

**INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION  
Great Lakes Regional Office  
100 Ouellette Ave., 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Windsor, ON**

***Minutes – February Executive Meeting, February 7-8, 2023***

The International Joint Commission (IJC) met in Executive Session (in-person, with virtual participation also facilitated) on Tuesday, February 7, 2023 from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. EDT, with Pierre Béland in the Chair.

**COMMISSIONERS**

Pierre Béland, Chair, Canadian Section  
Rob Sisson, Chair, U.S. Section  
Henry Lickers, Commissioner, Canadian Section  
Merrell-Ann Phare, Commissioner, Canadian Section  
Lance Yohe, Commissioner, U.S. Section

**SECTION OFFICES**

Susan Daniel, Secretary, U.S. Section  
Christopher Wilkie, Secretary, Canadian Section  
Mark Colosimo, Director Science and Engineering, U.S. Section  
John Allis, Engineering Advisor, U.S. Section  
Geneviève Asselin A/Public Affairs Manager, Canadian Section  
Rob Caldwell, Senior Engineering Advisor, Canadian Section  
Jennifer Brebner, Web Administrator (contractor)  
Kevin Bunch, Writer-Communications Specialist, U.S. Section (contractor)  
Tia Dumoulin, Communications Advisor, Canadian Section  
Oliver Dumville, Senior Policy Advisor, Canadian Section  
Antionette Dunston, Special Assistant, U.S. Section  
Alexandria Farrell, Environmental Officer, Canadian Section  
Desirée Estephan-Saliba, IWI Student, Canadian Section  
David Fay, Senior Engineering Advisor, Canadian Section  
Kathy-Lee Galvin, Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Section  
Adam Greeley, Science Advisor, U.S. Section  
Shenice Gross, Network Administrator, U.S. Section (contractor)  
Jeff Kart, Executive Editor, IJC Newsletters, U.S. Section (contractor)  
Erika Klyszejko, Engineering Advisor, Canadian Section  
Jeff Laberge, Information Management Analyst, Canadian Section  
Michael Laitta, Senior Physical Science Adviser/GIS Coordinator, U.S. Section  
Catherine Lee-Johnston, Environmental Officer, Canadian Section  
Brian Maloney, Special Assistant, U.S. Section  
Diana Moczula, Junior Policy Advisor, Canadian Section  
Christian Moreau, IT Support Analyst, Canadian Section  
Isabelle Reid Executive Assistant, Canadian Section  
Victor Serveiss, Environmental Advisor, US Section

Anvi Solanki, AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow, U.S. Section  
Carole Smith, Senior Advisor, Canadian Section  
Derek Spelay, Administrative Assistant, Canadian Section  
Jeremy Trombley, AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow, U.S. Section  
Ed Virden, Senior Policy Advisor, Public Affairs U.S. Section  
John Yee, Chief, IM and IT Services, Canadian Section  
Shane Zurbrigg, Legal Advisor, Canadian Section

### **GREAT LAKES REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF**

Heather Stirratt, Director  
Antonette Arvai, Physical Scientist  
Raj Bejankiwar, Physical Scientist  
Jennifer Boehme, Physical Scientist  
Mark Burrows, Physical Scientist  
Matthew Child, Physical Scientist  
Rajendra Poudel, Economist  
Laura Sabra, Administrative Officer  
Diane Varosky, Administrative Coordinator  
Allison Voglesong Zejnati, Public Affairs Specialist  
John Wilson, Physical Scientist  
Rachel Wyatt, Communications Officer

### **1. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda was approved as proposed.

### **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER EXECUTIVE MEETING**

The minutes were approved, with two amendments: 1) that the minutes reflect that Commissioners approved the Great Lakes Science Strategy, 2) IRRWB minutes should reflect that Commissioners expect the workplan by spring and will be discussing it with the Board in January.

### **3. COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES**

Commissioners received the 2021 Activities Report, and were updated on the status of the 2022 report. Commissioners approved the posting of the 2021 report on the IJC website.

Commissioners were updated on the implementation of the new Cision news clipping tool that was deployed the week before the meeting. Commissioners indicated their support of the new tool. Commissioners asked for clarification about social media engagement and advised leveraging non-IJC media and building partnerships.

### **4. GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY AGREEMENT (GLWQA)**

#### **A. Summary of 2022 Public Engagements to consider progress under the GLWQA**

Staff provided an update on recently completed public engagements and outreach efforts. They asked whether Commissioners would support the creation of a separate report to document the

public engagement process that could be referenced in the final GLWQA PROP report. Commissioners indicated that they are supportive of publishing a separate report, but wanted more information on the permissions granted by participants involved in the process. Staff will prepare the report for review by Commissioners.

Commissioners praised the use of contracted facilitators in the public meetings, and advised using the same contractor in the future.

Commissioners requested feedback from staff on the public engagement process. Staff indicated that they will provide guidance on improving future public engagement and outreach. Commissioners also asked for more details about the process of summarizing public comments, and staff provided further explanation of the process. Commissioners advised documenting comments by group to show broad support for proposed actions. Commissioners also advised documenting those comments that fall outside of the IJC's mandate in order to acknowledge all comments received. Commissioners advised asking Indigenous Chiefs and Metis leaders to review the publication as well.

### **B. Triennial Assessment of Progress Report**

Staff provided an update on the Triennial Assessment of Progress (TAP) report indicating that sections have been drafted and technical writers are providing support. Staff explained that the approved timeline is still on track and that staff and advisors will receive the report for review in Mid-March. Commissioners expressed concern about receiving the full report in mid-March without having an opportunity to review the outline and recommendations. Staff are to share an outline and recommendations prior to full-report review in mid-March.

## **5. GREAT LAKES SCIENCE STRATEGY ENGAGEMENT PLAN & NEXT STEPS**

Staff provided an update on the Great Lakes Science Strategy, and recommended approval of a communications and engagement plan, a two-page leave-behind document, and a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document. Commissioners agreed to advancing the communications and engagement plan, and requested revisions to the two-pager and FAQ document. More specifically, Commissioners requested more detail on the investments recommended via the Strategy, including funding allocations. Commissioners also requested clarification of the key messages and audiences for the documents. Staff are to provide a follow-up briefing note with the recommended updates.

## **6. U.S. GREAT LAKES WEEK**

Staff outlined plans for the US Great Lakes Week which will take place March 6-9, 2023, and requested guidance on Commissioner interests during that week as well as whether additional invitations to Great Lakes boards co-chairs. Commissioners expressed an interest in scheduling meetings with Congressional representatives and requested objectives for these meetings. Commissioners suggested that GLWQA Board co-chairs could be invited to larger events and receptions.

## **7. INTERNATIONAL WATERSHEDS INITIATIVE – IKLBC/IOLBC PILOT INTERNATIONAL WATERSHED BOARD SCOPING ACTIVITIES**

Staff provided an outline of proposed scoping activities for potential IKLBC and IOLBC pilot International Watershed Boards and preliminary ideas for a AK/YU/BC regional internal scoping exercise. Staff requested guidance on the proposed activities and the timeline and asked for an update from Commissioners on discussions with governments on the proposed scoping process. Staff indicated that, due to some overlap in the membership of the two proposed pilot watershed boards, there may be opportunities to have meetings run concurrently, but also recognized concerns among board advisors that this may cause confusion among the boards. Commissioners advised that staff proceed with the scoping activities as outlined and hold the meetings and conduct scoping activities concurrently and asked that Secretaries communicate with governments to keep them informed about the process. Commissioners indicated that staff should communicate with Commissioners for help identifying key contacts in the AK/YU/BC region.

### **8. INTERNATIONAL WATERSHEDS INITIATIVE – 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

Staff provided an update on planned activities and products for the IWI 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023. Staff requested feedback from Commissioners on the proposed table of contents for the IWI 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Showcase Report and asked if Commissioners would be interested in participating in a video or photo at the April 2023 Semi-Annual Meeting to kick off IWI 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events. Commissioners were supportive of the proposed IWI 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Showcase report and agreed to participate in an IWI 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Kick-off during the April Semi-Annual Meeting. Commissioners also recommended reviewing the original reference and highlighting IWI's efforts to promote innovative funding mechanisms and pursue efforts to identify additional regions where watershed boards might be needed. Commissioners also recommended producing shorter videos for social media that focus on ways that the IWI contributes to building relationships that solve problems. Additionally, Commissioners requested that IWI events include Indigenous participation, particularly around ceremonies to be held in April.

### **9. INTERNATIONAL LAKE ONTARIO ST. LAWRENCE RIVER BOARD**

Staff updated Commissioners on Great Lakes levels and flows as well as forecasts for upcoming precipitation. Commissioners discussed whether to keep these updates on the agenda, and agreed that shorter updates are sufficient when there is no immediate crisis. They also noted that this data should be oriented to the public and focus on key messages.

Commissioners discussed topics raised by the Seaway Corporations. Staff will be arranging a meeting with governments to provide an update on Phase 2 of the 2014 Expedited Review and the development of a Decision Support Tool (DST).. Commissioners discussed a potential field visit on a vessel. Commissioners asked staff to communicate with the Coast Guard and provide options for a decision.

### **10. POPLAR AND BIG MUDDY BASINS**

Staff shared a draft directive for a task force to study the need to fulfill the IJC reporting responsibilities for water use and apportionment in the Poplar and Big Muddy Basins. Commissioners discussed the role of the proposed IJC task force and the resources it would require as well as its relationship with the existing Binational Monitoring Committee. Commissioners discussed interest on both sides of the border and consultations with relevant

agencies, which is ongoing. The Canadian Section will be discussing with Canadian Section staff will communicate with relevant agencies and stakeholders in Canada. Commissioners also asked staff to discuss the potential IJC task force with the Poplar River Bilateral Monitoring Committee to gauge willingness to participate/collaborate.

## **11. INTERNATIONAL SOURIS RIVER BOARD**

Staff provided an update on the ISRB winter meeting and requested confirmation of Commissioner attendance. Commissioners Yohe and Beland indicated that they would attend the meeting. Staff also updated Commissioners on the status of committee appointments and discussions with agencies in both countries, including the Water Security Agency for Saskatchewan and a letter from Manitoba. Commissioners indicated that they would like to further consider the letter from Manitoba and that staff should raise it again at the next executive meeting. Staff requested permission to update the ISRB micro-site with new membership, directive, and other information. Commissioners approved the micro-site changes.

## **12. INTERNATIONAL RAINY-LAKE OF THE WOODS WATERSHED BOARD AND INTERNATIONAL LAKE OF THE WOODS BOARD OF CONTROL**

Staff provided an update on board activities since the December 2022 executive meeting. Staff requested Commissioner feedback on the Water Level Committee's post-flood report. Commissioners asked for more details on the Commissioners supported release of the report as soon as possible. Staff also requested direction on questioning the ILWCB 2022 flood report prior to the LOW spring freshet period. Commissioners directed sections to work together toward a factual understanding of statements and data contained within the report, considering the issues in the report identified by the U.S. Section ILWCB member. Sections will begin with exchanging the list of open questions presented at the December 2022 Executive meeting. Commissioners requested that legal advisors provide an overview and recommendations at the next meeting. Commissioner Phare indicated that she will be attending the March 7 meeting of the IRLWCB public meeting and will present opening remarks.

## **13. ORAL UPDATES**

### **1. Lake Champlain Richelieu River Study Data**

Staff provided an update on the latest communications activities and efforts at data curation for the study indicating that the March deadline for curation and sharing of data will be met.

### **2. International Red River Watershed Board**

Staff provided an update on the IRRWB workplan indicating that a letter had been sent to Board Co-Chairs on January 9, 2023. In the letter, Commissioners requested that the IRRWB submit a work plan in the Spring that includes the strategic planning session as part of the new work plan along with some new projects using IWI funding. However, the Board still wants to wait until after the strategic planning meeting in May to provide a new work plan. Staff should continue to encourage the Board to develop new IWI projects and are to offer supporting the board in developing the new workplan and new IWI project proposals.

### **3. IJC recommendation Implementation/GLWQA Tracking Tool**

Staff presented an automated tool for tracking recommendations and the status of their implementation indicating that the tool will make it easier for staff to provide reporting on the status of IJC recommendations. Staff will discuss with commissioners how to evaluate implementation of recommendations. Commissioners requested that the tool be expanded to include recommendations from across the transboundary and advised staff to investigate existing tools that can serve this function.

#### 4. Milltown Dam Decommissioning

Staff provided an update on the decommissioning of the Milltown dam indicating that the process had been delayed due to permitting, but a contract is underway starting in the spring of 2023 to be completed in 2024. Staff are waiting for confirmation that permits have been secured.

#### 5. Great Lakes St. Lawrence River Adaptive Management Committee (GLAM)

Staff provided an update on the appointments to the Public Advisory Group (PAG) and indicated that Commissioners could expect polling notes for the appointment of another member and for approval of the semi-annual reports. Staff also indicated that they are monitoring the need for facilitation during the meetings.

#### 6. Conference Sponsorships

Staff provided the existing sponsorship policy indicating that sponsorship for conferences is not common, and usually involves a purchase order with deliverables, which usually includes a report. Commissioners requested a list of conferences that have been funded recently.

### 14. OTHER BUSINESS

Secretaries provided an update on the April Semi-Annual Meeting.

#### Decisions to be recorded in the minutes of the February 7, 2023, Executive Meeting

##### **UN 2023 Water Conference**

On February 7, 2023, Commissioners agreed to IJC participation at the UN 2023 Water Conference, March 22-24 in New York, NY and to be an official sponsor and partner of the Global Exchange side event.

##### **Great Lakes Water Quality Board (GLWQB)**

On February 3, 2023 Commissioners approved the following U.S. appointment and Canadian appointments and reappointments to the Great Lakes Water Quality Board (WQB):

- a) Appointment of **Meredith Brown** as a Canadian at-large member for a three-year term from February 27, 2023, to February 26, 2026;
- b) Appointment of **Fe de Leon** as a Canadian environmental non-government organization member for a three-year term from February 27, 2023, to February 26, 2026;
- c) Appointment of **Carolyn Dubois** as Canadian environmental non-government organization member for a three-year term from February 27, 2023, to February 26, 2026;

- d) Appointment of **Molly Flanagan** as a U.S. environmental non-government organization member for a three-year term from February 27, 2023, to February 26, 2026;
- e) Reappointment of **Carolyn Johns** as a Canadian at-large member for a three-year term, from February 27, 2023, to February 26, 2026; and
- f) Reappointment of **Mark Fisher** as a Canadian business member for a three-year term, from January 11, 2023, to January 10, 2026.

### **Great Lakes Adaptive Management (GLAM)**

On January 30, 2023 Commissioners approved the Terms of Reference for the GLAM (and ILOSLRB) Public Advisory Group in support of Phase 2 of the expedited review.

### **International Lake Champlain Richelieu River (LCRR)**

On January 29, 2023 Commissioners approved the LCRR News Release that formally announces its approval of all recommendations made by the LCRR Board in their final report and that IJC's recommendations were shared with both governments.

### **International Rainy Lake of the Woods Watershed Board (IRLWWB)**

On January 31, 2023 Commissioners approved the following appointments:

- a) Approve the appointment of Mr. Travis Rob as a Canadian public member on the board's WLC starting February 2, 2023 and ending February 1, 2024.
- b) Approve the appointment of Mr. Lucas King as a Canadian public member on the IRLWWB starting February 2, 2023 and ending February 1, 2024.

### **International Souris River Board (ISRB)**

On January 25, 2023 Commissioners approved the appointment of Mr. Mark Lee as Canadian member of the ISRB, starting January 25, 2023 and ending January 24, 2026.

### **Health Professionals Advisory Board**

On January 19, 2023 Commissioners approve the following appointments to the Health Professionals Advisory Board (HPAB):

- a) Reappointment of Mr. Barry Jessiman, Canadian member, for a second term of three years effective July 8, 2022 through July 7, 2025;
- b) Reappointment of Dr. Thomas Edge, Canadian member, for a second term of three years effective July 7, 2022 through July 6, 2025; and for Dr. Edge to assume the role of HPAB Canada co-chair effective February 14, 2023 upon the departure of incumbent Dr. Laurie Chan;
- c) Reappointment of Dr. Elaine Faustman as a US member for six months effective April 28, 2023 through the end of her final term on October 23, 2023;

- d) Reappointment of Dr. Joan Rose, US member, for a final term of three years, five months effective April 28, 2022 through October 3, 2025; and for Dr. Rose to assume the role of HPAB US co-chair effective April 28, 2023 through the end of her term; and
- e) Appointment of Dr. Marc Habash as a new Canadian member for a three-year term, commencing upon the date of approval by Commissioners.

**International Niagara Board of Control (INBC)**

On December 20, 2022, Commissioners approved the temporary order approving the New York Power Authority's (NYPA) request for an alteration to the regular scope of installation of the Lake Erie-Niagara River Ice Boom for the 2022-2023 ice season and an IJC letter to NYPA approving their request.

*Original signed by:*

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Christopher Wilkie  
Secretary  
Canadian Section

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Susan Daniel  
Secretary  
United States Section