

GRCA General Membership

Chair Helen Jowett

Vice-Chair Chris White

Townships of Amaranth, East Garafraxa, Melancthon and Southgate and Town of Grand Valley

Guy Gardhouse

Townships of Mapleton and Wellington North

Pat Salter

Township of Centre Wellington

Kelly Linton

Town of Erin, Townships of Guelph/Eramosa and Puslinch

Chris White

City of Guelph

Bob Bell, Mike Salisbury

Region of Waterloo

Les Armstrong, Elizabeth Clarke, Sue Foxton, Helen Jowett, Geoff Lorentz, Jane Mitchell, Joe Nowak, Wayne Roth, Sandy Shantz, Warren Stauch

Municipality of North Perth and Township of Perth East

George Wicke

Halton Region

Cindy Lunau

City of Hamilton

George Stojanovic

Oxford County

Bruce Banbury

County of Brant

Brian Coleman, Shirley Simons

City of Brantford

Dave Neumann, Vic Prendergast

Haldimand and Norfolk Counties

Bernie Corbett, Fred Morison

Major flooding in February

Three politicians attended the Annual General Meeting in February to thank the GRCA for its response to the mid-winter flood earlier that week.

Appreciation came from Cambridge MPP Kathryn McGarry, Cambridge MP Bryan May and Brant County Mayor Ron Eddy.

The winter of 2018 left snow accumulation and thick ice on local rivers. When a warm front arrived February 19 to 21, significant rainfall and snow melt resulted in heavy runoff, causing high river flows, ice jams and flooding.

GRCA staff worked to monitor watershed and weather conditions and predict flooding. They also operated dams and reservoirs to reduce flooding and issued nine flood messages related to this event. The GRCA worked with staff in the municipalities that were impacted during this event.

A report about this event will go to the GRCA board March 23, 2018.

\$34 million GRCA budget approved by board

The GRCA will spend more than \$34 million this year on programs that protect water quality, reduce flood damages, protect natural areas, support responsible development and provide outdoor recreation and environmental education.

The budget was approved by the GRCA board at the February AGM.

Municipalities will contribute about \$11.3 million in general municipal levy to the GRCA this year, about 33 per cent of the total budget. The municipal levy portion is up 2.5 per cent this year, which works out to approximately \$10.72 per watershed resident.

Government grants totalling just over \$4.9 million represent about 15 per cent of the budget. This includes \$800,000 from municipalities towards the Rural Water Quality program. The remainder is primarily provincial grants, which include funding of over \$1.5 million for the Source

Protection Program.

Finally, the GRCA generates more than \$15.3 million or 44 per cent of its own revenue through camping fees, park admissions, nature centre programs, hydro sales, property rentals, tree sales, planning permits, and donations raised by the Grand River Conservation Foundation (GRCF).

Renewal of Grand River Notification Agreement

In February, the Chair of the GRCA signed the Grand River Notification Agreement (GRNA) for a five-year term.

The agreement first came into effect in 1996 and was renewed in 1998, 2003 and 2013. It sets out a protocol for the GRCA and other parties to share information about projects in the southern part of the Grand River watershed with the Six Nations of the Grand River and the Mississaugas of the New Credit. The First Nations also share information with the GRCA and other parties to the agreement, including the province, County of Brant, City of Brantford and County of Haldimand.

The agreement sets out the circumstances under which notification is given. For example, the GRCA shares decisions that are being considered in areas regulated by the GRCA.

The GRNA is not legally binding and doesn't impact the legal rights or responsibilities of any party, nor is it a substitute for direct consultation.

Contractors to plant 127,000 trees this spring

The GRCA is hiring three contractors to plant nearly 127,000 trees across the watershed this spring on both private property and GRCA land.

The three tree planting contracts will cost \$121,000 plus HST. The contractors are Bartram Woodlands Ltd., Black River Tree Planting and Quiet Nature Ltd.

Tree planting is contracted out by the GRCA in blocks, based on the planting method and tree



Canadian Heritage Rivers System



size. This allows many people to work at the same time to plant trees quickly.

Plantings on private land are paid for by the individual property owners, but their costs are often offset by funding that comes from a variety of programs, including the Rural Water Quality Program, Forests Ontario and the Habitat Stewardship Program.

Plantings on GRCA land are funded through agencies such as Forests Ontario and donations made to the Grand River Conservation Foundation.

Chair and Vice-chair return for third year

Helen Jowett was acclaimed to a third one-year term as chair of the GRCA. Chris White was also acclaimed to a third one-year term as vice-chair.

Both Jowett and White were acclaimed by the GRCA board of directors at the general membership meeting in January. As per the GRCA by-laws, a member is eligible to be re-elected to the role of chair or vice-chair for up to a maximum of five one-year terms. The 26-member GRCA board is composed of representatives appointed by the municipalities within the Grand River watershed.

Both Jowett and White expressed their gratitude to their fellow board members and GRCA staff for their dedication and contributions in the stewardship of the natural resources within the Grand River watershed.

Jowett was elected as a Region of Waterloo councillor for Cambridge in 2014, and was subsequently appointed as a member of the GRCA board. Jowett holds an MBA and is a Certified Human Resources Professional and Mediator.

White has been a member of the GRCA board since 2014. He holds a BA in History and Economics, and is a certified ISO 9000 Lead Auditor. He was elected to the Guelph/Eramosa Township council in 2003, became mayor in 2006 and served as Wellington County warden from 2011-2014.

New playground equipment

Three new playground installations are planned this spring — one at Byng Island



View of the February ice jam in Brantford. GRCA staff worked to monitor watershed and weather conditions and predict flooding. They also operated dams and reservoirs to reduce flooding and issued nine flood messages.

Park and two at Guelph Lake Park.

New playground equipment will be installed in the seasonal camping area at Guelph Lake Park. Until now, this has been the only playground at Guelph Lake. A new play area will also be added at Sandy Bay for day use visitors and nightly campers. In addition, equipment in the large playground near the pool of Byng Island Park will be replaced.

Henderson Recreation Equipment Limited of Simcoe will carry out the installations for \$120,000 plus HST. The designs have been reviewed by local municipal accessibility advisory committees for compliance with provincial legislation.

In 2015, the GRCA audited all playground structures at Grand River Parks. An equipment replacement schedule was developed, based on the condition and life expectancy of equipment. These replacements are in the five-year capital forecast for Grand River Parks.

Reservation system opened March 1

The Grand River Parks camping reservation system opened March 1.

The reservation system at www.grcacamping.ca provides 24-hour online reservation service until mid-October,

when the camping season closes.

As well, a call centre is available for those who want to reserve a campsite by phone. The call centre, which can be reached toll-free at 1-877-558-GRCA (4722), is open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

This issue of *GRCA Current* was published in March, 2018.

It is a summary of the February, 2018 business conducted by the Grand River Conservation Authority board and committees, as well as other noteworthy happenings and topics of interest.

The Grand River Conservation Authority welcomes distribution, photocopying and forwarding of *GRCA Current*.

Next board meeting:

March 23 at 9:30 a.m.,
GRCA Administration Centre

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