

Minutes for the BPAC Meeting of 18 August 2004, Civic Center, Sault Ste Marie ON
Meeting called to order at 7 PM by Don Marles, Chair
Present: Don Marles, Joe Gallagher, Kara Flannigan, Al Wright, Mike Ripley

Don reviewed the officers as elected at the previous meeting in February 2004, namely, Don as Chair and Greg as 1st Vice-Chair. The position of 2nd Vice Chair is currently vacant.

Greg then provided a report regarding the activities of the BPAC Office at Lake Superior State University. The Office received a grant from the Great Lakes Commission to support office functions, to update the reference collection, to put on the Environmental Summit, and for the Citizen Science Monitoring Program. Two staff people have been hired, one to update the website and another for the other responsibilities. (One of those responsibilities will be to take minutes for the BPAC meetings).

The 2004 Environmental Summit is scheduled for 4 November at the LSSU Cisler Center. The format will be the same as previous years.

The Office received another grant from the US EPA/Great Lakes Program Office to develop a Stage II-type document providing public input on the contaminated sediments problem. There will be a series of public workshops, the first to inform the public about the current status of the problem, the next to gather public input on what they would like to see done about the problem, and a third to present the report and allow public comments on the report.

Mike Ripley then gave an update on the SPAC meetings. The main issue from SPAC is to lobby the MDEQ to re-instate staff for support of the PACs.

The group then discussed goals for the BPAC for the remainder of this year (through February 2005). The consensus was to revisit the Beneficial Use Impairments as listed in the Stage II document and address each one in turn through a series of focused meetings. Overall objectives for the year will be to keep pressure on the agencies to address the BUIs and to recruit more participation in BPAC by industry and municipalities.

Meeting dates were set for 13 September (US), 19 October (Canada), 30 November (US), 12 January (Canada) and 15 February (US).

Potential presenters discussed for the upcoming meetings were Sue Greenwood to discuss fish habitat restoration, Barbara Keller to discuss results of her sediments studies, Greg Zimmerman to discuss the Citizen Science Monitoring Program, Pat Carr to discuss the upcoming St Marys River watershed planning effort on the Michigan side, Dwight Sargeant to discuss the air monitoring program, a consulting company that will be doing a sediments cleanup project on the Soo Michigan side, Tracy Latulippe to discuss Ducks Unlimited wetland surveys, Rosita Clark to discuss the Tannery Site, the Algoma U professor to describe his pilot study/survey of fishermen's awareness of and adherence to

fish eating advisories. BPAC members are encouraged to contact Don with other possible speakers.

Other issues for the group to address is our input to the next version of Algoma Steel's voluntary environmental quality plan, maintaining a list of success stories such as the Munuscong Watershed Association's new water trail signs, supporting the development of risk assessment approaches, and helping to develop pollution prevention strategies. Municipalities and business groups should be especially interested in that since a pollution event could spoil tourism and restrict other industrial activity. Another task for BPAC is to convince the agencies to develop task groups/technical committees to address each of the BUIs.

The September meeting will be to go over the BUIs and their associated action items and develop strategies to maintain progress on the action items and to review Al Wright's recent report.

In addition to the usual updates, the October meeting will focus on contaminated sediments and we will invite Rosita Clark to talk about the Tannery Bay cleanup. We will also invite a representative of the consulting company working on the new cleanup project. We'll ask Barbara Keller to update us on her work as well.

The November meeting will focus on outreach. Greg will update the group on the Citizen Science program and review the Environmental Summit. We'll invite Pat Carr to describe the watershed planning project.

The November and December meeting agendas will be set at the September meeting.

The group discussed the need for advanced publicity for meetings with the idea that focused meetings may encourage more attendance.

Concluding remarks included Don's concern that general funding in support of the PAC is not available from Ontario or Canada – they are interested in funding only specific clean-up projects on a competitive basis.

Don reminded members of a video-conference on 30 September regarding capacity building and fundraising for not-for-profit groups, Mike Ripley mentioned that BPAC should encourage municipalities to join the declaration of 3rd Sunday of July as "Lake Superior Day."

The meeting adjourned at 830 PM.

Minutes submitted by G. Zimmerman