MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
CATFISH CREEK CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Thursday, April 9, 2026 **Meeting #02/2026**

PRESENT:

Paul Buchner	Vice-Chairperson	Township of South West-Oxford
Gary Clarke	Member	City of St. Thomas (via phone)
Morgaine Griffin	Chairperson	Municipality of Central Elgin
Scott Lewis	Member	Township of Malahide
Arthur Oslach	Member	Town of Aylmer

STAFF:

Dusty Underhill	General Manager / Secretary-Treasurer
Peter Dragunas	Water Management Technician
Brittany Bell	Communications/Program Support Assistant
Gerrit Kremers	Resource Planning Coordinator
Al Bradford	Conservation Areas Supervisor

OTHERS PRESENT:

Rob Perry Aylmer Express

WELCOME / CALL TO ORDER:

Chairperson Griffin welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at (10:00 a.m.).

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

The CCCA recognized that the land on which we gather is in the traditional territory shared between the Haudenosaunee confederacy, the Anishinabe nations, and the Attiwonderonk Neutrals.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

Motion # 12/2026	P. Buchner	A. Oslach	CARRIED

THAT, the Agenda for the April 9, 2026, Full Authority meeting be adopted as circulated and amended.

DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF:

No one had a pecuniary interest to disclose at this time.

DISCLOSURE OF INTENTION TO AUDIO / VIDEO RECORD MEETING:

The Chairperson asked for disclosures of intentions to audio or video record the meeting. No one indicated any such intentions at this time.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

Motion #13/2026	G. Clarke	P. Buchner	CARRIED

THAT, the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting #01/2026 (February 19, 2026) be accepted as circulated.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES:

No one reported any outstanding business to discuss from the previous Minutes.

PUBLIC / SPECIAL DELEGATIONS:

None

REPORTS:

Reports FA 01 to FA 04/2026 – Monthly Staff Reports, were presented, discussed, and resolved.

Motion # 14/2026	S. Lewis	A. Oslach	CARRIED

THAT, Staff Reports FA 01 to FA 04/2026 for the months of January, February and March, 2026 be noted and filed.

Report FA 05/2026 – 2026-2027 General Insurance Program was presented, discussed, and resolved.

Motion # 15/2026	A. Oslach	G. Clarke	CARRIED

THAT, Report FA05/2026 be received as information at this time.

Report FA 06/2026 – 2026 Budget Levy, discussed, and resolved.

Motion # 16/2026 P. Buchner S. Lewis CARRIED

THAT, the 2026 Catfish Creek Conservation Authority Budget totalling $1,763,734.36 be adopted as presented;

AND THAT, the 2026 Municipal General Levy in the amount of $585,066.16 be approved as presented.

Member's Name	Municipality	CVA Apportionment %	Yes	No
Scott Lewis	Township of Malahide	36.2556%	X	
Morgaine Griffin	Municipality of Central Elgin	28.0888%	X	
Arthur Oslach	Town of Aylmer	26.0182%	X	
Gary Clarke	City of St. Thomas	6.2277%	X	
Paul Buchner	Township of South-West Oxford	3.4096%	X	

Report FA 07/2026 – Budget Measures Act was presented, discussed, and resolved.

Motion # 17/2026 A. Oslach P. Buchner CARRIED

THAT, the Board of Directors of the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority receive this report for information;

AND THAT, staff be directed to monitor the progression of Schedule 3 of the Plan to Protect Ontario Act (Budget Measures), 2026, and to participate in all required transition planning activities;

AND THAT, staff report back to the Board with updates, implications, and any required decisions as additional information and direction from the Province becomes available.

Reports FA 08/2026 – Conservation Ontario Overview Schedule 3, Bill 97 (Plan to Protect Ontario Act) (Budget Measures), 2026, was presented, discussed, and resolved.

Motion # 18/2026 S. Lewis A. Oslach CARRIED

THAT, Report FA 08/2026 be received as information at this time.

Report FA 09/2026 – Transition Plan and Committee for the Amalgamation of Eastern Lake Erie and Grand River Conservation Authorities, with Focus on Catfish Creek, was presented, discussed, and resolved.

<u>Motion # 19/2026</u>	A. Oslach	S. Lewis	CARRIED

THAT, Report FA 09/2026 be received as information at this time.

Report FA 10/2026 – 2027 Budget Timeline, was presented, discussed, and resolved.

<u>Motion # 20/2026</u>	P. Buchner	A. Oslach	CARRIED

THAT, the Board of the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority direct staff to proceed with the development and approval of the 2027 budget in advance of the 2026 municipal elections to provide financial stability, support continuity in staffing and program delivery, and ensure clarity for municipal partners during a period of uncertainty associated with Bill 97 (Plan to Protect Ontario Act, 2026).

Report FA 11/2026 – CCCA Committees, was presented, discussed, and resolved.

<u>Motion # 21/2026</u>	S. Lewis	P. Buchner	CARRIED

THAT, the Full Authority approve the Committee appointments for the year 2026 as amended and presented in Report FA 11/2026.

Report FA 12/2026 – Approval of Standard Data License Agreements, was presented, discussed, and resolved.

<u>Motion # 22/2026</u>	A. Oslach	S. Lewis	CARRIED

THAT, the Board of Directors of the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority approve the Standard Data License Agreement for use in the distribution of GIS data;

AND THAT, staff be authorized to implement and administer the agreement for all applicable data requests.

Report FA 13/2026 – Watershed Tour, was presented, discussed, and resolved.

<u>Motion # 23/2026</u>	S. Lewis	A. Oslach	CARRIED

THAT, the Board of Directors support a Watershed Tour immediately following the June 18, 2026 Full Authority meeting.

Report FA 14/2026 – Approved Section 28 Regulation Applications, was presented, discussed, and resolved.

Motion # 24/2026	P. Buchner	A. Oslach	CARRIED

THAT, the Full Authority receive the staff approved Section 28 Regulation Applications Report FA 2026, as information.

Report FA 15/2026 – Summary of Revenue & Expenditures, was presented, discussed, and resolved.

Motion # 25/2026	P. Buchner	A. Oslach	CARRIED

THAT, the Full Authority receive the staff approved Section 28 Regulation Applications Report FA 2026, as information.

GENERAL MANAGERS REPORT:

I delivered a comprehensive budget presentation for Malahide regarding the proposed 2026 levy. The presentation outlined projected revenue requirements, anticipated expenditures, and the overall financial strategy for the upcoming year. It included a detailed breakdown of cost drivers, funding allocations, and the rationale behind the levy adjustment. I also addressed the potential impact on residents and local stakeholders, explained how the funds would be invested to support community services and infrastructure, and provided comparative data from previous years to give context to the proposal. The session concluded with an open discussion, allowing attendees to ask questions and provide feedback on the 2026 levy plan.

Prepared extensively for the 75th Annual General Meeting (AGM), ensuring that all reports, financial statements, and supporting documentation were accurate, up to date, and clearly presented. This involved coordinating with key stakeholders, reviewing agenda items, and compiling comprehensive briefing materials for attendees. I also assisted in drafting presentations, preparing speaking notes, and organizing relevant data to facilitate informed discussions and decision-making. In addition, I ensured that all logistical arrangements were in place, including scheduling, communication with members, and compliance with governance requirements. The preparation process focused on maintaining transparency, promoting engagement, and supporting a productive and well-structured 75th AGM.

Prepared thoroughly for the 2026 Personnel and Finance Committee meeting by reviewing all relevant financial reports, staffing updates, and budget forecasts in advance. This included analyzing expenditure trends, evaluating personnel costs, and ensuring that all supporting documentation was accurate and complete. I worked closely with key team members to gather updated data, clarify agenda items, and identify any areas requiring discussion or decision. In addition, I assisted in drafting briefing notes, preparing financial summaries, and organizing presentation materials to ensure the meeting ran efficiently and effectively.

Chaired the Lake Erie Region Management Committee meeting, providing leadership and structure to ensure a focused and productive session. I facilitated discussions across key agenda items, encouraged open dialogue among committee members, and ensured that all perspectives were considered before decisions were made.

Led the negotiation process for the CCCA insurance renewal, working closely with brokers and insurance providers to secure comprehensive coverage at competitive rates. This involved reviewing the existing policy terms, assessing current risk exposures, and identifying areas where coverage could be enhanced or streamlined. Throughout the process, I advocated for favorable terms and conditions, negotiated pricing adjustments where possible, and sought clarity on coverage limits, exclusions, and deductibles. In addition, I ensured that the renewed policy aligned with the organization’s operational needs and risk management strategy. The outcome was a well-structured insurance renewal that balanced cost efficiency with appropriate protection for the organization’s assets, members, and activities.

I participated in and facilitated multiple meetings both locally and with the Lake Erie Region Management Unit regarding the proposed CA amalgamation. These meetings focused on evaluating the strategic, operational, and financial implications of the amalgamation, as well as identifying opportunities to strengthen regional collaboration and service delivery. At the local level we are addressing concerns, and ensuring transparency throughout the process. With the Lake Erie Region Management Unit, discussions centered on governance structures, resource allocation, staffing considerations, and long-term sustainability. My involvement ensured clear communication between all parties, alignment on objectives, and a structured approach to decision-making throughout the CA amalgamation process.

I attended the SCRCA, and KCCA Annual General Meetings to strengthen regional collaboration, maintain active engagement with partner Conservation Authorities, and stay informed on shared priorities and emerging issues. My participation provided an opportunity to observe governance practices, review financial and operational updates, and better understand how each organization is addressing common challenges such as funding pressures, regulatory changes, and watershed management initiatives. Attending these AGMs also allowed me to build and maintain professional relationships with board members, senior staff, and regional stakeholders. These connections are valuable in supporting knowledge sharing, identifying best practices, and fostering coordinated approaches across jurisdictions. In addition, my presence demonstrated our organization’s commitment to regional cooperation and transparency, particularly in the context of ongoing discussions and strategic initiatives that impact multiple Conservation Authorities.

Attended multiple Conservation Authority (CA) General Manager meetings to ensure our organization remains informed, aligned, and responsive in an increasingly complex and evolving operating environment. In today's climate, marked by regulatory changes, funding constraints, climate variability, and heightened public scrutiny, regular engagement at the GM level is essential. These meetings provide a forum to discuss legislative updates, provincial policy direction, watershed management priorities, and emerging risks. Staying actively involved ensures we can anticipate changes rather than react to them, allowing for proactive planning and sound decision-making. Participation also supports regional consistency and collaboration. Many of the challenges facing Conservation Authorities, such as flood risk management, infrastructure pressures, development impacts, and environmental protection, cross municipal boundaries. GM meetings create opportunities to share best practices, coordinate responses, and advocate collectively on sector-wide issues. In addition, these sessions strengthen professional networks, foster transparency, and promote unified messaging across the CA sector. Attending multiple GM meetings demonstrates a commitment to strong governance, informed leadership, and strategic collaboration, particularly important in today's rapidly changing regulatory and financial landscape.

I assisted as a mentor for the Youth Conservation Program, providing guidance, support, and practical insight to participants throughout the program. My role involved sharing knowledge about environmental stewardship, watershed management, and conservation practices, while helping participants connect their learning to real-world applications. Serving as a mentor was particularly important in fostering the next generation of environmental leaders. By offering encouragement, sharing professional experiences, and modeling strong work ethics and community engagement, I contributed to creating a positive and impactful learning experience for the youth involved in the program.

I attended the Path of Honour meeting at the Ontario Police College to coordinate and schedule the upcoming work day, ensuring that timelines, responsibilities, and site logistics were clearly defined. The discussion focused on aligning expectations, confirming scope of work, reviewing maintenance requirements, and ensuring that all activities would be completed safely and efficiently. In addition to scheduling, I engaged in discussions regarding the renewal of the service contract. This involved reviewing the current agreement, evaluating performance outcomes, and clarifying deliverables for the upcoming term. I negotiated key terms including pricing, scope adjustments, timelines, and service standards to ensure the renewed contract reflected both operational needs and value for money.

I worked closely with Dorbar to review and renew my employee health benefits plan, ensuring that coverage continued to meet both personal needs and cost-effectiveness objectives. This process involved assessing the existing plan, analyzing available options, and comparing alternative providers and coverage levels. I evaluated factors such as premiums, deductibles, prescription coverage, and additional wellness benefits to determine the best fit. Throughout the process, I engaged in detailed discussions with

Dorbar to clarify terms, address potential gaps in coverage, and negotiate adjustments that optimized both protection and affordability.

I successfully renegotiated the cell phone bills for the CCCA, achieving significant cost savings while maintaining essential service levels. I engaged directly with service providers to explore alternative plans, clarify billing discrepancies, and negotiate more favorable terms, including lower rates, optimized data packages, and additional features where beneficial. By carefully analyzing the organization's communication needs and advocating for cost-effective solutions, I was able to secure a reduction in recurring expenses without compromising service quality.

I have been actively keeping up with the developments surrounding Bill 97 and the proposed amalgamation of conservation authorities by regularly reviewing government updates, attending local meetings where possible, and following coverage from reputable news sources. I've taken the time to understand how these changes could impact environmental oversight, watershed management, and local decision-making processes. In addition, I've engaged in discussions with community members and stakeholders to hear a range of perspectives, which has helped me form a more balanced and informed view on the implications of the legislation and the restructuring of conservation authorities.

NEW BUSINESS:

Motion # 26/2026	P. Buchner	A. Oslach	CARRIED

THAT, the Summary of Revenue & Expenditures, be noted and filed.

Motion # 27/2026	S. Lewis	P. Buchner	CARRIED

THAT, Accounts Paid (total withdrawals/payments) totalling $237,708.50, be approved as presented.

CORRESPONDENCE:

a) Copied:

- Correspondence Register for January and February 2026.

Motion # 28/2026 S. Lewis P. Buchner CARRIED

THAT, the Copied Correspondence and Correspondence Register for the months of January and February, be noted and filed.

CLOSED SESSION:

Motion # 29/2026 S. Lewis A. Oslach CARRIED

THAT, the Full Authority adjourn to Closed Session at 10:45 a.m.

Motion # 30/2026 A. Oslach S. Lewis CARRIED

THAT, the Full Authority rise with report at 11:06 a.m.

Motion # 31/2026 P. Buchner A. Oslach CARRIED

The Board approved an amendment to a policy.

Motion # 32/2026 S. Lewis P. Buchner CARRIED

The Board approved a confidential recommendation as presented in closed session.

Motion # 33/2026 S. Lewis G. Clarke CARRIED

THAT, the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Full Authority #02/2026 (February 19, 2026), be adopted as circulated.

NEXT MEETING / TERMINATION:

The next meeting of the Catfish Creek Conservation Authority will be meeting held on Thursday, June 18, 2026, commencing at 10:00 a.m.

Motion # 34/2026 G. Clarke S. Lewis CARRIED

THAT, the Full Authority be terminated at 11:06 a.m.

D. Underhill

General Manager / Secretary –Treasurer

Authority Chairperson