

**Ministry of the Environment,  
Conservation and Parks**

Office of the Minister

777 Bay Street, 5th Floor  
Toronto ON M7A 2J3  
Tel.: 416-314-6790

**Ministère de l'Environnement,  
de la Protection de la nature et  
des Parcs**

Bureau du ministre

777, rue Bay, 5<sup>e</sup> étage  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2J3  
Tél.: 416.314.6790



357-2021-3380

December 9, 2021

Chris White, Chair  
Grand River Conservation Authority  
Email: [chrisw@wellington.ca](mailto:chrisw@wellington.ca)

Samantha Lawson, Chief Administrative Officer  
Grand River Conservation Authority  
Email: [slawson@grandriver.ca](mailto:slawson@grandriver.ca)

Dear Chris White and Samantha Lawson:

Thank you for your application submitted on September 29, 2021 on behalf of the Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA) seeking a Minister's exception under the *Conservation Authorities Act* (CAA) relating to chair and vice-chair appointments.

After carefully considering your application regarding the appointment of the chair and vice-chair, I have decided to not grant the GRCA an exception to subsections 17 (1.1) and (1.2) of the CAA pursuant to my authority under clauses 17(1.3) (a) and (b). The rationale for this decision is outlined below:

- My ministry is of the understanding that GRCA elected the current chair and vice-chair for the 2021 term prior to the February 2, 2021 proclamations coming into effect under section 17 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*, therefore, the 2021 term appointments do not fall under the current requirements.
- With the GRCA chair and vice-chair currently serving their first one-year term, there is no need for an exception request under subsection 17(1.3) at this time. Should GRCA wish to apply for an exception to the chair or vice-chair provisions as members approach the end of their second consecutive one-year term, an exception request can be submitted in advance of the 2023 annual general meeting, as applicable.
- With 21 participating municipalities in the GRCA, where 12 of these municipalities make up four sub-groups and work together to appoint their members, there is opportunity for rotation of the chair and vice-chair positions amongst municipalities to ensure that a member who is appointed by a particular participating municipality is not appointed to succeed an outgoing chair or vice-chair from the same participating municipality.


Chris White and Samantha Lawson  
Page 2.

Please contact the Conservation Authority Office at [ca.office@ontario.ca](mailto:ca.office@ontario.ca) if you have further questions regarding the rotational requirements.

I note that the intent of the changes made through Bill 229, the *Protect, Support and Recover from COVID-19 Act (Budget Measures)*, 2020, to section 17 of the CAA was to encourage fuller representation and varying perspectives from participating municipalities in a conservation authority. Granting an exception to allow the GRCA to appoint chairs and vice-chairs to serve up to four consecutive one-year terms and to avoid the rotation requirement in perpetuity would in my opinion defeat the purpose of these changes. I encourage the GRCA membership to take this into account when considering future appointments to the positions of chair and vice-chair. I would ask that you share this correspondence with all members of the GRCA. If there are questions, please feel welcome to reach out to the Conservation Authority Office at [ca.office@ontario.ca](mailto:ca.office@ontario.ca).

I appreciate the dedication of the GRCA for your continued work and contributions to protecting people and property from natural hazards, the conservation and management of conservation authority-owned lands, and your role in drinking water source protection. I look forward to continuing to work with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Piccini', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David Piccini  
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

c: Chloe Stuart, Assistant Deputy Minister, Land and Water Division, MECP  
Kirsten Corrigan, Director, Conservation and Source Protection Branch, MECP  
Conservation Authority Office (via [ca.office@ontario.ca](mailto:ca.office@ontario.ca))