

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday, October 23, 2025

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Boardroom
Morrison Dam Conservation Area

DIRECTORS PRESENT

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

DIRECTORS ABSENT

Jaden Hodgins

STAFF PRESENT

Andrew Bicknell, Tina Crown, Millie Ghorbankhani, Cassie Greidanus, Abbie Gutteridge, Davin Heinbuck, Brian Horner, Jaden Schoelier, Nathan Schoelier, Ellen Westelaken.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Ray Chartrand called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., welcomed everyone in attendance, and read the Land Acknowledgement Statement.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

MOTION #BD 66/25

Moved Joey Groot

Seconded by Wayne Shipley

“RESOLVED, THAT the agenda for the October 23, 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**MOTION #BD 67/25**

**Moved by Adrian Cornelissen
Seconded by Marissa Vaughan**

“RESOLVED, THAT the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on September 18, 2025, and the Budget Committee meeting held on October 9, 2025, the motions therein be approved as circulated.”

Carried.

BUSINESS OUT OF THE MINUTES2026 Proposed Budget

Davin Heinbuck, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer, provided a brief summary of the Budget Committee meeting held on October 9, 2023. He noted that the Board asked staff to provide options for bringing the budget to a total increase of approximately 4%. Staff proposed looking for other revenue for a Healthy Watersheds project, using some funds from the reserves, as well as phasing the Dam Safety Review over 2 years to reduce the overall increase to 3.93%.

While most Board Directors were content with the proposed changes, there was still some discussion regarding the wage increase of 2.5%. Staff showed the board the comparison of wage increases among member municipalities, as well as neighbouring conservation authorities, and Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) falls in the middle of those numbers. Staff noted that the benefit costs have increased this year, as well as the addition of OMERs for some of the staff. Most Directors were in agreement to leave the wage increase in place, but suggested tying it to a specific month's consumer price index (CPI), or a three month average, as there can be a great deal of month-to-month fluctuation.

MOTION #BD 68/25

**Moved by Ray Chartrand
Seconded by Adrian Cornelissen**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors directs staff to bring back a policy to the Board that will tie the annual wage increase with a three-month average CPI (May – July).

Carried.

Directors noted that staff had fulfilled their request from the Budget Committee and directed staff to send the 2026 Proposed Budget out to Member Municipalities for the 30-day review period.

MOTION #BD 69/25

**Moved by Adrian Cornelissen
Seconded by David Marsh**

“RESOLVED, THAT the proposed amendment to the 2026 proposed budget be approved as presented, and

“FURTHER, THAT the member municipalities be advised of the 2026 category 1 and Category 3 Operating Levy and budget, and be provided with supplementary information for the 30-day review, as the weighted vote by apportionment is intended to be held at the December 18, 2025 Board of Directors meeting.”

Carried.

PROGRAM REPORTS

1. (a) Development Review

Andrew Bicknell, Water & Planning Manager, presented the Development Review report pursuant to 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 11 *Applications for Permission* and 6 *Minor Works Applications*.

Joey Groot had some questions for staff regarding the process for dealing with violations, as well as the permit review time. Andrew noted that once staff are made aware of a potential violation, they first try to validate the concern and investigate at a staff level. They then try to work with the landowner to rectify the situation after the fact. He also noted that permits are valid for one year, and work must commence during that period. There was also a question regarding a lapse in days to issue the permit after the completed application was received. Andrew reported that sometimes landowners choose to wait to have the permit issued, as they are not prepared to commence work and do not want to risk their permit lapsing.

(b) Violation/Appeals Update

Andrew Bicknell had verbal updates on one file regarding a violation in Port Franks involving two properties, as well as ABCA property. He noted that staff have had communications with one of the landowners and have noted that the docks and boats have been removed from ABCA property. While they have not yet spoken with the second landowner, staff have made efforts to contact them. Staff are still working with legal counsel and coordinating with municipal staff on this matter.

MOTION #BD 70/25

Moved by Dave Jewitt

Seconded by Wayne Shipley

“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. 3rd Quarter Profit and Loss Statement

Tina Crown, Financial Services Coordinator, provided the profit and loss statement to September 30, 2025, including a projection for the remaining quarter of 2025. In general, she reported that the ABCA is consistent with previous years, and is on track with the 2025 budget.

MOTION #BD 71/25**Moved by Joey Groot****Seconded by Steve Herold**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the financial statement to September 30, 2025 as presented.

Carried.

3. Participation in Arkona Sesquicentennial

Nathan Schoelier reported that 2026 will mark the 150th Anniversary of the Town of Arkona. He noted that the planning committee approached ABCA staff to request that the Rock Glen Conservation Authority (RGCA) entry fee be waived on Saturday, June 13, 2026 to support community participation in the event.

MOTION #BD 72/25**Moved by Marissa Vaughan****Seconded by Wayne Shipley**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors approves the Arkona 150th Anniversary Committee’s request to waive the Rock Glen Conservation Area.”

Carried.

4. Education Update

Cassie Greidanus, Conservation Education Supervisor, provided a report and presentation to Directors to update them on the activities of the Conservation Education department. In general, it was a busy and successful year. She provided updates on school programs, community group programming, Nature Day Camps, as well as special events. To date in 2025, ABCA Conservation Education staff have had 126 school programs reaching 3388 students. There are more programs scheduled for the fall and early winter, so this number is expected to be over 4000 by the end of the year. In addition to community groups such as Scouts, staff have also partnered with the local libraries for programming. During the summer, 6 weeks of Nature Day camps were held, with 120 campers. There was still a waiting list of almost 60 children who were interested in these camps. Staff have also run the Oaks and Acorns program for parents and toddlers, which have been very successful. Special events in 2025 included the Envirothon, the Scouts Can-Am, a Huron Waves guided hike, several local fairs, as well as career days at local high schools. Staff are looking forward

to another busy year in 2026. Directors commended Cassie and her staff for their excellent work in 2025.

MOTION # BD 73/25

**Moved by David Marsh
Seconded by Dave Jewitt**

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

Carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

CORRESPONDENCE

- a) Reference: Note of Thanks
File: A.5.1
Brief: An email from Laura Pate, thanking the ABCA for the trail mobile as a way for those less mobile to enjoy the trail. She noted the excellent time her father had when they drove the trail with volunteer, Jim Hayer.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Regarding the proposed budget, Wayne Shipley asked that staff include the original budget number in the package, so councilors can see how it has changed from the original proposal.
2. Davin Heinbuck noted that due to the 30-day review period, the earliest that the Board could vote on the budget will be the December 18, 2025 Board of Directors meeting. He reminded Directors that he, and other staff, are available to speak to Municipal Councils regarding the proposed budget.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

None.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Steve Herold at 11:40 a.m.

Ray Chartrand
Chair

Abigail Gutteridge
Secretary

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