

Full Authority
20 Feb 2020
Agenda Item: 12

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

- Temperature swings combined with precipitation received during late January and early February has resulted in above normal water flows for the majority of the winter. Only recently have flows shown any signs of abating.
- Currently, the seven day forecast includes precipitation in the form of snowfall to be received in the watershed next week with temperatures slightly above normal. Precipitation received during this period should not have a significant impact on water flows and levels.
- On average, water levels are near or at winter levels.
- The Water Safety Statement issued earlier in January has been removed. There are currently no statements in effect.

Anticipated Conditions

- The CVCA anticipates the cyclical nature of the winter patterns in the watershed to continue based on long range forecasts. From this point, this pattern should not have much effect on the watershed unless significant rainfall is received and the current snowpack is not able to absorb the precipitation.
- However, if temperatures either reach or exceed the normal range and the cyclical high temperatures of this winter is extended into late winter/early spring and coincides with extreme rainfall events, then the spring runoff *may* begin earlier than anticipated.
- These weather conditions coupled with conditions stated in the January report could easily contribute to higher than average spring flooding. This would once again be another year's worth of data suggesting we are in potentially in a pattern higher than normal spring freshets and flooding scenario.

Marmora Dam Repairs

- After receiving Board approval to proceed with the installation of the temporary fencing and warning signage (FA Motion G22/20), Mr. Greg Prichard of Watech Services was contacted. Approval to proceed was given to Watech and Mr. Prichard advised the Authority that fabrication of the fencing would commence immediately with the target of installing the fencing as soon as it was completed and there was a break in the weather.
- The other option would be to wait until after the spring freshet to install the fencing when the work could be safely finished. The downside of course would be any delay in the work would result an increase in safety to the public and the CVCA's exposure to liability.

Water and Erosion Control Infrastructure (WECI) Funding

- The CVCA has recently received notification that WECI funding will be available for 2020 from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRFF). Unfortunately, the total amount of funding available for WECI projects was not revealed to conservation authorities at this time. Therefore, as a precautionary note, the CVCA projects once again may or may not rank high enough to qualify. However, there is no downside for applying for the funding other than not being successful. If there is no application, then there is absolutely no opportunity to obtain funding.
- Staff will only submit projects that have not been approved last year and that receive financial support of the CVCA Board. As well, staff will submit the current fencing project.
- Since this notification from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry was circulated to the CVCA after the circulation of the budget, a motion will be required to authorize funding for the projects.

Project	CVCA Contribution	MNRFF Contribution	Total Expenditure
Marmora Dam Safety Update	\$12,127.50	\$12,127.50	\$24,255
Crowe Bridge Weir Assessment	\$8,662.50	\$8,662.50	\$17,325
Marmora Dam Fencing/Signage	\$8,847.50	\$8847.50	\$17,695
Totals	\$29,637.50	\$29,637.50	\$59,275

- Staff have submitted the projects to meet the MNRF WECI application deadline prior to Board approval of allocating funding for the projects. Should Board approval not be forthcoming at the meeting on the 20th of February, staff will rescind any or all of the projects from the WECI list.
- ***Staff strongly recommend that the Board approve the CVCA's 50% funding for the projects indicated in the chart since this funding is a 50/50 partnership with the MNRF.***

2. Administration

Township/Municipal Council Meetings

- Since the last Board meeting, the General Manager has met with Stirling-Rawdon's Finance and Personnel Committee. The message was the same, the CVCA's 9.36% increase is due to the reduction in the Provincial grant for conservation authorities.
- Council was also informed that the CVCA has done everything possible to help keep the budget as low as possible. For example, if the CVCA did not have to request their member municipalities replace the Provincial shortfall, then the overall budget increase would be approximately 2/10ths of 1 percent.
- The CVCA has received correspondence from Stirling-Rawdon stating the budget would be discussed at their Council meeting.
- Cathy Redden and I also attended Faraday Council meeting to discuss their concerns regarding the budget. It was initially a discussion focused on reducing the CVCA's levy increase.
- However, Cathy suggested by working together to bring the CVCA's small rural CAs' financial disparities to the Province's attention, would provide a better platform to address financial pressures on townships/municipalities.
- Havelock-Belmont-Methuen has invited myself to attend their Council meeting on the 18th to discuss the CVCA budget.

Consultation Meeting – Colborne, 7th of February 2020

- Consultation meeting held in Colborne on the 7th of February 2020 was well attended by CVCA representatives including Cathy Redden, Jim Martin, Tim Conlin and Tim Pidduck. As well, Reeve Dennis Purcell (Faraday Township and former CVCA Board member)
- Over 200 people were in attendance.
- Minister Yurek, Deputy Minister, MPPs David West and David Pacini were present. Minister Yurek gave a brief speech reviewing the consultation process. He did not offer any Provincial perspective or solutions to the review of conservation authorities. Neither his letter of August or the funding cuts were discussed.
- David Pacini gave a similar speech as host of the event.
- Presentations were given by DUCs Unlimited, Federation of Cottage Association, Conservation Ontario, Ontario Homebuilders Association, EnPointe and the Ontario Landowners Association providing different perspectives and levels of support and criticisms of conservation authorities. It was virtually a 50/50 split between the two viewpoints
- Following the presenters, round table discussions were held with on average 7 participants representing a variety of stakeholders. Approximately 2 ½ hours were allocated to debating the four questions (with a subset of questions for each) asked by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks. An MECP staff member was present at each table to record the discussions.
- An opportunity was also given to submit written comments if a point was not addressed during the discussion. On behalf of the CVCA, I provided information about the financial disparity between large urban CAs and small rural CAs, the per capita levy gap and the reliance on water management for the local economy.
- No indications were given by the Minister what the next steps would be or any timelines for changes/implementation of CA programs and services.
- The third and final consultation meeting will be held in London on the 14th of February. Attendance is expected to equal or higher for the final session.

Eastern Ontario Managers' Meeting

- Eastern Ontario General Managers' are planning a follow up meeting to the consultation meeting to discuss issues, concerns and accusations from the non-supportive sectors in attendance last Friday, the 7th of February.
- It is the aim of the Eastern Ontario Managers to develop a strategy and/or response to offer assist Conservation Ontario in any rebuttals or conversations with Minister Yurek as this process continues to unfold.

3. Miscellaneous

- The CVCA website has had some updates/revisions. Moving forward, this will be an area of focus when time permits or should an opportunity be made available to the Authority. For example, the recent changes were a result of a contract staff having the expertise and time to devote to making improvements.