



## Essex Region Conservation Authority

### Board of Directors

### Meeting Minutes

**Meeting Date:** Thursday, June 19, 2025

**Time:** 6:00 pm

**Location and Details:** Council Chambers, County of Essex Civic Centre  
360 Fairview Avenue West, Essex, ON

#### Attendance

|                         |                                                                         |                  |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Members Present:</b> | Molly Allaire (Chair)                                                   | Michael Akpata   |
|                         | Jim Morrison (Vice Chair)                                               | Jeff Renaud      |
|                         | Peter Courtney                                                          | Bill Dunn        |
|                         | Jason Matyi                                                             | Larry Verbeke    |
|                         | Dennis Rogers                                                           | Joe Bachetti     |
|                         | Thomas Neufeld                                                          | Tania Jobin      |
|                         | Tracey Bailey                                                           | Angelo Marignani |
| <b>Absent:</b>          | Katie McGuire-Blais                                                     | Mark McKenzie    |
| <b>Regrets:</b>         | Ryan McNamara                                                           | Dayne Malloch    |
|                         |                                                                         | Kieran McKenzie  |
| <b>Staff Present</b>    | Tim Byrne, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer                                      |                  |
|                         | Nicole Kupnicki, Manager, Human Resources & Council Services            |                  |
|                         | Shelley McMullen, CFO/Director Finance and Corporate Services           |                  |
|                         | Danielle Breault-Stuebing, Director Communication and Outreach Services |                  |
|                         | Kevin Money, Director Conservation Services                             |                  |
|                         | James Bryant, Director Watershed Management Services                    |                  |
| <b>Others</b>           | Dan Jenner, Regulations Coordinator                                     |                  |
|                         | Ashley Meyer, Partner, Hicks, McPherson, latonna Driedger, LLP          |                  |
|                         | Jacqueline Serran, DRCC Remedial Action Plan Coordinator, ERCA          |                  |
|                         | Tom Dufour, Geomatics Technician, ERCA                                  |                  |
|                         | Sital Singh Garha, Reigns 740 Inc.                                      |                  |
|                         | Suksham Sharma, Reigns 740 Inc.                                         |                  |

#### 1. Call to Order

Good evening and welcome to the June 19, 2025, meeting of the ERCA Board of Directors. I will call the meeting to order. We have regrets this evening from:

- Councillor Ryan McNamara, Lakeshore
- Deputy Mayor, Dayne Malloch, Pelee
- Councillor Kieran McKenzie, Windsor

## **2. Land Acknowledgement**

I'd like to begin by acknowledging that this land is the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, comprised of the Ojibway, the Odawa, and the Potawatomi Peoples.

We value the significant historical and contemporary contributions of local and regional First Nations and all of the Original Peoples of Turtle Island - North America who have been living and working on the land from time immemorial.

## **3. Declarations of Pecuniary Interest**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

## **4. Approval of Agenda**

### **A. ERCA Board of Directors**

**Resolution 37/25** Moved by Jeff Renaud

Seconded by Peter Courtney

THAT the Agenda of the June 19, 2025, meeting of the ERCA Board of Directors be approved.

**Carried**

## **5. Adoption of Minutes**

### **A. ERCA Board of Directors**

**Resolution 38/25** Moved by Joe Bachetti

Seconded by Bill Dunn

THAT the Minutes of the April 10, 2025, meeting of the Board of Directors and the recommendations therein be approved as distributed. **Carried**

### **B. Executive Committee**

**Resolution 39/25** Moved by Larry Verbeke

Seconded by Jim Morrison

THAT the Minutes of the April 10, 2025, and May 28, 2025, meetings of the Executive Committee and the recommendations therein be approved as distributed. **Carried**

### **C. Finance & Audit Advisory Board**

**Resolution 40/25** Moved by Tania Jobin

Seconded by Jeff Renaud

THAT the Minutes of the June 11, 2025, meeting of the Finance & Audit Advisory Board and the recommendations therein be approved as distributed. **Carried**

### **D. John R. Park Homestead Advisory Board**

**Resolution 41/25** Moved by Jeff Renaud

Seconded by Michael Akpata

THAT the Minutes of the May 7, 2025, meeting of the John R. Park Homestead Advisory Board and the recommendations therein be approved as distributed. **Carried**

## **6. Business Arising from the Previous Minutes**

### **A. Notice of Motion**

**Resolution 42/25** Moved by Tracey Bailey  
Seconded by Peter Courtney

THAT Essex Region Conservation Authority send a letter to the MECP, to ECCC and Conservation Authorities stating the following:

Given the current administration in the US and their eroding and elimination of both the scientific community and government agencies, we request that both the MECP and ECCC not only continue their funding and research within the Great Lakes Basin with regards to costal resilience, flood mitigation, water quality and the reduction of Algal blooms, but also increase funding to these endeavours.

For many years we have had a great relationship with our partners to the south and worked cooperatively and in tandem on issues which we both faced. The current administration is now putting roadblocks which impede or prevent this collaboration, and we must step up at this time into a leadership position. Without the sharing of knowledge, we will have to increase our funding in these areas to maintain the protection of these watersheds and the environment. .

**Carried**

## **7. Announcements**

Good evening, It's been a very busy spring season. I'd like to congratulate the tree planting team, who, despite the significant rainfall experienced through April and May, successfully planted and distributed nearly 70,000 trees over the past two months.

ERCA was pleased to represent Conservation Authorities from across the province this weekend at the Ontario Association of Civil Engineering Technicians and Technologists' Building Ontario Conference – a premier event dedicated to the future of infrastructure and the built environment in Ontario – to highlight ways in which CAs help facilitate safe development across the province.

I'd also like to provide an update to an announcement that we made at our last meeting regarding the proposed Disc Golf Course at Holiday Beach. As members may know, there was significant opposition from the public to this proposed location, and administration has pressed pause on this effort to reassess if Disc Golf may be compatible in another location. A report will be brought back to this Board in the fall.

It's also my pleasure to recognize one of our staff for achieving a five-year milestone. Jackie Serran has been the Remedial Action Plan Coordinator for the Detroit River Canadian Cleanup initiative for the past five years. Over that time, she's made remarkable contributions to the delisting of the Detroit River as an Area of Concern by working with researchers and government officials to reclassify impairments such as degraded fish populations as well as bird and animal deformities impairments. Further, Jackie works directly with the Conservation Services team to implement habitat creation projects such as the Peche Island fish habitat and

erosion protection works. Most notably, Jackie has worked directly with hundreds of volunteers to help clean up and improve the River through clean up and tree planting events.

Thank you, Jackie, for all of your hard work and dedication, and on behalf of the Board, I'd like to present you with this plaque recognizing your 5 years of service.

I'd also like to remind all members that time and space is running out to reserve your spot for the upcoming Essex Region Conservation Foundation Fundraising Golf Tournament. This is the Foundation's largest annual fundraising event, and we'll hear more about how these funds help to protect and restore our regional environment shortly. If you are interested in participating in golf or just attending the fabulous dinner portion of the evening, please see Danielle after tonight's meeting!

## 8. Delegations

None

## 9. Presentations

### A. BD09/25 Essex Region Conservation Foundation Grant Acceptance

**Resolution 43/25** Moved by Bill Dunn

Seconded by Tracey Bailey

THAT the Board of Directors accept the 2024 grants from the Essex Region Conservation Foundation, inclusive of the donor designations and gift restrictions, and that it will comply with all specifics contained within the restricted charitable gift agreements, as summarized in attached Schedule A. **Carried**

<comments from Terry Patterson, Chair ERCF, presented by Tim Byrne>

Since 1977, the Foundation has been raising funds to support the local conservation initiatives of the Essex Region Conservation Authority. Our Foundation Board consists of 14 volunteer members who dedicate their time and talents to helping raise funds for ERCA's local conservation initiatives. We strategically focus on four main fundraising pillars:

- Greening our region and taking climate action;
- Connecting our region by trails;
- Inspiring future generations through conservation education; and
- Preserving our heritage at the John R. Park Homestead

I'm pleased to report that again in 2024, the Foundation was extremely successful in its fundraising efforts. Thanks to the wonderful generosity of donors and event participants throughout the year, the Foundation will provide grants to the Essex Region Conservation Authority in the amount of \$515,082 to undertake important conservation work.

Some of the highlights that this funding will support include the significant number of trees that were added to green the region and take climate action; the incredible restoration work at the Homestead that we celebrated just last month; the nearly 8,000 students who were able to

experience Conservation Education programs, the updates to Devonwood Conservation Area and much more.

On behalf of the Foundation, we are so grateful to the many generous donors and supporters whose philanthropy has made this tremendous support possible. We were able to bring those donors together last week to thank them in person at our Donor Appreciation and Awards evening. This year's Gratitude Report has been provided so you can see all of those who are helping to create a future of sustainability in our region.

We look forward to another great year of fundraising for local conservation, and hope to welcome each of you to our four signature fundraising events throughout the year. Once again, we thank you for the opportunity to be your partner in conservation, and to raise these funds that are so important to the environment and our community, and ensuring that the Windsor, Essex, Pelee Island region remain the Place for Life.

It's my pleasure, Chair Allaire, to present you with this cheque for \$515,082.

## 10. Reports for Approval

### A. BD10/25 Draft 2024 Audited Financial Statements and Financial Condition Update

**Resolution 44/25** Moved by Angelo Marignani  
Seconded by Thomas Neufeld

THAT, as recommended by Administration and the FAAB, \$400,000 of the accumulated operating surplus be transferred to the infrastructure reserve fund and \$67,274 remain intact until the formal succession plan for key management positions is approved; and further,

THAT, as recommended by Administration and the FAAB, the draft audited Financial Statements of the Essex Region Conservation Authority, including the Independent Auditor's Report, for the year ended December 31, 2024, be recommended to the Board of Directors for approval and for release as the final audited Financial Statements. **Carried**

### B. BD11/25 John R. Park Homestead Digital Strategy

**Resolution 45/25** Moved by Joe Bachetti  
Seconded by Peter Courtney

THAT the John R. Park Homestead Digital Strategy be approved for inclusion in ERCA's submission to the Community Museum Operating Grant (CMOG) as required by the Provincial Museum Operating Standards. **Carried**

### C. BD12/25 Designation of Summer Locknick as a Provincial Offences Officer

**Resolution 46/25** Moved by Jim Morrison  
Seconded by Larry Verbeke

THAT the Essex Region Conservation Authority Board of Directors designate Ms. Summer Locknick, Regulations Analyst (TV), as a Provincial Offences Officer under the *Conservation Authorities Act*. **Carried**

## **11. Reports for Information**

### **A. BD13/25 Watershed Management Services Activities Report for April and May 2025**

**Resolution 47/25** Moved by Bill Dunn  
Seconded by Jeff Renaud

THAT the review of Regulations and Planning Applications, as presented in Report BD13/25 be received for Members' information. **Carried**

### **B. Environmental Registry Reports**

- i. Conservation Ontario Comments ERO 025-0380 (Bill 5, Endangered Species Act) (May 15 2025)
- ii. Conservation Ontario Comments ERO 025-0391 (Bill 5 Special Economic Zones Act) (May 17 2025)
- iii. Conservation Ontario Verbal presentation to the Standing Committee (Bill 5 "Special Economic Zones Act, 2025) ERO-025-0391
- iv. Conservation Ontario's comments on "Proposed Planning Act and City of Toronto Act, 2006 Changes (Schedules 3 and 7 of Bill 17 - Protect Ontario by Building Faster and Smarter Act, 2025)" (ERO#025-0461), "Proposed Regulations– Complete Application" (ERO#025-0462), and the "Proposed Regulation– As-of-right Variations from Setback Requirements" (ERO#025-0463).

**Resolution 48/25** Moved by Angelo Marignani  
Seconded by Jason Matyi

THAT Conservation Ontario comments on ERO 025-0380, ERO 025-0391, ERO#025-0461, ERO#025-0462, ERO#025-0463 be received for Members' information. **Carried**

### **C. Correspondence**

- i. Letter Town of Perry Sound Council Resolution 2025-067 Opposition to Elements of Bill 5 dated June 3, 2025

**Resolution 49/25** Moved by Larry Verbeke  
Seconded by Jim Morrison

THAT correspondence be received for Members information. **Carried.**

## **12. Hearings**

### **A. Convene as the Hearing Board**

**Resolution 50/25** Moved by Peter Courtney  
Seconded by Tania Jobin

THAT the Board of Directors sit as the Hearing Board in respect of an application(s) under Section 28.1 of the Conservation Authorities Act. **Carried.**

We are now going to conduct hearings under Section 28.1 of the Conservation Authorities Act in respect of one (1) application.

We, as the Hearing Board, are unaware of the matters being brought forward and we are only now receiving and reviewing the information provided by staff this on this day.

The Authority administers regulations under Part 6 of the Conservation Authorities Act, which requires the permission of the Authority for development within an area regulated by the Authority in order to ensure no adverse affect on (the control of flooding, erosion, dynamic beaches or unstable soils or bedrock) or to permit alteration to a shoreline or watercourse or interference with a wetland. The Staff has reviewed the proposed works and a copy of the staff report has been given to the applicant.

The Conservation Authorities Act Section 28.1 subsection 3 provides that:

"An authority shall not refuse an application for a permit or attach conditions to a permit unless the applicant for the permit has been given an opportunity to be heard by the authority."

In holding these hearings, the Authority Board is to determine whether or not a permit is to be issued. In doing so, we can only consider the application in the form that is before us, the staff report, such evidence as may be given, and the submissions to be made on behalf of each applicant.

The proceedings will be conducted according to the Statutory Powers Procedure Act. Under Section 5 of the Canada Evidence Act, a witness may refuse to answer any question on the ground that the answer may tend to criminate the person, or may tend to establish his/her liability to a civil proceeding at the instance of the Crown or of any person.

The procedure in general shall be informal. However, this is a quasi-judicial process, and provides for evidence to be given in response to members' question. Therefore, staff and applicants will be asked to swear an oath or provide an affirmation to speak the truth.

In accordance with the Act, an applicant who has been refused permission or who objects to conditions imposed on a permission, may appeal the decision to the Ontario Land Tribunal who may refuse the permission, or grant permission with or without conditions.

If the applicant has any questions to ask of the Hearing Board or of the Authority representative, they must be directed to the Chair of the board.

As a reminder, the Hearings will be conducted in accordance with the approved Hearing Guidelines. We, as the Hearing Board, will question, if necessary, both the staff and the applicant/agent.

Before I ask Dan Jenner, Regulations Coordinator to introduce the applications, I would ask that they swear an oath or provide an affirmation to speak the truth for the duration of the Hearing Board.

Dan Jenner, Regulations Coordinator provided an affirmation.

- i. Sital Singh Garha, Reigns 740 Inc.

**Resolution 51/25** Moved by Michael Akpata  
Seconded by Jim Morrison

THAT the application from Sital Singh Garha, Reigns 740 Inc., to construct a new dwelling at 325 Frank Ave, City of Windsor, Province of Ontario, be denied. **Carried.**

#### **B. Reconvene as Board of Directors**

**Resolution 52/25** Moved by Jeff Renaud  
Seconded by Larry Verbeke

THAT the Hearing Board reconvene as the ERCA Board of Directors.

### **13. Committee of the Whole**

#### **A. Confidential Matters related to Property**

**Resolution 53/25** Moved by Tania Jobin  
Seconded by Jason Matyi

THAT the meeting move from the Board of Directors to the Committee of the Whole related to property matters. **Carried**

#### **B. Return to Open Session**

**Resolution 54/25** Moved by Jeff Renaud  
Seconded by Jim Morrison

THAT the actions of the Committee of the Whole be endorsed. **Carried**

### **14. New Business**

#### **A. Flood-prone and “Undevelopable” Properties**

A discussion was held regarding properties within the Essex Region that would be, by current standards, undevelopable based on existing natural hazard conditions. Various points were raised, specifically regarding definable limits of a natural hazard (e.g. flood depth) at which a property would be considered no longer developable due to constraints with ingress and egress, and subsequently how current and future residents could be notified of such constraints. Administration made note of ongoing related initiatives, including but not limited to, technical studies and discussions with municipal planners and emergency first responders.

**B. Letter from JK and SK Friends at St. Pius School, received and presented by Joe Bachetti**

*Dear friends at ERCA,*

*Thank you very much for the opportunity to visit John R. Park Homestead. It was a wonderful experience and we learned a lot. We loved doing the scavenger hunt with our colored cards and finding all the rings. We saw and heard many things we never saw before. The big fish swimming around and the trees that were chomped by beavers were so cool! Thank you for sharing lots of information in your puppet show and letting us feel the real fur and deer horns. The egg hunt was so much fun and we loved digging in the dirt and exploring the water table. We were so happy to feed Maple and her kids and learning about the eagles in the barn. The leaders, Miss Emily, Mr. Chad and Mis Kris were amazing and taught us so much! Thank you again for a great day and we hope to be back again!*

*JK and SK friends at St. Pius School (with signatures from each student)*

**15. Other Business.**

**A. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will held on Thursday, September 11, 2025, at 6:00pm in Council Chambers at the Civic Centre in Essex, ON.

**16. Adjournment**

**Resolution 55/25** Moved by Bill Dunn  
Seconded by Larry Verbeke

THAT the June 19, 2025 meeting of the Essex Region Conservation Authority Board of Directors be adjourned. **Carried**

*Molly Allaire*

Molly Allaire, Chair



Tim Byrne, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer