



Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC)

Meeting Minutes

June 23, 2022- Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Minutes Prepared by Mike Moroney

Attending Members:

Paulette Duhaime	U.S. Co-Chair, Citizen at Large	Mike Moroney	St. Clair River RAP Coordinator
Kris Lee	CAN Co-Chair, Wallaceburg Advisory Team for Cleaner Habitat	Dan Collins	Citizen at large
Terry Burrell	CAN Co-Vice Chair, City of Sarnia, Friends of St. Clair River	Melanie Foose	Michigan EGLE
John Jackson	CAN Env. Sector	Ted Briggs	Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks
Janelle Nahmabin	Aamjiwnaang First Nation	April White	Environment and Climate Change Canada
Susan MacFarlane	Citizen at large	Theresa Warren	Lambton Public Health

Regrets:

- Sheri Faust, Friends of the St. Clair River (U.S.)
- Patty Troy, U.S. Co-Vice Chair, Env Sector
- Naomi Williams, Walpole Island First Nation
- Donna Blue, St. Clair Region Conservation Authority
- Ken Phillips, St. Clair Region Conservation Authority

Actions Arising from the Minutes

- a) Mike Moroney to revise the slide presentation based upon the comments received.
- b) Janelle Nahmabin and Naomi Williams to follow-up with Kris Lee for a discussion on appropriate wording for the answers to Survey Questions 11 and 12.
- c) Janelle Nahmabin to confirm the number that can be accommodated on the boat for the Redesignation Event.
- d) Mike Moroney and Paulette Duhaime to work together to complete the Fact Sheets for the Drinking Water BUI.

- e) Kris Lee to contact BASES to confirm if the U.S. side can access the BASES water quality monitoring data for the St. Clair River, and if residents on the U.S. side can register for MYCNN notifications.

1.0 Call to Order, Introductions and Land Acknowledgement

Meeting called to order by Paulette Duhaime at 6:32 pm.

Housekeeping:

- Notice to committee that the meeting would be recorded to assist with minutes production.

2.0 Adoption, Additions or Corrections to Draft Agenda

Moved by: Paulette Duhaime

MOTION to approve the agenda.

No objections.

CARRIED

3.0 Approval of March 24, 2022, Draft Minutes

Corrections:

- Two corrections – typographical errors – second paragraph on page 5, and second last line on page 8.

Moved by: Terry Burrell

Seconded by: Susan MacFarlane

MOTION to approve the minutes of the last meeting of the BPAC on March 24, 2022, as amended.

CARRIED

4.0 Great Lakes Ecoregion Network Survey (GLEN) – K. Lee, J. Jackson, P. Duhaime

On May 27, 2022 a few members from BPAC (Kris Lee, Paulette Duhaime, and John Jackson) had a meeting to discuss a survey questionnaire that had been circulated by the GLEN. Proposed responses to the survey questions were discussed and documented by Mike Moroney. There were a total of 12 questions. Kris Lee prepared a PowerPoint presentation to summarize the responses provided to each question and presented the information to the BPAC members. It was noted that there is the possibility that the presentation may be used elsewhere, beyond just this presentation to BPAC, so members should keep that in mind when

reviewing the proposed responses to each question. Each slide was discussed and the following revisions to the presentation were suggested:

Slide 5, Q4 - The bullet on Benthos should reference the contaminated sediment issue. The bullet on Drinking Water should reference that the restrictions were related to historical spills and should explain that this Beneficial Use Impairment is currently going through the process to be redesignated as Not Impaired.

Slide 6, Q5 – Melanie Foose pointed out that unilateral delisting is possible under the Four Agency Compendium of Position Papers. She wanted to make sure there was awareness of this although it does not appear to be an issue at this time for the St. Clair River Area of Concern. Kris Lee suggested that when GLEN makes the presentation at the Great Lakes Forum, it should be emphasized that it is the citizens’ desire to delist both sides of the St. Clair River at the same time. Citizens on both sides understand the benefit of working together since it is one river.

Slide 7, Q6 – It was recommended that the volunteer hours put into the AOC effort be included as a bullet on this slide as it is a significant amount of time but is not funded. Also, the slide should make it clear that two of the funding programs are on the Canadian side and the other two are on the U.S. side. There is a typographical error in the heading that should be corrected.

Slide 11, Q11 – Spell out PFAS (Perfluoroalkylated Substances). Also add a new bullet about impacts from agricultural activities (e.g. phosphorus loadings)

Slide 12, Q11 – Add an additional bullet – Funding needs for Indigenous communities. Aamjiwnaang First Nation does not have enough resources to manage all the issues. They want all members of their community to be informed about what is going on in their community, not just the Environment Department staff. They want to make sure that there is thorough consultation on issues and a sufficient number of staff to manage them. This should be referenced in Slide 13, Q12 as well. It was suggested that Walpole Island First Nation is likely in the same situation.

Action: Mike Moroney to revise the slide presentation based upon the comments received.

Action: Janelle Nahmabin and Naomi Williams to follow-up with Kris Lee for a discussion on appropriate wording for the answers to Survey Questions 11 and 12.

John Jackson explained that GLEN was set up to address all issues in the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and the intent is to keep GLEN in place well after 2022. The survey was circulated by GLEN to communities across the AOCs of the Great Lakes on both the U.S. and Canadian sides. GLEN is going to prepare a report based on the information collected from the completed surveys.

This year is the 50th year of the signing of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. The U.S. and Canada are having a celebration at the Great Lakes Forum in September 2022 to

acknowledge the event. GLEN plans to use the opportunity to make a presentation (presenter to be confirmed) outlining the information collected from the surveys and documented in the report. The main purpose of the report is to create awareness about what the communities are saying in terms of where we are at with delisting efforts and where we want to go. They would like to gather information on the community's perspective as opposed to the agency perspective.

5.0 Redesignation Celebration – K. Lee

The Duc d'Orleans has been booked for Tuesday, Sept 13, 2022 from 6:00 pm to 8:00 pm for the BUI Redesignation Celebration Event. A planning committee consisting of Kris Lee, Mike Moroney, Janelle Nahmabin, and Susan MacFarlane will work on organizing the event. The cost is \$1,500 plus HST for two hours. Additional costs for catering in food. The committee will need to discuss who to invite, the agenda, and catering of food. Since there will be food on board, the number that can participate will likely be reduced.

Action: Janelle Nahmabin to confirm the number that can be accommodated.

Paulette Duhaime inquired if a separate on-land event could also be held which would allow access to a wider group. The planning committee agreed to take the suggestion into consideration.

6.0 Draft Binational Drinking Water BUI Fact Sheet – Qs and As – P. Duhaime

A draft fact sheet in the form of Qs and As is being prepared to provide information on both the Canadian and U.S. sides. It was shared with the Drinking Water Committee on the U.S. side. A lot of comments came back. Need to address the comments and work on preparing an easier to read one-page version for the general public on the U.S. side. Mike Moroney will be picking up where Natasha Pozega left off. Paulette Duhaime will also be meeting with FOSCR (U.S.) for input on a simpler one-page fact sheet. The longer 4-page Q and A version can still be posted on a web site for those that are interested in more detail.

Kris Lee recommended that when creating the Fact Sheet for the Canadian Side, the primary audience to keep in mind is Walpole Island First Nation and the Wallaceburg community. They are the downstream water intakes. WATCH could provide input on the Fact Sheet.

The goal is to complete the Fact Sheets by the end of August 2022.

Action: Mike Moroney and Paulette Duhaime to work together to complete the Fact Sheets.

Huron to Erie Water Monitoring Program – Paulette Duhaime explained that there was a problem with equipment for the East China Township facility. The data logger is being repaired and updated. There is still an issue with getting notifications to the drinking water plants on time. During the last meeting, the U.S. Coast Guard agreed to work with the U.S. EPA and the

drinking water facilities on how to manage spill notifications. Would like to have multi-layers of notification.

Consideration is being given to bringing the Canadian water intakes on board with the water monitoring system. The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments (SIMCOG) is going to reach out to the Walpole Island First Nation and Wallaceburg water treatment plants in that regard.

Action: Kris Lee to contact BASES to confirm if the U.S. side can access the BASES water quality monitoring data for the St. Clair River, and if residents on the U.S. side can register for MYCNN notifications.

7.0 Life After Delisting – Monitoring Habitat Projects – P. Duhaime

Paulette Duhaime questioned how the current AOCs coordinate with current monitoring programs at the State and Federal levels. It was suggested that for future BPAC meetings, it would be beneficial to invite representatives from various government agencies to come and speak to BPAC about monitoring programs. What monitoring is going to be done, who is going to do it, and how can the information collected can be accessed.

The State Public Advisory Council for Michigan has started a maintenance and monitoring habitat sub-committee. There is much interest in this committee. Although there is no funding for maintenance right now, they do want to understand the monitoring programs that will be in place.

It was suggested that being able to access water quality monitoring data that is collected through the BASES monitoring station in the St. Clair River would be one way of having access to on-going water quality monitoring information.

April White explained that ECCC has a Cooperative Science and Monitoring Initiative. They coordinate the monitoring activities over the Great Lakes each year. Water quality etc.. The information collected is extensive. Just need to determine how the information can be accessed. It would be helpful to have more discussions around the science and monitoring work that does occur, and by whom, and then figure out at the local level if there are gaps that need to be addressed.

8.0 Agency Updates

i. Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks - Ted Briggs

No major updates since the last BPAC meeting.

ii. Environment and Climate Change Canada- April White

No major updates since the last BPAC meeting. Focusing on work planning for the coming year and the draft assessment report for BUI 3 – Degradation of Fish and

Wildlife Populations. The draft report needs to have CRIC review then it will be brought to BPAC.

- iii. **Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) - Melanie Foose**
There are only two BUIs on the U.S. side that are left. For the Restrictions on Fish Consumption BUI, there is going to be sampling again next summer. For the Drinking Water BUI, they are waiting for the facility response plan to be finalized for the DTE plant – U.S. EPA advised that they have the newest plan that was submitted by the company and it is under review. Once in place and signed, it is good for 5 years.
- iv. **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - Rose Ellison**
 - No report.

9.0 Committee Reports

- i. **Statewide Public Advisory Council (SPAC)- Paulette Duhaime**
 - The last SPAC meeting was held on June 14, 2022. There has been a lot of work on the Environmental Justice Committee. Current PAC grants were extended to the end of August 2022. New grants will be out by Oct 1, 2022. Rick Hobrta is the current manager for the Michigan AOC program. He advised that the Michigan EGLE grant has been increased so they expect to be able to increase PAC support for the next 2 to 3 years. Equity and inclusion can start to be factored into the process.
 - The most recent AOC conference was held in Muskegon, Michigan. Over 300 people attended. All the management actions have been completed for the Muskegon Lake AOC.
 - A maintenance and monitoring subcommittee formed under SPAC has been continuing with their work.
 - Melanie Foose advised that work is already underway to plan for the next SPAC meeting. It will be held in Munroe, Michigan. Details to be confirmed.
- ii. **Friends of the St. Clair River (Canada) - Terry Burrell**
 - Have been working with Bluewater Anglers and supporting their fish hatchery facility in the Village of Point Edward. FOSCR will also be supporting an event in St. Clair Township – Sombra Days - July 9, 2022 from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm.
- iii. **Friends of the St. Clair River (USA) - Sheri Faust/P Duhaime**
 - Sheri Faust was not able to attend the BPAC meeting but relayed information to Paulette Duhaime to share with the committee.
 - The annual Sturgeon Festival was held on June 4, 2022. The focus was on teaching children about sturgeon. There was also a sturgeon release incorporated into the event. About 3,000 people attended the festival. FOSCR (U.S.) raised about \$30,000 as a result of the event.

- It was estimated that about 176 hours of volunteer time went into the event. The volunteer effort was key to making the event a success.
- The new FOSCR (U.S.) office is now located in the former Eddy Elementary School building in St. Clair, Michigan.

iv. Canadian RAP Implementation Committee (CRIC) – Kris Lee

- CRIC held a meeting on the afternoon of June 23, 2022. The agencies provided an update on the progress in addressing the remaining BUIs.
- Discussed the proposed BUI Redesignation Event in September 2022
- Discussed a proposal to hold an Annual Community Event each year going forward. Ted Briggs explained that such events are usually held in AOCs after the annual report has been prepared. The annual report can be presented and discussed at the event. It can also include a keynote speaker. Usually a 2-hour event. Held as an indoor event. There is an outreach subcommittee with CRIC and they should probably start looking at this. Direction at CRIC today was to get this subcommittee working on it. The event could be held this calendar year or next calendar year, whatever works best.
- Paulette Duhaime suggested that such an event be open to the general public, rather than by invitation.
- Updates on the annual event will be provided at future BPAC meetings during the CRIC updates.

v. Four Agency Managers Work Group – Ted Briggs/April White

- They are meeting on June 30, 2022 to discuss planning for the next Four Agency Managers Work Group meeting in the Summer 2022.

10.0 Other Business

- No items.

11.0 Next Meeting Date and Adjournment

- With the Redesignation Event planned for September 2022, it would be a good time to plan an afternoon BPAC meeting the same day. Kris Lee to confirm the date and time of the next meeting.

Moved by: Terry Burrell

Seconded by: Kris Lee

MOTION to adjourn the meeting.

CARRIED

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.