

Full Authority
18 April 2024
Agenda Item: 15

General Manager's Report

Background

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.

Watershed Management

Current Watershed Conditions

- Staff have recently made numerous stop log adjustments due to low precipitation amounts in March combined with little snowmelt to replenish water levels to the summer recreational range. This has been experienced in the recent prior years, but not to this extent. With such a small initial spring freshet (rainfall + snowmelt), staff were concerned a lack of water inputs would seriously jeopardize lake levels for the remainder of the spring and then into the summer.
- Fortunately, water levels and flows did respond to dam adjustments and are currently at seasonal values. However, with recent rainfall, the overall trend has resulted in higher lake levels and adjustments have been as per the CVCA's normal water management practices.

Anticipated Conditions

- Precipitation amounts should return to normal or near normal for the remainder of April, which is typically the time when the risk of flooding in this watershed is the highest.
- While staff are not anticipating flooding from the forecasted rainfall during the next two weeks, there is the possibility a single rainfall event exceeding predicted amounts or successive days of rainfall could result in flooding in the CVCA watershed. As such, staff will continue to remain vigilant throughout the remainder of the spring when the likelihood of flooding is the statistically the highest.

Water Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECI) Status

- Three of the 2023/24 WECI projects are now complete, with the last project waiting on installation when access conditions improve.
- The steel walkway/stairs at the Belmont dam is significantly better than the 35+ year old wooden ramp, which is rotten and on the verge of collapse. It was also always incredibly slippery to cross in any kind of damp weather.
- The storage boxes for Belmont and Marmora dams are bigger and allows for the chain and hoist system to be easily accessed for all dam operators now. The old system was a very short box that was too high for all operators to use safely.
- The original Wollaston safety line was not high enough to function correctly in the event of a fall into the gain. As a result, the support for the safety line will be replaced with a system which will meet provincial standards and will have the flexibility to install an overhead gantry system for stop log removal. The safety line will be installed once the Wollaston access lane has dried out sufficiently for a truck larger than a ½ ton.

Dam Operations – General

- The Marmora Dam electric gate has undergone repairs, making it operational for the remainder of the spring freshet.

Conservation Areas Update

McGeachie Conservation Area

- The Hastings Destination Trails Committee has proposed a reopening of the McGeachie trails since the cleanup of the area has been completed late last fall. CVCA staff will consider the event provided most (if not all) of the work is completed by the committee or a combination of the committee and volunteers. CVCA does not have the staff complement to undertake this type of project as we begin to enter the building season.

Callaghan's Rapids Conservation Area

- Please see Agenda Item #10

Crowe Bridge Conservation Area

- No report at this time.

Regulations and Planning

- The CVCA Regulations staff successfully held our “lunch and learn” sessions for municipal staff again this year. It was well attended by 15 municipal staff from across the watershed.
- The CVCA Regulations and Planning Policy Manual update has not been completed. Staff have been working diligently on the task, however it appears the deeper the review, the more outstanding items need to be addressed. Even the formatting of all the changes for page numbering, new text boxes, checking and correcting grammar, spelling and punctuation for a 200+ document has become a larger project than originally anticipated. The permit, planning and property inquiry workload is beginning to
- Although the permit, planning and property inquiry workload is beginning to increase, staff are committed to have the document ready for the Board to begin their review and comments by mid-May.
- Staff are in the final stages of reviewing the Flood Hazard Identification Mapping Project (FHIMP) deliverables, which includes mapping and technical information.

Administration

General

- An information letter was circulated to the member municipalities regarding the new regulation and how it will impact the CVCA’s operations as the Authority transitions from the old to the new regulation. In addition, the municipalities were informed of key changes that will affect future applications.
- It was also noted the CVCA’s role in planning will not be altered and that municipalities must continue to circulate planning applications.
- The municipalities were advised mapping will be placed on the CVCA website as time and resources allow.
- Peterborough County staff have contacted the CVCA advising the Authority the County will (subject to County Council approval) be embarking on a Watershed Plan. This will require CVCA input and staff time, along with the other conservation authorities. If approved to move forward, the County is planning to start work in the fall of this year.

Staff Recommendation

That the CVCA Board receive the General Manager's report as presented.

Board Discussion

TP