The LPRCA Chair called the meeting to order at 9:05 am Friday, November 13, 2019 in the LPRCA Administration office Boardroom.

A-151/19 moved: J. Scholten seconded: R. Geysens

THAT the LPRCA Board of Directors approves the agenda for the Budget Meeting held November 13, 2019.

CARRIED

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None

BUDGET

GENERAL MANAGER’S REPORT

The GM summarized some of the projects and activities completed this past year including the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan, the Port Burwell property lease agreement, the Flood Forecasting and Warning project, and Phase 1 of the Waterford North Conservation Area hydro and water upgrades. Projects started in 2019 include the Riverine Floodplain Mapping project, the Norfolk County Lake Erie Hazard Mapping project, the Backus Education Centre Displays Revitalization project, and Phase 2 of the Waterford North Conservation Area hydro and water upgrades. A large funding application was submitted yesterday to upgrade and refurbish some of the buildings at Backus Heritage Conservation Area.

The Manager of Corporate services provided a general overview noting that the proposed 2020 budget shows an overall municipal levy increase of 1.8% or $36,208. The operating levy increased by 2.33% or $37,508 and the capital levy decreased by -0.34% or $1,300. The budget includes a cost of living increase of 1.75% to the pay grid, increases to the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and employee benefits, and decreases to Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) and Employment Insurance (EI). Non-levy revenue was increased to $2,796,380 or 63% of total
The Department Summary pages were modified to display the strategic directions and action plans outlined in the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan.

WATERSHED PLANNING AND TECHNICAL SERVICES BUDGET

Staff time has been reallocated throughout the Watershed Services Department but remains consistent.

The Watershed Planning and Technical Services Department provides municipal plan input review, permits, and flood and erosion hazard mapping as support documents.

Fees revenue has been increased by 20% to account for an anticipated increased number of applications. The Planning and Technical fees have been increased by approximately 2% and a new fee has been added for Wetland Boundary Delineation to be completed by the LPRCA Ecologist. Surveys were completed and fees are comparable with neighbouring conservation authorities.

The 2020 budget reflects the decrease in provincial funding that occurred in 2019 after the 2019 budget had been approved. The funding is allocated to both the Watershed Flood Control Services Department, and the Watershed Planning and Technical Department. The provincial funding for Section 39 is assumed to be $8,807 which reflects the same 48% reduction as in 2019.

WATERSHED FLOOD CONTROL SERVICES BUDGET

The Flood Control Services department includes the Flood Forecasting and Warning System, and the maintenance and operation of dams and weirs. The increase to Materials and Supplies is due to the licensing and hub services for the data collection system for rain and stream flow. The services were covered under the NDMP capital funded project for the past two years.

This department had the provincial funding cut by $24,759 from $51,180 to $26,421 in 2019 and the assumption is the funding remains at the same level for 2020.

HEALTHY WATERSHED SERVICES BUDGET

The Healthy Watershed Services Department includes stewardship and restoration programs, surface water and ground water quality monitoring, low water response programs, and source water protection programs. The majority of the activities/projects in this department are funded through various government programs and private landowners/organizations while three programs are funded through levy.

New restoration design fees have been introduced to the schedule for Wetland Restoration Projects and Soil Erosion Control Projects to help offset staff time costs in design and plan preparation.
COMMUNICATION AND MARKETING SERVICES BUDGET

Two major priorities for the Communications and Marketing Department in 2020 are a new LPRCA website and increased effectiveness of social media tools. Purchased Services were increased to complete the website design and the associated maintenance costs. The Communications Coordinator has been tasked with increasing promotion of the parks through various means, and improving the effectiveness of the flood forecasting warnings. Staffing remains unchanged from the previous year.

BACKUS HERITAGE AND EDUCATION SERVICES BUDGET

The Backus budget requires funding through the municipal levy to operate and has been reduced by 12% for 2020. The current Backus Area Supervisor is also a Provincial Offences Officer; therefore, the staff time for that position has been reduced by 50% at Backus and reallocated to the Conservation Parks Management Department. The seasonal contract Park Assistant position was eliminated and replaced with a seasonal contract Park Supervisor for the summer season at Backus.

CONSERVATION PARKS MANAGEMENT SERVICES BUDGET

The Conservation Parks Management Services Department encompasses Deer Creek, Haldimand, Norfolk and Waterford North conservation areas and is not supported by municipal levy. The budget shows a staffing increase due to the reallocation of the Backus Area Supervisor’s time as mentioned above.

The park fees have been increased to reflect upgrades in the parks and the cost of services provided. The day-use entry fees have been increased as they have not been adjusted since 2015. Surveys were completed and LPRCA fees are mid-range compared with neighbouring campgrounds.

PUBLIC FOREST LAND MANAGEMENT SERVICES BUDGET

As part of the Eastern Ontario Model Forest (EOMF) group, LPRCA was able to achieve Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification in 2013. The EOMF is currently offering a carbon offset program to their members through their partnership with Blue Source Canada; staff is currently reviewing the program to possibly add another revenue stream. Forest revenue has become more challenging with invasive pests damaging forest product and increased species at risk; therefore, there is no increase to forest revenue in the 2020 budget.

PRIVATE FOREST LANDS MANAGEMENT SERVICES BUDGET

The Private Forest Lands Management Department assists private land owners to reforest marginal lands on their property. The goal is to plant 60,000 trees funded by private landowners and Forest Ontario, and a further 12,000 trees with Ontario Power Generation (OPG) funding. The fee per tree cost to the landowner will increase to 25
cents up from 19 cents in 2020 as the fee has remained unchanged for at least three years.

OTHER CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT SERVICES BUDGET

This department includes all of the LPRCA parkettes within the watershed, the Lee Brown Marsh facility, the Waterford Workshop, the motor pool, and the continuing hazard tree removal on LPRCA properties. A contract position has been added to the workshop to support the continuous repairs/upgrades required at the parks and facilities.

CORPORATE SERVICES BUDGET

The Corporate Services Department will continue to update policies and procedures; scheduled for review are the Health and Safety policy, Procurement Policy and the Record Retention Policy. Also in 2020, staff will be implementing an Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) module in the Accounts Payable System. The municipal levy has been decreased by 5% in this department.

CAPITAL PROJECTS SUMMARY

The 2020 total for capital spending is budgeted at $963,450 requiring $386,350 from the general levy and $223,100 special levy from Norfolk County.

WATERSHED SERVICES CAPITAL PROJECTS

Staff provided an updated detailed plan for the flood control structures to 2024. At the end of 2020, all Dam Safety Reviews will be completed with the exception of Lehman Dam. Repairs at Deer Creek are expected to be completed in 2020.

A Dam Status Report was submitted to the Norfolk County Public Works Department in August and the projected levy increase and special levy requirement was submitted to the Norfolk County Finance Department in advance of today’s meeting.

This is the second, and final year, of the planned National Disaster Mitigation Program (NDMP) projects - Riverine Floodplain Mapping Project and Norfolk County Shoreline Flood and Erosion Hazard Study. The Norfolk County Shoreline Flood and Erosion Hazard Study requires a special levy of $48,100. Norfolk County was made aware of this request in 2019.

BACKUS HERITAGE AND EDUCATION SERVICES CAPITAL PROJECTS

Hydro upgrades began at Backus in 2016. Further hydro upgrades are planned to improve the aging hydro infrastructure including electrical panels and wiring in 2020.

The last pool inspection at Backus by the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit noted heaving and unevenness of some areas of the pool deck and suggested replacement. The
deck surrounds the pool, which is 52’ by 27’, and continues to the washrooms and entranceway. The drain and pool pump were replaced recently and the pool is functioning well.

CONSERVATION PARKS MANAGEMENT SERVICES CAPITAL PROJECTS

Haldimand Conservation Area. A water system upgrade is required to resolve on-going issues with turbidity; therefore, a settling tank with an alum system is to be installed. Also, access to the beach and wellhead has incurred washouts on a regular basis and requires repairs.

Norfolk Conservation Area. Hydro upgrades will continue by replacing aging electrical panels and wiring to alleviate breakers tripping during peak usage. Also, the steel stairs leading to the beach and the water system pumphouse have deteriorated and require replacement. Any portion of the current stairs that can be salvaged will be reused.

Waterford North Conservation Area. 1) The office roof has been leaking and requires replacement. It is a fairly large building as the office is attached to the main washrooms and the pavilion. The new metal roof will be installed by staff. 2) Phase 2 of the Hydro and water upgrades and installation project are underway. Phase 3, the final phase, would add 52 serviced sites of which 27 would be premium sites will be started at seasons end 2020 and completed prior to opening day 2021. 3) A dock is to be built and installed at Bass Lake (the back pond) to provide easier access for equipment storage, and a longer trip with a small portage into Shadow Lake and downtown Waterford.

OTHER CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT CAPITAL PROJECTS

Staff requested funds to purchase two new ½ ton pickup trucks to replace two ten-year old trucks, two new utility task vehicles (UTV) to replace two trucks used at the parks, and one new diesel riding mower to replace a 2007 model.

A project to replace signage and missing corner posts at a number of LPRCA woodlots started last year and will continue over the next two years. Another project started last year requires gates to be added at woodlot entrances to discourage ATV trespass and garbage dumping. The gates are built and installed by the workshop staff and will continue at least until 2022.

For emergency purposes, staff will be working with the various municipalities to have 911 signs installed at all entrances of properties that have access points.

CORPORATE SERVICES CAPITAL PROJECTS

Computer hardware and accessories upgrades are required which will be deployed throughout the organization. Additionally, one backup server requires replacement.
S. Patterson left the meeting at 11:40am.

**A-152/19** moved: J. Scholten seconded: D. Beres

*That the LPRCA Board of Directors approves the following recommendations regarding LPRCA’s 2020 Draft Operating and Capital budgets;*

*That the 2020 proposed Ontario Regulation 178/06 Permit Fees and Planning Act Review Fees as set out in Tab 5 be approved;*

*That the 2020 proposed Conservation Area User Fees as set out in Tab 11 be approved;*

*That the 2020 proposed Healthy Watershed Services User Fees as set out in Tab 7 be approved:*

*That the draft 2020 budget of $5,404,790 with an operating budget of $4,441,340 and a capital budget of $963,450 which includes a special levy of $223,100 for Norfolk County;*

*AND requiring an increase in the general municipal levy (excluding the special levy) of 1.8% or $36,208 overall compared to 2019 be circulated to member municipalities for review and comment;*

*AND FURTHER that staff be directed to present the Draft 2020 Budget to member municipalities when requested.*

CARRIED

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:50am.

Michael Columbus
Chair

Dana McLachlan
Administrative Assistant