



Board of Directors Meeting

MINUTES

A meeting of the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority's Board of Directors was held in person and remotely via the LTVCA's Administration Office at 100 Thames Street in Chatham, ON at 2:00 P.M. on Thursday, November 20, 2025.

The following directors were in attendance: P. Tiessen, H. Aerts, K. Loveland, L. Vogler, R. Leatham, S. Emons, S. Hipple and J. Wright. M. Vink, A. Finn, P. Van Meerbergen and M. Bondy sent their regrets.

1. First Nations Acknowledgment

Mark Peacock read the First Nations acknowledgement.

2. Call to Order

3. Adoption of Agenda

BD-2025-77 R. Leatham – S. Emons

Moved that the agenda be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

4. Disclosures of Conflicts of Interest

None Declared.

5. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

BD-2025-78 K. Loveland – H. Aerts

Moved that the Board of Directors meeting minutes of October 16, 2025 be approved.

CARRIED

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

None declared.

7. Presentation

7.1) Bill 68: Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2025 (No.2) & Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities ERO posting #025-1257

Item 7.1 was undertaken as follows:

- 7.7.1) Review of MOECP Nov. 18, 2025 Presentation
- 7.1.2) Review of Take-aways from MOECP meeting
- 7.1.3) Review of Proposed Amalgamation
- 7.1.4) Review of Options to comment to province
- 7.1.5) Board Discussion
- 7.1.6) Review of Recommended LTVCA Resolution
- 7.1.7) Review of Comments to ERO
- 7.1.8) Review of Communications Plan
- 7.1.9) Review of Example Municipal Resolution

Mark Peacock provided the Board of Directors with information and presentations on Bill 68 and the ERO posting, and the implications for the LTVCA. Mark went through the presentation that was provided to CA General Managers / CAO's by the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, 'Improving Ontario's Conservation Authority System'. He then provided a further presentation on the LTVCA's response to the ERO posting, breaking down the information that was provided to explain how the new agency could potentially operate. Mark provided three options for the Board of Directors to consider for moving forward with submitting comments back to the ERO posting to the province.

Amanda Blain provided the Board of Directors with a presentation on a Communications Strategy for the public to use to respond to the ERO posting. The LTVCA will be providing a simple easy template for the public to utilize when commenting back on the ERO. Local accountability to municipalities that fund the CA, increases in costs to taxpayers, loss of local decision making for local communities and potential delays in planning and permitting processes were just a few items noted as concerns. A major concern was that the LTVCA owns and manage hundreds of acres of land, much of which was donated by local residents and entrusted to the LTVCA as a personal legacy for long-term protection, stewardship, and the public good, with the expectation that such lands would be cared for by a locally governed conservation authority. Amanda emphasized the need for a concise, consistent statement moving forward reaching out across all sectors, CA's, municipalities, builders associations, farm organizations, etc.

The LTVCA will provide a background report to member municipalities for information to provide details to councils around this issue. The LTVCA will also provide an example of a motion that councils can use and/or edit based on a motion generated from the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry.

BD-2025-79 K. Loveland – L. Vogler

Moved that the Board of Directors approve the following as a response to the ERO posting regarding Bill 68:

WHEREAS the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks has posted Environmental Registry Notice No. 025-1257 ("Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities"), proposing to reduce Ontario's 36 conservation authorities to 7 regional entities as part of a broader restructuring that would also create a new Ontario Provincial

Conservation Agency to provide centralized oversight and direction under the Conservation Authorities Act; and

WHEREAS under this proposal, the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA) would be merged into a new "Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority" together with the:

Essex Region CA
St. Clair Region CA
Upper Thames River CA
Kettle Creek CA
Catfish Creek CA
Long Point Region CA
Grand River CA

forming a single organization stretching from Windsor, London and Sarnia, through to Waterloo region; and

WHEREAS the Board acknowledges and supports the Province's goals of improved efficiency, consistency and fiscal prudence in conservation delivery, but finds that the proposed "Lake Erie Region" configuration would:

- Create a geographically vast and administratively complex entity, joining southwestern rural and urban municipalities throughout the province with little shared watershed connection or economic alignment;
- Dilute local accountability and municipal partnership, contrary to the principle that decisions are best made closest to the communities they affect;
- Generate substantial transition costs — including human-resources integration, governance restructuring, IT migration and policy harmonization — that would divert resources from front-line service delivery and delay measurable outcomes, contrary to the Province's own business-planning principles of value for money, cost containment and service continuity; and,
- Risk greater uncertainty and delay for builders, developers and farmers, as local permitting offices and staff familiar with site conditions are replaced by distant regional structures, making it harder for applicants to obtain timely on the ground local advice, resolve issues or expedite housing and infrastructure approvals that support the Province's "Get It Done" agenda; and

WHEREAS the LTVCA has already undertaken significant modernization work aligned with provincial objectives, including:

- Implementation of a Customer Service Delivery Program;
- Continually improvement of delivery standard well above the standard required by the province – 2024 - 81.7% met standard, 2025 - 96.8% are meeting standard
- Continual improvements in transparency and client communication through a number of recent strategic planning initiatives;
- Improvement in data and network systems, including security and redundancy
- Maintenance of a very low administrative overhead cost (e.g.10.7% (2024) of total operating costs).

And has done this while retaining in person local support to developers and permit recipients and Maintained a very limited levy increase to municipalities over the last 8 years.

This demonstrates that cost effective and meaningful modernization can occur within the current watershed-based governance framework; and

WHEREAS the Board further recognizes that the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority serves Southwestern Ontario communities facing vastly different climatic, hydrological and infrastructure realities (e.g. large diking and pumped systems) based on the needs of vibrant rural and urban communities that are very different than the large urban communities found in the proposed regional conservation authority,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Board of Directors does not support the proposed “Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority” boundary configuration outlined in Environmental Registry Notice 025-1257; and

The Board instead endorses further provincial evaluation of a more focused specific model as a geographically coherent, cost-effective and locally accountable alternative that advances the government’s priorities of efficiency, red-tape reduction and timely housing delivery; and

The Board requests that the Ministry engage directly with affected municipalities and conservation authorities across Southwestern Ontario most specifically, the Lower Thames Valley municipalities before finalizing any consolidation boundaries or legislative amendments; and

That this resolution, with a letter from the Chair, be forwarded to the Environmental Registry of Ontario consultations and to:

the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and his Opposition critics;

local Members of Provincial Parliament;

the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and Conservation Ontario; and

the Boards of the Essex Region, St. Clair Region, Upper Thames River, Kettle Creek, Catfish Creek, Long Point Region, and Grand River Conservation Authorities.

CARRIED

BD-2025-80 S. Emons – K. Loveland

Moved that presentation 7.1) be received for information.

CARRIED

8. Business for Approval

9. Correspondence

10. Other Business

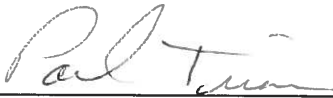
None noted.

11. Adjournment

BD-2025-80 H. Aerts – K. Loveland

Moved that the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED



P. Tiessen
Chair



Mark Peacock, P. Eng.
CAO/Secretary-Treasurer

