



**THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WAINFLEET  
BIG FORKS DRAIN STEERING COMMITTEE**

BFDCS 02/2026

June 24, 2026 –10:00 A.M.

BOARDROOM 1/ZOOM

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1. **Call to Order**
2. **Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof**
3. **Previous Meeting Minutes**
  - a) Minutes of the Big Forks Drain Steering Committee Meeting held February 25, 2026
4. **Business Arising**
  - a) RJ Burnside Engineering Update
  - b) Public Consultation (discussion and examples)
  - c) Steering Committee Terms of Reference (final review and ratification)
5. **Other Business**
6. **Next Meeting Date**

Wednesday, October 21, 2026 @ 10:00 a.m.
7. **Adjournment of Meeting**

**THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF WAINFLEET  
BIG FORKS DRAIN STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES**

BFDSC01/26  
DECEMBER 1, 2025  
10:00 A.M.  
BOARDROOM 1/ZOOM

PRESENT:           L. Aarts           Chair, Drainage Advisory Committee (Township)  
                      C. Biberhofer    Fisheries and Oceans Canada (via Zoom)  
                      A. Chrastina     Clerk (Township)  
                      E. DeLay         Project Engineer (RJ Burnside)  
                      M. Jemison      Drainage Superintendent (Township)  
                      E. Miller         Project Assistant (RJ Burnside)  
                      R. Nan           Manager of Operations (Township)  
                      K. Peters         Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority  
                      J. Van Rooy     Drainage Superintendent (Haldimand County)  
                      L. Wren          Fisheries and Oceans Canada

REGRETS:           T. Gilmore       Township Councillor  
                      S. Vander Veen  Municipal Drains Lead (RJ Burnside)

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**8. Call to Order**

The Drainage Superintendent called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

**9. Declarations of Interest and the General Nature Thereof**

None.

**10. Business Arising**

a) Introductions and Round Table

Participants briefly introduced themselves and their role related to the Big Forks Drain project.

b) Background Information Presentation

The Drainage Superintendent provided a brief presentation outlining the history of the Big Forks Drain project from 2019 to present.

c) Current Conditions, Findings

RJ Burnside representatives shared a presentation primarily outlining survey findings and next steps:

- Most areas have a metre of sediment
- Some drawings have been generated from surveys

- Currently working on cross sections (every 100m) to compare existing conditions to proposed improvement
- Review of RJ Burnside project team roles
- The design is in its infancy currently
- Final survey spring 2026 (complete to outlet) with finalized drawings to follow
- Consultation with NPCA and other partners to come
- Large scale public consultation to follow

d) Steering Committee Terms of Reference Discussion

The committee reviewed the draft Terms of Reference and will further review for ratification at the next meeting.

11. **Other Business**

- a) Fisheries and Oceans confirmed the natural watercourse portion is not currently classified in AgMaps and that there are some Species at Risk considerations.
- b) NPCA advised there are two new Water Resources Engineers on staff now.
- c) None of the participants are aware of any local naturalist groups that should be engaged.

12. **Next Meeting Date**

Wednesday, June 24, 2026 @ 10:00 a.m.

13. **Adjournment of Meeting**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

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M. Jemison, CHAIR

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A. Chrastina, RECORDING SECRETARY

# Terms of Reference

## Big Forks Drain Steering Committee

### Overview:

The Township of Wainfleet Council initiated a Section 78 Drainage Act Improvement Project on the Big Forks Municipal Drain in March 2024. The improvement project seeks to facilitate a fulsome cleaning of the municipal drain and extend the drain downstream to provide outlet for other municipal drains in the Township.

With a current watershed of approximately 16,271 acres and providing outlet for 24 municipal drains in the Township of Wainfleet and Haldimand County the drain is critical to draining agricultural, residential and institutional lands. Looking to extending the drain downstream the watershed has the opportunity to increase up to 42,000 acres and provide outlet for an additional 50+ municipal drains.

Expected to be one of the largest municipal drain projects in the history of the province, combined with local challenges and working in areas designated as Wetlands with Significance MNR, this project requires the creation of a steering committee to help shape the design and guide the project.

### Purpose:

The Big Forks Drain Steering Committee (BFDSC) will be a collaborative network focused on fulfilling the obligations under the Drainage Act to update and improve the Big Forks Municipal Drain.

The BFDSC seeks to provide support and help shape the design of the project to maintain compliance with relevant regulations and complete the project in a timely and cost-effective manner. Representatives will provide input and direction from their respective organizations throughout the duration of the project.

### Term

The term of membership shall be the duration of the Big Forks Drain Improvement Project, starting in January 2026 and commencing with the issuance of the Construction Completion Certificate.

### BFDSC Chair:

Township of Wainfleet Drainage Superintendent shall serve as Committee Chair and preside over meetings and Committee business.

It is the role of the Chair to preside over Committee meetings so its business can be carried out efficiently and effectively, and to act as a liaison between the Committee, Township of Wainfleet Council and the public. The Chair shall also ensure the following:

- Encourage balanced and professional discussion
- Enforce on all occasions the observance of order and decorum among members
- Adjourn the meeting when business is concluded

## Representatives

BFDSC should be comprised of individuals representing organizations involved in municipal drain projects as per the Drainage Act and individuals representing the Big Forks Drain watershed.

Suggested Representation:

- Community Members / Property owners from the Big Forks Drain watershed
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans
- Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority
- Township of Wainfleet
- Haldimand County
- RJ Burnside
- OMAFA

## BFDSC Member Organization Representatives

- Provide recommendations to the Committee for advice and/or decision making
- Speak on behalf of their organization to commit resources (in-kind or other) and support actions of BFDSC.
- Identify and bring forth new issues and opportunities.
- Represent the range of ideas and concerns from members within their organization, as appropriate.
- Review meeting materials in advance of the meetings and arrive prepared to provide a broad perspective on the issues under consideration.
- Respect the needs of other sectors, individuals, or organizations and operate in a respectful, professional and non-biased manner.

## Meetings:

- BFDSC Meetings will be chaired by Township of Wainfleet Staff
- BFDSC meetings will be held quarterly.
- Meetings shall be conducted in hybrid, Township of Wainfleet to provide physical meeting space with connectivity for members to join virtually
- Agendas and supporting materials will be sent by the Chair at least one (1) week prior to the meeting.

- Coordination of the meetings (including agenda setting) is the responsibility of the Township of Wainfleet.
- Additional meetings, as needed to fulfill actions, may be required outside of the regular BFDSC meetings.
- Meetings shall be governed by the Township of Wainfleet's Procedural by-law, being a by-law to govern the calling, place and proceedings of the meeting