



# LOWER TRENT CONSERVATION

714 Murray Street, R.R. 1, Trenton, Ontario K8V 0N1

■ Tel: 613-394-4829 ■ Fax: 613-394-5226 ■ Website: [www.ltc.on.ca](http://www.ltc.on.ca) ■ Email: [information@ltc.on.ca](mailto:information@ltc.on.ca)

Registered Charitable Organization No. 107646598RR0001

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board of Directors refers to the General Membership as set out in the Lower Trent Conservation Administrative By-Law No. 2023-01

### REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

#### MEETING # 2025-09

**DATE:** November 13, 2025  
**TIME:** 1:08 PM  
**LOCATION:** Administration Office, 714 Murray Street, Trenton / Virtually

#### DIRECTORS PRESENT:

ON SITE		REMOTE SITE
Eugene (Gene) Brahaney (Chair)	Rick English	Lynda Reid
Sherry Hamilton (Vice-Chair)	Jeff Wheeldon	
Mike Ainsworth	Bobbi Wright	
Jim Alyea	Eric Sandford	
Bob Mullin		

**REGRETS:** None

**STAFF:** Rhonda Bateman, Chitra Gowda, Gage Comeau

**GUESTS:** None

#### 1. Meeting called to order by the Chair

The meeting was called to order by Chair Brahaney at 1:08 p.m.

#### 2. First Nations Acknowledgement

*"This land is located on the traditional territories of the Anishnabek, Huron-Wendat, and Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) peoples. We acknowledge our shared responsibilities and obligations to preserve and protect the land, air and water. We are grateful to have the privilege to meet, explore, and connect here on these shared lands. In the spirit of friendship, peace and respect, we extend our thanks to all the generations that came before us and cared for these lands - for time immemorial."*

#### 3. Disclosure of pecuniary interests

There were no pecuniary interests declared.

**4. Approval of the Agenda**

RES: G109/25

Moved by: Rick English

Seconded by: Jim Alyea

THAT the agenda be approved as presented.

Carried

**5. Delegations**

There were no delegations received for this meeting.

**6. Public Input (3 minutes per speaker)**

There was no public input at this meeting.

**7. Adoption of the Minutes**

RES: G110/25

Moved by: Eric Sandford

Seconded by: Jeff Wheeldon

THAT the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of October 9, 2025 be adopted.

Carried

**8. Business arising from these minutes**

None.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**9. Correspondence**

Rhonda Bateman, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), noted that an email was received from the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP), after the October 2025 agenda package was posted. This email was forwarded to the Board of Directors as an invitation to participate in an information session on the Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) posting about the proposed regional boundaries of conservation authorities.

**STAFF REPORTS**

**10. Monthly Payments Issued**

RES: G111/25

Moved by: Lynda Reid

Seconded by: Mike Ainsworth

THAT the list of payments issued in the total amount of \$287,492.82 for the month of October 2025 be received as information.

Carried

**11. Watershed Management, Planning and Regulations Reports**

Director Alyea asked about the status of a permit for a site where sand piles had been dumped. Gage Comeau, Manager, Watershed Management, Planning and Regulations, responded that LTC has issued a permit, and the application is now with the City of Quinte West.

- a. Summary of Permits for Period September 27 – October 30, 2025
- b. Planning and Regulations
- c. Flood Forecasting and Warning (FFW) and Ontario Low Water Response (OLWR)

RES: G112/25

Moved by: Bobbi Wright

Seconded by: Jeff Wheeldon

THAT the Watershed Management, Planning and Regulations Reports be received as information.

Carried

**12. Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan Program**

October 2025 Newsletter

RES: G113/25

Moved by: Jeff Wheeldon

Seconded by: Mike Ainsworth

THAT the Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan Newsletter for October 2025 be received as information.

Carried

**13. 2026 Fee Policy and Schedule**

Rhonda Bateman, CAO said that one comment was received from the Deputy Mayor of Trent Hills during a council meeting indicating that LTC is potentially breaking the rules set by MECP by proposing changes to one of the fees. In response, Rhonda Bateman sent a letter to the Board of Directors members from Trent Hills stating that the proposed changes to LTC fees would only be effective upon removal of the fee freeze in place by the province, as was stated in the LTC notice that was circulated with the proposed fee policy and schedule. No other comments were received. Director Sandford asked if the fee freeze would be lifted after the proposed amalgamation of conservation authorities. Rhonda Bateman responded that the fees would likely be revised and standardized after such an amalgamation.

RES: G114/25

Moved by: Bobbi Wright

Seconded by: Sherry Hamilton

THAT the 2026 Lower Trent Conservation Fee Policy and Schedules be adopted and effective January 1, 2026, except for Schedule 1 Planning and Regulation fees which will be effective on the date that the Minister rescinds the current freeze on fees.

Carried

**14. Proposed Update to O. Reg. 41/24 Policy Document**

Gage Comeau provided a summary of the proposed changes. Updates to the hearing protocol address the multiple ways that a proponent can make an appeal. The administrative review has resulted in more flexibility in the policy document, while adhering to the regulation. In a future update, spill flood hazards are to be addressed. Director Sandford asked if municipalities will be sent the document during public consultation. Gage Comeau responded that a first circulation was made to municipalities, local builders and consultants.

RES: G115/25

Moved by: Bob Mullin

Seconded by: Rick English

THAT the proposed revisions and updates to the LTC Ontario Regulation 41/24 Policy, and the new Hearing Guidelines - Appendix F and Administrative Review – Appendix M documents be approved and adopted pending a 30-day Public Consultation.

Carried

**15. CAO's Report**

Rhonda Bateman, CAO, described the ERO posting of the proposed consolidation of 36 conservation authorities into seven regions. The ERO posting runs from November 7 to December 22, 2025. She noted that the interactive mapping was incorrect in its depiction of

LTC with the northern boundary missing the 2018 expansion to the north in Trent Hills. This will be clarified through LTC's comments on the ERO posting.

She added that the province indicated that the new regional structure would have the regions act as independent organizations operating with municipal governance and oversight. It is not clearly demonstrated how this will be applied. Board member numbers and representation is important locally; but at a regional level, it has not been determined which of the 47 municipalities would have a seat in the proposed regional consolidation of 7 CAs including LTC. It is not clear if there will be representation from smaller municipalities on a regional board. The province has indicated that the funding model will not be changing.

Rhonda explained that Bill 68 included the creation of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency through changes to the Conservation Authorities Act. It is expected to pass through the house relatively quickly. On November 12, 2025, there was a Conservation Ontario Council meeting where the Agency was discussed. LTC Board vice-chair Sherry Hamilton attended. Rhonda presented the slide deck from that meeting. She said that it is important for board members to attend the November 18, 2025 information webinar as well; this would help prepare comments for the ERO submission. She added that she understands the MECP comments about efficiencies including administrative costs for municipalities sharing several CAs. There are many considerations that have not been addressed yet including existing assets, liabilities and agreements. When the MECP develops the plan for consolidation, there should be a consultation period to discuss these outstanding questions. Rhonda noted that LTC staff are worried about their jobs; the mention of 'redeployment' by MECP makes staff nervous about their roles or work location moving forward.

Director Mullin expressed concerns with the consolidation proposal. He asked if it would be extended to areas without a conservation authority. Rhonda Bateman replied that the proposal does not extend to these areas. Director Mullin asked if others' liabilities would extend to the current member municipalities of LTC. Rhonda responded that the new consolidated corporation would take over all assets and liabilities. She added that reserves are tied to current municipal members, not a regional (consolidated) conservation authority; and that it is unknown what would happen to reserves. She also said that LTC has agreements with municipalities and external agencies, and that renegotiations due to consolidations would need to happen.

Director Hamilton said that the Conservation Authorities Act would need to be changed in order to consolidate CAs and that it is not clear if negotiations were going to happen; at the end of the day municipalities would receive an invoice. She expressed concerns that the proposed consolidation is a consolidation of power and is an erosion of democracy. She wants to know what happens to assets and reserve funds and is concerned that people might not continue to donate funds if they don't know where the money will go, how it will be put to use. Director Hamilton noted that there are significant Minister's powers proposed to allow the Minister to change everything. She noted that the Conservation Ontario presentation included an example of delays caused by amalgamations: the MTO amalgamated into five regions and then delayed a development project. Director Hamilton encouraged board members to comment on the ERO

posting. She recommended to keep local relationships strong, for example with the Homebuilder's Association.

Director Wheeldon said that the proposal to share digital services such as online permitting is good, however a consolidation does not have to happen in order to have shared digital services. He reiterated the same observation about minister's powers attached to changes, and that it undermines municipalities. Director Wheeldon expressed empathy and care for LTC staff. He asked if there are any other avenues to express concerns with the proposal. Rhonda Bateman replied that board members can write to the Minister directly.

Director Wright asked if LTC is protecting its lands from development. Rhonda Bateman replied that in the lands and properties inventory work carried out recently, conservation authorities were required to identify developable lands. LTC's lands were identified as undevelopable.

Chair Brahaney said that the proposal appears to be a power struggle to diminish conservation authorities. He gave the example of regional governments that were set up for savings, but there have been no savings. The provincial government is taking over a few school boards. Chair Brahaney said that he has been a school board trustee for 23 years and has never seen a provincial government move so fast to take over.

Director Alyea remembered the large funding cuts made in the 1990s by the provincial government. He expressed concern with service levels decreasing after the proposed consolidation and said that there is no cost savings to be had with one regional consolidated conservation authority. He expressed concerns with the possibility of demotions for staff. He recalled that there were no significant savings from the 1990s fundings cuts.

Director Sandford asked if smaller municipalities would be represented in the proposed regional boards. Rhonda Bateman replied that it was not clear if this would be the case. Director Sandford noted that the County of Hastings provides a fair amount of funding to LTC and Quinte Conservation (QC). He indicated that having no representation on the conservation authority board is not right. Director Alyea added that Quinte West municipality does not sit on any county council. Director Mullin noted that the proposed consolidation of conservation authorities is on the upcoming County of Hastings planning board agenda.

Director English asked if the engineering position is replacing an existing position. Rhonda Bateman responded that it is not an extra position and that hiring is underway.

Rhonda Bateman reiterated that all board members are invited to the MECP information webinar being held on November 18, 2025 regarding the proposed consolidation; and to submit comments on the ERO posting. Rural conservation authorities would be impacted the most. It is business as usual for LTC until provincial direction changes. She noted that she would send the edited Conservation Ontario slide deck to board members for their information.

RES: G116/25 Moved by: Jim Alyea Seconded by: Sherry Hamilton  
THAT the CAO's Report be received as information.

Carried

**16. Members Inquiries/Other Business**

Director Alyea noted residents' concerns about the naturalization of plants at the Trenton Greenbelt Conservation Area, and that they noted the growth of weeds. Director Wheeldon noted similar concerns at Proctor Park in the tall grass areas. The difference between weed growth, untrimmed grass growth, and purposeful naturalization areas was acknowledged.

Director Alyea asked about the status of the indigenous study for Young's Cove area. Gage Comeau replied that LTC has worked with the developer for the past few years and issued a permit including wetland compensation. A compensation site was determined, and the developer is working with Ducks Unlimited now. The existing LTC permit is still valid. The developer made a secondary submission to address a few matters. The removal of the wetland being compensated for and the creation of the compensation wetland are anticipated to be completed by summer 2026.

Directors Alyea and Wheeldon noted comments from residents about protecting trees that have grown on farmlands that have not been farmed for decades. Director Alyea noted that aerial photography could help show that these lands were once farmed.

**17. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

RES: G117/25

Moved by: Rick English

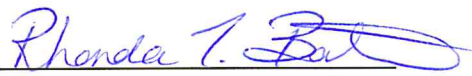
Seconded by: Bobbi Wright

THAT the meeting be adjourned.

Carried

Time: 2:29 p.m.

  
Gene Brahaney, Chair

  
Rhonda Bateman, CAO/ST