

# St. Marys River Binational Public Advisory Council (BPAC) Meeting Minutes

**Place:** Cisler Center (Lake Superior State University)  
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

**When:** February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013 (Rescheduled from February 19<sup>th</sup> due to snowstorm)  
6:30– 8:30 p.m.

## 1. Call to order/introductions

**Present:** Klaas Oswald, Chris Graham, Mike Ripley, Corrina Barrett, Kira Fry, Catherine Taddo, Crystal Bole, Greg Zimmerman, Lorelei Premo, Paula Antunes, Barb Keller, Max Cox, Marilyn Burton, Kristina Denison, Shane Albrecht

**Guests:** Jennifer Payne (SSMIC)

**Regrets:** Don Marles, Dave Samp, Nancy Griffin

## 2. Approval of Last Meetings Minutes

- January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2013 adopted.

## 3. Business arising from previous minutes

Draft letter of endorsement for the Little Rapids project

- Greg had drafted a letter that was handed out to the group (attached).
- The option chosen was the best value for the amount of money available. There should be wording put in the letter explaining that if more money becomes available that a different option may be more feasible to maximize the available money.
- Paula to make this change and send the letter out with electronic signatures.
- Group approved the revisions. Letter was accepted.

Recent developments on Pointe Estates / BPAC letter

- Both Klaas and Chris G. offered to attend the next RCA Board meeting taking place March 19<sup>th</sup>.
- It was proposed that we share this letter with other CA's, MPACs, OPACs, SPACs, and BPACs to gain momentum and support locally.
- The letter was originally sent to the Minister of Environment for Canada and the Minister of Environment for the Province. This did make a difference the first time around (when Pointe Estates was first tabled a few years ago).
- A few changes need to be made to the letter with respect to “density of cottages”, as there are more residences/houses than cottages around the area, the septic issue would be year round, not seasonal. Also the line that discusses “poorly treated sewage in the SMR which has resulted in beach closings”, whereas the report done by the SIMWG found multiple causes for the beach closings that were not the result of the sewage treatment. Mike will make the appropriate changes with input from Corrina and Catherine.
- Once the City Council receives the proposed plan, the public can have their say again.
- A copy should go to Oraziotti, Ontario Minister of the Environment, Minister of the Environment for Canada, and Ontario Minister of Natural Resources.
- The letter should also be cc'd to Donald McConnell (Planning Director for the City), Don Elliott (Director of Engineering Services for the City), Jerry Dolcetti (Commissioner of Engineering and Planning for the City), and Sherri Cleaves (APH).
- Letter to be posted on the BPAC website.

## Michigan Aesthetics BUI BPAC Letter

- Letter was sent out to Rick Hobrla.
- Haven't heard anything back yet on whether or not they plan to incorporate BPAC's suggestions in this years sampling.

## 4. Office Reports

### Update for the Environmental Summit

- Greg mentioned that he talked to a Washington School teacher who said their class will come to the kids day.
- Chris Graham will put an advertisement in the CAFC monthly newsletter to help promote it.
- It will also be posted to the Water Portal and BPAC websites.
- Speakers panel theme is "Connecting Science to the Community".
- Michelle Bruneau (Michigan Dept. of Community Health) will speak about the Fish Consumption Advisory, Eating Safe Fish.
- Katie Williams (PhD Candidate, U of W/M), Matthew Bertrand (Grand Traverse Conservation District) and George Denger (Professor of Communications, LSSU) will also be guest speaking at the summit.
- Taking place Saturday March 16<sup>th</sup>, with the Kids Day on Friday March 15<sup>th</sup>.

### St. Marys River Elementary School Contest (at Anna McCrea Public School, SSM, ON)

- A school wide contest to promote projects on the St. Marys River.
- There are three age groups with age appropriate activities: JK – Grade 2 are to draw pictures of what they can do to keep the St. Marys River clean; Grades 3-6 are to write a poem on what "the St. Marys River should be..."; and the Grades 7-8 are to write a short essay on "an ideal future for the St. Marys River".
- Each category will have 1 winner, and that student wins a pizza party for their whole class.
- Corrina also set up a booth that stayed in the school for the week, and she talked to each class about the importance of the river, and the work being done to try and restore it.
- Winning entries will also be posted on the Water Portal website.

## 5. Agency Updates

- EC: is reviewing the application under its Great Lakes Sustainability Fund that was submitted by Algoma U and the SSMIC.
- The submission is targeted to look at the Aesthetics and Eutrophications BUIs on the Ontario side. The project proposes 2 years of water quality sampling, twice a month (from June – October) at 4 locations with one repetition.
- Chippewa County Health Department: received Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant (\$250,000) for low impact stormwater mitigation at both 4 Mile Beach and Sherman Park. They also received \$75,000 for Brimley State Park area for research on source tracking and watershed classification.

## 6. Memberships

- No new membership requests.

## 7. New Business

### PAC support grant due next week

- Same as previous years, allows hiring of BPAC Student.
- Big change this year is that there is no funding for baseline monitoring for the Little Rapids project site, so this was written into the PAC support grant (looking at biota and physical characteristics of the site).

### SPAC conference call taking place tomorrow

- PAC support grants will be a part of the call.
- Greg will take over as the SPAC representative and Mike will be the backup.

## Bill 100 Revival

- Needs to be revived in order to go through legislature.
- Klaas would like the BPAC to write to the Ministers asking them to revive Bill 100 as an important piece of legislature.
- Klaas has a rough draft but it can be discussed at the next meeting.

## Deep Water Harbour

- Essar and Tenaris could use this port to bring in more material.
- EDC are currently behind the project and contain information on it.
- Dredging is going to be an important part of this process if it moves ahead. But restriction on dredging is also a BUI.
- This could be a way to help get some contaminated sediments out, but they should be aware of the costs associated with disposal and the potential for resuspension.
- See if there is anyway of being included on their (EDCs) contact list.
- Paula will try to facilitate a meeting with the EDC to see if there is any information/opportunity to being included in the information transfer list.

## 8. Public Comments

## 9. Next Meeting

- Date to be determined for March – will send out **Doodle Poll**.
- BPAC Elections to take place.

## 10. Adjourned at 7:45 pm.

# **Four Agency Report to the St. Marys River BPAC Meeting**

February 27, 2013

Cisler Center, Lake Superior State University, Sault Ste. Marie, MI

## **Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)**

- The Eastern Upper Peninsula Regional Planning & Development Commission (EUP Regional Planning) is continuing to work on the Little Rapids Habitat Restoration Engineering and Design project. Over the past couple of months several meetings have been held with local residences, Sugar Island Township officials, and other stakeholders to discuss the project, potential design options, and to solicit stakeholder input. The process of paring down the design options is underway and stakeholder input is being sought to help identify a preferred engineering design. At this time, the Little Rapids project is still in the feasibility and engineering design phase and no decisions have been made on future phases of the project. Additional information about the project is available on the EUP Regional Planning's webpage: <http://eup-planning.org/current-projects/little-rapids-noaa-project>

## **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**

- The Eastern Upper Peninsula Regional Planning and Development Commission is currently working with a number of partners to develop the engineering designs for the Little Rapids project. They have conducted a series of meetings with local community members, township officials and other interested parties to present an array of project ideas and concepts for this project. Nothing has been finalized and it is important to get local agreement on the final design. This project will be important in removing the habitat beneficial use impairment for the American side of this AOC. It is anticipated that fiscal year 2013 funds would be available from the GLRI to construct the project.

## **Ontario Ministry of the Environment**

Funding opportunity:

- The ministry is preparing to launch year two of the Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund; any applicants that were not successful in 2012 are encouraged to request a debrief to help inform 2013 applications

Environmental Monitoring and Reporting Branch update

- Tara George, who was working as a scientist on the northern Areas of Concern and Lake Superior on a secondment, has been appointed to the position permanently.
- The sedimentation rate study for the area East of Bellevue Marine Park being undertaken by the Canadian Centre for Inland Waters and the Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre (with funding provided by the MOE) is progressing well. A presentation on the completed work will be made to BPAC on or before August 31<sup>st</sup> 2013.

## **Environment Canada**

- Environment Canada is reviewing the application under its *Great Lakes Sustainability Fund* submitted by Algoma University and the Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Centre.