

ST. CLAIR RIVER BINATIONAL PUBLIC ADVISORY COUNCIL
(BPAC)

Minutes - FINAL
Meeting 2019-2

Thursday, April 4, 2019
St. Clair Power Plant
4901 Pointe Drive
East China, Michigan

ATTENDEES:

Kelly Johnson
Patty Troy
Melanie Foose
Kirsten Lyons
Fred Kemp

Kathy Watts
Kris Lee
Marina Plain
Rose Ellison
Donna Blue

Paulette Duhaime
Archie Kerr
Steve Demick
Susan MacFarlane

GUESTS:

Judy Lindberg
Meghan Price
Rommy Sleiman
Alexis Thomas

Bob Coffey
Rachael Barlock
Jason Roggenbuck

Justin Westmiller
Katie Grantham
Amanda Kosch

REGRETS:

John Jackson
Peter Westfall
Theresa Warren

Christine Loeffler
Sheri Faust
Lori Eschenburg

Dan Collins
Terry Burrell

Call to Order and Introductions – P. Troy

The meeting was called to order by Patty Troy.

Adoption, Additions or Corrections of Draft Agenda – All

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

Moved by Fred Kemp and seconded by Archie Kerr that the draft agenda be accepted with the following addition: 1) Patty Troy requested that Paulette Duhaime discuss a meeting held with Transport Canada during the US Drinking Water BUI Update.

CARRIED

Approval of January 24, 2019 Draft Minutes and Actions – All

The draft minutes from the last meeting on January 24, 2019 were reviewed.

- No corrections to be made to draft minutes.

Moved by Kathy Watts and seconded by Paulette Duhaime that the draft minutes of January 24, 2019 be accepted as prepared.

CARRIED

Introduction of Justin Westmiller – P. Troy and J. Westmiller

Patty Troy introduced Justin Westmiller, the newly appointed Director of the Office of Homeland Security/Emergency Management with the County of St. Clair. Justin provided a brief introduction of himself and his position with the County.

Presentation by DTE Energy – R. Sleiman

Rommy Sleiman of DTE Energy provided the BPAC with an informative presentation about the company's St. Clair Power Plant operations. DTE has three facilities – St. Clair Power Plant, Belle River Power Plant and Blue Water Energy Center.

The St. Clair Power Plant participates in a number of environmental initiatives. The facility is ISO 14001 Environmental Management System certified, as well as certified as a Clean Corporate Citizen and Wildlife Habitat certified. They also participate in the Adopt a Highway program in St. Clair County and an eaglet banding program.

Environmental staff at the plant ensure the plant operates according to all of its environmental permits and all applicable regulations. They also complete necessary environmental reporting, regular inspections, monitoring of air, water, and waste systems, and manage voluntary programs like the Wildlife Habitat Council certification. Staff also participate in safety equipment deployment drills to ensure they are prepared in the case of an emergency situation.

Burning coal produces carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides. These gases are vented from the boiler through precipitators to the stack. Fly ash, which is very light, exits the boiler along with the hot gases. Electrostatic precipitators (large air filters) remove 99.4 percent of fly ash before going out the stacks. Depending on the market demand, fly ash is sold to the cement industry for construction. The facility also has a number of treatment basins on site to contain by-products produced during production.

Huron Erie Corridor Drinking Water Monitoring Program – R. Barlock and M. Price

Rachael Barlock from the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SEMCOG) and Meghan Price of Environmental Consulting & Technology, Inc. presented to the BPAC on the Huron to Erie Real Time Drinking Water Monitoring program. This program originally started in the mid-2000s, but participation slowly declined over the years. New funding was received from the Michigan Office of the Great Lakes in hopes of restoring the program. The goal of the program is to connect operators of all 14 water treatment plants along the corridor to improve reaction time if an issue occurs. The funding allowed for the hiring of a consulting team which visited the water treatment plants to determine what equipment was needed to resurrect the Drinking Water Monitoring program. It was decided that new multi-parameter sondes would be installed at the plants. This piece of equipment will monitor conductivity/temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, and blue/green algae. The new sondes will significantly reduce maintenance costs as they require less frequent calibration. Updated Data Loggers are connected to each sonde allowing water treatment plant operators to view real-time data. This data can be viewed on a password protected website allowing operators to see data from each plant. The website can be accessed from anywhere at any time. Each water treatment plant agreed to participate in quarterly stakeholder meetings, committed to an annual maintenance contract and regular

servicing/calibration of the equipment. If this project is successful more funding can be requested to purchase better equipment and improve communication. It is hoped that in the future the real time data will be available to the public.

Report from BPAC Membership Committee – A. Kerr and F. Kemp

Archie Kerr presented member attendance statistics for the last two years.

ACTION – Patty Troy and Kelly Johnson will provide Archie Kerr and Fred Kemp with a list of BPAC members sitting on subcommittees.

ACTION – Archie Kerr and Fred Kemp will contact BPAC members who are consistently absent from BPAC meetings, and do not attend subcommittee meetings, to ask whether they wish to remain on the BPAC.

US Drinking Water Update – P. Troy and P. Duhaime

The US Drinking Water subcommittee had their last conference call meeting on April 2, 2019. The subcommittee has compiled a list of National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) dischargers to the river and have contacted those dischargers to inquire whether they have spill prevention plans in place and when those plans were last updated. The information received from dischargers will be included in the Drinking Water BUI Removal Recommendation.

Members of the BPAC including Paulette Duhaime, Patty Troy, Kris Lee, and Marina Plain, attended a meeting on March 21, 2019 hosted by Transport Canada in Samia, Ontario.

Attending members relayed concerns regarding:

- The notification of major spills.
- The procedure followed when a spill occurs.
- The need to have in place proper spill response plans.
- Higher water levels in the river are resulting in larger wakes which impact habitat projects.

Transport Canada informed meeting participants that a spill occurring while a ship is in transit is handled by the Coast Guard, whereas a spill that occurs while a ship is loading or unloading is the concern of Transport Canada.

Updates from OMOECC, ECCC, Michigan OGL and USEPA – T. Briggs, A. White, M. Foose and R. Ellison

OMOECF Update:

Ted Briggs was unable to attend the meeting.

Kelly Johnson informed the BPAC that the provincial government has not provided direction regarding Canada-Ontario Agreement (COA) funding which has supported St. Clair River Remedial Action Plan coordination, outreach and education in the past.

ECCC Update:

April White, through communication with Kelly Johnson, informed the BPAC that RAP Coordination has 1 year of funding remaining from Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC). Applications for the Great Lakes Protection Initiative (GLPI) will be due in January 2020 and RAP Coordination will have to be submitted as a project application. The most recent call for GLPI funding closed in mid-January. Two applications were submitted for projects in the

St. Clair River AOC and recommendations have been made. Successful applications will be announced in the coming months.

The Sediment Management Project continues to move forward. Three public open house sessions have been planned for April:

- Monday, April 15, 2019 – 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
Clearwater Arena – Lower Community Room
1400 Wellington Street, Sarnia, Ontario
Presentation at 6:30 pm
- Wednesday, April 17, 2019 – 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm
Wallaceburg Municipal Office – Multipurpose Room
786 Dufferin Avenue, Wallaceburg, Ontario
Presentation at 1:00 pm
- Wednesday, April 17, 2019 – 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm
Courtright Fire Hall
1550 Eighth Street, Courtright, Ontario
Presentation at 6:30 pm

Michigan OGL Update:

Melanie Foose informed the BPAC that as of April 22, 2019 the Department of Environmental Quality is restructuring as the Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE). The Michigan Office of the Great Lakes will join this new department.

USEPA Update:

Rose Ellison advised the BPAC that the last monitoring report for Krispin Drain will be released shortly. The Krispin Drain project was the last of the habitat projects to be completed and this report will summarize two years of monitoring data, comparing pre-project data to post-project data. General observations at the project site include:

- Water in the project area has increased approximately 2.5 feet since the project was installed; this resulted in planted vegetation being drowned out.
- The fish community and structure is good or better, with more variation of species.
- Phragmites is coming back into the site and needs to be controlled.
- Native seed stock is present on the site, but is being overgrown by phragmites.

This final report will be sent out to the BPAC when it is finalized. The scope of monitoring will now shift to more general monitoring in the river rather than at specific sites.

Committee Reports:

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

The last SPAC meeting was held on November 27, 2018. The next meeting is scheduled for May 15 and 16, 2019.

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

The Friends of the St. Clair River are waiting to hear about Canada-Ontario Agreement (COA) funding for 2019-2020.

Friends of the St. Clair River – USA – K. Lyons

Kirsten Lyons informed the BPAC that the Friends US have hired a strategic planning consultant to create a fund development plan. The group has also hired a public relations staff member who is a retired reporter.

The Sturgeon Festival is taking place June 1, 2019.
Friends are organizing a workshop for August 10, 2019 to teach paddlers how to identify invasive species. The workshop will take place in the Krispin Drain.

BPAC Membership Subcommittee – A. Kerr and F. Kemp

Archie Kerr reported for the Membership Subcommittee earlier in the agenda.

Canadian RAP Implementation Committee (CRIC) – A. White

April White informed the BPAC that the Fish Tumour BUI assessment report is in progress. The report will come to the BPAC for review once finalized by the CRIC.

For 2019 – 2020, the CRIC will be focused on the following report work:

- Finalizing Fish and Wildlife Populations Status Assessment.
- Drafting Drinking Water BUI Status Assessment.
- Compiling information for the Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat BUI.

The 4th Science Symposium is being held on April 10, 2019 from 5:30 – 8:30 at Bogart's Banquet Hall in Sombra, Ontario. The theme is "Fish Diversity, Health and Habitat".

Four Agency Managers Work Group – A. White

The U.S. government shutdown impacted the winter meeting, but a Four Agency Managers meeting is scheduled for April 24, 2019.

Other Business:

Green Drinks Sarnia

- Vince Gagner, general manager of the Sarnia-Lambton Environmental Association will be presenting at Green Drinks Sarnia on April 10, 2019.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date will be June 20th in the Sarnia, Ontario area.

Adjournment

Moved by Paulette Duhaime and seconded by Susan MacFarlane that the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED