May LRCA Board Meeting
Lakehead Region Conservation Authority
May 27, 2026, at 4:30 PM
130 Conservation Road/Microsoft Teams

Members Present:
Grant Arnold, Robert Beatty, Donna Blunt, Rudy Buitenhuis, Dan Calvert, Sheelagh Hendrick

Members Present (Remote):
Jim Vezina, Trevor Giertuga, Greg Johnsen, Brian Kurikka

Members Not Present:
Albert Aiello

Also Present:
Tammy Cook, Chief Administrative Officer
Mark Ambrose, Finance Manager
Ryan Mackett, Communications Manager
Melanie O'Riley, Administrative Clerk/Receptionist, recorder of Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

THAT: *the Agenda be adopted as published.*

Motion: #67/26

Motion moved by Dan Calvert and motion seconded by Sheelagh Hendrick. ***CARRIED.***

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

None.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

THAT: *the Minutes of the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority 4th Regular Meeting held on Wednesday, April 29, 2026 be adopted as published.*

Motion: #68/26

Motion moved by Dan Calvert and motion seconded by Sheelagh Hendrick. ***CARRIED.***

5. IN-CAMERA AGENDA

No In-Camera meeting was held.

6. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

None.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

8. STAFF REPORTS

8.1. NWORCA Branding

Members reviewed and discussed Staff Report COMREL-02-2026 related to the rebranding of the LRCA to "Northwestern Ontario Regional Conservation Authority" effective February 1, 2027, and updated logos and domain names.

THAT*: Staff Report No. COMREL-02-2026 entitled NWORCA branding be received for information.*

Motion: #69/26

Motion moved by Sheelagh Hendrick and motion seconded by Dan Calvert. ***CARRIED.***

THAT: *the Northwestern Ontario Regional Conservation Authority logos be adopted as presented.*

Motion: #70/26

Motion moved by Sheelagh Hendrick and motion seconded by Dan Calvert. ***CARRIED.***

THAT: *the nworca.ca URL be adopted as the eventual new URL for the Authority website.*

Motion: #71/26

Motion moved by Sheelagh Hendrick and motion seconded by Dan Calvert. ***CARRIED.***

8.2. Current River Floodplain Mapping Update – Phase 1 Project Award Recommendation

Members reviewed and discussed the proposal submitted by KGS Group Consulting Engineers to complete Phase 1 of the update to the Current River Floodplain Mapping.

THAT: *the proposal submitted by KGS Group Consulting Engineers dated May 8, 2026 to complete Phase 1 of the Current River Floodplain Mapping update be accepted for a cost of $127,231.00, not including HST.*

Motion: #72/26

Motion moved by Rudy Buitenhuis and motion seconded by Robert Beatty. ***CARRIED.***

9. CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

9.1. Monthly Treasurer's Report

Members were provided with the Monthly Treasurer's Report for April's Administration and Capital.

9.2. 2026 Budget Amendment

Members reviewed and discussed the amendment to the 2026 Budget.

THAT: *the 2026 Budget be amended to add a sole-benefitting levy to the City of Thunder Bay in the amount of $780,000.00* ***AND FURTHER THAT*** *a copy of the budget amendment be provided to the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks and the City of Thunder Bay.*

Sole-Benefitting Levy Portion-Weighted Recorded Vote Results

Municipality	Member	Vote %	Vote
Conmee	Grant Arnold	1.54%	Yes
Dorion	Robert Beatty	1.03%	Yes
Gillies	Rudy Buitenhuis	0.88%	Yes
Neebing	Brian Kurikka	7.87%	Yes
O'Connor	Jim Vezina	1.65%	Yes
Oliver Paipoonge	Dan Calvert	19.30%	Yes
Shuniah	Donna Blunt	17.73%	Yes
Thunder Bay	Sheelagh Hendrick	12.50%	Yes
Thunder Bay	Trevor Giertuga	12.50%	Yes
Thunder Bay	Albert Aiello	12.50%	Absent
Thunder Bay	Greg Johnsen	12.50%	Yes

Motion: #73/26

Motion moved by Robert Beatty and motion seconded by Rudy Buitenhuis. ***CARRIED.***

9.3. Consolidation of Conservation Authorities May Update

Members reviewed and discussed Staff Report CORP-06-2026 related to the consolidation of Conservation Authorities May update. It was noted that all Conservation Authorities received a Minister's Direction effective May 1, 2026, to February 1, 2027, outlining temporary restrictions related to governance, organizational or staffing changes, acquisition and disposition of land, significant capital transactions and the acquisition of goods and services. It was also noted that the firm EY was retained by the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency as a third-party advisor to support the development of a "Playbook" to guide the transition to regional Conservation Authorities. All CAs are required to complete an information request prior to June 12, 2026, regarding CA operations.

THAT *Report CORP-06-2026 entitled Consolidation of Conservation Authorities May Update, be received for information.*

Motion: #74/26

Motion moved by Grant Arnold and motion seconded by Rudy Buitenhuis. ***CARRIED.***

10. PASSING OF ACCOUNTS

THAT: *having examined the accounts for the period April 1, 2026 to April 30, 2026 cheque #3843 to #3860 for $419,735.94 and preauthorized payments of $147,851.93 for a total of $567,587.87, we approve their payment.*

Motion: #75/26

Motion moved by Rudy Buitenhuis and motion seconded by Robert Beatty. ***CARRIED.***

11. REGULATORY ROLE

Members were provided with the Plan Input and Review program comments and Section 28 permits issued since last meeting.

12. PROJECTS UPDATE

12.1. Communications Manager Projects Update

It was noted that the Dorion Bird Festival was very well attended with 82 people on Saturday and 54 people on Sunday. 121 different species of birds were sighted with 1 new species, a Gadwall Duck, being observed.

It was noted that the 2026 Wine Tasting and Dinner event at Whitewater was very successful. The profit of $10,900 that was raised will go towards Environmental Education programming.

It was noted that a "grand re-opening of Mills Block Conservation Area" public event will occur on Thursday, July 9, 2026.

12.2. Lands Manager Projects Update

It was noted that a grass fire occurred near Mission Island Marsh Conservation Area on May 21, 2026. There was no damage to LRCA infrastructure; however, there were trees that were damaged that will require removal.

It was noted that the Norwest Community Health Centre has volunteered to clean along the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway behind the LCBO, led by Brian Hamilton.

It was noted that North Rock Engineering was hired to complete the 5 year update of the LRCA Asset Management Plan.

12.3. Watershed Manager Projects Update

it was noted that a virtual public open house for the Coastal Resilience Management Plan Project will take place on Wednesday, June 10, 2026, via Microsoft Teams.

It was noted that the GIS/IT Specialist and Environmental Planner attended the Conservation Authority Collaborative Information Session (CACIS) held in Barrie, Ontario on May 12-13, 2026.

It was noted that the LRCA hosted and participated in the Kaministiquia River Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting held on May 5, 2026.

It was noted that staff have completed their annual rain gauge inspection at the nine rain gauge stations maintained by the LRCA.

It was noted that the Provincial (Stream) Water Quality Monitoring Network (PWQMN) sampling program facilitated by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks has begun.

12.4. Stewardship Manager/Biologist Projects Update

It was noted that the Tree Seedling Program was a huge success with 11,920 tree seedlings sold and $9,048.00 raised for the Environmental Education Program. All trees were donated by Hill's Greenhouse.

It was noted that LRCA's 2026 Shoreline Protection Program received funding from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks. Twenty landowners experiencing cyanobacteria concerns or looking to restore degraded nearshore wildlife habit in the Thunder Bay Area of Concern will benefit from the program.

It was noted that volunteers have begun tending the Hope and Memory Garden along Balmoral Avenue and the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway with LRCA staff supporting garden operations. The Garden will be a stop on June 20th Motorcycle Ride for Dad event hosted by Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Foundation.

It was noted that on June 5, 2026, an Opening Ceremony for the Indigenous Community Medicine Garden that is located adjacent to the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway will take place.

It was noted that on April 22, 2026, the LRCA hosted a volunteer transplanting event with over 40 volunteers that transplanted native perennials into large plant pots.

It was noted that the Seeds for Conservation Program has raised $6,482.80 through seed and plant sales for the first quarter of the 2026 financial year.

13. NEW BUSINESS

None.

14. NEXT MEETING

Thursday, June 25, 2026 at 4:30 p.m.

15. ADJOURNMENT

THAT: *the time being 5:17 p.m.* ***AND FURTHER THAT*** *there being no further business we adjourn.*

Motion: #76/26

Motion moved by Robert Beatty and motion seconded by Grant Arnold. ***CARRIED.***

Donna Blunt
Chair

Tammy Cook
Chief Administrative Officer