

The Niagara Parks Commission

Minutes of the public meeting of The Niagara Parks Commission held on Thursday, December 11, 2025 at the School of Horticulture, 2565 Niagara Parkway, Niagara Falls, Ontario, L2E 6T2.

Attendance

- Members: Chair Bob Gale
Vice Chair Graham Coveney
Commissioner April Cotton
Commissioner Spencer DeWolfe (virtually)
Commissioner Tom Insinna
Commissioner Wayne Redekop
Commissioner Ted Salci
- Regrets: Commissioner Jim Diodati
Commissioner Dan La Caprara
Commissioner Erwin Wiens
- Staff: David Adames, Chief Executive Officer/Secretary to the Commission
Marcelo Gruosso, Chief Operating Officer
Laura Pingue, Chief Financial Officer
Janice Spino, Chief Human Resources Officer
Katy Wassenaar, Senior Manager, Public Relations
Darla Jones, Executive Assistant to the Chair and CEO/Recording Secretary

1. Call to Order

Chair Gale called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Approval of Agenda

The following motion was moved by Commissioner Salci and seconded by Commissioner Insinna:

That the agenda be approved.

Carried.

4. Land Acknowledgement

Chair Gale provided the following land acknowledgement:

The Niagara Parks Commission wishes to acknowledge and honour the lands along the Niagara River corridor as the traditional territory of Indigenous peoples. In both spirit and partnership, we recognize and thank the Six Nations of the Haudenosaunee, the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation of the Anishinaabek, the Neutral Nation, and all who provided stewardship of these lands over millennia. Recognition of the contributions of Indigenous peoples is consistent with our commitment to making the promise of Truth and Reconciliation real in our communities. We are grateful for the opportunity to live, work, and play here and thank all those who have served and continue to serve as caretakers of this special place.

5. Chair's Opening Remarks

Chair Gale requested that the recording secretary read aloud the names of Commissioners in attendance.

The Chair welcomed those in attendance and provided the following remarks:

"Good morning, everyone, and welcome to our December Public Commission Meeting. At our last meeting, we were preparing for the launch of this year's Winter Festival of Lights. And now, the festival is in full swing. I hope Commissioners have been able to check out some of the displays and new programming this year – Queen Victoria Park is looking better than ever. The Festival will continue through to January 4, including nightly fireworks between December 25 and January 4. Niagara Falls is a popular destination for many over the holidays – whether guests are coming for the day or spending a couple nights in the destination - there is plenty to see and do. Looking back over the last few weeks, on November 18, I provided a welcome to delegates in Niagara Falls for the National Golf Course Owners Association Conference. We also hosted their opening reception at the power station that evening. November 18 – 20 was the Tourism Industry Association of Canada's National Tourism Congress held in Gatineau, Quebec. David attended the conference and delivered a presentation about Niagara Parks' recent investments to improve our visitor experiences and the ROI we've achieved as a result. That week, Museums Canada hosted events in the national capital region as well and David delivered a presentation about guest feedback collection and implementation, as well as a talk on revenue innovation. On November 21, I was pleased to attend the Coldest Night of the Year launch event at Table Rock. This is a fantastic local initiative that raises money for local charities serving people experiencing hurt, hunger and homelessness in our communities. The launch event was held to raise awareness ahead of the annual walk will take place on February 28. Thank you to Commissioner April Cotton for attending and speaking at the Zonta Club of Niagara Falls' Candlelight Vigil at Table Rock on November 24. This annual event marks the kick off to 16 days of activism in support of ending gender-based violence. Thank you as well to Inspector Lepa and Constable Paul from our Police for attending."

“On December 3, I was pleased to attend an event in support of the Niagara Parks Foundation’s Silent Auction to raise funds for the Children’s Garden. The auction raised over \$30,000 in support of the upcoming project to build an interactive Children’s Garden at the Botanical Gardens. Thank you to everyone who participated for your generosity and congratulations to the winners! We’ll now continue with the rest of our public meeting.”

6. Approval of Draft Minutes

The following motion was moved by Commissioner Salci and seconded by Vice Chair Coveney:

That The Niagara Parks Commission:

1. Approve the minutes dated November 13, 2025 (COMM-2025-21).

Carried.

7. Presentations

Queenston Dinner Committee Update

Bob Cuipa, President, Queenston Dinner Committee, thanked the Commission and staff for their support of the 2025 Battle of Queenston Heights commemorative dinner held on October 17, 2025 at Queenston Heights Restaurant. Bob provided an overview of the successful event and shared plans for the 2026 commemorative dinner that that will be held on October 16, 2026. Staff will look into improving audio capabilities at Queenston Heights Restaurant for the 2026 dinner event as well as to explore the potential opportunity for local history students to attend. Visit www.thequeenstondinner.ca for information.

2025 Niagara River Coastal Wetland Restoration Program

Corey Burant, Manager, Forestry and Environmental Sustainability, provided an update presentation respecting the 2025 Niagara River Coastal Wetland Restoration Program.

Business Highlights

David Adames provided a presentation respecting Business Highlights.

The following motion was moved by Commissioner Redekop and seconded by Commissioner Salci:

That The Niagara Parks Commission:

1. Receive the following presentations for information: Queenston Dinner Committee Update, 2025 Niagara River Coastal Wetland Restoration Program and Business Highlights.

Carried.

8. Other Business

There were no items for other business.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting will be Thursday January 15, 2026 at 9:00 a.m. at the School of Horticulture, 2565 Niagara Parkway, Niagara Falls, Ontario, L2E 6T2.

10. Closed Session

The following motion was moved by Commissioner Insinna and seconded by Vice Chair Coveney:

That The Niagara Parks Commission moved into the Closed Session.

Carried.

The Niagara Parks Commission moved into the Closed Session at 9:41 a.m. with the following persons in attendance:

Members: Chair Bob Gale
Vice Chair Graham Coveney
Commissioner April Cotton
Commissioner Spencer DeWolfe (virtually)
Commissioner Tom Insinna
Commissioner Wayne Redekop
Commissioner Ted Salci

Staff: David Adames, Chief Executive Officer/Secretary to the Commission
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Bob Gale
Chair

Darla Jones
Executive Assistant to the Chair and
CEO/Recording Secretary

David Adames
Chief Executive Officer/
Secretary to the Commission

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