

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Thursday, June 18, 2026

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Boardroom
Morrison Dam Conservation Area

DIRECTORS PRESENT

Ray Chartrand, Adrian Cornelissen, Joey Groot, Steve Herold, Jaden Hodgins (via Zoom), Dave Jewitt, David Marsh, Wayne Shipley, Marissa Vaughan

STAFF PRESENT

Andrew Bicknell, Rosalind Chang, Tina Crown, Millie Ghorbankhani, Abbie Gutteridge, Davin Heinbuck, Brian Horner, Tracey McPherson, Jaden Schoelier, Nathan Schoelier, Ellen Westelaken.

OTHERS PRESENT

Libby George - *University of Waterloo*, Ben Woodward - *University of Waterloo*

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 50/26

**Moved Marissa Vaughan
Seconded by Wayne Shipley**

“RESOLVED, THAT the agenda for the June 18, 2026, 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 51/26**

**Moved by Joey Groot
Seconded by Wayne Shipley**

“RESOLVED, THAT the minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on May 21, 2026, and the motions therein be approved as circulated.”

Carried.

BUSINESS OUT OF THE MINUTESRegional Consolidation of Conservation Authorities – Regional Meeting Update

Davin Heinbuck, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer, provided an update regarding a regional meeting of the conservation authorities that will comprise the Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority (LHRCA) after consolidation. While appointments to the Transition Committee have not yet been announced, the current Chairs and CAOs/General Managers of the predecessor conservation authorities of the LHRCA met informally to discuss how to move forward together.

In general, all conservation authorities (CAs) are prepared to work together, and the meeting laid the foundation for a relationship built on optimism and collaboration. In addition, a document of guiding principles for transition is currently in development. Some of these principles include transparent governance, fiscal responsibility, equitable representation, and local service responsiveness. All CAs agreed that the development of a watershed council for each predecessor CA would be an effective means to ensure local matters are brought forward at the regional level. All CAs also agreed that it would be ideal to have a 2027 budget approved prior to the upcoming municipal elections in October. There is still some clarity needed regarding the budget process, but it will be discussed later in July with the Transition Committee. Overall, Chairs and CAOs/General Managers were pleased with the outcome of this initial meeting.

MOTION #BD 52/26

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

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives this update on the inaugural Lake Huron Regional Conservation Authority planning meeting.

Carried.

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

Jaden Schoelier, Water & Planning Technician, 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 6 *Applications for Permission* and 5 *Minor Works Applications*.

(b) Violation/Appeals Update

Andrew Bicknell, Water and Planning Manager, did not have an update regarding ongoing violations. However, he noted that Planning and Regulations were contacted by municipal staff regarding a potential violation, and wanted to commend the public works staff for their collaborative efforts.

MOTION #BD 53/26

Moved by Marissa Vaughan

Seconded by Dave Jewitt

“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. Open House Session – Partnership with University of Waterloo Coastal Research Group

Andrew Bicknell informed the Board that the Water and Planning department at the ABCA is planning to hold an open house session within the next couple of months, in partnership with the Coastal Research Group from the University of Waterloo. Andrew had the opportunity to sit down with Ben Woodward from the University of Waterloo, one of the students involved in the Coastal Research Group, to learn more about the citizen science research that they are leading. The observational data that is being collected through these efforts is of interest to the ABCA, as it documents changes along the coastline over time. This joint open house will provide an opportunity for ABCA to engage with the public, while also promoting this citizen science program.

Libby George and Ben Woodward, from the University of Waterloo, joined the meeting via Zoom to present their program, Coastie – Georeach Citizen Science Programs, to the Board. They noted that their areas of research have expanded from several National Parks to Provincial Parks, Municipal parks and conservation areas. Special stands are erected along coastlines where citizens who are visiting the areas can place their cell phones to take photos. These photos can be uploaded to their website and are used to track changes to the coastline. Organizations can also set up an account to retrieve the photo data for their own use. ABCA Directors were very interested in the program and thought it would be a good fit for supplemental data in key locations. Staff noted that they are already in discussions to set up locations within the watershed.

MOTION #BD 54/26

Moved by Steve Herold

Seconded by Dave Jewitt

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the report “Planning and Regulations staff to host open house session in partnership with University of Waterloo Coastal Research Group.”

Carried.

3. Risk Management Official Servicing Agreement

Andrew Bicknell reported that, since 2015, the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority has provided Risk Management Official services for eight municipalities to enforce the Source Protection Plans for the Ausable Bayfield and Maitland Valley Source Protection Regions. Risk Management Officials/Inspectors are certified by the Province. Municipalities may also delegate this responsibility. The current agreement in place lapses at the end of December 2026, and all eight municipalities have expressed a desire to enter into another agreement with the ABCA to provide these services. Staff have drafted up an agreement, with a cost structure based on a similar formula to the current agreement.

Staff noted that, as this is a renewal of an existing agreement and is under \$500,000, it is exempt from the guardrails put in place by the Province during the transition phase of the consolidation of conservation authorities. They recommend that the ABCA Chair and General Manager be authorized to sign the agreement with interested municipalities.

MOTION #BD 55/26

Moved by Joey Groot

Seconded by Wayne Shipley

“RESOLVED, THAT Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors authorize the Chair and General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer to sign the Risk Management Official Servicing Agreement with interested municipalities.”

Carried.

4. Stewardship Funding Update

Angela Van Niekerk, Wetlands Specialist, provided an update on funding toward stewardship projects over the past year from several funders, including Canada Nature Fund (CNF), the Habitat Stewardship Program (HSP), and the Great Lakes Local Action Fund (GLLAF). The CNF funding has been available for the last eight years, and is now complete. Over the eight years, approximately 485 projects were supported by these funds. In the last year, 98 projects were completed with this funding, including 4 wetlands, 13 fragile land retirement projects, 17 erosion control projects and 54 cover crop fields. HSP funding helped to fund 1 wetland and 7 fragile land retirement projects, and the GLLAF helped to fund 6 wetlands and 19 fragile land retirement projects.

MOTION #BD 56/26

Moved by David Marsh

Seconded by Jaden Hodgins

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

Carried.

5. Huronview Innovative Drainage Demonstration – RFP Results

Mari Veliz, Healthy Watersheds Manager, reminded the Board that funding was secured for an innovative sub-irrigation project at the Huronview Demonstration Farm. A design for the work has been finalized, and a request for proposal (RFP) sent out to three contractors previously involved with the Huronview Demonstration Farm. A tender was submitted by Parker and Parker Ltd at a price of \$110,740 (including HST). This tender met all technical requirements and falls within the approved budget from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA).

MOTION #BD 57/26

Moved by Joey Groot

Seconded by Marissa Vaughan

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors accept the proposal in the amount of \$110, 740 (including HST) from Parker and Parker Ltd. to complete the installation of the sub-irrigation infrastructure at the Huronview Demonstration Farm.”

Carried.

6. Rock Glen Conservation Area – AED Donation

Stacey Palen, Workplace Safety Specialist, informed the Directors that Patrick Armstrong, Executive Director of the Dave Mounsey Memorial Fund, has expressed interest in donating two Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) to Rock Glen Conservation Area (RGCA). The donation would consist of two AEDs – one housed in an outdoor cabinet that would be mounted on the exterior of the Museum, and one in a mobile case to be housed at the gatehouse. The current unit at the RGCA gatehouse has exceeded its recommended service life and is due for replacement. The value of the donation is more than \$6000, and ABCA would be responsible for the installation costs. A quote by Sisler Electrical Inc. of Arkona quoted the installation at \$689 plus HST.

MOTION #BD 58/26

Moved by Steve Herold

Seconded by Wayne Shipley

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors accepts the donation of two Automated External Defibrillators and two housing units for Rock Glen Conservation Area from the Dave Mounsey Fund.”

Carried.

PRESENTATION

Angela Van Niekerk presented an update on the wetlands program at the ABCA. She noted that this program has been in place for 18 years, and was established in 2008 with the Ausable River Recovery Strategy. This strategy focused on improving water quality in the Ausable River to help the many species-at-risk. Since that time, over 120 landowners have participated in the creation of wetlands, and 174 wetlands have been established. Staff have worked with over 26 partners and groups to do this work. Staff have worked with contractors to ensure a proper design process, and use native plants and seed mixes for vegetation around the wetlands. Funding secured for these projects have come from larger provincial or federal funding programs, as well as other programs such as the Huron Clean Water Project, Ducks Unlimited Canada and ALUS (Alternative Land Use Services) Middlesex.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Davin Heinbuck provided a brief report outlining the progress of various projects, staff training, upcoming meetings and events, as well as general activities of ABCA staff.

MOTION #BD 59/26

**Moved by Wayne Shipley
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 REPORTS

None.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**MOTION #BD 60/26**

**Moved by Adrian Cornelissen
Seconded by Joey Groot**

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors go into Committee of the Whole at 11:40 a.m., with Nathan Schoelier, Davin Heinbuck and Abbie Gutteridge remaining in attendance.”

Carried.

MOTION #BD 61/26

Moved by David Marsh

Seconded by Marissa Vaughan

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors rise and report at 12:18 p.m.”

Carried.

MOTION #BD 62/26

Moved by Dave Jewitt

Seconded by Steve Herold

“RESOLVED, THAT the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Board of Directors advise staff to proceed as discussed regarding the property matter.”

Carried.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Marissa Vaughan at 12:18 p.m.

Ray Chartrand
Chair

Abigail Gutteridge
Secretary

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