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# HALDIMAND COUNTY

## Report PDD-56-2021 Long Point Region Conservation Authority 2022 Levy For Consideration by Council in Committee on December 7, 2021

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### OBJECTIVE:

To advise Council of the upcoming Long Point Region Conservation Authority (LPRCA) 2022 levy budget, which require funding from Haldimand County.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report PDD-56-2021 Long Point Region Conservation Authority 2022 Levy be received.

**Prepared by:** Shannon VanDalen, MCIP, RPP, CMMI, Manager of Planning and Development

**Respectfully submitted:** Mike Evers, MCIP, RPP, BES, General Manager of Community & Development Services

**Approved:** Craig Manley, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Haldimand County has been provided with information outlining the proposed 2022 municipal levy for the Long Point Region Conservation Authority (LPRCA), an increase of 2.15% over last year's levy and representing a \$6,177.00 increase. Notice from Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) and the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA)—the second and third of the three Conservation Authorities covering the County—has yet to be received and is anticipated early in the new year.

A protocol developed many years ago between Conservation Ontario and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario gives municipalities control over only the amount of discretionary nonmatching conservation authority levies to be set annually. These levies are set by the Authority Board and are allocated to member municipalities based on their share of assessment in the watershed. Appointees to each Authority are expected to vote on proposed Conservation Authority levies based on the direction of their respective Municipal Council. Given the small magnitude of change, staff are not recommending any specific direction be given to this municipality's appointees regarding the general levies proposed by the Long Point Region Conservation Authority for 2022.

### BACKGROUND:

Haldimand County funds three Conservation Authorities whose watersheds fall within this municipality's boundaries. The general levy for each Conservation Authority is apportioned to its watershed municipalities on the basis of a "modified current value assessment" model as set out in Ontario Regulation 670/2000.

The *Conservation Authorities Act* (the "Act") requires Conservation Authorities to provide notice to their member municipalities regarding the coming year's levies. Ontario Regulations 139/96 and 106/98 both state that 30 days notice must be provided to the municipality of a meeting being held by the Conservation Authority to approve the non-matching levy. The LPRCA Board of Directors intends to

vote on the Final 2022 budget at its January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022 meeting, and request any comments regarding the draft budget by December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Following Council's consideration of this report, the resolution will be shared with the LPRCA.

The County's share of the total general municipal levy for 2022 for the LPRCA is 14.23%, and as reflected in this percentage, Haldimand County does not comprise the weighted majority membership in the Conservation Authority. As a result, there may be little control or influence that the County's appointees can exert on the decisions of the authorities in setting their 2022 budget for the general levy component. Any proposed special levies are subject to the approval of only the benefiting municipality.

The table below shows the total impact of the municipal levy:

	2021 Levy	2022 Levy	Increase (\$)	Increase (%)
LPRCA	\$293,461.00	\$299,638.00	\$6,177	2.15

Generally, appointees to each Conservation Authority are to vote on the proposed levy apportionment based on the direction of their respective Municipal Councils. Given the overall minor impact in costs to the County, staff have not recommended that any specific direction be given to Haldimands' appointees regarding the 2022 levy proposed by the Long Point Region Conservation Authority. If Council supports this approach, this report need only be received as information; otherwise, specific direction by resolution should be given to the County's appointees.

In October 2021, the Province passed new regulations under the *Conservation Authorities Act* to implement changes required under Bill 229. These changes include Mandatory Programs and Services, and Transition Plans and Agreements for Programs and Services. The Mandatory Programs and Services is funded through the municipal levy and is not anticipated to have any significant impact. This will continue to provide the services for permit and application review and assessment regarding natural hazards as well the conservation and management of lands and source water protection. The other changes will require a separate agreement to be entered into between the municipality and the conservation authority and will not impact the annual municipal levy. Any additional programs and services would have to come from funding sources outside the municipal levy, such as self-generating revenue, contracts or grants, and would require consultation with the County.

## **FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:**

In the past, Haldimand County Council chose to allow each of its Board appointees to "vote their conscience" at the budget approval meetings. If the current Council supports the same approach, this report need only be received as information. Otherwise, specific direction by resolution should be given to the County's appointees as to how they should vote on the upcoming Long Point Region Conservation Authority 2022 Budget.

## **STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:**

Not applicable.

## **REPORT IMPACTS:**

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: No

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. 2022 Draft LPRCA Budget.