

Full Authority
15 November 2018
Agenda Item: 11

General Manager's Report

The General Manager's report provides a brief update for the Board Members prior to the Board meeting bringing forward additional information and/or progress on initiatives or current issues for the Board members consideration.

1. Watershed Management

Current Watershed Conditions

- Water levels and flows have very slowly increased with the precipitation received in the fall since the last Board meeting in September.
- Flow at Marmora Dam is currently at 15 cms (cubic metres per second).
- Precipitation received at the Belmont rain gauge (southern end of the watershed) from the 21st Sept to 8th of Nov is 184.3
- Precipitation received at the Glen Alda rain gauge (mid to upper portion) for the same period is 210.8
- Although precipitation levels are higher than average for the approximately 2 month period, levels and flows are only recently reflecting the effects of the rainfall. This is due to the dry period in the first half of the summer which reduced surface water levels, dried ground conditions and would have likely impacted groundwater levels (reserves in aquifers). The lag time for both surface and ground recovery is to be expected.
- While CVCA staff have initiated the fall draw down as per normal, staff have cautiously proceeded in the early stages of the draw down in the event rainfall did not materialize to sufficiently replenish levels and flows.
- As the fall has progressed and precipitation amounts continue to add to the total received to date, levels have remained steady or increased slightly which translates into more stop log adjustments and higher flows.

Anticipated Conditions

- These recent adjustments will result in a return to normal fall flows and staff will reduce lake levels to winter norms as weather conditions permit. Currently, it has been a slightly slower draw down than normal.
- November monthly averages indicate additional precipitation will likely have some impact on the draw down process.
- CVCA staff will continue to monitor weather conditions, operate dams to mitigate effects of rainfall as per the flood forecasting and warning daily operations cycle

2. CVCA Conservation Areas

McGeachie Conservation Area

- Recently, the contractor who has conducted repairs at the CVCA office was asked to undertake a review of the cottage and provide a detailed quote for repairs and any renovation work. The quote is pending.
- Preliminary investigations identified dry rot in some of the main floor joists.
- Sufficient repairs have been completed to date to stabilize the floor, additional repairs will be required to permanently repair the floor for the long term.
- Repairs have been financed through the successful acquisition of a \$4,000 donation to the Crowe Valley Conservation Foundation.
- Further repairs, upgrades, etc. will require additional funding. Approximately \$1900 is still available from the original donation and the donor has stated he will contribute more in the spring after meeting with myself and possibly touring the MCA.
- In addition, two other possible donors have expressed interest in helping the CVCA with this project.
- As well, staff continue to send letters and make inquiries through the Grant Advance search software and database. As staff become more familiar with the process of securing donations and the intricacies of fundraising, there is a greater chance of success. Some of the keys to obtaining donations is to ensure a good relationship is developed with the donor, the donors are “comfortable” the project is worthy and ties with their goals and they are not the only partner in the project.
- Community support/participation in the project is also a major concern for donors, therefore our member municipalities and their residents may also be called upon from time to time to assist the CVCA’s endeavours and to aid in securing donations

3. CVCA – WECI Project Update

- Work is progressing on the installation of the safety booms at Belmont and Allan Mills dams.
- O.D.S. Marine has contracted the construction of the anchors which will be sunk in the river for anchor points for the booms. The installation of the anchors should be completed by the end of November.
- Project expenditures are in line with the budget and the interim report has been submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

4. 2019 Budget Item – Computer Replacement

The CVCA currently uses the Windows 7 Professional Operating System. Due to the recent announcement that this system will not be supported beyond 2019, the CVCA, like all businesses and organizations are in essence being forced to make a change to Windows 10.

There are savings in the CVCA's 2018 budget which could allow for the purchase of new computers, Windows 10 and associated software which will have the capacity to handle the latest operating system. This will ensure the CVCA will have the most current computer hardware network in place to perform the necessary functions of this organization for the next 5 year period. This will be especially important for the CVCA's regulation program as demands on computer capabilities such as hard disk drive space and RAM are continually pushed to or beyond limitations resulting in too much maintenance or costly upgrades.

This situation is somewhat similar to other assets such as older vehicles. There comes a point in the life of the asset where it becomes ineffective to make repairs and a new vehicle is essential.

If the decision is to go ahead and use the savings to purchase new computers this fiscal period, staff will also investigate the possibility of either replacing the towers for the regulation officers with laptops or add a laptop for the officers use in the field. This will increase efficiencies to allow for some of the work (adding field notes immediately, accessing site maps and property information) to be completed on site which will reduce duplication as much as possible. A separate laptop would also be effective (and convenient) for myself.

However much is expended in 2018, it could be removed from the 2019 Draft Budget and reduce the overall levy if the Board wishes to do so.

5. Miscellaneous

i) Funding Opportunity - Transient Tax

Recently, the Transient Accommodation Tax has come to my attention. As per section 400.1 (1) of the Municipal Act "A local municipality may, by by-law, impose a tax in respect of the purchase of transient accommodation in the municipality in accordance with this Part if the tax is a direct tax. 2017, c. 8, Sched. 19, s. 11.

O. Reg. 435/17 Transient Accommodation Tax, allows municipalities to charge a four percent tax to hotel stays under 30 days. I understand that revenue collected from the tax is to be directed toward tourism initiatives and programs within the jurisdiction.

Section 1 of the Regulation states:

1. (1) In this Regulation,

“destination marketing program” means a program under which one or more providers of transient accommodation in a municipality agree to pay a portion of their revenue to a non-profit entity (for which the providers of transient accommodation may or may not charge fees to purchasers of transient accommodation to recover that revenue) to be used by an eligible tourism entity in promoting tourism; (“programme de marketing de destinations”)

“eligible tourism entity” means a non-profit entity whose mandate includes the promotion of tourism in Ontario or in a municipality; (“entité touristique admissible”)

Section 6 states the following:

6. (1) The municipality and each eligible tourism entity that receives an amount under section 4 or 5 shall enter into an agreement respecting reasonable financial accountability matters in order to ensure that amounts paid to the entity are used for the exclusive purpose of promoting tourism, and the agreement may provide for other matters.

Therefore, this revenue from this tourism marketing tax could be used to offset conservation area recreation related expenses.

Recommendation:

That the CVCA Board authorize staff to initiate discussions with municipalities to bring to their attention the possibility of divesting this revenue to the CVCA and enter into an agreement with the participating municipalities in the CVCA watershed as per Regulation 435/17.

ii) CVCA Administration Building Improvements

Improvements and repairs to the CVCA Admin building have been completed. Included in the list of items are: 1) soffit repairs, 2) installation of an ice dam and eavestrough, 3) new door at the north end, 4) insulation redistribution in attic and roof repairs - vent replacement, valley repair to stop leakage.