

# INTERNATIONAL NIAGARA BOARD OF CONTROL

## MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 14, 2011 MEETING

(i) The Board met on September 14, 2011 at the Ministère des Relations Internationales in Quebec City. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Aaron Thompson and began at 9 a.m.

(ii) Those participating were:

### Board Members

#### United States

COL J. Drolet  
(Representing MG Peabody)

#### Canada

Mr. A. Thompson

### Secretaries

Mr. J. Kangas

Mr. L. Falkiner

### Working Committee

LTC S. Bales  
Mr. D. Harding  
Mr. E. Tauriainen  
Mr. G. Cross

Mr. C. Southam  
Ms. J. Frain  
Dr. H. Goertz

### Others

Mr. P. Yu  
Mr. J. Oyler  
Ms. C. Fisher  
Ms. D. Glance

Mr. P. Trépanier  
Mr. A. Carpentier  
Ms. C. Warwick

1. Mr. Thompson welcomed Commissioners Glance and Trépanier and thanked Mr. Carpentier for hosting the meetings. It was noted that the Commission had recently approved Ms. Jennifer Keyes as a new Canadian Member of the Board. Mr. Cross announced that Mr. Mahoney, U.S. Member of the Board, would be stepping down from the Board as he will be retiring from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission at the end of September. The meeting agenda (attached) was approved.
2. The Board was given an update on Lake Erie water levels and Niagara River flows. The level of Lake Erie began the reporting period 4 centimetres (1.6 inches) below its long-term average for the month of March. Well-above-average precipitation in February and March, along with the near record high precipitation in April and May, contributed to the very high net basin supplies received in March, April and May. The lake level peaked on a monthly basis in June, at 174.58 metres (572.88 feet), which was 25 centimetres (9.8 inches) above the long-term average for the month. No significant wind events were reported.

Lakes Michigan and Huron continued to be well below the long-term average during this reporting period. As a result, inflows to Lake Erie from the upstream lakes were below the long-term average for the six-month period March through August.

The Niagara River flow at Queenston for March through August was 6142 cubic metres per second (216,900 cubic feet per second) which was 397 cubic metres per second (13,660 cubic feet per second) higher than the same period last year.

3. A summary of the 2010-11 ice season was presented. Removal of the Lake Erie-Niagara River Ice Boom began on April 12 and was completed on April 22. On May 2, the New York Power Authority crew began towing

the individual spans up the Buffalo River to the boom's storage site, where the ground crew pulled them on shore. This operation was delayed for a few days due to unfavourable wind conditions. It resumed on May 5 and was completed on May 11.

It was noted that there were no breaks to boom spans this season and that no unusual maintenance would be required over the summer months.

It was agreed that comments on the draft 2010-11 Ice Boom Report be incorporated, the report finalized, printed, and forwarded to the International Joint Commission.

4. Operation and maintenance of the Chippawa-Grass Island Pool Control Structure during the reporting period was discussed. As of the end of August, the accumulated deviations were at +0.57 metre-month (+1.87 foot-month), well within the maximum allowable range of +/-0.91 metre-months (+/-3.0 foot-months). Tolerances for regulation of the Pool were suspended for two days in April to assist in ice management and one day in April due to abnormally high flows. They were also suspended for June 18 and 19, July 18 and 19 and August 15 due to actions taken in response to police emergencies.

A revision of the Board's Directive for regulation of the Chippawa-Grass Island Pool was approved and will be forwarded to the Power Entities by the Board Secretaries. This revision does not change the parameters for regulation of the Chippawa-Grass Island Pool. It contains some minor changes in wording intended to clarify when tolerances may be suspended.

The Board was informed that replacement of oil lines on Gates 1-13 is proceeding. Work was completed on one gate last year, will be completed on 5 gates this year with the program finishing with replacement done on 7

gates next year. The oil lines in the newer gates (14-18) do not need to be replaced.

The Canadian Secretary informed the Board that the Canadian Coast Guard will no longer replace the warning signs for boaters at the Welland River. It is likely that the police force responsible for enforcing boating restrictions may also be responsible for posting and maintaining warning signs. Initial discussion with the Niagara Parks Commission along those lines will be followed-up with a letter asking the Commission to investigate the policing jurisdiction for the river on the Canadian side of the border.

5. The Board was informed that discharge measurements are scheduled for the upper Niagara River's International Railway Bridge Section and the American Falls Section in 2012 and for the lower river's Cableway Section in 2013.

NYPA, on behalf of the Power Entities, has undertaken to have the cableway removed. A contractor was selected and removal was scheduled for mid-May. Just prior to the removal date, a rock slide resulting from significant rainfall obstructed portions of the access road to OPG's Sir Adam Beck complex. The rock-fall event prevented safe access to the cable anchor point on the Canadian side of the gorge. Containment fencing will be installed by OPG in 2011 with cable removal re-scheduled to 2012.

Discussions between Environment Canada's Water Survey of Canada and the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation regarding establishment of an international gauging station at the Welland Canal Supply Weir continue.

A draft of a new Buffalo rating is anticipated for the spring of 2012.

6. Mr. Cross informed the Board of preliminary studies into electricity from four 10-foot diameter kinetic turbines in the upper Niagara River under a Federal Energy Regulatory Commission permit. LTC Bales noted that the Corps' Buffalo District will closely monitor the study progress and results. The potential for Boundary Waters Treaty impacts will be assessed.
7. Ms. Frain provided an update on the Niagara Tunnel Project's progress. The new tunnel will be completed near the end of 2013.

Upgrade of Sir Adam Beck Unit G9 was completed in December 2010 with a performance test, to determine water use and establish a unit rating table, undertaken in June and July 2011. Work to replace the G3 runner and generator re-wind is planned to begin in January 2012.

8. The International Niagara Board of Control's annual meeting with the public was held on the evening of August 17, 2011 in Niagara Falls, Ontario. Information on items including current and projected Great Lakes levels, the operation of the Lake Erie-Niagara River Ice Boom, the Board's measurement program and OPG's Niagara Tunnel Project were presented. Three members of the public attended.

The Board discussed the possibility of increasing attendance through combining the session with another function such as the Niagara Regional Water Festival. The Working Committee will develop options for the Board's consideration. It was agreed that USACE staff would lead the effort to re-vamp the Board's information brochure.

9. The matter of the Commission's August letter regarding the use of Social Media which contained guidelines for such use was discussed. It was agreed that the Niagara Board foresaw no need to use Social Media. It

was agreed that comments on the draft guidelines could be forwarded to the Commission by individuals either directly or through other Board's they may be involved with. The Board would inform the Commission of its position at the October appearance in Ottawa and would request that use of Social Media not be made mandatory.

10. A draft of the Board's One Hundred Seventeenth Semi-Annual Progress Report to the International Joint Commission was reviewed. Comments will be incorporated and advance copies furnished to the Commission.

The Secretaries will submit signed versions to the Commission Secretaries in Ottawa at the fall appearance. The Board noted that the appearance is scheduled for the morning of Wednesday, October 19 in the Commission's Ottawa boardroom.

The Board acknowledged the impending replacement of MG John Peabody by COL (P) Margaret Burcham as the Commander of the Great Lakes and Ohio River Division of the Corps of Engineers on September 19. She is expected to be appointed as Chair of the U.S. Section of the Board.

Following the IJC Fall Appearance in Ottawa, Mr. Chuck Southam of Environment Canada will succeed Mr. Len Falkiner as Secretary of the Canadian Section of the Board

11. The Board agreed the next meeting will be held during the March 19-23 period at a U.S. location to be determined.
12. There being no other items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:10 am.

INTERNATIONAL NIAGARA BOARD OF CONTROL

MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 14, 2011

Agenda

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Update on Lake Erie/Niagara River conditions
3. Operation of Lake Erie-Niagara River Ice Boom and review of report
4. Chippawa-Grass Island Pool operations and modification of Directive
5. Review discharge measurements programs
6. OPG tunnel status and plant upgrades
7. Cableway removal
8. 2011 Meeting with the Public
9. IJC Social Network
10. Review Semi-Annual Progress Report
11. Other Business
12. Next Board Meeting and IJC Appearance

ATTACHMENT