from flooding and erosion hazards. Staff granted permission for 1 *Application for Permission* and 8 *Minor Works Applications*.

Board members asked how ABCA staff were fairing in permit turn around time in comparison with the standard. Geoff Cade noted that staff are typically reviewing permits in a much shorter time than the standard.

(b) Violation/Appeals Update

Geoff Cade noted that there was no update on ongoing violations at the current time.

MOTION #BD 22/25**Moved by Wayne Shipley****Seconded by Marissa Vaughan**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Board of Directors affirm the approval of applications as presented in Program Report # 1 – a) Development Review and receive the verbal Violations and Appeals update as presented.”

Carried.

2. Process for Updating Conservation Areas Master Plans

Nathan Schoelier, Stewardship and Conservation Lands Manager, provided a report outlining the process to update the Master Plans for each of ABCAs Conservation Areas. These plans will contain site level management information and will provides specific guidance and direction. The 2025 budget included funds for updating master plans for three conservation areas (Morrison Dam, Rock Glen and Ausable River Cut). The process for development of these plans will include consulting the recently approved Conservation Lands Strategy, posted for both Board of Directors and public feedback, engagement with the public and stakeholders through various methods, summarizing the feedback and submitting the final plan to the Board of Directors for approval.

MOTION #BD 23/25**Moved by Steve Herold****Seconded by Dave Jewitt**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves the process for updating conservation areas master plans as detailed in this report.”

Carried.

3. Conservation Education Update

Cassie Greidanus, Conservation Education Coordinator, provided a comprehensive update on the activities of the Conservation Education department over the fall and winter months. She introduced Julie Stellingwerff, Education Instructor, to the Board. Julie will be with the ABCA part time and will be helping deliver a variety of programs to local schools. Julie led the Conservation Education department from 2005 – 2014, so comes with extensive background knowledge of conservation education programming. Education staff were busy with 49 school programs in the fall, as well as running a full Oaks and Acorns program. The Avon Maitland District School Board hosted two environmental forums in fall 2024, which ABCA staff helped to run. There were also community group programs, such as owl prowls and local library programs. Winter programming proved to be challenging this year due to bus cancellations for inclement weather; however, there

were several snowshoeing programs, Spring Water Awareness Programs, as well as a PA Day event at the Exeter Library. A week of Day Camp was also run over March break with eight campers.

Education staff have another two sessions of Oaks and Acorns planned for spring, as well as a full schedule of school programming and class trips. ABCA will also be hosting Envirothon again in 2025, which is planned for April 24 and May 7. Finally, staff will be running 6 weeks of Summer Day Camp, which is almost completely booked.

MOTION #BD 24/25

**Moved by Marissa Vaughan
Seconded by Wayne Shipley**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the Conservation Education Update for information as presented.”

Carried.

4. Flood Emergency Planning Meeting

Daniel King, Water Resources Engineer, provided an update on the annual Flood Emergency Meeting held on February 24, 2025. Member municipalities and other stakeholders were invited to the meeting. The 22 attendees included representatives from seven municipalities, three counties and two other conservation authorities. Roles and Responsibilities during a flooding event were reviewed, as well as an update on current watershed conditions and the upcoming flood outlook. Of note this year, was a presentation by James Bryant and Lina Florian from Essex Region Conservation Authority on some of their major recent flooding events. Attendees noted that they find this meeting worthwhile, and it reminds them to revisit their own emergency plans.

MOTION #25/25

**Moved by Dave Marsh
Seconded by Marissa Vaughan**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the Flood Emergency Planning Meeting report for information as presented.”

Carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

GENERAL MANAGER’S REPORT

Davin Heinbuck, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer, provided a report with a brief update on the progress of various projects, staff training, upcoming meetings and events, and general activities of ABCA staff.

MOTION #26/25

**Moved by Joey Groot
Seconded by Steve Herold**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the General Manager’s Report for information as presented.”

Carried.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

None.

CORRESPONDENCE

- a) Reference: Perth County Stewardship Program
File: A.5.1
Brief: A letter of thanks directed to Nathan Schoelier and the ABCA for support for the Perth County Stewardship Program, and looking forward to continuing the partnership in the future.
- b) Reference: Letter of Resignation
File: P.1.1
Brief: A letter from Erik Strahl, announcing his intent to resign from the ABCA on April 25, 2025. He thanked the Board and staff for their support and for such a welcoming work environment. He indicated that his resignation is due to a change in life plans and wishes staff at the ABCA all the best in the future.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Davin Heinbuck informed the Board of Directors that Conservation Authorities have moved back to be under the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks.
2. Davin Heinbuck reported that the Ontario Professional Planners Institute used the ABCA Shoreline Management Plan as a case study in their recent publication. He noted that staff will circulate this document to the Directors for their reference.
3. Davin Heinbuck and Daniel King gave a brief update regarding the recent snow and ice melt and the flooding associated with the event in Lambton Shores. Staff agreed to provide a more fulsome report at a future meeting.
4. Ray Chartrand presented Dave Jewitt with an award for Six Years of Service on the ABCA Board of Directors.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:16 p.m.

Ray Chartrand
Chair

Abigail Gutteridge
Secretary

*Copies of program reports are available upon request.
Contact Abigail Gutteridge, Corporate Services Coordinator*

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