

**MINUTES INTERNATIONAL JOINT**

**COMMISSION**

*Executive Meeting*

*July 22 and 23,  
2021*

The International Joint Commission met in a virtual Executive Session on Thursday, July 22 from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST and Friday, July 23 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST with Pierre Béland in the Chair.

**COMMISSIONERS**

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

**SECTION OFFICES**

Paul Allen	Acting Secretary, Canadian Section
Susan Daniel	Acting Secretary, U.S. Section
Rob Caldwell	Acting Director of Science and Engineering, Canadian Section
Mark Colosimo	Director of Science and Engineering, U.S. Section
Norman Barth	Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Section
Kevin Bunch	Writer-Communications Specialist, U.S. Section (contractor)
Christina Chiasson	Junior Policy & Communications Analyst, Canadian Section
Antionette Dunston	Special Assistant, U.S. Section
Desiree Estephan-Saliba	Legal Intern, Canadian Section
David Fay	Senior Engineering Advisor, Canadian Section
Mark Gabriel	Engineering Advisor, U.S. Section
Adam Greeley	AAAS Fellow, U.S. Section
Rachel Horoschak	Administrative Assistant, U.S. Section
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
Alexis Lashbaugh	Communications Intern, U.S. Section
Catherine Lee-Johnston	Environmental Officer, Canadian Section
Mark Leiva	Network Administrator, U.S. Section (contractor)
Sarah Lobrichon	Public Affairs Advisor, Canadian Section
Brian Maloney	Special Assistant, U.S. Section
Diane Moczula	Junior Policy Advisor, Canadian Section

Robert Phillips	Senior Water Quality and Ecosystem Adviser, Canadian Section
Isabelle Reid	Executive Assistant, Canadian Section
Victor Serveiss	Environmental Advisor, U.S. Section
Carole Smith	Senior Advisor, Canadian Section
Derek Spelay	Administrative Assistant, Canadian Section
Nazifa Uddin	Geospatial Student, Canadian Section
Ed Virden	Senior Policy Advisor, U.S. Section
John Yee	Chief, IM and IT Services, Canadian Section
Shane Zurbrigg	Legal Advisor, Canadian Section
<i>[Christopher Wilkie</i>	<i>Incoming Canadian Section Secretary (3 Aug 2021)]</i>

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

David Burden	Director
Antonette Arvai	Physical Scientist
Raj Bejankiwar	Physical Scientist
Jennifer Boehme	Physical Scientist
Mark Burrows	Physical Scientist
Matthew Child	Physical Scientist
Monique Myre	Administrative Officer
Diane Varosky	Administrative Coordinator
Allison Voglesong-Zejnati	Communications Specialist (contractor)
Li Wang	Physical Scientist
John Wilson	Physical Scientist

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

The agenda was approved.

#### **2. OUTSTANDING CORRESPONDENCE**

Outstanding correspondence was reviewed.

#### **3. COORDINATED CALENDAR, 2021 FALL SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING, 2022 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**

The coordinated calendar, 2021 fall semi-annual meetings and 2022 schedule of meetings were reviewed. The Commission is planning for virtual fall 2021 meetings.

#### **4. ST. MARY MILK RIVERS WATER APPORTIONMENT PROCEDURES STUDY**

Commissioners were briefed on the draft directive for the study and discussed possible study board structure and membership. Commissioners reached consensus on a six-person board with three members from each country. The six-person board will include the St. Mary Milk Rivers

Accredited Officers as Co-Chairs, the Field Representatives as Alternate Co-Chairs, and four at-large members.

## **5. POPLAR RIVER BOARD INFORMATION PAPER**

Commissioners reviewed the draft information paper and discussed the long-standing challenges in water quality monitoring on the Poplar River. Commissioners requested that some specific examples of issues with water quality monitoring be added to the information paper, and that a cover letter transmitting the paper be prepared for the Co-Chairs signatures.

## **6. LAKE ONTARIO ST. LAWRENCE RIVER BOARD**

Commissioners received an update on LOSLR Board activities and conditions in the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence River basin. It was noted that Lake Ontario water levels have declined to below-normal levels due to below-average net basin supplies and the Lake St. Lawrence region is experiencing very low levels because of the lower Lake Ontario levels. It was also noted that the continued above-average outflows prescribed by Plan 2014 were needed to counter the continued high inflows from Lake Erie.

## **7. GREAT LAKES ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

Commissioners received an update of the GLAM expedited review of Plan 2014.

## **8. LAKE ONTARIO-ST. LAWRENCE RIVER BOARD COMMUNICATION**

Commissioners received an update on the stakeholder engagement sessions and progress towards a new communications strategy for the board.

## **9. SOURIS RIVER FLOODING and WATER SUPPLY REFERENCE STUDY**

Commissioners received a status update on the draft Souris River Flooding reference report. The continued Study Board engagement with key stakeholders and Indigenous contacts was noted along with progress on completing the final report. Upcoming milestones were discussed including submittal of the report to the IJC by September 21.

## **10. INTERNATIONAL SOURIS RIVER BOARD GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

Commissioners received an update on the ISRB governance review. Commissioners approved staff drafting a letter to the ISRB and the International Souris River Study Board for Commissioners' consideration in the future via email polling.

## **11. INTERNATIONAL WATERSHEDS INITIATIVE**

Commissioners received an after-action report on the IWI regional webinars on the IJC's 5<sup>th</sup> report to governments. An update was provided on discussions to establish a process to identify and carry out consultations with state, local and federal governments for future additional watershed boards along the boundary. The timing for the notice of International Red River Board designation to Watershed Board was discussed. The Commission expects to complete consultation with governments on IJC designation of the IRRB to a final watershed board by the end of July. The IWI team updated Commissioners on priorities and projects.

## **12. CLIMATE RESILIENCY WORK PLAN**

Commissioners approved the Climate Resiliency Work Plan in principle and directed staff to advance the work plan for procurement action. Activities are to be funded out of existing resources of the three offices with reports back to the Commission. Per the work plan, Commissioners supported staff collaborations with the IWI Team working on the Climate Change Guidance Framework to complement efforts and build efficiencies into staff's work.

## **13. BACKGROUND AND STATUS UPDATE ON WATER QUALITY CONCERNS ON LAKE MEMPHREMAGOG**

Commissioners received an update on water quality concerns, specifically polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), in Lake Memphremagog. PFAS sampling is currently being undertaken in both Vermont and Quebec, and results will be reported to the Lake Memphremagog Steering Committee, a binational group that shares water quality information on the lake. The levels of PFAS detected to date have been within safe limits per safe drinking water guidelines in both countries. Commissioners noted the binational success of the state and province working together to address these concerns and look forward to updates on the sampling. Commissioners requested staff strike a small committee present potential next step for Commission consideration, for example, contacting other international river basin commissions to find out best practices in dealing with emerging chemicals of concern. It was noted that since 1994 over 20,000 new chemicals and polymers have been brought into commerce. The IJC wants to make sure that it follows best practices in reporting on this issue.

## **14. GREAT LAKES CONNECTING WATERS REPORT**

Commissioners reviewed and discussed the Great Lakes Connecting Waters report submitted by the Science Advisory Board Research Coordination Committee. The report will be forwarded to the Governments and was approved by Commissioners for posting on the IJC website as a board report.

## **15. LARGE BASIN MICROBIAL WATER QUALITY STUDY WORK PLAN**

Commissioners reviewed the joint HPAB and WQB proposal for a Large Basin Microbial Water Quality Study based on HPAB's Phase 1 work related to the completed "Centennial Study" report. Commissioners approved the proposal to proceed with the project using existing funding for the Great Lakes Regional Office.

## **16. ACUTE GASTROINTESTINAL ILLNESS IN FOUR GREAT LAKES CITIES PHASE 2 REPORT**

Commissioners reviewed and discussed the latest report and accompanying communications plan of the Health Professionals Advisory Board (HPAB) on Phase 2 of a study on Acute Gastrointestinal Illness (AGI) in Four Great Lakes Cities. Commissioners approved the Phase 1 and Phase 2 reports to be forwarded to the Governments and posted on the IJC website as board reports. Commissioners agreed to schedule a webinar presentation by the HPAB webinar on the report's results and recommendations.

## **17. ORAL UPDATES were provided on the following topics:**

- a. Information Management/Information Technology team activities
- b. International Red River Board's work in support of nutrient management strategy recommendations
- c. Lake of the Woods Rainy River Adaptive Management Committee planned projects.
- d. Flood/drought forecast along the boundary
  - i. Following a generally dry winter and spring across much of the transboundary, many of the border basins are observing abnormally dry to extreme drought conditions. Warm/dry conditions are expected to prevail through July.
  - ii. Water levels are low in many watersheds, but to date, no extreme regulatory accommodations have been required.
- e. Indigenous Collaboration Team activities

## **18. ACTION ITEMS, COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES AND CALENDAR**

Commissioners reviewed the action items and upcoming and planned communications activities in support of the IJC and Boards.

## **19. OTHER BUSINESS**

The meeting was adjourned with no other business.

## **DECISIONS TAKEN VIA POLLING**

The following decisions were taken by the Commissioners and are to be recorded in the minutes of the July 22-23, 2021, executive meeting:

### **International Souris River Study Board**

On July 22, 2021, Commissioners approved the appointments of Ms. Rebecca Seal-Soileau as U.S. co-chair for the International Souris River Study Board (ISRSB) and Ms. Elizabeth Nelsen as alternate, effective immediately, through the end of the study in January 2022.

### **International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control and International Kootenay Lake Board of Control**

On July 1, 2021, commissioners approved the re-appointments of

1. Mr. Ted White as a Canadian board member of both the International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control (IOLBC) and International Kootenay Lake Board of Control (IKLBC) retroactively for a three-year period starting October 15, 2020 and ending October 14, 2023.
2. Mr. Brian Symonds as a Canadian board member of the International Osoyoos Lake Board of Control (IOLBC) retroactively for a three-year period starting June 1, 2021 and ending May 31, 2024.

### **International Lake Ontario St. Lawrence River Board**

On July 12, 2021, Commissioners approved a response to the June 4, 2021 & June 29, 2021, letters to the ILOSLRB on the update on conditions.

On June 22, 2021, Commissioners approved the appointment of David Harper as Canadian co-chair of ILOSLRB for a 3-year term starting June 14, 2021.

### **International Souris River Board**

On June 16, 2021, Commissioners approved a letter to ISRB Co-Chairs as a follow-up to the June 4 meeting with them.

### **Science Advisory Board – Research Coordination Committee**

On June 14, 2021, Commissioners approved the appointment of Mr. Jason Borwick as a Canadian RCC member for a three-year period starting June 4, 2021 and ending June 3, 2024. Commissioners also approved the appreciation letter for departing member Marty Blake.

### **Great Lakes Water Quality Board**

On June 14, 2021, Commissioners approved the re-appointments for the following members:

1. Jon Allan as the U.S. Co-Chair and At Large member for a three-year term from January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2024.

2. Gayle Wood as the Canadian Co-Chair and Watershed member for approximately a one-year term from January 1, 2022 – February 27, 2023.
3. George Heartwell as a U.S. Municipal member for a three-year term from August 9, 2021, to August 8, 2024.
4. Liz Kirkwood as a U.S. Environmental Non-Government member for a three-year term from July 10, 2021 to July 9, 2024.
5. Stephen Galarneau as a U.S. State member for a three-year term from October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2024.
6. Monica Lewis-Patrick as a U.S. At Large member for a 1.5-year term from July 10, 2021 to January 10, 2023.
7. Mark Fisher as the Canadian Business member for a 1.5-year term from July 10, 2021 to January 10, 2023.
8. Mark Mattson as a Canadian Environmental Non-Government member for a 1.5-year term from July 10, 2021 – February 27, 2023.

### **International Red River Board**

On June 4, 2021, Commissioners approved the following appointments and reappointments.

1. Mr. Jason Gildea as a new US member for a three-year period starting, retroactively, February 10, 2021, until February 9, 2024. Position formerly held by Ms. Ayn Schmidt.
2. Mr. Theresa Haugen as a new US member, for a three-year period starting May 17, 2021, until May 16, 2024. Position formerly held by Mr. Jim Ziegler.
3. Reappointment of Mr. Gavin van der Linde as a Canadian member for a three-year period starting, retroactively, February 12, 2021, until February 11, 2024.
4. Reappointment of Mr. Malcolm Conly as a Canadian member for a three-year period starting, retroactively, February 19, 2021, until February 18, 2024.
5. Reappointment of Dr. Patricia Ramlal as a Canadian member for a three-year period starting, retroactively, April 1, 2021, until March 31, 2024.

### **International Watershed Board Designation**

On June 3, 2021, Commissioners approved the criteria description and transmittal letter to governments.

**International St. Croix River Watershed Board**

On May 20, 2021, Commissioners approved the appointment of Vincent Mercier as member of the International St. Croix River Watershed Board (ISCRWB) for a three-year term effective May 24, 2021, and ending May 23, 2024.

**Minutes of the Spring Semi-Annual Meeting**

On July 22, 2021, Commissioners approved the minutes of the April 16 and 19, 2021 Executive meeting.

**2021 June Executive**

On May 11, 2021, Commissioners approved cancelling the June 15-16 executive meeting, followed by a meeting on July 22 and no August meeting. Commissioners appreciate the regular thorough updates provided by staff, and have asked that special short, focused meetings be held in the interim should staff need to address pressing issues, those that have time constraints or need a decision.



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Christopher Wilkie  
Secretary  
Canadian Section



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Susan Daniel  
Acting Secretary  
U.S. Section