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Town of Aurora

Memorandum

Councillor's Office

Re: Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority
Board Meeting Highlights of July 24, 2020

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Councillor Wendy Gaertner

Date: October 27, 2020

Recommendation

1. That Council receive the correspondence for information.



Board Meeting Highlights

July 24, 2020

DEPUTATIONS

Pefferlaw Dam

The Board received a deputation by Ms. Karen Wolfe, a resident of Pefferlaw, who shared concerns regarding Staff Report No. 36-20-BOD regarding the Pefferlaw Dam, along with the associated engineer's report. The Board approved an amended resolution in Staff Report No. 36-20-BOD, whereby recommendations 1 through 6 were approved, and recommendation 7 was deferred until after public consultation has occurred and all options have been considered.

PRESENTATIONS:

a) LSRCA Education Program 2020 Accomplishments

Manager, Education, Nicole Hamley, provided an overview of LSRCA's Education Program 2020 accomplishments, noting that challenges began early in 2020 with the escalation of teacher job action, which saw the cancellation of nearly all Scanlon Creek field trips and planned teacher workshops. COVID-19 then resulted in the cancellation of all planned education programs and services, and within two weeks and tremendous support from Corporate Communications, programming was moved entirely online. Online learning webpages were launched that served three varied audiences, which brought over 3,300 external viewers in the second quarter. Resource packages were put together and a series of videos were created.

An LSRCA Facebook page dedicated to Outdoor Learning has allowed for two-way engagement and sharing of resources as members are able to ask questions. Some great feedback has been received and teachers have been pleased to be able to share our posts in their own online platforms. By the end of June, this Facebook group had 1,000 followers, with a total worldwide reach now at just under 18,000.

This online learning experience has served many purposes – it has assured our watershed residents and community partners that we are still here to support nature connection; it has broaden our reach to new audiences, strengthened our reputation as leaders in outdoor education, developed our skill sets and expertise as we adapt and innovate, provided opportunities for collaboration both internally and externally, and set us up for success for Q3/Q4 and beyond.

Next steps include Summer Programming, a new online course "Introduction to Outdoor Learning", and a new Do it Yourself Hike Series at Scanlon Creek. Plans for the 2020/21 school year include a one-year contract extension with Simcoe County District School Board, a new hybrid model of Grade 7 program delivery with York Region District School Board with a focus on climate change, and a modified Forest School.

To view this document, please click this link: [LSRCA Education Program 2020 Accomplishments](#)

b) LSRCA 2nd Quarter 2020 Financial Report and Forecast

General Manager, Corporate and Financial Services, Mark Critch, provided the Board with LSRCA's 2nd Quarter 2020 Financial Report and Forecast, noting that LSRCA business operations have been significantly impacted by COVID-19; however, management took immediate and measured action to address the changes and minimize the financial impact. While there is a projected deficit being forecast for 2020, additional municipal funding is not anticipated. Uncertainty, however, does remain for Q3 & Q4, but there are also funding opportunities. Overall, the financial condition of LSRCA remains strong, and staff continue to keep a close eye on reserves and deferred revenue.

GM Critch shared some highlights for Q2, including that 2020 revenue has been delayed, deferred or lost in various programs, due to COVID 19 restrictions, some project work has been deferred into Q3 and Q4. The Scanlon Operation Centre redevelopment is substantially complete, and some operational savings have been identified due to staff working from work. An operational deficit of \$50,00 is expected for the end of Q2.

Looking forward at opportunities and risks, GM Critch noted that details on the impacts of Bill 108 are not all available at this time, and some fine tuning will be done once this information is available. New opportunities are available through Federal and Provincial infrastructure and stimulus programs. There continues to be uncertainty of timing with regards to full return to the offices and the related building/supplies cost. In summary, GM Critch noted that operations have been significantly impacted by COVID-19, but we are still doing all the work, have minimized the financial impact and made significant changes to process. It is anticipated there will be a deficit at year-end, but we continue to seek ways to eliminate or minimize it. Our financial condition remains strong, and staff continue to look for ways to minimize expenditures.

To view this presentation, please click this link: [2nd Quarter 2020 Financial Report and Forecast](#)

c) Climate Change Mitigation Strategy for the Lake Simcoe Watershed

General Manager, Integrated Watershed Management, Ben Longstaff, provided the Board with a presentation on the Climate Change Mitigation Strategy for the Lake Simcoe Watershed, which is ready to be released. He provided a brief overview of the strategies and most importantly some of the goals and recommendations that provide direction to LSRCA to help mitigate the effects of climate change at a local level. This strategy is the third in a series to be completed, the first being the carbon reduction strategy that completed in 2019, followed by the adaptation strategy earlier in 2020, with the aim of this last strategic document to identify what role LSRCA can play at a watershed level to reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions, while also respecting our mandate.

GM Longstaff explained how staff first quantified the situation by estimating emissions and carbon sequestration to develop an overall carbon budget that brings both the emissions and sequestration estimates together for the baseline year. He reviewed the five goals: i) to provide leadership in the field of climate change and carbon sequestration by continuing to support our municipal partners; ii) to effectively communicate the necessary information in order to educate and empower people within the Lake Simcoe watershed to take action to combat climate change within their communities; iii) to provide the tools and resources that will allow our LSRCA and our municipal partners to apply best practices to carbon reduction or sequestration efforts; iv) to use the tools and resources to expand and build upon our collective knowledge and understanding of climate change mitigation and carbon sequestration; and v) to support municipalities in incorporating carbon sequestration into community design and energy plans.

GM Longstaff reviewed the next steps, including releasing and promoting the strategy, preparing and an implementation plan, implementing the recommendations (which is underway), and tracking and reporting progress.

To view this presentation, please click this link: [Climate Change Mitigation Strategy for the Lake Simcoe Watershed](#)

d) LSRCA 2021 Budget Assumptions

General Manager, Corporate and Financial Services, Mark Critch, provided the Board with a presentation regarding LSRCA's 2021 Budget Assumptions, noting the purpose of the Budget Assumptions is to set clear organizational direction for budget targets, to enable staff to work with municipal funding partners to secure preliminary budget approval, to allow staff to build the 2021 budget, to provide the Board of Directors the opportunity to influence the general direction of the budget, and to strengthen the advocacy role of LSRCA Board members at municipal budget presentations.

GM Critch reviewed the standard budget assumptions and governing principles a provided the following summary of budget recommendations:

Inflation - Up to 2.00% (2020 Budget: 2.00%)

COLA for staff - Up to 1.00% (2020 Budget: 1.75%)

Infrastructure levy for Asset Management - 0.00% increase

No additional FTE's in 2021, unless they are fully funded from grants and/or fees

General and Special Operating Levy - Up to 1.00% (2020: 2.83%)

Special Capital Levy - Up to 1.00% (2020 Budget: 2.34%)

Investment in Strategic Priorities - 0.00% (2020: 0.00%)

He then reviewed the next steps for the 2021 Budget, which included using Board approved budget assumptions to develop 2021 Budget; sharing preliminary budgets with municipalities, ensuring coordination with municipal budget cycles; hosting on-line financial update for municipal funding partners in September; continuing to look for efficiencies and cost savings to support the 2021 Budget; using predictive information from 2020 Forecast to develop 2021 Budget; and presenting the 2021 Budget to funding partners in the fall and winter.

To view this presentation, please click this link: [2021 Budget Assumptions](#)

CORRESPONDENCE AND STAFF REPORTS:

Correspondence

The Board received the following pieces of Correspondence:

- a) October 30, 2019 letter from John Brassard, MP Barrie-Innisfil to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau requesting the re-establishment of the Lake Simcoe Clean-up Fund.
- b) November 21, 2019 letter from Scott Davidson, MP York-Simcoe to Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada Johnathan Wilkinson requesting the re-establishment of the Lake Simcoe Clean-up Fund.
- c) April 27, 2020 letter from Scot Davidson, MP York-Simcoe to Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada Johnathan Wilkinson regarding the Pepperlaw Dam.

- d) Conservation Ontario letters (2) to the Honourable Doug Ford and the Honourable John Yakabuski, both dated June 26, 2020, regarding Conservation Ontario's Client Service Streamlining Initiative, along with the referenced attachment - Conservation Ontario's bulletin regarding conservation authorities setting challenging targets and streamlining processes to improve client service and increase the speed of approvals.

LSRCA 2nd Quarter 2020 Financial Report and Forecast

The Board received Staff Report No. 33-20-BOD, prepared by Manager, Finance, Katherine Toffan, regarding LSRCA's Second Quarter Financial Report and Year-End Forecast for the period ending June 30, 2020. The Board approved the recommendations for staff to use deferred revenues from prior years to fund 2020 AOP items where needed and to use the Rate Stabilization reserve to fund COVID-19 related expenditures from March through December 31, 2020.

Climate Change Mitigation Strategy for the Lake Simcoe Watershed

The Board received Staff Report No. 34-20-BOD, prepared by Manager, Integrated Watershed Management, Bill Thompson, regarding the Climate Change Mitigation Strategy for the Lake Simcoe Watershed, and the Board approved the Climate Change Mitigation Strategy.

LSRCA 2021 Budget Assumptions

The Board received Staff Report No. 35-20-BOD, prepared by Manager, Budget and Business Analysis, regarding the Budget Assumptions for the 2021 fiscal year.

LSRCA's Monitoring Report – Planning and Development Applications for the Period January 1 through June 30, 2020

The Board received Staff Report No. 37-20-BOD, prepared by Director, Planning, Melinda Bessey and Director, Regulations, Ashlea Brown, regarding monitoring of planning and development applications for the period January 1 through June 30, 2020.

For more information or to see the full agenda package, please click the link below for LSRCA's Board of Directors' webpage: <https://www.lsrca.on.ca/Pages/Board-Meetings.aspx>