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Town of Aurora
Memorandum
Councillor Thompson

Re: **Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority Board Meeting Highlights of December 19, 2025**

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Councillor Michael Thompson

Date: January 27, 2026

Recommendation

- 1. That the memorandum regarding Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority Board Meeting Highlights of December 19, 2025, be received for information.**

Attachments

1. Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority Board Meeting Highlights of December 19, 2025

Board Meeting Highlights

December 19, 2025

Presentations:

a) 2026 Draft Capital and Operating Budget

General Manager, Corporate and Financial Services/CFO, Mark Critch, provided an overview of the Conservation Authority's 2026 Draft Capital and Operating Budget, first outlining what's new for the 2026 Budget, including a reduction in Development Services fees of \$860K or 22% and matching adjustments in staffing and program costs. He advised the new education Facility at Scanlon Creek Conservation Area is expected to open in September, and the 2026 budget will begin phasing in facility and Education and Engagement programming costs. He also advised that Investment yields are expected to be well above the variable market returns for 2026.

GM Critch noted that staff have worked within the Board approved 2026 budget assumptions in developing the budget, and municipal funding partners have been supportive of the 2026 Budget. The total amount of expenditures for the 2026 Draft Capital and Operating Budget is \$30.0M, down \$1.3M from 2025. An operating decrease of \$0.4M is mainly being driven by a reduction in consulting expenses and a reduction in anticipated legal expenses in the Development Services program, offset with the overall 2% increase in cost-of-living allowance for staff.

Next steps, upon approval of the draft 2026 Budget, include making the draft budget available on the Conservation Authority's Governance webpage for the general public and participating municipalities to view in advance of the 2026 Budget being brought forward for approval by weighted vote at the January 23, 2026 Board of Directors' meeting.

To view this presentation, please click this link: [2026 Draft Capital and Operating Budget Presentation](#)

Correspondence and Staff Reports:

2026 Draft Capital and Operating Budget

The Board received Staff Report No. 39-25-BOD regarding the 2026 Draft Capital and Operating Budget. The Board endorsed the 2026 Draft Capital and Operating Budget for use in consultation with participating and specified municipalities, as well as for circulation on the Conservation Authority's Governance webpage for the general public and participating and specified municipalities to view in advance of the 2026 Budget weighted vote, planned for January 23, 2026.

Comments on ERO No. 025-1257 – Proposed Consolidation of Ontario’s Conservation Authorities

The Board received Staff Report No. 40-25-BOD regarding a resolution and letter for submission to ERO No. 025-1257 regarding the proposed consolidation of Ontario’s conservation authorities. The Board approved the attached amended resolution, which was submitted, along with their comments letter, to the Environmental Registry of Ontario posting No. 025-1257.

Regulation Mapping Update

The Board received Staff Report No. 41-25-BOD outlining the changes to Regulation Mapping (Ontario Regulation 41/24) and endorsed the use of the updates for screening purposes, both internal and external, including public viewing on the Conservation Authority’s website.

Purchasing Policy Updates

The Board received Staff Report No. 42-25-BOD regarding updates to the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority’s Purchasing Policy and approved the updates for implementation effective January 1, 2026.

Standing Timber Sales – Durham Regional Forest

The Board received Staff Report No. 43-25-BOD regarding the record of tenders for the Durham Regional Forest Tender No. DRF-2025-001 and approved staff’s recommendation to award Tender No. DRF-2025-001 to Gee’s Lumber and Logging/ Penguin Poles.

For more information or to see the full agenda package, visit [LSRCA’s Board of Directors’ webpage](#).

LSRCA Board of Directors' Resolution No. BOD-119-25 – December 19, 2025

Moved by: I. Lovatt

Seconded by: T. Roy-DiClemente

BOD-119-25 Whereas the Provincial Government has amended the *Conservation Authorities Act* through Bill 68 "Plan to Protect Ontario (Budget Measures)" that allows for establishing the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency to oversee the transition to Regional Conservation Authorities, and direct the strategic direction, finances, and operational activities of the new Regional Conservation Authorities; and

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 consolidate Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into 7 regional entities as part of a broader consolidation; and

Whereas under this proposal, the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority would be consolidated into a new "Huron-Superior Regional Conservation Authority", together with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, Grey Sauble Conservation Authority, Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority, Maitland Valley Conservation Authority, Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority, and Lakehead Region Conservation Authority, forming a single organization of Lake Huron watershed conservation authorities.

Therefore, be it Resolved That Staff Report No. 40-25-BOD regarding Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority's Environmental Registry of Ontario response to proposed consolidation of Conservation Authorities be received; and

Further that the Attachment A, the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority's comments letter, be approved as amended for submission by the December 22, 2025 deadline for submissions; and

Further That the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority recognizes and supports the Province's desired outcome of improved consistency and modernized digital permitting processes, aligned with its goals and objectives for cutting red tape and getting more homes built faster, and safely; and

Further That the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority recommends that the Province engages in detailed consultation with all conservation authorities, municipalities, and watershed stakeholders in a meaningful manner and provide the detailed information required to implement such a significant undertaking; and

Further That should the proposed regional consolidation of conservation authorities be implemented, the current implementation of the *Lake Simcoe Protection Act* and Plan by the

Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority be transferred to the proposed Huron-Superior Region Conservation Authority; and

Further That should the proposed consolidation proceed, the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority requests the Province establish consistency between the *Lake Simcoe Protection Act* jurisdiction and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority jurisdiction through the inclusion of Upper Talbot River Arm and the portion of the City of Orillia that is within the Lake Simcoe watershed; and

Further That in order to achieve the stated goals of consistency through consolidation and elimination of duplication of efforts, consideration be given to requests from municipalities regarding municipal boundaries when determining membership in individual conservation authorities; and

Further That should the proposed consolidation proceed, consideration be given to the consolidation of Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, and Grey Sauble Conservation Authority to be called the Lake Simcoe Georgian Bay Regional Conservation Authority; and

Further That the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority recommends the removal of the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority from the proposed Huron-Superior Regional Conservation Authority. **Carried**