

**GREY SAUBLE CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
MINUTES**

**Full Authority Board of Directors
Wednesday, November 27, 2024, at 1:15 p.m.**

The Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) Board of Directors' meeting was held in a hybrid format of in-person at the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Administrative Office and virtually via the meeting application, WebEx.

1. Call to Order

Chair Robert Uhrig called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m., welcomed all those present in person and virtually and asked Member Tobin Day to provide a land acknowledgment declaration and reflection.

Directors Present In-Person: Chair Robert Uhrig, Scott Mackey, Tobin Day, Scott Greig, Sue Carleton, Jennifer Shaw, Alex Maxwell, Kathy Durst

Directors Present Virtually: Vice Chair Nadia Dubyk, Jon Farmer, Jennifer Shaw

Regrets: Tony Bell

Staff Present: CAO, Tim Lanthier; Administrative Assistant, Valerie Coleman; Manager of Information Services, Gloria Dangerfield; Manager of Financial and Human Resource Services, Alison Armstrong; Conservation Lands Technician, Margaret Potter; Water Resources Coordinator, John Bittorf; Forestry Coordinator, Mike Fry; Senior Forestry Technician, Cam Bennet

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

The Directors were reminded to disclose any pecuniary interest that may arise during the course of the meeting.

3. Call for Additional Agenda Items

Nothing at this time.

4. Adoption of Agenda

Motion No.:
FA-24-101

Moved By: Scott Mackey
Seconded By: Tobin Day

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the agenda of November 27, 2024.

Carried

5. **Approval of Minutes**

Motion No.: FA-24-102	Moved By: Seconded By:	Sue Carleton Scott Greig
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THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the Full Authority minutes of October 23, 2024.

Carried

6. **Business Out of Minutes**

Nothing at this time.

7. **Consent Agenda**

Motion No.: FA-24-103	Moved By: Seconded By:	Kathy Durst Tobin Day
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THAT in consideration of the Consent Agenda Items listed on the November 27, 2024, agenda, the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors receives the following items: (i) Environmental Planning – Section 28 Permits – October 2024; (ii) Administration – Receipts & Expenses – October 2024; (iii) Donation Letter; (v) BRWI Minutes – September 5, 2024 and FoH Minutes – November 5, 2024; (vi) Media – Recent Media Articles

Carried

8. **Presentation**

Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Foundation Chair, Don Sankey presented a cheque to Grey Sauble Conservation Authority to assist with funding GSCA's Bio-mapping, the annual Forest Festival, and GSCA's Education Coordinator. CAO, Tim Lanthier accepted the cheque on behalf of the GSCA.

9. **Business Items**

i. **Administration**

a. **Awarding of Legal Counsel Tender**

CAO, Tim Lanthier reported back on the results of the tender to secure Legal Counsel services in coordination with those provided through Grey County. It was noted that eleven submissions had been received.

The Legal Counsel Selection Sub-Committee met to review and assess all submissions. The committee recommended a selection of firms to cover the various needs of the Authority. Based on the services and specific expertise of each firm, and the fees proposed, the committee selected Smith Valeriote Law Firm for planning and provincial offences related services, Hicks Morley for employment, labour relations, and MFIPPA related services, and Middlebro' and Stevens for all other legal services.

It was noted that the tender had been emailed to all relevant local firms, only one local submission was received.

A Member asked with regard to financial implications. Mr. Lanthier responded that legal services are accessed on an as needed basis which can vary month to month and year to year.

Motion No.: FA-24-104	Moved By: Seconded By:	Scott Mackey Sue Carleton
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WHEREAS Grey Sauble Conservation Authority has a need to update and renew contracts for the provision of legal services,
AND WHEREAS GSCA prepared and issued a request for proposals for legal services,
AND WHEREAS a Selection Committee consisting of Chair Uhrig, Member Carleton, CAO Lanthier, and two GSCA Staff reviewed the respondent proposals and prepared recommendations to the Board of Directors,

THAT the Board of Directors direct staff to retain:

- **Smith Valeriote Law Firm LLP for planning, municipal and provincial offences related law services not covered by the GSCA/Grey County agreement.**
- **Hicks Morley for Employment, Labour Relations, and MFIPPA related law services.**
- **Middlebro' and Stevens LLP for all other law services (i.e.: real estate, property, general litigation, etc.).**

Carried

b. Watershed Based Resource Management Strategy Final

CAO, Tim Lanthier presented the final version of the Watershed Based Resource Management Strategy. The document was circulated to all member municipalities, local Indigenous councils, and stakeholders. There were three responses received.

A Member asked if components of the strategy will be included in future budgets. Mr. Lanthier responded that they would not appear directly in budget but rather this document will inform strategic planning decisions.

A Member asked if there were potential liabilities with identifying shortcomings. Mr. Lanthier responded that it is possible that identified shortcomings that are not addressed may pose a liability.

Motion No.: FA-24-105	Moved By: Seconded By:	Jon Farmer Nadia Dubyk
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WHEREAS Ontario Regulation 686/21 – Mandatory Programs and Services Regulation, requires conservation authorities to develop and implement a Watershed Based Resource Management Strategy on or before December 31, 2024,

AND WHEREAS GSCA has developed and consulted on such a Strategy,

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors endorse the GSCA Watershed Based Resource Management Strategy.

Carried

c. Personnel Policy – Bereavement Policy

Manager of Financial and Human Resource Services, Alison Armstrong, gave a review of the personnel policy and presented the two wording options for the bereavement section of the policy.

A Member moved to endorse Option 2.

There was discussion regarding the rationale for choosing option 2 over option 1. Concern was expressed regarding the subjective and open-ended nature of the wording. Approval was expressed to the forward-thinking nature of the proposed policy.

Motion No.: FA-24-106	Moved By: Seconded By:	Jon Farmer Sue Carleton
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WHEREAS the GSCA Board of Directors approved a new Personnel Policy for the GSCA, save and except the Bereavement Policy section,

AND WHEREAS, Staff have prepared two options for the wording of this policy, based on discussion of the Board,

THAT, the GSCA Board of Directors endorses Bereavement Policy Option 2 for inclusion in the Personnel Policy.

Carried

A Member asked for a recorded vote.

Name	Yeah	Nay
Tony Bell	Absent	
Sue Carleton	X	
Tobin Day	X	
Nadia Dubyk	X	
Kathy Durst	X	
Jon Farmer	X	
Scott Greig		X
Scott Mackey		X
Alex Maxwell		X
Robert Uhrig	X	
Jennifer Shaw	X	
Total	7	3

d. Q3 Budget Update

Manager of Financial and Human Resource Services, Alison Armstrong spoke to the Q3 budget update and noted that GSCA is currently predicting a deficit in the year end budget.

A Member asked Ms. Armstrong to expand on the opportunities that may mitigate the deficit. Ms. Armstrong responded that ending contract positions early and working to get revenues owing realized would help. Mr. Lanthier added that there may be no additional practical actions to take in 2024 to mitigate the deficit.

Motion No.:	Moved By:	Kathy Durst
FA-24-107	Seconded By:	Scott Greig

WHEREAS the Board of Directors approved the GSCA 2024 Operating and Capital Budget on December 19, 2023, by motion FA-23-122,

THAT, the Board of Directors receive staff report 043-2024 – 2024 Q3 Budget Report Back as information.

Carried

e. Q3 Portfolio Update

Manager of Financial and Human Resource Services, Alison Armstrong reported that GSCA's portfolio is up in excess of 10% for 2024 and 3.8% in this quarter.

Motion No.:	Moved By:	Sue Carleton
FA-24-108	Seconded By:	Scott Greig

THAT, the Board of Directors receive the GSCA 2024 3rd Quarter Portfolio update as information.

Carried

Mr. Lanthier recommending reallocating \$500,000 to GSCA's high-interest savings account to safeguard some of the gains. It was noted that these funds would be needed for the Administration Building Renovation, and it was wise to protect them and make them more available.

A Member asked if the Board should discuss allocating/protecting more of the funds than staff have recommended prior to a scaling back of the market. There was discussion regarding pulling a larger amount of funds from the portfolio. Concern was raised about making drastic changes to the portfolio without first getting advice from the portfolio manager.

It was suggested that staff meet with the portfolio manager and report back at a special meeting of the Board in December.

Motion No.:	Moved By:	Jennifer Shaw
FA-24-109	Seconded By:	Scott Greig

WHEREAS GSCA foresees the short-term need to draw on reserve funds to invest in the renovation of GSCA's Administration Centre,

THAT the GSCA Board of Directors direct Staff to move \$500,000 from GSCA's investment portfolio into GSCA's high interest savings account.

Carried

f. 2025 Draft Budget

CAO, Tim Lanthier, spoke to the GSCA 2025 draft Budget with the inclusion of the Administration Centre renovation.

Staff noted that the 15-year amortization was determined to provide balance between the annual costs to member municipalities and total borrowing costs.

Mr. Lanthier spoke to the comments and feedback received from municipal councils.

There was discussion around the logistics and feasibility of leasing an office space long term. It was noted the annual cost of leasing a comparably sized space over the long-term would cost the GSCA between \$240,000 and \$270,000 per annum in perpetuity, plus inflation. By comparison, the proposed renovations are estimated to cost \$185,000 per annum for 15-years. Additionally, there would be a cost to prepare a leased space for appropriate use and the existing building would still require maintenance investments. It was also noted that moving the staff to a long term leased space may impact the GSCAs ability to provide environmental education programming.

There was discussion around the merits of moving forward with the renovation versus delaying. It was generally agreed that there is never a best time for a large capital project and that the cost of completing the work could increase in the future.

Motion No.:	Moved By:	Sue Carleton
FA-24-110	Seconded By:	Scott Mackey

WHEREAS GSCA Board of Directors received and directed Staff to circulate the 2025 Draft Budget,

AND WHEREAS Staff have circulated the budget and presented the same to municipal partners,

AND WHEREAS Staff have prepared a revised budget that includes the capital costs of the Administration Centre renovation,

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors receive the revised 2025 Draft Budget,

AND THAT Staff be directed to distribute the revised 2025 Draft Budget and revised Budget Companion to participating municipalities for the minimum 30-day review period.

AND THAT Staff bring a report before the Board of Directors at the January 2025 meeting of the Board for final review and approval of the 2025 Budget.

Carried

ii. Water Management
a. Ice Management Plan

Water Resources Coordinator, John Bittorf provided a presentation on the newly drafted Ice Management Plan as required by Section 686/21, the Mandatory Programs and Services regulation.

Mr. Bittorf outlined the components of the plan. It was noted that staff approached the document to act as a both a resource for the public and as a training manual for new staff

Motion No.: FA-24-111	Moved By: Seconded By:	Tobin Day Alex Maxwell
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THAT the Board of Directors receive Report 045-2024 – Ice Management Plan as Information.

Carried

iii. Environmental Planning

Nothing at this time.

iv. Operations

Nothing at this time.

v. Conservation Lands

a. Conservation Lands Strategy Final

Conservation Lands Technician, Margaret Potter reported back on the Conservation Lands Strategy after being circulated. It was noted that minimal changes were made to the strategy as a result of consultations or feedback.

Motion No.: FA-24-112	Moved By: Seconded By:	Scott Greig Jon Farmer
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WHEREAS Ontario Regulation 686/21 – Mandatory Programs and Services Regulation, requires conservation authorities to prepare a Conservation Area Strategy on or before December 31, 2024,

AND WHEREAS GSCA developed a Draft Strategy and circulated it for consultation and has incorporated the findings into a final report;

THAT the GSCA Board of Directors approve the Conservation Area Strategy.

Carried

b. Old Baldy Parking

CAO, Tim Lanthier spoke to the winter parking situation at the Old Baldy Conservation Area property. It was noted that in 2020 GSCA staff undertook the work to resolve complaints regarding neighbouring landowners parking in the parking lot overnight in the winter.

After three years of invoicing and inconsistent payment of the permit fees, the staff at the Municipality of Grey Highlands reached out to the GSCA Board to request that parking fees be waived.

Mr. Lanthier noted that staff believe an agreement continues to be necessary to protect GSCA from potential liability.

Mr. Lanthier outlined four options for the Board to consider.

A Member asked how staff came to the \$500 fee value. Mr. Lanthier explained that the fee was determined based on GSCA's established administrative fee and in consideration of the value being gained by the landowners.

A Member asked with regard to maintenance of the parking lot in the winter. Mr. Lanthier responded that the municipality plows the parking lot and uses it as a turn around point.

There was discussion around the details of the situation and what direction GSCA should take. There was some agreement that some level of fee should be set.

A Member moved to endorse option 4, continuing the current requirement for a signed agreement and payment of a \$500 annual fee. The Board approved this motion.

Motion No.: FA-24-113	Moved By: Seconded By:	Scott Mackey Kathy Durst
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WHEREAS the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) is the fee-simple owner of the lands known as Old Baldy Conservation Area (herein, Old Baldy) in the Municipality of Grey Highlands,

AND WHEREAS, several property owners have a vested interest in securing a parking arrangement on GSCA's Old Baldy property to accommodate parking for their personal residences,

AND WHEREAS, under Section 21(1)(n) of the Conservation Authorities Act, GSCA may enter into agreements with individuals,

THAT the Board of Directors direct staff to proceed with Option 4: and to notify the Municipality and local residents of this decision.

Carried

Member Scott Mackey left the meeting at 3:50 pm.

vi. Forestry
a. Wodehouse (190) MA – Hardwood Tender

Forestry Technician, Cam Bennett presented the results of the Wodehouse tender. Three bids were received. Bester Forest products provided the best bid. Staff recommended awarding the tender to Bester Forest products.

Motion No.:
FA-24-114

Moved By: Kathy Durst
Seconded By: Sue Carleton

WHEREAS Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) owns and manages over 11,300 hectares (28,000 acres) of land comprised of 207 individual properties organized into 79 groupings;

AND WHEREAS, GSCA manages nearly 5,260 hectares (13,000 acres) of forested area to offset the operating expenses of the Forestry department and GSCA;

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors award the following forestry tender:

Sawlog and Fuelwood tender (GSC-24-01) for Wodehouse Management Area – Compartment 190 – to Bester Forest Products for their total bid of \$247,077.00, subject to signing the agreement.

Carried

Member Jennifer Shaw left the meeting at 3:56 p.m.

b. Exception to Wood Products Tendering Policy

Forestry Technician, Cam Bennett spoke to staff's request to deviate from the GSCA Wood Products Tendering Policy for the purpose of conducting a harvest at the Little Germany property. It was noted that this property is inaccessible without crossing through private property. Staff had tried and had been unable to connect with the landowner to arrange for access. Staff made inquiries with a local contractor who was able to make contact with the landowner and arrange for access to the Little Germany property. Staff noted that that without the efforts and cooperation of the local contractor, staff would not be able to conduct a harvest on the Little Germany property. Staff recommended deviating from the Tendering Policy and awarding the contract directly to the local contractor.

The Board approved.

Motion No.:
FA-24-115

Moved By: Scott Greig
Seconded By: Jon Farmer

WHEREAS, GSCA maintains a Wood Products Tendering Policy which provides direction to staff about the sale of wood products from GSCA lands;

AND WHEREAS, stand 8 at this Little Germany property (Compartment 90, Property Location – Lots 38, 39, and 40, Concession 14, Municipality of Grey Highlands (former Artemesia Township)) was scheduled for harvest in 2022;

THAT the Board of Directors authorize an exception to the Wood Products Tendering Policy to allow staff to engage in a direct sale of standing timber.

Carried

vii. Communications/Public Relations

Nothing at this time.

viii. Education

Nothing at this time.

ix. GIS/IT

Nothing at this time.

x. DWSP

Nothing at this time.

10. New Business

Nothing at this time.

11. CAO's Report

The CAO, Tim Lanthier, gave an update on recent activities.

Mr. Lanthier noted that he has been providing presentation to all member Municipal Councils regarding the 2025 Draft budget and the proposed building renovations.

The GSCA and Indigenous Relationships committee met to discuss several items, including potential artwork displays in the new lobby of the GSCA Administrative Centre.

GSCA staff and Board Chairs met with the GSCF executive to discuss the Foundation's expressed desire to dissolve the Foundation. Staff have recommended the Foundation hold off on dissolving the Foundation until GSCA can take time to assess its needs, consider other options, conduct targeted recruitment, and/or scale back on events.

Mr. Lanthier, along with other staff, attended the Remembrance Day service at the newly revitalized Eugenia Falls Cenotaph. The revitalization efforts were well received. Mr. Lanthier expressed thanks to Conservation Lands Technician, Margaret Potter for her excellent work on the project.

The SPC met, one of the items discussed was in relation to the delegation made to the committee previously regarding private well contamination.

12. Chair's Report

Chair Robert Uhrig thanked the members for their and expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to serve as Chair.

Chair Uhrig added, "It has been a rewarding experience, made easy by the participation and professionalism of the Members, and the amazing work and support from all the GSCA Staff. As someone who grew up in the area, I have learned so much more about our region and have a greater appreciation for the challenges that this body faces. Thank you in particular to Vice Chair Dubyk for standing in for me on those occasions I was unable to attend, and to CAO Lanthier for his always calm, able and steady leadership. It has been my pleasure to sit in this seat with you all."

13. Other Business

Nothing at this time.

14. Resolution to Move into Closed Session

Motion No.:	Moved By:	Sue Carleton
FA-24-116	Seconded By:	Jon Farmer

THAT the GSCA Board of Directors now move into ‘Closed Session’ to consider:

- i. Minutes of the Closed Session of the Regular Board of Directors meeting held on September 25, 2024; and,**
- ii. CAO Performance Review – closed as it relates to personal matters about an identifiable individual including Authority directors or Authority employees (GSCA Administrative By-Law, Section 4 (xvii)(b)).**

AND FURTHER THAT CAO, Tim Lanthier, and Administrative Assistant, Valerie Coleman will be present,

Carried

15. Resolution Approving the Closed Session Minutes

Motion No.:	Moved By:	Jon Farmer
FA-24-117	Seconded By:	Tobin Day

THAT the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Board of Directors approve the September 25, 2024, Closed Session minutes as presented in the closed session agenda.

Carried

16. Next Full Authority Meeting


Wednesday January 22, 2025

17. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:36 p.m.



Robert Uhrig, Chair



Valerie Coleman
Administrative Assistant