

ST. CLAIR RIVER BINATIONAL PUBLIC ADVISORY COUNCIL
(BPAC)

Minutes - Draft
Meeting 2017-2

Wednesday, May 24, 2017
Lambton Kent District School Board
200 Wellington Street
Sarnia, Ontario

ATTENDEES:

Kathy Watts
Theresa Warren
Kris Lee
Peter Westfall
Kelly Johnson

Marina Plain
Naomi Williams
Ted Briggs
Terry Burrell

April White
Patty Troy
Melanie Foose
Paulette Duhaime

REGRETS:

Frank Frisk

Monte McNaughton

Jim Clatworthy

GUESTS:

Jon Harding – Imperial Oil Limited
Craig Anderson – Imperial Oil Limited

Call to Order and Introductions – P. Troy

The meeting was called to order by Kris Lee at 6:40 pm.
Kelly Johnson was introduced as the new RAP Coordinator.

Adoption, Additions or Corrections of Draft Agenda – All

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

Moved by Kathy Watts and seconded by Patty Troy that the draft agenda be accepted with the following additions: 1) Science Symposium by April White after agenda item “Great Lakes Protection Act Workshop” and 2) Celebration of BUI Delisting under “Other Business”.

CARRIED

Approval of March 15, 2017 Draft Minutes and Actions – All

Actions arising from the last meeting on March 15, 2017 were reviewed along with the draft minutes.

- Kris Lee is awaiting a response to the Freedom of Information (FOI) request to MOECC. The total cost of the FOI request has not been determined.

Moved by Theresa Warren and seconded by Paulette Duhaime that the draft minutes of March 15, 2017 be accepted as presented.

Imperial Oil Limited – Update – J. Harding and C. Anderson

Jon Harding and Craig Anderson of Imperial Oil Limited attended the meeting to speak to members about emergency communications and procedures at Imperial Oil's Sarnia plant. Imperial Oil Limited is a national company which has an integrated chemical and refinery operation and also research facilities on the St. Clair River. Imperial Oil is Canada's largest refiner of oil. Between 900 and 1000 people are employed at the Sarnia plant. The Sarnia operation began in 1897 as an oil refinery. The chemical aspect of operations in Sarnia started in the 1950s. Crude is supplied to the plant through pipelines.

On February 23, 2017 while shutting units down at the plant, significant flaring occurred. This was considered an operational issue and prompted an incident response on site. Emails and faxes of an information notice were widely distributed, including to media on both sides of the border. The notice was also posted on the Imperial information line stating, "Imperial personnel are currently responding to an operating issue and as a result there is significant flaring at Imperial Sarnia Site. More information will be provided as soon as it becomes available." Information was also dispersed through CAER (Community Awareness and Emergency Response). Information updates were provided to media, officials, including MOECC, and the community using information bulletins sent by email, FAX and messages posted on both updates lines – Imperial's and the CAER information line.

At approximately 9:30 p.m., Imperial became aware of images of the flaring that were circulating on Facebook. The photos were alarming as it looked as though the site was on fire.

As a result of this incident Imperial Oil has created a Facebook page which will be used to inform the public of incidents at the plant. The Facebook page will also be used to share industry and company information with followers of the page. Imperial Oil will continue to use a Twitter account to convey important information with the public. The company also updated their information bulletin on the corporate website, created a "Flaring 101" document, ran informational advertisements in local papers, and updated their emergency response distribution lists.

Representatives from the US have been added to Imperial Oil's emergency distribution list.

For up to date information from Imperial Oil, members of the public can call 519-339-2111.

Imperial Oil is also a member of the Community Awareness and Emergency Response (CAER) organization. Information on incidents call be obtained by calling 1-855-472-7642 (1-855-4SARNIA).

Patty Troy requested Jon Harding return to speak to BPAC members about the 2016 hydrochloric acid hydrocarbons event when he is able to share information with the public.

ACTION – Jon Harding will send Kelly Johnson a copy of his presentation for distribution to BPAC members.

"Beach Closings" Beneficial Use Impairment (BUI) Status Assessment and Recommendation – Canada – T. Briggs

Ted Briggs presented to BPAC the Draft Status Assessment and Recommendation Report for the "Beach Closings" Beneficial Use Impairment (BUI) on the Canadian side of the St. Clair

River Area of Concern (AOC). The delisting criteria for this BUI stated that this BUI could be re-designated if “less than 20% of the geometric means of water samples collected over the swimming season, at identified beaches within the St. Clair River AOC, exceed the Provincial Water Quality Objective for *E. coli* or is similar to a suitable non-AOC reference site, when assessed over a period of at least three to five years”. It was presented that based on the data collected on the Canadian side of the St. Clair River re-designation of this BUI is recommended. This recommendation is based on the findings that the sampling completed in the St. Clair River showed no difference when compared to the upstream reference beaches.

Moved by Terry Burrell and seconded by Peter Westfall that the recommendation to remove the “Beach Closings” BUI from “Impaired” to “Not Impaired” be accepted on the Canadian side of the St. Clair River AOC.

CARRIED with one abstention

ACTION - The draft removal recommendation will be updated and distributed to BPAC for final comment.

Great Lakes Protection Act Workshop – K. Lee, A. White

Kris Lee reported to BPAC that she attended the Great Lakes Protection Act (GLPA) workshop on behalf of BPAC and the Wallaceburg Advisory Team for a Cleaner Habitat (WATCH). This is a provincial act which focusses on the safety and protection of Ontario’s Great Lakes. Kris will keep BPAC updated on the GLPA Alliance.

Science Symposium – A. White

April White attended the Science Symposium on April 12, 2017. Aamjiwnaang First Nation hosted the event with support from Walpole Island First Nation. The theme was Water, Wetlands and Critters. Presentations focused on a number of topics including: wetland health within the AOC, contaminant burdens, macroinvertebrates, and wetland restoration. It was noted that there has been dramatic improvement in the St. Clair River AOC since the Stage 1 RAP. Mercury levels in the suspended sediment have stabilized, however, phosphorous levels seem to have increased since 2007.

Patty Troy requested that Debbie Burniston, a presenter at the Science Symposium speak to BPAC regarding the Head and Mouth Water Quality Survey conducted by ECCC. Patty Troy also raised a question regarding Ken Drouillard’s presentation. Ken stated that 8 metric tons of mercury were found in St. Clair River sediments. Patty questioned where these are located.

ACTION – April White will contact Debbie Burniston to obtain a copy of her report for circulation to BPAC members.

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

OMOECC Update:

Ted Briggs reported that the OMOECC is continuing to fund the FOSCR through COA. They are also working on projects with St. Clair Region Conservation Authority focused on shoreline softening.

ECCC Update:

April White reported that ECCC is working on finalizing the science and monitoring work plan and water monitoring at the head and mouth of the river will continue. Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) and Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) are completing wetland assessments in the Mitchell's Bay area. A habitat restoration project lead by Rural Lambton Stewardship Network (RLSN) has been recommended for funding approval through the Great Lakes Stewardship Fund. April is currently exploring the development of a video on the AOC with a focus on coastal wetland restoration.

MDEQ Update:

Melanie Foose advised that the Habitat BUI draft report is currently out for the 30 day public comment period and the notice of public comment with the link to the updated report was provided to BPAC.

Melanie raised concerns about the Cottrellville Township Shoreline project. The entire site is being mowed including all native herbaceous plant species that were planted. The trees and shrubs remain. Although there was no formal agreement preventing mowing of the site, the habitat plan was agreed to by the township, and there was an expectation that the site would remain as designed, including an area of native plant species – plants, shrubs and trees – as well as a large area of lawn available for an recreational purpose. Melanie requested support from BPAC to approach the township on this matter. Paulette Duhaime reported that Kirsten Lyons and herself will meet with the township supervisor to discuss this issue. Paulette will notify Melanie of the meeting date and time.

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 advised BPAC members that the spring SPAC meeting was held March 28, 2017 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. PAC support grants are forth coming. The next meeting will be held on June 12 -13, 2017. A legislative briefing will be held in October.

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

Terry Burrell reported that Don Hector, coordinator of the Chatham Kent Lambton Children's Water Festival (CKLCWF) presented at the May FOSCR meeting. The FOSCR have decided to increase their support for the 2017 CKLCWF.

Darrell Randell and Donna Strang attended Carolinian Canada Coalition's Go Wild Grow Wild event in London. This was a well-attended event by both adults and youth.

The Clay Creek project is nearing completion. This is a collaborative project between FOSCR and the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA).

Articles for the next FOSCR newsletter are due to Ken Hall by June 5th.

Friends of the St. Clair River (FOSCR) – USA – S. Faust

Patty Troy updated BPAC members on recent FOSCR (USA) activities on behalf of Sheri Faust who was unable to attend the meeting. The Sturgeon Festival is being held on Saturday, June 3rd from 10 – 4 p.m. If anyone is able to volunteer, they are asked to contact Kirsten Lyons. There are still tickets left for the boat trip.

BPAC Membership Subcommittee – A. Kerr and F. Kemp

No new updates identified.

Canadian RAP Implementation Committee (CRIC) – K. Lee

Kris Lee advised BPAC that the last CRIC meeting was held on May 24, 2017. Comments from the CRIC on the draft “Restrictions on Drinking Water Consumption or Taste and Odour Problems” BUI discussion paper are due by the end of June. BPAC should be receiving the report by mid to end of summer.

Four Agency Managers Work Group – T. Briggs

The next Four Agency Managers Work Group meeting will be held via teleconference on June 29, 2017. Canadian comments on the “Restrictions on Dredging Activities” BUI report were recently received.

Other Business:

- Kris Lee advised BPAC members that a delisting celebration should be planned for the near future.
 - On the Canadian side “Beach Closings”, “Restrictions on Dredging Activities”, and “Bird and Animal Deformities or Reproductive Problems” BUIs are expected to be re-designated , while on the US side “Bird and Animal Deformities or Reproductive Problems” and “Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat” are upcoming.
 - It is recommended that an event be planned for the end of September/early October.
 - Possible locations suggested by BPAC members were Walpole Island, the Point Edward Optimist hall or the Point Edward Yacht Club.

ACTION – Peter Westfall will check into the cost of the Optimist hall and the yacht club.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 20, 2017 in Port Huron, Michigan at the St. Clair County Building.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Kris Lee.