

1 **INTERNATIONAL NIAGARA BOARD OF CONTROL**

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3 Minutes of the September 24, 2014 Meeting
4 Cornwall, ON
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8 Mr. Thompson called the meeting to order at 8:08 pm in the Heritage Room of the Best
9 Western Conference Centre, Cornwall, Ontario. Those in attendance were:
10

UNITED STATES

CANADA

BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. D. Lee, Alt. Co-Chair

Mr. A. Thompson, Co-Chair
Ms. J. Keyes

SECRETARIES

Mr. K. McCune

Mr. D. Beach

WORKING COMMITTEE AND ASSOCIATES

Mr. P. Yu

Dr. F. Seglenieks

Mr. E. Tauriainen

Mr. J. Frain

Ms. C. Fisher

Mr. C. Southam

Ms. L. Gale

Ms. J. Fooks

Mr. J. Oyler

Mr. A. Heer

Mr. J. Scungio (phone)

OTHERS

Ms. D. Glance IJC

Mr. D. Fay, IJC

Dr. M. Colosimo, IJC (phone)

Ms. W. Leger, EC

Mr. K. Grode, USACE

Mr. G. Walker, IJC

Ms. L. Pollack, IJC

Mr. M. McNiven, OPG

Mr. J. Babb, IJC

Ms. C. Jarema, USACE

31 **Item 1. Approval of Agenda**

32 The Board approved the agenda as distributed (Encl 1).
33

34 **Item 2. Membership Changes, Roles and Responsibilities**

35 Changes in membership included:

- 36 • BG Margaret Burcham has resigned and was replaced by BG Richard Kaiser as
37 US Co-Chair of the Board.
- 38 • COL Robert Peterson was replaced by Ms. Deborah Lee as Alternate US Co-
39 Chair of the Board.
- 40 • LTC Owen. Beaudoin was replaced by LTC Karl Jansen as US Co-Chair of the
41 Working Committee.
- 42 • Mr. John Kangas was replaced by Mr. Kyle McCune as US Secretary.
- 43 • Mr. Chuck Southam was replaced by Mr. Derrick Beach as Canadian Secretary.
- 44 • Mr. Jonathan Staples filled the vacant Canadian member position of the Working
45 Committee.

46

47 **Item 3. Update on Lake Erie/Niagara River conditions**

48 The Board was provided with an update of levels, precipitation and net basin
49 supplies for Lake Erie and the Niagara River. The monthly precipitation was provided in
50 a new format as a departure from long term average. Within the reported period, Lake
51 Erie basin received approximately 49.0 cm (19.3 in) of precipitation, which is an
52 average amount. The monthly net basins supplies were approximately average for the
53 reporting period as well. However, net total supply to Lake Erie was 4% above
54 average, contributing to Lake Erie's level rising over reporting period due to an increase
55 in level of Lake Michigan-Huron and the resulting increased supply of water from Lake
56 Michigan-Huron into Lake Erie. Michigan-Huron's level was holding steady in
57 September in a month that usually sees a decline, indicating continued increased
58 supply from Michigan-Huron. The six month forecast with average conditions indicates
59 that Lake Erie will remain slightly above average level.

60 The monthly mean flow for the Niagara River was slightly below average.

61

62 **Item 4. Lake Erie – Niagara River Ice Boom**

63 A summary of the ice boom operation for the winter of 2014 was provided to the
64 Board. It was noted that the ice boom was installed by December 14, 2013 and it
65 functioned as designed through the ice season. The Board informed the Commission
66 on March 27, 2014 by letter that the ice boom removal would be delayed past April 1
67 due to the remaining Lake Erie ice cover being well above the 650 km² (250 square
68 miles) threshold for ice boom removal. Ice observation flights, as well as satellite
69 imagery and daily air temperatures, were used to monitor the progress of ice melting
70 through April. On April 28, 2014 an ice observation flight showed 622 km² (240 square
71 miles) of ice in the eastern basin of Lake Erie and removal of the ice boom began on
72 April 29, 2014. The Board issued a media advisory on April 29 that removal operations
73 had begun. The ice boom was completely removed by May 19, 2014.

74 The Board adopted a suggestion that information of ice monitoring activity be posted on
75 the Board web site to inform the public of efforts that are being undertaken to monitor
76 ice cover in the eastern Lake Erie basin to determine when the 650 km² (250 square
77 mile) threshold of ice cover is reached to trigger the start of removal of the ice boom.

78 **Ice Boom Report** An update on the status of 2013-14 Ice Boom Report was provided
79 to the Board. The report was to be circulated to the Board and members after the
80 Board meeting and comments provided back to complete the report and present it at
81 the upcoming Commission hearing.

82 **5 year Review** A summary of the findings of the 5-year review of the ice boom
83 operations was provided to the Board by the Working Committee. The Working
84 Committee suggested based on their findings that the ice boom continues to function as
85 intended and recommended to the Board that they recommend to the Commission
86 continue to authorize use of the ice boom. The Working Committee also recommended
87 that the "Procedural Guide for the Operation of the Lake Erie-Niagara River Ice Boom
88 (1984)" be reviewed and updated to reflect advancements in ice boom operation and
89 monitoring procedures. The Board agreed to adopt the Working Committee
90 conclusions. The Board members agreed to provide comments by September 29 to
91 the Secretary on the draft letter from the Board to the Commission providing these
92 findings and recommendations.

93 The Board also asked the Working Committee to prepare a review of the procedural
94 guide with suggested updates for Board approval. It was noted that a procedure for the
95 updating of the guide needed to be developed and included for approval by the Board.
96 The Board also advised that any boom operations must take into account that
97 employee safety is a priority and that any updates in the procedural guide must reflect
98 this. It was also noted that a "FAQ's" regarding the boom operations may be beneficial
99 and could be made available to the public on the Board web site. It was also noted that
100 Power Entity operational staff will need to be involved in the review and update of the
101 procedural guide.

102

103 **Item 5. Chippawa-Grass Island Pool update**

104 The Board was provided a summary of the operation and maintenance of the
105 Chippawa-Grass Island Pool (CGIP) and International Niagara Control Works (INCW).

106 Operations during reporting period

107 Tolerances were suspended for seventeen days during the reporting period due to
108 emergencies, ice conditions and water flow measurements in support of the Board and
109 INC activities.

110

111 During the reporting period the CGIP was operated within all of the criteria indicated in
112 the 1993 Directive.

113 • The accumulated monthly deviation of CGIP elevation from 171.16 as of
114 August 31, 2014 was 0.69 metre-months, which was within the tolerance
115 that it shall not exceed 0.91 metre-months.

116 • There were no months in the reporting period that the change in the
117 monthly mean from one month to the next exceeded 0.15 metres

118 • The maximum range of fluctuation in the pool level during a calendar day
119 did not exceed 0.46 metres.

120 • Daily maximum or minimum CGIP levels were not exceeded.

121

122 Maintenance issues

123 Maintenance work was conducted on a number of gates on the INCW structure. Due to
124 the load restrictions, movement of materials for dam maintenance must currently be
125 completed by work barge during the open water season.

126

127 Review of Directive

128 The review of the Board's Directive for operation of the CGIP is ongoing by the Working
129 Committee. However it was noted that the 5 Year Ice Boom review will take
130 precedence over this review.

131

132 **Item 6. Review discharge measurement programs**

133 Welland Canal

134 During this reporting period no measurements were taken. It is expected that the next
135 regularly-scheduled measurements will take place in 2015.

136

137 Niagara River

138 Flow measurements in the Niagara River were not scheduled for this reporting period.
139 However, since it had not been possible to obtain low flow measurements during the
140 last scheduled measurements in the fall of 2013, out-of-schedule measurements were
141 taken on August 12, 13, 14 and 15, 2014 for flows ranging from 1,434 to 1,605 m³/s, in

142 order to provide low flow measurements for verification of the Ashland Avenue Gauge
143 rating curve. These measurements are being verified.

144 Full river flow measurements were also completed in the period August 12-15, 2014 in
145 the gorge and at “the White House” sections. Once verified, these flow measurements
146 may also be used to verify existing flow measurements.

147 It was noted that any Niagara River flow measurements scheduled for 2017, especially
148 those downstream of the Falls, should take into account the construction activity of the
149 American Falls Bridge that is proposed for that period of time.

150 Fort Erie Rating Equation

151 There was no new information to report to Board for this reporting period. Work on this
152 is ongoing by the Working Committee.

153

154 **Item 7. 2014 Meeting with the Public**

155 An update on the Public Meeting held in Niagara Falls, NY on September 3, 2014 was
156 provided. The meeting was successful in addressing public concerns and providing
157 information to the public on Board activities. Ten members of the public attended in
158 person, four participated on-line, and three by telephone. A number of questions from
159 the public were answered during the meeting and in person after the meeting. One
160 question was addressed on further investigation after the meeting.

161
162 The Board agreed that the next venue(s) be chosen to support Webex technology and
163 that a summary of questions received at public meetings be maintained for future
164 meetings.

165

166 **Item 8. Review Semi-Annual Progress Report**

167 All comments from the Board and Associates are to be provided by Monday September
168 29, 2014. A final draft report will be provided to the Commission by the beginning of
169 October.

170

171 **Item 9: Review of Past Minutes**

172 A review of past minutes was completed and Board comments provided. Meeting
173 minutes will be finalized.

174

175 **Item 10. Other Business**

176 a. **Adaptive Management**

177 The Board was briefed on the status of the Adaptive Management Plan by the Adaptive
178 Management Committee. An update on the Draft Directive was provided which included
179 responsibilities of the AM committee, responsibilities of the Boards, membership,
180 outreach and engagement strategy, and timelines on deliverables. A strategy for
181 managing the AM effort was provided. It included Great Lakes Adaptive Management
182 start-up activities, the business case, the AM product description and it will be compiled
183 into an AM Brief which is to be put forward to the Board for approval. The Board was
184 asked to consider whether they endorse the Directive that has been provided by the
185 Commission. The Chair tabled a vote to the Board members for support of the Draft
186 Directive and the three members in attendance voted to support the Directive. The Board
187 will also seek the opinion of Mr. Allerton who was unable to attend before providing a
188 response to the Commission. The Board will provide the Commission with
189 correspondence on the final decision after this meeting.

190 Further involvement of the Board will be sought by the AM Committee as the AM Plan
191 progresses.

192

193 **b. American Falls Bridge**

194 The Board was updated on the progress of plans for the rehabilitation of the existing
195 bridges across the American Falls channel. This update included a summary of the
196 project history. Preliminary design is expected to be completed fall 2014 with final design
197 to begin in winter 2015. Construction is scheduled to begin in spring 2017. The Board
198 will be kept informed of the project's status.

199 **c. NPC Miller's Creek Marina Project**

200 The Board was updated on the status of plans for works on the Niagara Parks
201 Commission's Miller's Creek Project. It is currently in the planning stage. The project has
202 the potential to include infill in the Niagara River. The Board will be kept informed of the
203 status of this project.

204 **d. Temporary Gauge at MoM**

205 It was noted that this gauge is located at a dock on the Canadian side of the Niagara
206 River now operated by Hornblower Niagara Cruises, and no longer Maid-of-the-Mist Boat
207 Tours. It was determined this gauge would not be considered as a permanent back-up
208 gauge to the Ashland Avenue gauge at this time. However it could be considered in the
209 future if needed.

210 **e. Falls Recession**

211 The Board was updated on monitoring the Falls crest for rock movement. No rock fall
212 has been noted over the last reporting period.

213 **f. Welland River Watershed**

214 The Board was updated on Environment Canada's analyses of this issue. Water
215 Survey of Canada gauges have been identified in the Welland River and Niagara River
216 as having data that is expected to be outside the influence of the operation of the CGIP.
217 Additional data sources are being explored to provide level data in the Welland River
218 within the influence of the CGIP daily operation level changes. The Board will be
219 updated on the analyses and interaction with local interest groups at future meetings.

220 **g. Ashland Avenue Gauge Intake**

221 An update on the issues with the Ashland Avenue gauge was presented to the Board.
222 In order to ensure reliable gauging for measurement of the flow over the falls, NOAA
223 and NYPA recommended that effort be put into refurbishing the existing gauge location
224 rather than finding another gauge location at this time. NYPA and NOAA are
225 formulating plans to refurbish the gauge and expect to implement improvements in the
226 Fall 2014 before freeze-up.

227 **h. FAQs**

228 The Board was updated on the progress of development of Frequently Asked
229 Questions (FAQs) for a new web page to be posted on the Board website.
230 Environment Canada staff have done work on this item and will continue to develop
231 FAQs. The FAQs will be reviewed by the Working Committee prior to being sent to the
232 Board for approval and posting.

233 **Item 10. Next Board meeting and IJC appearance**

234 The Board noted that its Appearance with the Commission is scheduled for the morning
235 of October 22 (Wednesday); the Reception is scheduled for that evening. The next
236 Board meeting was scheduled in Buffalo, March 13, 2015.

237 It was noted that the Commission is taking a new approach to the hearings and is
238 asking for updates on issues only. Board issues to present at the upcoming IJC
239 hearing are 1) 5 Year Review of Ice Boom Operations, 2) Ashland Avenue Gauge, 3)
240 Welland River Watershed, 4) AM Committee, and 5) Public Outreach Initiatives.

241 The meeting adjourned at 11:43 a.m.

INTERNATIONAL NIAGARA BOARD OF CONTROL

September 24, 2014

8:00 – 11:00 a.m. (est'd.)

Best Western Plus Parkway Inn & Conference Centre

1515 Vincent Massey Drive, Cornwall, ON

Approved Agenda

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|-----|---|-------------|
| 1. | Approval of Agenda | 8:00-8:05 |
| 2. | Membership Changes, Roles and Responsibilities | 8:10-8:20 |
| 3. | Update on Lake Erie/Niagara River conditions | 8:20-8:35 |
| 4. | Lake Erie – Niagara River Ice Boom | 8:35-8:50 |
| | a) Status of 2013-14 Ice Boom Report | |
| | b) 5-Year Review | |
| 5. | Chippawa-Grass Island Pool update | 8:50-9:05 |
| | a. Operations during reporting period | |
| | b. Maintenance issues | |
| | c. Review of Directive | |
| 6. | Review discharge measurements program | 9:05-9:20 |
| | a) Welland Canal | |
| | b) Niagara River | |
| | c) Fort Erie rating equation | |
| 7. | 2014 Meeting with the Public | 9:20-9:25 |
| 8. | Review of 123 rd Semi-Annual Progress Report | 9:25-9:40 |
| | Break | |
| 9. | Other Business | 9:55-10:55 |
| | a) Adaptive Management (Leger/McCune) | |
| | b) American Falls Bridges | |
| | c) NPC Miller's Creek Marina Project | |
| | d) Temporary M-O-M Gauge | |
| | e) Falls Recession | |
| | f) Welland River Watershed | |
| | g) Ashland Avenue Gauge Intake | |
| | h) FAQ's | |
| 10. | Next Board and IJC Appearance | 10:55-11:00 |