

INTERNATIONAL NIAGARA BOARD OF CONTROL

Minutes of the March 10, 2010 Meeting
Detroit, MI

Colonel Drolet called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m. in a conference room of the DoubleTree Hotel, Detroit. Those in attendance were:

UNITED STATES

COL J. Drolet, Alt. Chair

Mr. J. Kangas

WORKING COMMITTEE AND ASSOCIATES

LTC D. Snead

Mr. E. Tauriainen

Mr. G. Cotroneo

Mr. D. Harding

Mr. J. Cross

Mr. J. Oyler

Ms. S. Daniel

Mr. R. Thomas

Ms. C. Fisher

Mr. Z. Jeffries

Dr. J. Selegean

Ms C. Jarema

Mr. J. Koschik

BOARD MEMBERS

SECRETARIES

CANADA

Mr. R. Moulton

Mr. L. Falkiner

Dr. H. Goertz

Mr. C. Southam

Mr. T. McAuley

Ms. J. Frain

Item 1. Approval of Agenda

The Board approved the agenda after adding items under Other Business (Encl 1).

Item 2. Update on Lake Erie/Niagara River conditions

Mr. Falkiner provided the Board with an update of levels, precipitation and net basin supplies for Lake Erie and the Niagara River. Precipitation over the Lake Erie basin was reported to be 13 % below average for the September 2009 – February 2010 period. Lakes Michigan-Huron levels are about the same as a year earlier and are expected to stay below average for the next 6 months. Lake Erie outflows were generally near average during the September 2009 – February 2010 period. Lake Erie water levels were above average until early January and have been at or below average since. Currently, the lake is about 15 cm (6 in) below average. The 6-month forecast indicates that Lake Erie levels and outflows will stay slightly below average through the summer.

Item 3. Review of Ice Season Activities and Conditions

The Board was provided a summary of the 2009-2010 ice boom season to date. Under the Commission's 1999 Supplementary Order of Approval, installation of the spans may

begin when the Lake Erie water temperature at Buffalo reaches 4⁰ C (39⁰ F) or on December 16, whichever comes first. This ice season, the water temperature reached 4⁰ C (39⁰ F) on December 12. Installation began on December 17 (6 spans), continued December 18 (12 spans) and was completed on December 19 (4 spans).

Ice first appeared in the Chippawa - Grass Island Pool on January 3. Ice management activities were undertaken for much of the remainder of January, including using ice breakers. Ice cover on Lake Erie peaked during the first week of February at about 95%; average cover for that time of year is about 65%. A helicopter flight on February 12 found an average ice thickness, in the eastern end of the lake, of 9 cm (3.5 in). As of the Board meeting, the eastern Lake Erie basin had greater than 50% ice coverage. One ice affected flood alert was experienced on the upper Niagara River, with no damages reported.

The new storage and work site for the ice boom, located about 3 kilometres (2 miles) inland on the shoreline of the Buffalo River, is nearing completion. NYPA expects it to be ready when the ice boom is removed later this spring.

Item 4. Chippawa-Grass Island Pool Operations

Mr. Falkiner discussed the operation and maintenance of the Chippawa-Grass Island Pool (CGIP) Control Structure during the reporting period. Tolerances for regulation of CGIP levels were suspended on October 8 and 11 for police activity; on February 6 for low flows; on September 28 and 29, October 7, and December 9-11 for high flows; and, for 11 days in January and 4 days in February for ice management.

The major overhaul of Gate 2 was completed on October 2, 2009. A similar overhaul (seals, cylinders, pistons) of Gate 10 will be completed in 2010. OPG had previously reported that a problem with deteriorated hydraulic lines had been found. The hydraulic lines of Gates 1 – 13 will be replaced, starting this summer, at a rate of 3 gates/year. Lines on Gates 14-18 do not need replacing.

The Board approved an update of its Chippawa-Grass Island Pool Directive to the Power Entities. A sentence was added to recognize that the maximum daily fluctuations range may be exceeded under abnormal flow or ice conditions. The local Board representatives were also clarified. The Secretaries will finalize it for Board signature and transmittal.

Item 5. Review discharge measurement programs for the Niagara River and Welland Canal

The Board was informed of the present schedule of measurements. Analysis of the flow measurements last year at the International Railway Bridge Section indicated that the measurements were clustered above the rating curve. Wind may have been a factor; the Board's staff is still looking into the issue. [The measurements in 2006 clustered below the rating curve; those in 2003 clustered slightly above.] Measurements will be

taken this year at the International Railway Bridge, Welland Canal Supply Weir, and Cableway sections.

The Board noted that the Power Entities had been notified of flow measurements and were requested to maintain steady plant discharges for the Cableway section measurements.

The Board received an update on removal of the overhead cable at the measurement section. The Board's Working Committee is working with local agencies and interests for a coordinated removal plan and eventual removal. The Power Entities have set aside funds for removal in 2011.

Item 6. Implementation of new Ashland Avenue rating

Mr. Cotroneo provided the Board with an update on the January 1, 2010 implementation of the revised Ashland Avenue rating equation. The work of Mr. Koschik, Detroit District, in calculating the M factors was acknowledged by the Board. The Board noted that the major impact to interests will occur when the tourist season opens. The Board's staff was requested to visit with the tour boat operators prior to the start of the tourist season in order to be assured that they understand what the change means to their operations.

Item 7. OPG tunnel status and plant upgrades

Ms. Frain reported on the tunnel status. As of March 8, the Tunnel Boring Machine has progressed 6167 m (20,200 ft), and is on schedule. The tunnel had advanced about 2500 m (8,200 ft) in the past year and has now progressed over half of its total distance. The alignment was changed eastward to reduce the time required for completion. Placement of concrete in the arch portion of the tunnel is expected to begin in May. The tunnel is expected to be available for use in December 2013.

Ms. Frain also noted that upgrades continue on the Beck 1 units with the replacement of the unit G9 runner. In addition, work continues on the replacement of the DeCew ND1 plant's penstocks and overhaul of 4 units. The first two units are expected to return to service in August and September 2010, with the remaining two units due back in April and May 2011.

Item 8. 2010 Meeting with the Public

The Board discussed the preliminary plans for the September 2010 annual meeting with the public and agreed to hold it in Niagara Falls, New York the week of September 13 - 17. The last meeting with the public was held on September 16, 2009, at the Seaway visitor center in St. Catharines, Ontario.

Item 9. Review Semi-Annual Progress Report

The Board reviewed and revised the draft 114th Semi-Annual Progress Report to the International Joint Commission. Comments and suggestions were noted and a revised draft will be sent to the Commission by March 26.

Item 10. Other Business

a) Warning sign. Mr. Kangas inquired as to whether any progress had been made to replace the deteriorated warning sign for boaters near the mouth of the Welland River on the Canadian shore. This had been discussed informally with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. To date, no progress has been made.

b) Board Membership. Mr. McAuley reported that the IJC was in touch with the Province of Ontario to find a replacement for former Board Member Rob Messervey.

c) Peace Bridge. Mr. Kangas reported on a recent public workshop held by the Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority. The public is being asked to express their reference for one of five candidate bridge designs. All designs have several piers in the water with pier placement in-line with existing piers. The Authority's intent is to begin construction at the end of 2011 or early 2012. It was noted that a new gauge may need to be installed on the U.S. side of the River to document any water level impacts of the new design. The gauge should be operational for a period of time prior to construction. Mr. Oyler offered to look into transferring a NOAA gauge.

Item 11. Next Board meeting and IJC appearance

The Board noted that its Appearance with the IJC is scheduled for the morning of April 21. The Reception is the evening of April 20. The next Board meeting is tentatively scheduled for the week of September 13-17 period in the Niagara region.

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

INTERNATIONAL NIAGARA BOARD OF CONTROL
MEETING OF MARCH 10, 2010

Approved Agenda

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Update on Lake Erie/Niagara River conditions
3. Review of ice season activities and conditions
4. Chippawa-Grass Island Pool operations
5. Review discharge measurements program
 - a. Welland Canal
 - b. Niagara River
6. Implementation of new Ashland Avenue rating
7. OPG tunnel status and plant upgrades
8. 2009 Meeting with the Public
9. Review Semi-Annual Progress Report
10. Other Business
 - a) Warning sign
 - b) Board membership
 - c) Peace Bridge
11. Next Board Meeting and IJC Appearance