

ST. CLAIR RIVER BINATIONAL PUBLIC ADVISORY COUNCIL
(BPAC)

Minutes - FINAL
Meeting 2018-4

Wednesday, October 10, 2018
St. Clair County Administration Building (Auditorium)
200 Grand River Ave.
Port Huron, Michigan

ATTENDEES:

Kelly Johnson
Patty Troy
Fred Kemp
Melanie Foose

Kathy Watts
Kris Lee
Naomi Williams

Paulette Duhaime
Dan Collins
Sheri Faust

GUESTS:

Vince Gagner

REGRETS:

Ted Briggs
Terry Burrell

April White
Christine Loeffler

Archie Kerr
Peter Westfall

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 Paulette Duhaime and seconded by Kris Lee that the draft agenda be accepted with the following revision: 1) Vince Gagner will provide a brief introduction after the presentation by Sheri Faust.

CARRIED

Approval of July 26, 2018 Draft Minutes and Actions – All

Actions arising from the last meeting on July 26, 2018 were reviewed along with the draft minutes.

- No corrections to be made to draft minutes.

Moved by Fred Kemp and seconded by Kris Lee that the draft minutes of July 26, 2018 be accepted as prepared.

CARRIED

Post Delisting Transition – Friends of the St. Clair River US – S. Faust

Sheri Faust, chair of the Friends of the St. Clair River board, spoke to BPAC about the future of the group once the river moves from an Area of Concern to an Area of Recovery.

Friends just celebrated their 11th anniversary and currently have approximately 100 volunteer stewards, 2 staff members, and 8 directors on their board. Over 2000 volunteer hours were logged in 2018!

The group is currently considering their future with the delisting of the St. Clair River expected in the foreseeable future. The focus of the group has always been the St. Clair River watershed, but they are looking to expand their focus to all watersheds of St. Clair County. The group's priority however, will always be the Area of Concern. The group will also continue to lead the delisting effort until it has been successful.

Friends believe they need to move towards operating as a non-profit organization rather than a committee, with a broad focus rather than the narrow focus they've had up to this point. This will also mean relying on current and additional staff members more than volunteers. The group has recently completed a strategic planning exercise and decided on the following strategic plan pillars: public relations, fundraising, organization capacity, watershed stewardship, and education programs. Friends will continue their transition in anticipation of delisting.

Sheri also shared Friends US organization chart. This will be distributed with the meeting minutes. Please forward comments or suggestions to Sheri.

Introduction of Vince Gagner – V. Gagner

Vince Gagner attended the BPAC meeting and was asked to provide a brief introduction of himself and his upcoming position with the Sarnia-Lambton Environmental Association (SLEA). Vince is from Wallaceburg and grew up on the St. Clair River. He has a background in toxicology and has held many interesting positions over the years. Along with being the General Manager of the Industrial Education Co-Op, and General Manager of CAER (Community Awareness Emergency Response), he will also be taking on the role of General Manager for SLEA when Dean Edwardson retires at the end of October 2018.

US Drinking Water BUI Update – P. Troy

The Drinking Water Subcommittee last met in-person in August and had conference calls in September and October. Patty Troy presented the finalized Drinking Water BUI criteria to BPAC and suggested some very minor amendments.

Moved by Paulette Duhaime and seconded by Kris Lee that the Drinking Water BUI criteria be approved with the minor amendments suggested by Patty Troy.

CARRIED

Canadian Drinking Water BUI Update – K. Johnson for A. White

Kelly Johnson provided a brief report on the Canadian Drinking Water BUI. While the Drinking Water BUI is certainly a priority there are a few other BUIs in line to move forward in 2019.

However, if possible, the Drinking Water BUI Status Assessment will be initiated.

Kris Lee also provided an update on work the Wallaceburg Advisory Team for a Cleaner Habitat (WATCH) has been doing related to the Drinking Water BUI. WATCH has requested a one-page fact sheet related to emergency management from each of the major dischargers along the St. Clair. These fact sheets will be submitted to the US Drinking Water Subcommittee for inclusion in their Drinking Water BUI document.

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. No update was available.

ECCC Update:

April White, through communication with Kelly Johnson, informed the BPAC that all agreements for 2018-19 to restore Areas of Concern under the Great Lakes Protection Initiative are in place. There are two agreements: St. Clair River RAP Coordination and funds for Rural Lambton Stewardship Network to continue maintenance on coastal wetland properties. The next round of proposals opens November 8, 2018 through an online process.

April also reported that DFO monitored the fish community at several coastal wetland sites this past summer. This is the second year of monitoring at these sites. The fish health report has not yet been received however, findings from the studies were presented, as they were known at the time, at the past two Science Symposiums.

It is expected the official re-designation of 3 BUIs (Bird and Animal Deformities or Reproductive Problems, Restrictions on Dredging, and Beach Closings) will happen very soon. Fish Tumours or Other Deformities, and Degraded Fish and Wildlife Populations are the next BUIs to be considered for re-designation, while Loss of Fish and Wildlife Habitat BUI information is compiled to prepare for its assessment.

Lastly, April informed the BPAC that the collaboration agreement between ECCC and industry for the St. Clair River Contaminated Sediment Management Design project is almost finalized. Provincial funding for the project has not yet been confirmed, but project partners remain optimistic that funding will be announced in the near future.

Michigan OGL Update:

Melanie Foose reported that the report from the 2016 sampling related to the Restrictions on Fish and Wildlife Consumption BUI report should be ready by the next BPAC meeting.

Melanie also reported that the Lake St. Clair Conference is being held on November 1 and 2, 2018 in Michigan. During this conference Kelly Johnson will be presenting on the Canadian Beach Closings BUI and related work, and April White will be giving a Canadian Areas of Concern Restoration update.

Melanie informed the BPAC that the Office of the Great Lakes is undergoing a programmatic audit, during which grant and BUI reports will be looked at. As part of the audit a survey was sent to PAC members.

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

There were no updates since the June meeting. A date for the next meeting will be set in the near future.

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

The next Friends meeting is being planned for October 25, 2018.

Work is underway on re-developing the Friends website, which also hosts information for the AOC.

Friends of the St. Clair River – USA – S. Faust

Friends have been in discussions with Enbridge US regarding funding for potential shoreline habitat projects. Along with the Wildlife Habitat Council, Friends have identified areas where shoreline habitat projects could be implemented if funding were available. Enbridge has proposed a \$50,000 project, while Friends suggested a multi-year project with additional funding to complete project maintenance and monitoring. Discussions will continue.

BPAC Membership Subcommittee – A. Kerr and F. Kemp

No new updates available.

Canadian RAP Implementation Committee (CRIC) – TBD

The next CRIC meeting is being planned for November 22, 2018 in the Sarnia area.

Four Agency Managers Work Group – M. Foose

The next Four Agency Manager's Committee meeting is being held on the Canadian side of the St. Clair River at Walpole Island First Nation on October 31, 2018. The meeting will include a tour of habitat restoration projects in the AOC.

Other Business:

St. Clair River Evening – K. Johnson

- Kelly Johnson informed BPAC that she is working to coordinate a "St. Clair River Evening" event which will be held in Sarnia on November 22, 2018 and be open to the public. The theme will be habitat restoration in the AOC. Further information will be circulated in the coming weeks.
***UPDATE since October 10th meeting: the St. Clair River Evening may be rescheduled to a different date.

Emergency Preparedness Conference – V. Gagner

- Vince Gagner reported to BPAC that he is looking to organize an Emergency Preparedness conference in early 2019. He may request a presentation about the AOC for the event.

IPAT Report – P. Troy

- Patty Troy requests an update on the IPAT Report. Patty suggested that a IPAT presentation be made at a future BPAC meeting.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date will be January 24 or 31, 2019 in the Sarnia, Ontario area.

Adjournment

Moved by Sheri Faust and seconded by Patty Troy that the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED