



Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC)

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

January 27, 2022- Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Minutes Prepared by Natasha Pozega

Attending Members:

Paulette Duhaime	U.S. Co-Chair, Citizen at Large	Natasha Pozega	St. Clair River RAP Coordinator
John Timar	City of Sarnia	Sheri Faust	Friends of the St. Clair River (U.S)
Patty Troy	US Co-Vice Chair, Env. Sector	Melanie Foose	Michigan EGLE
Donna Blue	St. Clair Region Conservation Authority	Ted Briggs	Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks
Kris Lee	CAN Co-Chair, Wallaceburg Advisory Team for Cleaner Habitat	Naomi Williams	Walpole Island First Nation
John Jackson	CAN Env. Sector	Susan MacFarlane	Citizen at large
Dennis Plain	Aamjiwnaang First Nation	April White	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Terry Burrell	City of Sarnia, Friends of St. Clair River (CAN)	Rose Ellison	US Environmental Protection Agency
Dan Collins	Citizen at large	Fred Kemp	City of Port Huron

Regrets:

None.

1.0 Call to Order, Introductions and Land Acknowledgement

Meeting called to order at 6:31pm.

Housekeeping:

- Notice to committee that the meeting would be recorded to assist with minutes production.
- Chair will ask for opposition to motions only.

2.0 Adoption, Additions or Corrections to Draft Agenda

Additions:

- Discussion on IJC Article relating heavy precipitation events to increase in public illness in Great lakes cities.

MOTION to approve the agenda as revised.

Moved by John Jackson and seconded by Terry Burrell.

CARRIED

3.0 Approval of August 19, 2021 Draft Minutes

MOTION to approve the minutes of the last meeting of the BPAC on August 19, 2021.

Moved by Kris Lee and seconded by Terry Burrell.

CARRIED

4.0 City of Sarnia Thank you Letter- Terry Burrell

A letter was received from the City of Sarnia thanking the BPAC for their involvement in restoring the St. Clair River Area following viewing of the AOC video. Terry will acknowledge receipt of the letter to the Municipal council.

5.0 Archie Kerr BPAC Resignation

Archie Kerr has been an active member of the BPAC for 24 years but has announced his resignation. Kris Lee provided Archie with a letter thanking him for his many years of service.

It was also noted that long-term member of the BPAC, John Misaros, has passed away. The BPAC is grateful for John's many years of service and sends their condolences to John's family.

6.0 City of Sarnia Legacy Landfill at Canatara Park- Terry Burrell

Many years ago, there was an industrial landfill (Former Michigan Avenue Landfill (FMAL)) where Canatara Park is now located (south end). While it has not been operational in over 50 years, it accumulated a lot of oily waste during its operation and periodically that waste will percolate upwards. The City has been working for many years to contain the waste through the installment of containment structures underground, and several monitoring wells across the area. In October 2021, City Council agreed to dedicate an additional \$300,000 to remediation of the legacy landfill. The City of Sarnia holds full responsibility for the landfill and submits regular reports to MECP.

Given the proximity of the Former Michigan Avenue Landfill (FMAL) to the Lake Chipican and Lake Huron, the BPAC is interested in pursuing options to be on record so that if this becomes a greater issue following delisting, action will be taken. A note was also made that this should be raised by the Source Water Protection person if it has not been already.

7.0 Elections of Officers- Fred Kemp

Positions to be elected include Canadian Co-Chair, Canadian Co-Vice Chair, U.S. Co-Chair, and U.S. Co-Vice Chair.

Nominations open for Canadian Co-Chair:

Patty Troy nominates Kris Lee, seconded by Susan MacFarlane.

Kris Lee accepts the nomination.

MOTION to close nominations.

Moved by Terry Burrell and seconded by Paulette Duhaime.

CARRIED

MOTION to elect Kris Lee as the Canadian Co-Chair of the Binational Public Advisory Council.

Moved by Terry Burrell and seconded by Patty Troy.

Unanimous.

CARRIED

Nominations open for Canadian Co-Vice Chair:

Kris Lee nominates Terry Burrell, seconded by Susan MacFarlane.

Terry Burrell accepts the nomination.

MOTION to close nominations and a unanimous ballot cast.

Moved by Susan MacFarlane and seconded by Patty Troy.

Unanimous.

CARRIED

Nominations open for the U.S. Co-Chair:

Terry Burrell nominates Paulette Duhaime, seconded by John Timar.

Paulette Duhaime accepts the nomination.

MOTION to close nominations and a unanimous ballot cast.

Moved by Terry Burrell and seconded by Susan Macfarlane.

Unanimous.

CARRIED

Nominations open for the U.S. Co-Vice Chair:

Paulette Duhaime nominates Patty Troy, seconded by Kris Lee.

Patty accepts the nomination.

MOTION to close nominations and a unanimous ballot cast.

Moved by Terry Burrell and seconded by Susan MacFarlane.

Unanimous.

CARRIED

Summary of election results:

Canadian co-chair: Kris Lee

U.S. co-chair: Paulette Duhaime

Canadian co-vice-chair: Terry Burrell

U.S. co-vice-chair: Patty Troy

8.0 Appointments to SPAC and CRIC- Fred Kemp

MOTION to appointment Kris Lee as representative and Susan MacFarlane as the alternate representative on the Canadian RAP Implementation Committee (CRIC).

Moved by Terry Burrell and seconded by John Jackson.

Unanimous.

CARRIED

MOTION to appointment Patty Troy as representative and Paulette Duhaime as the alternate representative on the Statewide Public advisory Council (SPAC).

Moved by Sheri Faust and seconded by Dan Collins.

Unanimous.

CARRIED

The Chair thanks Fred Kemp for conducting the 2022 elections.

9.0 Update on Drinking Water BUI- Binational- Melanie Foose, Natasha Pozega

U.S. Update (M. Foose):

- Still waiting for the DTE Facility response plan to be written and approved by EPA. Communication is ongoing between the two Parties. This falls under the Oil Pollution Act.

CAN Update (N. Pozega):

- In August 2021, Natasha presented the draft report for the *restrictions on drinking water or taste and odour problems* BUI to this group.
- At the January 20, 2022 meeting of the Canadian RAP Implementation Report a motion was passed to enter the redesignation process. The next step in the process to seek support of the report from Aamjiwnaang First Nation, Walpole Island First Nation, and the BPAC.
- Paulette and Natasha have been working a Binational Drinking Water Fact Sheet. The draft will be shared with the BPAC for review before being released to the public.

The group remains interested in conducting a binational redesignation celebration for this BUI.

Aside (P. Duhaime): A link was shared to an article circulated by the IJC correlating an increase in gastrointestinal illness at major cities of the great lakes following rain events. The two protozoa studied are resistant to chlorination. Paulette encourages members to review the executive summary of the report for discussion at the next meeting. While outside of the scope of this BUI, it should be on the BPAC's radar for life after delisting.

News release: <https://mailchi.mp/ijc/press-release-hpab-acute-gastro-report?e=e0822accfe>

Pilot Study: <https://ijc.org/en/hpab/proof-of-concept-acute-gastrointestinal-illness-great-lakes>

10.0 Fish and Wildlife Populations BUI (Canada)- April White

April presented a summary of the findings of the initial draft assessment report for BUI 3- *Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations*. In the 1991 Stage 1 RAP Report, fish populations were deemed to be diverse and well balance, but there was concern about the accumulation of industrial contaminants in some juvenile fish and other aquatic species. In addition, the decline of four waterfowl species between 1968 and 1982 raised concern that conditions within the AOC could have been contributing to species decline and there was also concern surrounding the accumulation of contaminants in waterfowl tissue. This BUI was therefore designated as *requires further assessment (RFA)*. The 1995 Stage 2 RAP Report identified actions to restore the BUI and some of the recommendations included compiling the long-term data on waterfowl and marsh birds and conducting body burden contaminant analysis on overwintering waterfowl and fish. The report highlights several reports where the long-term data on waterfowl and marsh birds have been analyzed and findings of a fish health study. Data suggests that waterfowl and waterbirds diversity and abundance is high within the AOC and that there is not sufficient toxicity in water or sediments to negatively affect the ability of fish and wildlife species to reproduce and grow normally. The report therefore recommends that the status of this BUI be redesignated from *requires further assessment* to *not impaired*.

Q: What was the peer review process for the fish condition data?

A: The fish condition data was peer reviewed and published in a scientific Journal. April to confirm where the article was published.

Q: The hexachlorobutadiene, OCS, and mercury in the Stag Island Females had an 8-fold increase. Given the increase in body burdens, how do we know that this will not continue to increase and become a problem?

A: It's hard to say what happened for sure, but upstream-downstream monitoring of suspended sediment in the river are showing downstream trends in each of the compounds. We do know that hexachlorobutadiene is highly metabolized by fish and the half life is short. These increases were only identified near Stag Island, and the same results were not detected downstream.

A comment was made that the combination of an increase in mercury, smaller gonad size, and location in the impact zone may warrant follow-up.

Q: Has there been a wildlife survey conducted more recently than 2011?

A: No. These surveys are very expensive, so they aren't conducted very frequently. Surveys generally focus on areas where there is still concern.

A comment was made that when this BUI is delisted, it needs to be clear that because the BUI is no longer impaired, it does not necessarily mean it's okay to consume as much fish and/or wildlife as one wishes. Communication needs to be clear that the redesignation means conditions are no worse than other non-AOC sites in the Great Lakes.

Note: This report has not been accepted by the CRIC. Once accepted to enter the redesignation process, a formal presentation to the BPAC will be conducted.

A virtual presentation of the data collected was delivered as part of the 2021 Virtual AOC Science Symposium on October 20, 2021. The recording for that presentation can be found here: <https://friendsofstclair.ca/symposium/>

11.0 Life After Delisting and PAC Recruitment- Paulette Duhaime

A document was circulated by the University of Michigan on issues facing Public Advisory Councils. One issue raised that should be address was PAC recruitment. One suggestion made was to re-establish a membership committee of the BPAC.

The SPAC Environmental Justice DEI Sub-committee is working on a PAC recruitment package to address this issue in all PACs. This may a useful package for this committee.

The economic benefits of a restored environment should be emphasized in a recruitment package/letter to cities and townships along the St. Clair River. Invitation to help guide the economic recovery. This would help show value in member participation.

Consideration needs to be given to what the near and long-term activities of this committee will be. We need to show the benefits of the work we're doing and highlight the importance of community involvement after delisting. Member commitment also needs to be defined.

There may be some funds available in the PAC support grant extension to help build this recruitment package. First, we need to identify who will the audience be, why are we asking them to participate, and what their commitments will be. Will recruitment efforts be better suited for the BPAC or the Friends groups? The two groups are different and may attract

different individuals. Could conduct a community survey to determine what they would like to hear from us and identify how they would like to be involved in the future.

12.0 50th Anniversary of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement- Kris Lee, John Jackson

2022 marks the 50th Anniversary of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. The governments are organizing a public forum in September. They expect to have 700 attendants in person as well as virtual participation. The event will highlight what's been achieved over the past 50 years, what is the state today, and how to plan. More details to come. There is interest in organizing events around the basin scattered throughout the year.

13.0 Agency Updates

i. Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks- Ted Briggs

Currently working on 3 new funding agreements:

- AOC coordination with SCRCA (2 yr)
- FOSCR ongoing outreach and education (1yr)
- Ongoing shoreline rehabilitation work with SCRCA (1 yr)

Great Lakes Local Action Fund opening soon. Grants will be awarded for projects up to \$50,000 for community restoration projects along the Canadian shores of the River.

ii. Environment and Climate Change Canada- April White

Steven Guilbeault appointed as new environmental minister in October 2021.
In year 2 of 3-year agreements for First Nations participation in AOC work
Have a contract with SCRCA to support RAP Coordination until March 2023.
Call for GLPI project proposals still open until Monday.

iii. Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy- Melanie Foose

Only 2 impairments remain in the US:

Fish consumption BUI- Still waiting on fish analysis from fish collected a few years ago.
Drinking water BUI- Still waiting on the facility response plan for DTE to incorporate into the draft report. It needs to be completed, then updated and signed by EPA.

AOC conference still being planned as an in-person event May 24-26, 2022

IAGLR State of Lake Erie Conference in Cleveland, Ohio March 16 & 17.

iv. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency- Rose Ellison

The Great Lakes National Program Office received an additional billion dollars as part of the GLRI allotment over the next 5 years. AOCs and sediment projects are top focus for these funds.

Rose is retiring full time at the end of April and will be transitioning out over the next year. She will be missed!

14.0 Committee Reports

i. Statewide Public Advisory Council- Patty Troy, Paulette Duhaime

SPAC last met on January 20, 2022

Funds will be available through the state revolving fund to assist with lead pipe replacement.

Heard from EPA about brownfield opportunities in the AOC and prioritization meetings within the AOC.

Heard from EGLE about the BUI removal process for the Michigan AOCs. A discussion was held around the role of binational groups in AOC delisting. The governments don't foresee delisting moving forward simultaneously.

EGLE has funds to hire extra staff to assist with programs that are backlogged.

An All PAC meeting is being organized for the last two weeks of April.

Next SPAC meeting to be held virtually in June.

Updates for the IJC conference can be found at binational.net.

ii. Friends of the St. Clair River (Canada)- Terry Burrell

AGM dinner held on December 8, 2021

MECP funding support has been confirmed for 2022-23

FOSCR continues to support SCRCA education programs. Their virtual programs have allowed them to reach up to 1000 students in one day.

The team is talking to local groups organizing fishing derbies about how they can be involved.

Identifying other opportunities to attend/collaborate at community events.

iii. Friends of the St. Clair River (USA)- Paulette Duhaime

Friends have been very busy with community outreach (ex. Sturgeon school).

Due to covid, funds weren't all spent the PAC support grant may be extended for 6 months.

Thumb Coast Watershed Centre is up and running and includes a classroom, laboratory, and office spaces.

iv. Canadian RAP Implementation Committee- Natasha Pozega, Terry Burrell

Last meeting January 20, 2022.

CRIC supported entering the redesignation process for the restrictions on drinking water consumption and taste and odour problems BUI.

April White delivered a presentation on the F&W Populations draft report.

Pratt Rawat presented an update on the City of Sarnia's ongoing sewer separation work and other infrastructure projects. The major burden has now been lifted.

Mike Moroney provided an update on the St. Clair River Sediment Management Project. The final engineering and remedial design plan is now available at stclairsediment.ca.

v. Four Agency Managers Work Group- Rose Ellison

Next meeting to be held on April 14, 2022

15.0 Other Business

CAN AOC Coordination Updates (N.Pozega):

The 2021 Canadian AOC Annual Report is now complete. View it here:

https://friendsofstclair.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Brochures_ST.-CLAIR-RIVER.pdf

Natasha will be presenting on the St. Clair River AOC at the IAGLR SOLE Conference on March 16, 2022.

16.0 Next Meeting Date and Adjournment

Requests will be extended to Michelle Selzer (EGLE) and Luca Cargnelli (ECCC) to provide a presentation on the Lake Erie Lake wide Action Management Plan (LAMP). Two dates have been proposed: March 10th and March 24th. The date selection will be made by the Canadian Co-Chair.

MOTION to adjourn.

Moved by Kris Lee, seconded by Terry Burrell.

CARRIED

Meeting adjourned at 9:27pm.