

Media Release

For Immediate Release

February 25, 2022

“Conservation Authority Budget Approved for 2022”

LTVCA Holds Annual General Meeting

LTVCA watershed - The Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA) held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on February 24 via Zoom. The meeting was also livestreamed on the LTVCA's YouTube channel <https://youtu.be/ueGIAOKpZ14>



LTVCA's Annual General Meeting was held via Zoom on February 24, 2022 at 2 p.m.

Trevor Thompson was appointed as Chair, Linda McKinlay as 1st Vice-Chair and Christa Cowell as 2nd Vice-Chair. Trevor Thompson is a Municipal Councillor for the Municipality of Chatham-Kent, Linda McKinlay is a Municipal Councillor for the Municipality of Lakeshore and Christa Cowell is a Municipal Councillor for Southwest Middlesex.

Directors Richard Leatham (West Elgin), Paul Tiessen (Leamington) and Sarah Emons (Southwold) were appointed members of the Executive Committee. Sandi Hipple (Strathroy-Caradoc), Mike Hentz (Dutton Dunwich) and Sarah Emons were appointed members of the Ska-Nah-Doht Village Advisory Committee. Trevor Thompson, Linda McKinlay and Amy Finn

(Chatham-Kent) were declared members of the Ice Management Committee.

The 2022 budget of \$3,892,506 received approval at the AGM. The budget represents an increase of \$573,110 or 17.3% in overall spending in comparison to the 2021 approved budget of \$3,319,396. The corresponding increase in the municipal levy is \$29,542 or 1.76%. The 10 member municipalities of the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority include Chatham-Kent, Dutton Dunwich, Lakeshore, Leamington, London, Middlesex Centre, Southwest Middlesex, Southwold, Strathroy-Caradoc and West Elgin. Chatham-Kent appoints three representatives to the LTVCA Board while the remaining nine municipalities appoint one representative each for up to a three-year term.

The 2021 LTVCA Conservation Awards took place first. “LTVCA Awards for Volunteer Heroes” were presented to Dr. Chris Ellis, Barry Frazer and Andrew McCallum, and “Environmental Awards” were presented to Robert Glenn and Joan Durdan-Fitzpatrick - Retired Teachers Association. The LTVCA applauded the work of the award recipients and looked forward to working with them in 2022.

The 2021 Annual Report presentation emphasized how the LTVCA was able to continue vital programs & services for the people of our watershed during these difficult times across the watershed. The Conservation Authority safely provided services following its Pandemic Management Plan for all the work done. While providing almost all services to the public, staff limited their high-risk activities and worked from home as much as possible, adapting to the new environment.

The 25 full-time and 18 short-term contract staff had a very productive and busy year. Seventy-four flood bulletins were issued, 24 media releases published and 22 provincial water quality monitoring sites were operated. Additional highlights of the year included the LTVCA undertaking 3,121 regulatory and municipal plan review

services, the provision of stewardship grant assistance to 448 landowners, the planting of 89,000 trees, and the natural restoration of 270 acres. Aquatic species at risk (mussels and fish) had extensive studies performed across the watershed. Phosphorus reduction initiatives engaged 100+ agricultural businesses and encouraged the planting of over 10,550 acres of cover crops. The ALUS program had landowner projects in Middlesex, Elgin and Chatham-Kent that restored 341 acres with wetlands, trees and grasslands. A recorded attendance of 68,000 people enjoyed camping and day use at five LTVCA campgrounds and 18 conservation areas, and another new land donation of a 26-acre forest was welcomed. Seventeen public events were held in conservation areas in 2021, with the Longwoods 'Magic of Lights' event the best in Canada with over 35,000 vehicles attending the drive-through during 40 evenings. Ska-Nah-Doht Village and Museum was busy as a film production site and educational facility showcasing new exhibits, virtual and onsite programming. A new website was launched and the public was kept informed of LTVCA happenings with over 400 social media messages on four platforms. Also recognized were the more than 84 volunteers who gave over 360 hours of their time and the 40+ partners of the Conservation Authority that provided an additional \$1.82 million for watershed conservation.

Chair Trevor Thompson remarked - *"It's an honour to receive the confidence of the board to be re-elected as Chair. 2021 has shown that the LTVCA has been able to thrive in an environment of uncertainty. It's our staff and Board that have made that possible, and I look forward to seeing an even more successful 2022."*

Vice-Chair Linda McKinlay noted- *"Once again, LTVCA has enjoyed another successful year. Conservation areas were used by record numbers of our residents and our Administration was busier than ever, working through permits and striving to ensure the safety of the public from hazardous areas. Kudos to our Chair, Trevor Thompson and our CAO Mark Peacock for leading our Board and staff while dealing with constant COVID-19 restrictions. Together we managed to excel in 2021, and we are on the path to more successes in 2022."*

Mark Peacock CAO / Secretary-Treasurer of the LTVCA stated - *"I am privileged to work with a professional staff and a dedicated Board that supports the LTVCA delivering environmental programs that engage more of our community every year"*.

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