

# International Niagara Board of Control

## Minutes of the September 16, 2008 meeting

- i. The Board met on September 16, 2008 at the Holiday Inn in Fort Erie, Ontario. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Ralph Moulton and began at 8:30 a.m.
- ii. Those participating were:

<b>Board Members</b>	
<b>United States</b>	<b>Canada</b>
COL V. Quarles (Alternate for BG Peabody) Mr. D. Mahoney	Mr. R. Moulton Mr. R. Messervey
<b>Secretaries</b>	
Mr. J. Kangas	Mr. L. Falkiner
<b>Working Committee</b>	
LTC D. Snead Mr. D. Harding Mr. S. Thieme Mr. P. Valeri	Mr. C. Southam Ms J. Frain
<b>Others</b>	
Mr. G. Cotroneo Mr. S. Speck	Mr. P. Kowalski Mr. P. Trépanier Mr. T. McAuley Mme G. Faveri

1. Mr. Moulton welcomed COL Quarles, LTC Snead and Mr. Valeri to their first Niagara Board meeting. He also welcomed as observers IJC Commissioners Trépanier and Speck, IJC Engineering Advisor Mr. McAuley and Ms. Faveri. 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 19 centimetres (7.5 inches) above the long-term average and reached its season peak, 18 centimetres (7.1 inches) above average, in April. While it declined in June, the level rose slightly in July due to wet weather. By August, the level, although near average, was again declining. Lake Erie's level is forecasted to remain below average over the next six months. The Niagara River flow at Queenston was 253 cubic metres per second (8,930 cubic feet per second) higher for March through August compared to the same period last year.
3. A summary of the 2007-08 ice season was presented.

Mr. Kowalski noted instances when some spans of the boom were forced open during storm events and their subsequent repair. He also reviewed the implementation of the Flood Warning Notification Plan in the Event of Ice-Affected Flooding on the Upper Niagara River on two occasions. There were no reports of property damage resulting from ice affected flooding.

Because of the ice on eastern Lake Erie and the ice bridge that remained in the Maid-of-the-Mist Pool below Niagara Falls, the Board, by letter dated March 25, informed the Commission that a delay in opening the Lake Erie-Niagara River Ice Boom beyond April 1 was anticipated.

Representatives of the Board continued to monitor conditions and subsequently determined on April 14 that boom opening operations could begin. Removal began the next day with 3 spans removed. Over the next three days, substantial tension on span anchor cables from pressure exerted by the ice field slowed boom opening due to safety concerns. Only 5 spans were removed during that time. A further 3 spans were opened on April 18 and, with improved ice and wind conditions, the remaining 14 spans were opened on April 19.

It was agreed that comments on the draft 2007-08 Ice Boom Report be incorporated, the report finalized, printed, and forwarded to the International Joint Commission.

Mr. Harding reported that the search for an alternate ice boom storage site continues. No satisfactory shoreline site has been identified and efforts are being concentrated on potential sites on the shore of the Buffalo River.

Concern remains about the damage sustained by the ice boom components during the winter. When spans are forced open it most often occurs at the clamp closest to the junction plate. Long periods of open water, combined with high winds, are particularly hard on anchor cables and pontoons. Mr. Harding noted that NYPA continues to review the ice boom's operation and investigate ways to improve its design and performance.

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 +0.44 metre-months (+1.44 foot-months), well within the maximum allowable range of +/- .91 metre-months (+/-3.0 foot-months). Tolerances for regulation of the Pool were suspended for March 23 and April 2 to assist in ice management.

Repairs were made to the seals on Gate 14 and the seals and ice shield on Gate 13 of the Control Works during the reporting period.

In order to reduce paper consumption, 16 of the 20 graphic recorders used for Control Works operations by the Niagara River Control Centre will be retired in favour of electronic graphing. Paper charts of the four prime gauges used for determining Falls flows and regulation of the Grass Island Pool levels will be retained.

Verification of the Ontario Power Tailrace Gauge has become a safety issue. An acceptable satellite based surveying method, which does not require a human presence on the slippery shoreline rocks, will be implemented.

5. A schedule for upcoming measurement programs was submitted to the Board. Measurements are scheduled for 2009 at the International Railway Bridge Section, for 2010 at the Cableway and Welland Canal Sections and for 2012 at the American Falls Section. All measurements will be obtained using Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler technology.

The Board approved a revised Ashland Avenue Gauge Rating. Technical review of the revision was undertaken by members of the Coordinating Committee on Great Lakes Basic Hydraulic and Hydrologic Data. A summary report on its development is being prepared for submission to the Board in early 2009. The report, and the Board's recommended approval, will be sent to the International Niagara Committee for final approval and implementation.

A meeting will be held in November, with representation from the Power Entities and the cableway owners (Environment Canada and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), to discuss removal of the cable car and cableway which are no longer needed. It was noted that the cableway is in a safe condition.

6. Construction of a third tunnel at Niagara to supply additional water to the Sir Adam Beck Complex continues. Tunnelling and intake construction are progressing concurrently. To date, the Tunnel Boring Machine (TBM) has progressed 3026 metres (9,928 feet). That is a little over one quarter of the entire tunnel length. Progress was hindered by the need to stabilize the rock face and remove rock that had fallen into the excavation as the TBM passed under the buried St. David's Gorge. Ms. Frain reported that OPG is looking into a shift of the tunnel alignment in order to decrease the length of the tunnel boring and to go through less shale.
7. The Board requested that material be prepared to provide an update to the Commission at the October appearance on the status of the Peace Bridge expansion project.
8. The International Niagara Board of Control's annual meeting with the public was held on the evening of September 15th in Buffalo, New York. Three members of the public attended the meeting. 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 revision of the Ashland Avenue Gauge, and OPG's Niagara Tunnel Project was presented. The Board was pleased to welcome Commissioners Trépanier and Speck to the session.
9. A draft of the Board's One Hundred Eleventh Semi-Annual Progress Report to the International Joint Commission was reviewed. Comments will be incorporated, the report printed and the Secretaries will submit a signed version to the Commission Secretaries in Ottawa at the fall appearance.
10. The Board noted that the appearance is scheduled for the morning of Wednesday, October 29, 2008 in the Commission's Ottawa boardroom.
11. The Board agreed its next meeting be scheduled for early in March in Chicago. The Board noted that the centennial celebration of the signing of the Boundary Waters Treaty will take place in the Niagara region in June 2009.
12. There being no other items of business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

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## **International Niagara Board of Control**

**Meeting of september 16, 2008**

### **Agenda**

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Update on Lake Erie/Niagara River conditions
3. Review of ice season activities and conditions and annual ice boom report
4. Chippawa-Grass Island Pool operations
5. Review discharge measurements program
  - a. Welland Canal
  - b. Niagara River
6. Ashland Rating revision
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