

ST. CLAIR RIVER BINATIONAL PUBLIC ADVISORY COUNCIL  
(BPAC)

Final Draft Minutes  
Meeting 2015-2  
Thursday, March 26, 2015  
Lambton-Kent District School Board  
200 Wellington Street  
Sarnia, Ontario

ATTENDEES:

Donna Strang  
Terry Richardson  
April White  
Patty Hayman  
Kris Lee

Kathy Watts  
Theresa Warren  
Marina Plain  
Anne Marie Gillis  
Patty Troy

Peter Westfall  
Archie Kerr  
Naomi Williams  
Fred Kemp

REGRETS:

Phil Vallance  
Melanie Foose  
Ted Briggs  
John Jackson

Judy Ogden  
Paulette Duhaime  
Darrell Randell  
Craig Griffiths

Monte McNaughton  
Sheri Faust  
Fred Fuller

GUESTS:

Krista Desrochers

**Call to Order and Introductions – K. Lee**

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm by Kris Lee. Councillor Anne Marie Gillis was introduced as the new City of Sarnia representative to BPAC. In addition, a private citizen interested in becoming involved with the St. Clair River Remedial Action Plan (RAP) was introduced, Krista Desrochers.

**Adoption, Additions or Corrections of Draft Agenda - All**

The draft agenda was reviewed and additions or corrections were solicited from BPAC members.

**Moved by Archie Kerr and seconded by Peter Westfall that the draft agenda be accepted with the following revisions: 1) Kirsten Lyons will provide the committee report for the Friends of the St. Clair River Watershed for Sheri Faust, 2) April will report on recent Canadian RAP Implementation Committee activities and 3) there will be no report for the Four Agency Managers Work Group.**

***CARRIED***

**Approval of February 10, 2015 Draft Minutes and Actions – All**

Actions arising from the last meeting on February 10, 2015 were reviewed along with the draft minutes. Donna Strang informed BPAC members that revisions to the draft minutes were received from Annette DeMaria of Environmental Consulting and Technology regarding the

Chrysler Beach Project after they were circulated. The revisions were minor with most providing additional details about the project or cost corrections. The revisions were reflected in the hard copy minutes available at the meeting.

**ACTION** – Donna Strang will circulate the revised February 10, 2015 meeting minutes to BPAC members with those prepared for the current meeting.

**Moved by Fred Kemp and seconded by Archie Kerr that the draft minutes of February 10, 2015 be accepted with the modifications identified.**

**CARRIED**

**AOC Conference Update – K. Lee and P. Troy**

Kris Lee and Patty Troy attended the Areas of Concern (AOC) conference in Toledo, Ohio, sponsored by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). They provided BPAC members with an overview of some of the topics discussed during the two day event.

**“Areas of Concern in Recovery (AiR)” Explanation:**

One of the major topics at the AOC conference was the designation of an “Area of Concern in Recovery (AiR)”. The AiR designation is a temporary status that can be given to an AOC where all restoration activities are completed, but the chemical, biological or physical conditions of the ecosystem require additional time to recover (between 5 and 15 years). A draft guidance document was prepared by a Task Team consisting of federal, provincial and state representatives to help determine what conditions must be met to designate an AOC as an AiR along with challenges and other considerations. This document will be posted on binational.net at the end of March or April, 2015. The AiR designation has been discussed on the Canadian side of the St. Clair River AOC and will be on the next Four Agency Managers Work Group agenda.

It is unclear how the AiR status will be applied to binational AOCs. Patty Troy drafted a motion expressing BPACs desire that the St. Clair River AOC be delisted ONLY when both the Canadian and American sides have been restored. She would like to see this motion approved by BPAC and provided to the federal, provincial and state governments.

**Patty Troy moved that the proposed motion be accepted by BPAC members:**

“The St. Clair River BPAC recognizes that our AOC is one area. While completion of management actions may allow delisting criteria to be met and BUIs removed by each country separately, we will not recommend AOC delisting until all BUIs are removed on both sides of the border. This will not preclude, but rather encourage the use of the “Area of Concern in Recovery” designation in one or both countries while awaiting the necessary recovery for all BUI removals.”

**TABLED**

BPAC members felt more time was required to review the proposed motion and learn more about AiRs before approval.

**ACTION** – Patty Troy will solicit feedback on the draft motion at the next BPAC meeting.

**ACTION** – Donna Strang will send the link and a reminder to BPAC members to read the draft AiR Guidance document once it is posted on binational.net.

**Public Education Discussion:**

Another major topic of discussion at the AOC conference surrounded effective public outreach and education activities. Kris Lee and Patty Troy prepared a survey that was distributed to BPAC members at the meeting. The purpose of the survey was to solicit feedback on BPACs

role in public outreach and how to build and maintain stewardship and advocacy for the St. Clair River.

BPAC members were asked to review and fill out the survey and provide comments on the questions (e.g, wordsmithing, order, etc.).

**ACTION** – BPAC members will review, fill out and comment on the survey. All feedback can be provided to Kris Lee via email at [lee@kent.net](mailto:lee@kent.net).

**ACTION** – Donna Strang will send an electronic version of the survey to BPAC members present at the meeting.

*Life After Delisting:*

Included in the public outreach and education survey were questions surrounding “Life After Delisting”. Comments and answers can be forwarded to Kris Lee as discussed above.

**Gregory A.D. – World of Water Chicago Dive and Travel Expo Gold Coast Award Winners – K. Lee and P. Troy**

Kathy Johnson and Greg Lashbrook of Gregory A.D. received the Gold Coast Award at the Chicago Dive and Travel Expo for their diving work in the Great Lakes including the St. Clair River. Videos taken during their diving trips have helped assess the effectiveness of underwater habitat restoration, provided visuals for public education and identified environmental issues in need of correction. BPAC members were encouraged to send messages of congratulations to Kathy Johnson and Greg Lashbrook on their achievement.

**OMOECC, EC, MDEQ and USEPA Updates on Canadian and American Projects – T. Briggs, A. White, M. Foose and R. Ellison**

*OMOECC Update:*

Ted Briggs was unable to attend the meeting. No update was available.

*EC Update:*

April White provided BPAC with an update on Environment Canada activities. Great Lakes Sustainability Fund (GLSF) proposals and recommendations have been submitted for Ministerial approval. Four proposals were submitted (excluding the RAP Governance proposal) with three moving forward at a recommended 100% funding. The total value of the three projects is \$213 K. The RAP Governance proposal was recommended for five years of funding totaling \$280 K. It is hoped that Ministerial approvals will be provided in early April or May.

In addition, Environment Canada is currently drafting a new work plan under the Great Lakes Action Plan (GLAP) for the next five years. The GLAP outlines science and monitoring activities required in all Canadian AOCs. Ten projects for the St. Clair River AOC were recommended totaling approximately \$1.4 million.

**ACTION** – April White will circulate to BPAC members the Great Lakes Action Plan work plan covering 2015 to 2020 once it is finalized.

**ACTION** – April White will circulate a list of the ten projects recommended for funding under the Great Lakes Action Plan in the St. Clair River AOC.

*MDEQ Update:*

Melanie Foose was unable to attend the meeting. No update was available.

*USEPA Update:*

Rose Ellison was unable to attend the meeting. No update was available.

## **Committee Reports:**

### **Statewide Public Advisory Council (SPAC) – P. Troy and P. Duhaime:**

Patty Troy reported that 2015-16 PAC support grant applications are due to the Great Lakes Commission this month. PAC support grants provide some funding to assist Beneficial Use Impairment (BUI) removals. Sheri Faust is currently preparing the grant application. Patty drafted a letter of support on behalf of BPAC for the PAC support grant for the St. Clair River AOC.

**Moved by Archie Kerr and seconded by Kathy Watts that BPAC supports the application for the 2015-16 PAC support grant.**

**CARRIED**

Patty Troy also reported that the next SPAC meeting will be held on May 4 and 5<sup>th</sup> in Port Huron. The meeting will include a site tour of the Blue Water River Walk along the St. Clair River. She expressed that BPAC members are welcome to attend.

Lastly, legislative briefings to State Senators are being organized for June 2015 in Lansing, Michigan. These briefings provide opportunities for updates and overviews of the work being conducted in AOCs and encourage continued financial support for the program.

Kris Lee reported that on the Canadian side, a conference will be held in Sarnia that brings together all Canadian and American mayors of Great Lakes cities. More information regarding the event will be passed along to BPAC members once available.

### **Friends of the St. Clair River (FOSCR) – D. Randell and T. Burrell:**

Kris Lee provided an update on FOSCR activities on behalf of Darrell Randell and Terry Burrell who were unable to attend the meeting. A number of Phragmites eradication and wetland enhancement and creation projects are being supported by FOSCR that are or will be conducted in the Mitchell's Bay area of the St. Clair River AOC. In addition, because community consensus was not achieved by members of the Stag Island Fraternal Fellowship Association regarding the Stag Island Phragmites and wetland project, a letter has been sent indicating that funds originally designated for this project have been withdrawn.

### **Friends of the St. Clair River Watershed (FOSCRW) – S. Faust:**

Kirsten Lyons reported on FOSCRW activities on behalf of Sheri Faust who was unable to attend the meeting. Two upcoming events supported by FOSCRW include: 1) a spring clean-up along the Blue Water River Walk and 2) the Sturgeon Festival being held in Port Huron on May 30<sup>th</sup>. Lou Rodriguez, a local chalk artist will be coming to the event and creating chalk art along the Blue Water River Walk. The FOSCRW were also selected to receive funding that would support the programming, events and volunteer management for the Blue Water River Walk.

### **BPAC Membership Subcommittee – A. Kerr:**

Archie Kerr presented to BPAC an overview of the current status of the BPAC membership. Archie Kerr and Fred Kemp agreed to go through the membership list and see which sectors required representation and who on the list had not attended a meeting in the last year. Discussions surrounded which sectors did not have representation and whether they were still required. In 2014, Canadian sectors that had no representation included Labour, Shipping, Agriculture and Government. In the United States, no representation was recorded for Citizens at Large, Community Groups, Agriculture, Health or Government. There were 10 Canadian and 17 United States representatives that did not attend any of the six BPAC meetings held in 2014.

**ACTION** – Fred and Archie will report back to BPAC at the next meeting. Actions required include:

1. Review sectors that are required
2. Follow-up with people that did not attend a meeting in 2014 to see if they are still interested, and
3. Attempt to fill any vacancies.

**ACTION** – Donna Strang will forward the BPAC By-Laws to Archie and Fred.

Canadian RAP Implementation Committee (CRIC) – P. Vallance:

April White reported on CRIC activities on behalf of Phil Vallance who was unable to attend the meeting. The CRIC met earlier in March. A number of BUI status assessments are nearing completion including the “Restrictions on Dredging Activities” and “Beach Closings” status assessments. In addition, a draft discussion paper focusing on the “Restrictions on Drinking Water Consumption or Taste or Odour” Problems has been drafted and currently going through reviews.

Four Agency Managers Work Group – T. Briggs:

Ted Briggs was unable to attend the meeting. No update was available.

Other Business:

1. Sediment Management Project:

BPAC members inquired about the status of the Sediment Management Project that would have three areas of contaminated sediment restored along the Canadian shoreline of the St. Clair River. Concern over increased costs due to the delay in implementation was expressed. It was suggested that BPAC write a letter encouraging the governments to start implementation of this project.

**ACTION** – Kris Lee and Patty Troy will draft a letter expressing BPACs concern and encourage governments to move forward with implementation of the Sediment Management Project.

2. **ACTION** – Donna Strang will forward Anne Marie Gillis the “Who Are We” Brochure that describes the roles and responsibilities of BPAC, among other committees.
3. A Lake Huron Regional Restoration Meeting will be held in Port Huron at the Great Lakes Maritime Centre on May 12, 2015.

Next Meeting Date:

The next BPAC meeting will be held on May 12, 2015 in Port Huron, Michigan (Location – TBD).

Adjournment:

**Moved by Marina Plain and seconded by Fred Kemp that the meeting be adjourned.**

**CARRIED**

The meeting was adjourned by Kris Lee at 8:30 pm.