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# DRAFT MINUTES OF M842/03-2025

**NIAGARA ESCARPMENT COMMISSION**

**HYBRID**

**(Georgetown office and Microsoft Teams)**

**March 20, 2025**

## MEMBERS PRESENT

J. Chevalier (virtual), G. Driedger, M. Francis (virtual – left at 12:15 pm), R. Gibson, L. Golden (virtual), D. Hutcheon (virtual), L. Kiernan, G. Krantz, G. Little, D. McKinlay (virtual),   
D. Measures, D. Nielsen (virtual), R. Vacca (Chair), J. Vida (virtual – left at 1:15 pm),   
A. Witteveen.

## REGRETS

K. Lucyshyn.

## STAFF PRESENT

S. Carey, J. Isaac, M. Cairns, M. Thompson, J. Sperling, S. Robinson, K. Bannister,   
B. Henderson, O. J. MacDonald, M. Morris, R. Burns, L. Wang, A. Bochenek, J. Olah,   
R. Van Massenhoven.

ALSO PRESENT

A. Landre, Counsel; A. Zhao, Counsel.

## MEETING CALLED TO ORDER 9:35 a.m.

Chair Rocco (Rocky) Vacca presided.

## INTRODUCTIONS / ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair welcomed all participants to the meeting.

He noted that the government is now out of the caretaker mode and that the new Minister of Natural Resources is the Honourable Mike Harris Jr.

The Chair asked Commissioners to confirm their attendance with the Commission Secretary at least one week in advance in advance of the meeting to ensure quorum.

## LAND ACKNOWELDGEMENT

The Chair read the Land Acknowledgment.

DIRECTOR’S REMARKS

The Director advised that the new Cabinet members have been appointed and transition materials have been prepared for the new Minister. Staff will be working with the Minister on the need for timely appointments to the Commission to maintain quorum, avoid the cancellation of meetings and allow for the continuity of NEC business. He also advised that a new Minister has been appointed to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and staff will be working with the ministry to determine next steps and timelines for Coordinated Plan Review.

The Director reminded participants of the code of conduct, accessibility requirements and the steps to be taken should anyone experience technical challenges during the meeting.

## BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

No business arising.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**M842R1/03-2025**

Moved By: Witteveen

Seconded By: Measures

*“That the Commission approve the February 20, 2025, Commission Minutes M841-02-2025, as written.”*

**Motion Carried**

## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST – Declaration of Conflicts of Interest

## None declared.

## MOTION FOR DELEGATES

**M842R2/03-2025**

Moved By: Hutcheon

Seconded By: Little

*“That the persons representing the matters listed on the agenda be invited to address the Commission.”*

**Motion Carried**

## DISCUSSION AGENDA: C PACKAGE ITEMS ONLY

## (Staff Reports, Information items)

**C1**

**STAFF REPORT**

**NEC COMPLIANCE:** **Risk Assessment and Decision-Making Guidelines**

**BACKGROUND**

NEC staff conduct compliance activities in alignment with the NEC Compliance Continuum using a risk assessment-based approach. The risk assessment and decision-making tool is a key component of the overall NEC compliance framework. It describes the categories of risk relevant to the *Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act* (NEPDA) and Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP), provides guidance for assessing the impact of an occurrence, and uses an Informed Judgement Matrix to identify the associated level of risk.

The 2025 updated guidance is designed to provide transparency on how NEC assesses risk and responds to occurrences in accordance with the level of risk. It is also intended to create consistency in the way occurrences are assessed and in the operational delivery of the NEC compliance program.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Commission endorse in principle the draft document titled "NEC Risk Assessment and Decision-making Guideline for Compliance".

SPEAKERS

Melody Cairns, Manager, Program Services, and Suzanne Robinson, Senior Strategic Advisor, reviewed the staff report and answered questions.

**M842R3/03-2025**

Moved By: Kiernan

Seconded By: Little

*“That the Commission endorse in principle the draft document titled "NEC Risk Assessment and Decision-making Guideline for Compliance.”*

**Motion Carried**

**Broke:** 10:40 a.m.

**Reconvened**: 11:50 a.m.

**C2**

**NEC COMPLIANCE: Directives and Procedures**

**BACKGROUND**

In coordination with the updated Risk Assessment and Decision-Making Guidelines, the draft Training and Accreditation, Note-taking, Referral to MNR, Compliance Site Inspections and Access Private Property Directives have been formalized to ensure transparency and consistency with compliance investigations. Feedback received from the Commission by March 27th, will be reviewed, and incorporated as appropriate. The draft documents will then be circulated to the Ministry of Natural Resources for their review and feedback.

The draft Directives and Procedures will be finalized by the Director and will be implemented in the first quarter of the 2025-26 fiscal year. Additional directives or procedures will be developed in the next fiscal as required.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Commission receive the information.

SPEAKERS

Melody Cairns, Manager, Program Services, O.J. MacDonald, Compliance Supervisor, and Max Morris, Compliance Supervisor, reviewed the Directives and answered questions.

**M842R4/03-2025**

Moved By: Measures

Seconded By: Gibson

*“That the Commission receive the 2025 NEC Compliance Directives information for Training and Accreditation, Note-taking, Referral to MNR, Compliance Site Inspections and Access Private Property for information.”*

**Motion Carried**

**C3**

**GUIDELINES FOR PROCEDURES AT MEETINGS**

**Updated to Robert’s Rules of Order**

**BACKGROUND**

At the January 2025 Commission meeting, the Commission endorsed moving from Bourinot’s Rules of Order for conducting Commission meetings to Roberts Rules of Order. Staff prepared revised Guidelines for Procedures at Meetings to align with Roberts Rules of Order and added new sections including Roles and Responsibilities, Agenda outline and rules for hybrid Commission meetings. Appendices were added with processes for motions when the Commission does not endorse staff recommendations, or when the Commission wishes to reconsider a previous resolution.

Commissioner comments and suggestions are to be sent to the Director before April 3rd. The final Chair endorsed procedures will be implemented starting at the April 17, 2025 Commission meeting.

**Broke for Lunch:** 12:15 p.m.

**Reconvened**: 12:50 p.m.

**CLOSED SESSIONS**

**M842R5/03-2025**

Moved By: Krantz

Seconded By: Kiernan

*“That the Commission enter into closed session.”*

**Motion Carried**

**M842R6/03-2025**

Moved By: Driedger

Seconded By: Hutcheon

*“That the Commission reopen the meeting to the public.”*

**Motion Carried**

## CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Information only Items

**G1** Director Approvals and Dashboards for FEBRUARY 2025

**G2** Appeals and Hearings update as of FEBRUARY 28, 2025

**G3** Plan Amendments Status update as of FEBRUARY 28, 2025

**M842R7/03-2025**

Moved By: Witteveen

Seconded By: Gibson

*“That the Commission accept the Consent Agenda items.”*

**Motion Carried**

NEW BUSINESS

## Commissioner Witteveen requested information on development taking place in Clappison’s Corner in Niagara. The Director advised that Commissioners are welcome to send their requests for information on a property to him and he will investigate and respond.

## ADJOURNMENT

**M842R8/03-2025**

Moved By: McKinlay

Seconded By: Nielsen

*“That this meeting be adjourned.”*

**Motion Carried**

**Time of Adjournment:** 1:50 p.m.

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Rocco (Rocky) Vacca

Chair