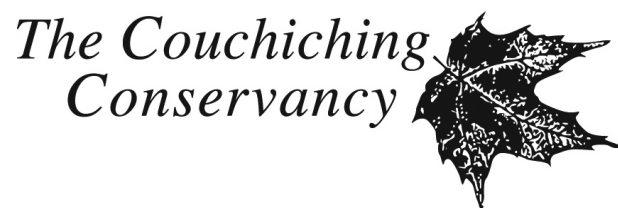


Minutes



Annual General Meeting

March 4, 2023

In person at Hawk Ridge Golf Club and Video Conference via Zoom

The 2023 Annual General Meeting (AGM) was called to order by Executive Director Dorthea Hangaard at 2:00 p.m. In-person attendance was 110 persons. In virtual attendance were 63 households.

1. Call to Order & Welcome		Lead: Dorthea Hangaard
Discussion/Conclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome given.• Acknowledged the area on which CC operates was cared for by the Anishnaabe and other Indigenous peoples. Those Indigenous communities continue to do that work today, and recognized the Williams Treaties that were signed, and the territories we stand on.• Welcome and appreciation given to the members of the Indigenous Community and local politicians that joined this AGM.		
2. Review of Agenda Items		Lead: Dorthea Hangaard
Discussion/Conclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A brief explanation provided on what will be discussed today.		
3. Review of Previous AGM Minutes		Lead: Jane Bonsteel
Discussion/Conclusions: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jane Bonsteel read highlights from the 2022 AGM minutes.• No corrections arose and the minutes for the 2022 AGM were accepted as distributed electronically ahead of the meeting, posted on The Couchiching Conservancy’s (CC) website, and provided in the AGM handouts.		
Motion: To approve the Minutes of the 2022 Annual General Meeting of The Couchiching Conservancy.		
Moved by: Neil Gray	Seconded by: Kathy Hunt	Vote: Carried

4. President's Remarks	Lead: Neil Gray
<p>Discussion/Conclusions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition and thanks given to the staff and contractors, outdoor volunteers and the Board of Directors for all their work during the past year. • Recognition and appreciation given to departing board member, Jamie Ross. • Many successful events and fundraisers were held in 2022. • Appreciation given to 1600 financial contributors, including individuals, foundations and corporations. • Over \$3 million has been contributed or pledged to the Heartwood Fund. • Also noted were close working relationships with community and environmental groups such as other land trusts and naturalist clubs. 	
5. The Past-Presidents' Council	Lead: Dorteia Hangaard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledgement of the contribution of the Past Presidents' Council and the on-going growth of the organization's collective wisdom and strength. • The Heartwood Fund (legacy giving fund) is endowed to ensure that CC can continue to operate forever. • Homi Bam spoke of his personal reasons for making a pledge to the Heartwood Fund. 	
6. Treasurer's Report	Lead: Jack Booth
<p>Discussion/Conclusions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jack Booth reviewed <i>The Couchiching Conservancy Financial Statements For the Year Ended October 31, 2022</i> as distributed electronically ahead of the meeting and posted on the CC's website. Highlights included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Revenues and Expenses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The results were not as budgeted: the decline in the financial markets in the first three quarters led to a loss of investment revenue of \$73,000 and a \$40,000 decrease in stock donations from the prior year. ○ <i>Statement of Operations and Changes in Net Assets for 2022</i> (p. 5): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The statement shows the investment loss for 2022 versus the very strong income in the prior year (\$281,000 swing). ▪ The pandemic continued to have an effect as work was delayed, e.g., difficulties obtaining appraisals and survey services, resulting in fewer properties being acquired than expected. This also reduced donations. None of the properties were lost, just delayed, and will be reflected in following years. Property and easement acquisition expense also reflects this. ▪ Subcontract amount was \$23,000 under budget as the pandemic slowed field work. ▪ Wages & benefits were \$51,000 over budget; not shown is the \$76,747 in donated time resulting in a difference of \$25,700. ▪ The bottom line for the year was a loss of \$40,000. ○ <i>Statement of Financial Position at Oct. 31, 2022</i> (Balance Sheet p. 4): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Short-term investments (available to CC in less than a year): \$1,168,225. The decrease of \$51,500 is due to investment loss. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liabilities totalled \$433,000 as of Oct 31, 2022. Of this, only \$40,600 are accounts payable. The balance of \$392,400 is deferred revenue that will be recognized in future years. Of this, \$254,600 is to be used towards purchase of property under the Corridors Campaign. Net assets: Heartwood Endowment Fund increased by \$60,000 to \$520,000 (does not include pledges). The acquisition of the Nicholson property increased capital assets by \$100,000. To protect capital in the reserve and endowment funds, \$53,400 was transferred from the President's Reserve to cover the investment loss. This decreased the President's Reserve from \$217,300 to \$163,900. In the prior 2 years, the President's Reserve had increased by \$100,000 largely due to strong investment income during those years. CC continues to be in a strong financial position with no long-term debt and over \$1,684,000 in the reserves and endowment funds. Although the last two years have been unusual (large surplus in 2021, then loss in 2022), the average of the two years presents a more reasonable picture (average surplus of \$139,000 and average investment income of \$67,000). Jack Booth thanked all supporters, volunteers, staff and board members for their commitment, as well as Jennifer Man and Debbie Trickey of Hehn Trickey for their timely audit. 		
Motion: To receive the Financial Statements for the year ended October 31, 2022.		
Moved by: Adam Thomson	Seconded by: Mark Bisset	Vote: Carried
Motion: To appoint Hehn Trickey Professional Corporation Chartered Accountants as auditor for the year ending October 31, 2023.		
Moved by: Roy Menagh	Seconded by: Lisa Gillette	Vote: Carried
7. Election of the Board		Lead: Dortehea Hangaard
<p>Discussion/Conclusions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biographies of the <i>Proposed slate of directors for 2023</i> distributed electronically ahead of the meeting and posted on CC's website. CC's Nominations Committee has recommended the following slate of candidates: Kathy Hunt as President, and Directors Neil Gray, Lisa Neville, Jane Bonsteel, Dale Leadbeater, Janet Machan, Bob Sullivan, Jack Booth and Morris Ilyniak. Dortehea Hangaard asked three times: "Are there any nominations from the floor?" Not receiving any from the floor or via Zoom, the motion was read. 		
Motion: To accept the slate of candidates as recommended by the Nominations Committee for 2023-24: President Kathy Hunt, and Directors Neil Gray, Lisa Neville, Jane Bonsteel, Dale Leadbeater, Janet Machan, Bob Sullivan, Jack Booth and Morris Ilyniak.		
Moved by: Mark Bisset	Seconded by: Courtney Baker	Vote: Carried
8. In-Coming President's Remarks		Lead: Kathy Hunt
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thanked Ron Reid and Janet Grand for introducing her to CC and the importance of land trusts, and Mark Bisset for his leadership. Honoured to represent the positive force that is CC, and working with the Board. 		

- Looking forward to Dorthea Hangaard's leadership and working towards "Re-connecting Nature".

9. Executive Director Report

Lead: Dorthea Hangaard

- Thank-you to all staff who have planned, organized and delivered this event.
- The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework was signed on December 22, 2022 including a goal (supported by Canada) of protecting 30% of land, ocean and inland waters by 2030.
- Looking at several historic aerial photographs highlighted the drastic changes and continued development pressures on Orillia since 1945.
- CC's Priority Areas for Acquisition Map shows Orillia's 'greenbelt', a blueprint for protecting nature in this region. In Carden and the Black River Wildlands, the plan has become reality.
- Success has been built on four key ingredients:
 - Reach out to landowners and get to know people.
 - Forge strong partnerships with other like-minded conservation organizations.
 - Convene roundtables of all interested parties in the area (stakeholders) and look for solutions together.
 - Be ready with funds and organizational resources to act quickly on opportunities.
- Continue to use these strategies on the west side of Lake Couchiching in the Bass Lake Corridor, the Minesing to Matchedash Corridor and the Matchedash Corridor.
- Stewardship:
 - Grassland birds are in serious decline; volunteers are monitoring Bobolink, Meadowlark and Barn Swallows via road-side surveys with encouraging results.
 - Ron Reid's Delayed Haying Program provided farmers a financial incentive to delay haying until after July 15th when grassland birds' nestlings are able to fly and have left the nests. The 2022 pilot program was successful with three farmers in Ramara and CC is planning to take the program region-wide in 2023.
- Volunteers - every year several are selected to highlight their contributions to CC:
 - For four years, Adrian Leemhuis and Lorraine Morris have organized the Blu Moose Ride, an extreme cycling event in memory of their son Danya who loved the Carden Alvar, raising over \$45,000.
 - Mary and Omar Mick, volunteers for CC since 1998, including as Land Stewards at Grant's Woods since it was donated in 2004 where they helped plan the trails with Ron Reid and Janet Grand. Mary was one of the earliest Volunteer Coordinators.
 - Cathy Massig has been the Land Steward at Alexander Hope-Smith since it was acquired in 2007. She continues to volunteer and is a strong supporter of the Heartwood Fund.
 - Susan Crowe is a Monarch Monitor and also a valuable member of the Passport to Nature Committee.
 - Cassie Pellerin volunteered her time, expertise and equipment to collect drone footage of several nature reserves. Technology is enabling monitoring of inaccessible reserves.
- Property Acquisitions:
 - Nicholson property (100 acres in the Black River Wildlands corridor on the Head River) donated by Janice and Gary Nicholson.
 - Marley property, 77 acres on the Black River was also dedicated in 2022.
 - Hancock and Frantzke-Williamson properties (almost neighbouring properties of 45 acres each in the Bass Lake Corridor, Oro-Medonte) were registered as Conservation Easements.

- Next acquisition campaign: Morton property with 400 acres of high quality alvar in Carden connected to Wolf Run and North Bear Alvar. It will be the 7th property protected through the Corridors Campaign. The goal is to raise \$387,00 for this property.

10. Honouring Mark Bisset

- Dorthea Hangaard, Gord Ball (Founder and Past President) and Margaret Pomeroy (Past President) gave heartfelt tributes and spoke of the strong leadership and significant contributions that Mark Bisset has provided during his tenure as Executive Director.

Meeting declared closed at 3:30 p.m. by Dorthea Hangaard.

Attendees were invited to stay after the meeting for cake in celebration of Mark Bisset's retirement and to give him their well-wishes.

Minutes Recorded by: Jane Bonsteel, Board Member