

Land Conservancy for Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington

DRAFT

**Minutes of the 2022 Annual General Meeting
held April 12, 2023
via Zoom**

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m., chaired by Vicki Schmolka.

Vicki welcomed everyone and thanked Dr. Lenore Fahrig for agreeing to be the guest speaker after the AGM part of the meeting.

Vicki started with a Land acknowledgement, mentioning beforehand the work of Bruce and Janet Elliott who put together information from a workshop on land acknowledgement. Vicki presented an acknowledgement based on her personal views as the board has not developed one for the Land Conservancy yet.

Vicki then gave an overview of who we are and what we do. All Board members are volunteers, and we are a registered charitable organization. We currently protect 13 properties covering 452 ha (1100 acres).

Each board member gave a brief introduction to their involvement with the Land Conservancy.

1. Statement of Quorum

Vicki noted that we require a Statement of Quorum. As there are many more than 15 members in attendance on Zoom, Vicki therefore recognized that we had satisfied quorum requirements.

2. Approval of Minutes of 2021 AGM

Vicki noted that the minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting, held on April 13, 2022, were posted on the web site. She asked members for comments or corrections.

Motion: Moved by: Chris Cannon; Seconded by: Annette Burfoot
That the minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting of the Land Conservancy for Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington, held April 13, 2022, be adopted as presented.
Motion Carried.

3. President's Report 2022

- How are we doing with our mission “to preserve and protect natural sites and landscapes in Kingston and Frontenac and Lennox & Addington counties”
-2015 baseline vs 2022 status: 5 more properties protected (~230 more ha preserved), endowed funds increased from \$28,000 to \$146,000, and the number of members increased from 123 to 174.

- February 2021 survey – 59 replies: the vast majority (80%) of responders want the LC to keep acquiring land; the public use of properties was more equally divided between don't open current properties for public use (40%), but acquire a new property for public use (44%) and 16% said open properties for public use; the majority of respondents (56%) believe habitat loss is the greatest threat to nature, with 31% saying climate change.
- Strategic plan – aspiration goals by 2027 include: 800 ha (~double 2022), membership 250 and build up a financial reserve for land acquisition.

The strategic planning exercise included discussing whether now was a good time to have a paid position. It was decided that for now the LC would maintain an all-volunteer organization.

- How can you help us – a list of a number of skills the LC needs: species identification, photography, website, GIS, database management, writing grants, fundraising

4. Treasurer's Report

- Three main funds: Operating (general), Land acquisition, Stewardship
- Some typical operating expenses: insurance, office supplies, website, OLTA membership, post office box
- Some typical land acquisition expenses: appraisals, legal fees, mileage reimbursement during the process of acquisition
- Some typical stewardship expenses: monitoring, property taxes, clean-up costs
- Other items: Somerville property acquisition by donation, term certificate investment (\$60,000), total land holdings and conservation easements (\$1,557,700), total cash balance FY 2022 (\$118,000)
- Financial reviewer report – Andrew Mills, April 10, 2023
- Appoint financial reviewer for 2023

Motion: Moved by: Roger Healey; Seconded by: Thom Snowman

That the Land Conservancy for Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington names Andy Mills as its Financial Reviewer for 2023.

Motion Carried.

Vicki thanked Roger for his efforts and asked if anyone had questions.

5. Communications Committee Report

Marc Sandaluk welcomed attendees and gave an overview of the steady progress in building the supporter base.

- Membership – 174 – up 10%, including 16 first time members.
- Social media followers – up by 14%
- Event highlights: Birds of winter, Unique nature email series, Media posts, Giving Tuesday fundraising

Vicki thanked Marc for his efforts and asked if anyone had questions.

6. Land Acquisition Committee Report

Murray Beckel, Chair of the Land Acquisition Committee in 2022

Murray provided an overview of what the land acquisition committee does and covered some of the highlights of the past year:

- Somerville Nature Reserve acquisition (~60 ha). Donated by Keith and Betty Somerville. Canadian shield habitat with at least three types of habitat and over 400 species to date, including a number of species at risk.
- Trail Cams – acquired two Bushnell wildlife cameras from fundraising on Giving Tuesday, which have been placed on three different properties with huge success recording a diversity of wildlife.
- Fourth Lake Nature Reserve – South cleanup on May 5, 2022. Thank-you to First Capital Disposal and Rotary Club of Kingston for contributions.
- Bat monitoring on Depot Creek NR and Rock Ridge NR – 8 different species found.
- Depot Creek Nature Reserve -erected new kiosk built by Paul Middaugh, six work parties led by Anne Robertson, fencing repairs
- Site visits overview – minimum of one per year to watch threats, clean up refuse, update species inventory, assess invasive species and conditions of conservation easement properties
- Property assessment enquiries – six new enquiries in 2022 and one new conservation easement enquiry
- Species at risk – list of 18 species protected on Land Conservancy properties

Vicki congratulated Murray on the excellent Committee work and thanked him for his efforts and those of all the Committee volunteers.

7. Mapping Committee Report

Kate Laird, Chair of the Mapping Committee, gave an overview of the efforts made in 2022.

- Updating of the protected lands layer in the Natural Heritage Plan (NHP). The protected lands layer in our NHP was updated in 2022 with additional Nature Conservancy of Canada properties and township properties.
- Fleming GIS collaborative application. November 2022.
The project is two parts: a) Update the headwater areas mapping in our NHP, b) Develop a map viewer. Protection of headwater areas is important for maintaining biodiversity and water quality downstream.
- Adam Clow continues to provide mapping of habitat and natural heritage values of prospective properties.

8. Nominations Committee Report and Elections

Chris Cannon reminded members of our Board structure, and how we stagger elections. All sitting members are willing to remain on with the Board.

Chris requested a motion from the floor to open nominations for 2-year terms, 2023-2025.

Chris pointed out that the Nominations Committee recommends these members for election to the Board for two-year terms: John Donihee, Kate Laird, Paul Mackenzie, Marc Sandaluk and Vicki Schmolka. Chris asked if there were any additional nominations from the floor.

Motion: Moved by: Mary Alice Snetsinger; Seconded by: Roger Healey
That nominations be closed, and that the slate of candidates as proposed by the Nominations Committee be accepted (John Donihee, Kate Laird, Paul Mackenzie, Marc Sandaluk and Vicki Schmolka), there being no other nominations, as Board members of the Land Conservancy for Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington are elected for two-year positions.

Motion Carried.

Chris then declared the candidates to be elected.

9. Adjournment

Vicki thanked the members for their attendance and concluded the business part of the meeting. She stated that the only reason the Board can do its work is thanks to the support of the membership, both moral and financial. She thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

Motion: Moved by: Roger Healey; Seconded by: Paul Mackenzie
That the 2022 Annual General Meeting of the Land Conservancy for Kingston,
Frontenac, Lennox & Addington be adjourned. *Motion Carried.*

The Annual Meeting adjourned at 8:06 pm.

10. Guest Speaker: Dr. Lenore Fahrig

Mary Alice Snetsinger introduced Dr. Lenore Fahrig, Chancellor's Professor of Biology at Carleton University speaking on "The value of small spaces for biodiversity conservation".

Some highlights from Dr. Fahrig's talk:

- Estimates of the number of species that have gone extinct range from 0.1 to 1 million and is likely to be much higher. The destruction of natural habitats (e.g., tall-grass prairies, ancient oak woodlands, tropical rainforests, coastal wetlands) for agriculture production is one of the most prominent reasons behind the loss of species. Dr. Fahrig overlaid a map of where species were most at risk with agricultural regions and there was a large degree of overlap.
- How to protect biodiversity and grow food. Dr. Fahrig's research group looked at how field size and habitat patch size affect biodiversity. Some of the initial research showed a surprising result that biodiversity was higher when crop fields were in smaller patches than in larger patches covering the same total field area. These results were found across many different species and agricultural regions.
- The theoretical paradigm that large patches are better for higher biodiversity formulated by Jarred Diamond in 1975 quickly became dogma, that persists today in government and also in other research. The research by Riva et al. (2022) published in Global Change Biology, indicated that on a worldwide perspective forested plots identified in 1992 were more likely to be lost by 2020 if they were in small patches than large patches.
- Are there more species in a single large patch or in several small patches covering the same area. Several studies in the 1980s from other research groups consistently found that more species were found in several small size patches than in a single large patch. These findings are contrary to the Jarred Diamond paradigm of larger patches are better for biodiversity.
- Why are more species found in several small patches versus one large patch?
 - larger landscape heterogeneity and higher number of different habitats
 - higher degree of movement found with small patches
 - risk of loss is spread out across a larger number of patches (unlikely to lose all small patches at once)

- Implications for conservation include supporting local efforts to maintain natural habitats, no matter how small. While the total amount of habitat preserved is more important than patch size, biodiversity can be maintained in a bunch of small patches.
- Dr. Fahrig's research has found more species in farmlands that had smaller crop fields. The challenge then is to encourage farmers to maintain small fields versus large fields.

Many questions were asked after the talk. Some topics covered:

- What species were more often found in small patches – this was very variable depending on the region – but amphibians and reptiles were on average found to have higher biodiversity in a few large patches versus several small patches. Dr. Fahrig thought this could be related to the ability to move between suitable habitats in less fragmented landscapes.
 - A2A connectivity – total amount of area is important, but small patches may still enable connectivity.
 - Urban planning policies should include the value of small natural spaces.
 - While it is more difficult for farmers to implement and maintain many small patches versus one large crop field, Lenore is hopeful that some can be convinced.
 - Each patch does not have to maintain all/many species IF they have enough patches for movement and connectivity.
- Influence of edge effects on invasive species numbers

Some of Dr. Fahrig's new research focuses on edge effects, under what situations are more species found in a single large patch versus several small patches, and what kind of species can withstand human impacts.

Mary Alice thanked Dr. Lenore Fahrig for her presentation. The AGM portion of the meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.