

**INTERNATIONAL JOINT COMMISSION**

***Minutes – Executive Meeting, Dec. 6 and 8, 2021***

The International Joint Commission (IJC) met in virtual and in person Executive Session on Monday, December 6, 2021 from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm and Wednesday, December 8, 2021 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm EST, with Jane Corwin in the Chair.

**COMMISSIONERS**

Jane Corwin	Chair, U.S. Section
Pierre Béland	Chair, Canadian 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**

Susan Daniel	Acting Secretary, U.S. Section
Christopher Wilkie	Secretary, Canadian Section
Glenn Benoy	Director of Science and Engineering, Canadian Section
Paul Allen	Manager, Policy and Communications, Canadian Section
Rob Caldwell	Senior Engineering Advisor, 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
Celine Desjardins	HR/Science & Engineering Coordinator, Canadian Section
Antionette Dunston	Special Assistant, U.S. Section
Alexandria Farrell	IWI Student, 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
Melanie Law	AAAS Science and Technology Policy Fellow, 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

### **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
Rajendra Poudel	Economist
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, subject to a reordered consideration of items as presented below and the addition of new agenda items 5 re: the early installation of the Lake Erie-Niagara River Ice Boom, and 6 re: temporary modifications to the deviation strategy governing outflows from Lake Ontario requested by the International Lake Ontario-St. Lawrence River Board.

## **2. INTERNATIONAL LAKE CHAMPLAIN/RICHELIEU RIVER BOARD STUDY**

The Commission was updated on progress re: the ILCRR Study Report, on schedule for completion in March, 2022. The comprehensive consultations process will be complemented by a senior-level meeting for Quebec government officials, now scheduled for Dec. 14, followed by two public meetings in the US in early January 2022.

## **3. INTERNATIONAL ST. MARY and MILK RIVERS STUDY**

Commissioners were apprised of recent developments, including the nomination of Board members and the formal launch of the study announced in the press release on 22 Nov. and the creation of a Study microsite at <https://www.ijc.org/en/smmr>. Commissioners approved the appointment of Accredited Officer Field Representatives of the St. Mary and Milk Rivers (AOSMMR) as alternates to the Study Board co-chairs, as well as the draft letter to government

entities to nominate representatives to the Study's Government Forum for Commissioner consideration and approval.

#### **4. INTERNATIONAL SOURIS RIVER REFERENCE STUDY**

Commissioners were updated on progress re: the Study Board's Souris River Flooding reference report, to include draft recommendations to governments now scheduled for submission on January 5, 2022. Commissioners noted the importance of recommendations vis-à-vis governance and asked that this be noted to governments in their letter report, and also noted plans to provide a courtesy update to the ISRSB regarding the Commission's reporting following the submission to governments.

#### **5. INTERNATIONAL NIAGARA BOARD OF CONTROL – NYPA REQUEST FOR EARLY INSTALL OF LAKE ERIE-NIAGARA RIVER ICE BOOM**

Staff introduced a NYPA request for an early installation of the Lake Erie-Niagara River Ice Boom. Due to staff shortages (in turn due to Covid-19), NYPA requested authorization to install the boom as early as Dec. 10 (rather than Dec 16 or sufficient cold water conditions). Commissioners agreed to a draft temporary order consistent with the request, and asked that the International Niagara Board of Control and Commission staff address important communications aspects prior to the ice boom installation to facilitate relevant public comment.

#### **6. INTERNATIONAL LAKE ONTARIO-ST. LAWRENCE RIVER BOARD (ILOSRLB) – REQUEST FOR MODIFICATIONS TO DEVIATION STRATEGY**

To address increased Lake Ontario water levels due to increased fall precipitation, Commissioners confirmed their approval of a draft response to the LOSLR Board letter requesting modifications to its deviation strategy in the run up to Seaway closure in order to facilitate enhanced St. Lawrence River outflows.

#### **7. INTERNATIONAL SOURIS RIVER BOARD (ISRB) GOVERNANCE REVIEW**

Commissioners received an update on ISRB governance, including progress with the Transition Team (TT). Commissioners agreed to consider TT feedback re: proposed modifications to Board and Committee structures, to include consideration of US and Canadian Government recommendations concerning a new "ROTT" (Reservoir Operations Task Team). Concerning revised draft Terms of Reference (TORs) for the Adaptive Management Committee, Commissioners suggested that TORs pertaining to Adaptive Management were relevant to every Committee, and should be reflected in respective TORs for each of them as well. Commissioners also endorsed the proposal to solicit interest and nominations for a Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC) to the Board, including from the TT.

## **8. INTERNATIONAL RAINY RIVER-LAKE OF THE WOODS WATERSHED BOARD**

Commissioners reviewed two aspects of ongoing Board work: (a) Environmental Emergency Planning, Preparedness and Response; and (b) Phosphorus Loading Targets. Concerning (a), Commissioners asked staff to complete their review of the Board's 2019 Report, integrating indigenous perspectives in so doing, so that they could consider draft advice to Governments by end Jan, 2022. Concerning (b), Commissioners agreed that based of the deliberative draft a revised letter to Governments be prepared for approval.

## **9. GREAT LAKES-ST. LAWRENCE RIVER – (A) CONDITIONS AND FORECAST; (B) COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

Following a presentation on (A), Commissioners expressed interest in (B), including with respect to the ongoing Boat Haul-Out Surveys, the translation of Phase 1 of the GLAM report on the Expedited Review of Plan 2014, and the further integration of indigenous perspectives on Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River issues. Commissioners received an update on communications activities; staff noting recent work including social media engagement. Commissioners noted with interest analytics on the IJC's social media profile and further ideas on enhancing interest in our work, Additional strategic direction on social media engagement will be discussed at the next Executive Meeting.

## **10. COORDINATED CALENDAR, 2022 SPRING SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING, 2022 SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**

The January Executive Meeting will be held on Jan 18-19, 2022. Staff will circulate a draft schedule for the 2022 Spring semi-annual and other Commission meetings.

## **11. INTERNATIONAL WATERSHEDS INITIATIVE (IWI)**

The Draft 2021 Climate Change Guidance Framework (CCGF) – Highlights Report, was approved for release, subject to a French translation and a submission to Governments with an accompanying letter noting linkages to other elements in the IWI workplan.

## **12. GREAT LAKES-ST. LAWRENCE RIVER ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT (GLAM) COMMITTEE**

Following a briefing on Phase 1 of the draft GLAM report on the Expedited Review of Plan 2014, Commissioners approved the release of English and French versions of the draft report for public comment in late January subject to:

- (a) a staff review of the report prior to release;
- (b) following the review and incorporation of Commission comment (if any) by the GLAM, the provision of an advance copy of the report to governments, as well as a Commissioner phone call with government representatives (also prior to release) during the week of 10 January, 2022;
- (c) the posting of the Public Advisory Group's (PAG's) Stakeholder Engagement Report as well as the Independent Review Group's (IRG's) Summary Review Report (both

submitted to the Commission in November) on the GLAM website at the same time as the public release of the draft report; and

(d) sending a letter to the Seaway corporations prior to the public release of the report, suggesting a meeting with Commissioners with a view to Seaway engagement on the Review, including the draft Decision Support Tool (DST).

### **13. GREAT LAKES WATER QUALITY AGREEMENT (GLWQA) 2022 PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS FOR THE TRIENNIAL ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS (TAP) REPORT**

Commissioners reviewed previous guidance for TAP public consultations, as well as the Great Lakes Public Forum in 2022, to note their support for comprehensive engagement with the Public, Indigenous governments, and stakeholders. Commissioners also asked staff to develop a proposal detailing proposed IJC 2022 TAP public consultations activities, to include planned activities in partnership with the Parties, for the IJC public comment event at the 2022 Great Lakes Public Forum.

### **14. ORAL UPDATES were provided on the following subjects:**

- a. Prospective IJC participation at the Canadian Water Resources Association Conference in Canmore, Alberta on June 5-8, 2022, endorsed by the Commission.

### **15. OTHER BUSINESS**

- a. Prospective IJC participation at the 102<sup>nd</sup> American Meteorological Association (AMA) Annual Conference in Houston, Texas from Jan. 23-27, 2022 (a hybrid event);
- b. Staff agreed to provide an update on the IJC and Shoal Lake at the January executive meeting.

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 December 6 and 8, 2021 executive meeting:

#### **International Lake Superior Board of Control**

On December 3, 2021, Commissioners agreed with the Board that the Directive concerning peaking and ponding on the St. Mary River be renewed for another five-year period.

#### **Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) conference**

On December 3, 2021, Commissioners approved IJC sponsorship and participation at the International Conference on Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) to be held in Ostende, Belgium on April 22-26, 2022.

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

On December 1, 2021, Commissioners approved the ILOSLRB-endorsed request by NYPA and OPG to extend existing “peaking and ponding” arrangements on the St. Lawrence River at Moses-Saunders dam for another five-year period.

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

On November 23, Commissioners approved the Water Quality Board’s (WQB) 2021 *Great Lakes Regional Poll* for posting to the WQB webpage as well as its public release.

### **Health Professionals Advisory Board**

On November 23, Commissioners agreed to forward to the US and Canadian Governments the 2021 (Phase 2) *Report on Acute Gastrointestinal Illness in the Great Lakes*.

### **St. Mary and Milk Rivers Study Board**

On November 9, Commissioners approved the following:

- a. The appointment of six SMMR Study Board members, as follows: Dr. Alain Pietroniro (Canadian co-chair) and Mr. John Kilpatrick (US co-chair), as well as Mr. Laurie Tollefson (Canada), Dr. Dena McMartin (Canada), Mr. Mark Anderson (US), and Ms. Sue Lowry (US);
- b. A Study Directive to be forwarded to Board co-chairs upon appointment; and
- c. A draft press release formally launching the SMMR Study, to be issued upon Board appointment in November, 2021;

### **International Rainy Lake of the Woods Watershed Board**

On October 19, 2021, Commissioners approved the reappointment of Ms. Trina Rawn as a Canadian member of the IRLWWB for a three-year period starting retroactively August 1, 2021 and ending July 31, 2024.

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Christopher Wilkie  
Secretary  
Canadian Section

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Susan Daniel  
Acting Secretary  
U.S. Section