

INTERNATIONAL NIAGARA BOARD OF CONTROL

Minutes of the March 20, 2008 Meeting Rochester

Colonel Drolet called the meeting to order at 8:12 a.m. in a meeting room of the Radisson Hotel, Rochester, New York. Those in attendance were:

UNITED STATES	CANADA
BOARD MEMBERS	
COL J. Drolet, Alt. Chair	Mr. R. Moulton Mr. R. Messervey
SECRETARIES	
Mr. J. Kangas	
WORKING COMMITTEE AND ASSOCIATES	
LTC J. Hurley Mr. S. Thieme Mr. G. Cotroneo Mr. D. Harding Ms. E. Paduano Ms. M. Kropfreiter	Mr. P. Kowalski Mr. C. Southam Ms. J. Frain

Item 1. Approval of Agenda

The Board approved the agenda as issued (Enclosure 1).

Item 2. Update on Lake Erie/Niagara River conditions

Mr. Southam provided the Board with an update of levels, net basin supplies, and precipitation for Lake Erie and the Niagara River. Precipitation over the Lake Erie basin was reported to be 23 percent above average for the period September 2007 – February 2008. Lakes Michigan-Huron levels were well below average and expected to stay well below for the next 6 months. Lake Erie outflows were generally below average during the September - February period, except for January, which was slightly above average. Lake Erie water levels were below average until February. Very high flows from the Maumee River basin into the lake in February contributed to the rise in levels. The 6-month forecast indicates that Lake Erie levels and outflows will approach average by early summer.

Item 3. Review of Ice Season Activities and Conditions

The Board was provided a summary of the 2007-2008 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 4 oC (39 oF) or on December 16, whichever comes first. This ice season, the water temperature reached 4 oC (39 oF) on December 9. Installation began on December 13 (10 spans), continued on December 15 (10 spans), and was completed on December 17 (2 spans).

The winter weather was mild until late January. Ice began forming behind the boom the last week of January. A strong wind event at the end of the month produced a difference in water levels between Buffalo and Toledo of about 4.7 m (15.42 ft). This event also produced close to record-high flow into the Niagara River, as indicated by the Fort Erie gage, of 11,500 cms (407,000 cfs). Three spans of the boom broke and a significant amount of ice was forced into the river. Ice breakers were required for ice

management in the Chippawa-Grass Island Pool and in the Tonawanda (U.S.) channel of the upper Niagara River for much of February and into March. Some flooding was experienced along parts of the river with only minor damages reported.

By March 13, ice cover on the eastern basin of Lake Erie was estimated to be around 4400 square kilometres (1,700 square miles), or about 85% coverage. Satellite imagery is used to supplement the Board's fixed-wing and helicopter observations. Ice thickness observations on March 12 found from 8 to 36 cm (3 to 14 in.) of ice at the standard measuring locations.

The ice bridge in the Maid-of-the-Mist Pool formed on January 25 and remained through to the end of the reporting period. Due to the large amount of ice remaining in the lake at the end of March, the Board expects the ice boom opening will be delayed.

Item 4. Chippawa-Grass Island Pool Operations

Mr. Kowalski discussed the operation and maintenance of the Chippawa-Grass Island Pool (CGIP) Control Structure during the reporting period. It was noted that the daily range in fluctuation limit of the CGIP was exceeded on January 30, February 1, and February 6 for ice management purposes. Tolerances for regulation of CGIP levels were suspended on October 31 and November 1 for flow measurements and for 25 days in February for ice management.

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

The Board was informed of the present schedule of measurements. No measurements are scheduled for 2008; the next measurements are scheduled for the International Railway section in 2009.

Mr. Thieme provided the Board with an update on efforts to evaluate the Ashland Avenue rating equation. He described the origin of the present equations used (one for flows less than 1416 cms (50,000 cfs), and one for flows above that). He discussed the pros and cons of various forms of the rating equation, and the flow measurements of the past several years. A draft report has been prepared that proposes changing the rating. The report is being reviewed by the Board's Working Committee and will be forwarded to the Coordinating Committee on Great Lakes Basic Hydraulic and Hydrologic Data for comment by experts in U.S. and Canadian federal agencies. The report may be ready for Board review this fall.

No progress was reported on plans for removal of the measurement cable.

Item 6. Status of New York Power Authority upgrades

Mr. Harding reported new rating tables for the upgraded units were developed, and, as of March 20, 2008, approved and signed for use by International Niagara Committee.

Item 7. OPG tunnel status

Ms. Frain reported on the tunnel status. As of mid-March the boring machine has progressed 1821 m (6000 ft), and was behind schedule. Completion of the tunnel is now expected to be delayed from 2009 to 2011 due to the amount of spiling required. The alignment may be changed to reduce the time required. The boring machine has passed the low point in the tunnel. Work is ahead of schedule at the upstream intake area.

Item 8. 2008 Meeting with the Public

The Board discussed the preliminary plans for the September 2008 annual meeting with the public and agreed to hold it in the Buffalo area the second or third week of September. The last meeting with the public was held on September 12, 2007, in Niagara Falls, Ontario.

Item 9. Review of 110th Semi-Annual Progress Report

The Board reviewed and revised the draft 110th Semi-Annual Progress Report to the International Joint Commission. Comments and suggestions were noted and a revised draft will be sent to the Commission.

Item 10. Other Business

There were no items considered under Other Business.

Item 11. Next Board meeting and IJC appearance

The Board noted that its Appearance with the IJC is scheduled for the morning of April 16. The next Board meeting is scheduled for the second or third week of September in the Fort Erie area, following the meeting with the public the previous evening.

The meeting adjourned at 10:23 a.m.

INTERNATIONAL NIAGARA BOARD OF CONTROL MEETING OF MARCH 20, 2008

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. Status of NYPA turbine ratings
7. OPG tunnel status
8. 2008 Meeting with the Public
9. Review Semi-Annual Progress Report
10. Other Business

11. Next Board Meeting and IJC Appearance