

OHIO LAKE ERIE COMMISSION MEETING
The CanalWay Center, Cuyahoga Heights, OH
September 25th, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.

Call to Order and Roll Call –Scott Nally, OLEC Commission Chair; Director, Ohio EPA

The Ohio Lake Erie Commission (OLEC) meeting was called to order by Commission Chairman, Ohio EPA Director Scott Nally at 10:05 a.m.

Commission Members Present:

James Zehringer, Director, Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR)
John Schlichter, Director’s Designee, Department of Agriculture (ODA)
Scott Nally, Director, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA)
Myron Pakush, Director’s Designee, Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
Gene Phillips, Director’s Designee, Ohio Department of Health (ODH)
William Murdock, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, Exec. Director, *via teleconference*

Staff Present:

Gail Hesse, Executive Director, Ohio Lake Erie Commission (OLEC)
Sandra Kosek-Sills, Ohio Lake Erie Commission (OLEC)
Rian Sallee, Ohio Lake Erie Commission (OLEC)
Heidi Rife, Ohio Lake Erie Commission (OLEC)

Welcome and Agenda Overview: Scott Nally, Director, Ohio EPA, and OLEC Chairman

Ohio EPA introduced the motion to “Approve 2013 Ohio Lake Erie Individual Award Lisa K. Brohl and 2013 Ohio Lake Erie Organization Award to Erie County General Health District and Special Recognition be given to Luckey Farmers, Inc.” The motion was seconded by ODOT.

The motion passed unanimously.

Director Nally presented the awards to Lisa K. Brohl and Richard England on behalf of the Erie County General Health District. Luckey Farmers, Inc. did not have someone present to receive their award. Each recipient made a few comments about their work and appreciation for the award.

ODNR Director Zehringer commented that Luckey Farmers are doing great things with equipment and tools to help the farmers and practices. ODNR thanked them for their efforts.

Director Nally presented a certificate to each of the 2013 Life on Lake Erie photo contest award recipients that were present and invited each to say a few words about the moment they took their photograph.

BUSINESS MEETING

Chairman’s Report – Scott Nally, Commission Chair:

There are four actions before the Commission today. The first addresses the approval of the Lake Erie Awards and second addresses the approval of the June meeting minutes.

ODOT moved the following resolution:

Resolved, that the Commission approves the meeting minutes for June 19, 2013.

ODH seconded the motion. ODNR Director James Zehringer asked that the word "Green" be changed to "Grain" in the ODNR agency report. All agreed. The Commission members voted all in favor and the motion carried. Murdock abstained from the vote.

William Murdock, MORPC, left the meeting via teleconference at 10:15 a.m.

Chairman Nally then called upon Amy Jo Klei of Ohio EPA to present the Grant Committee recommendations for funding.

Lake Erie Protection Fund

Grants Committee Report: Amy Jo Klei, Grants Committee Chairman

Klei presented two grant proposals to be funded for the 1st quarter, SFY 2014. The Ohio Lake Erie Commission administers the Lake Erie Protection Fund (LEPF) grant program with revenue generated by the sales of the Lake Erie license plate and other donations.

Projects must assist with implementation of the Lake Erie Protection and Restoration Plan (LEPR) and provide a direct benefit to Lake Erie of its tributary watersheds in Ohio.

Small Grant Proposals 461-14

- Conservation Development, Parking & Stormwater Management Codes
 - Chagrin River Watershed Partners, Inc., \$15,000 (in cooperation with the Lake County Planning Commission)
 - Implements the Chagrin River and Eastern Lake County Coastal Tributaries (ELCCT) Balanced Growth Plans.
 - Coordination on model codes for stormwater management and erosion and sediment control.
 - Work with communities on the update and implementation of local land use codes.
 - Encourage additional communities to support the Plans.

- Otolith Chemistry of Asian Carps in Lake Erie
 - Bowling Green State University, \$15,000
 - Will establish a method to use otoliths for discriminating Asian carps spawning and nursery habitat.
 - Once chemical tags are established, nursery habitats can be rapidly identified.

The resolution was deferred for vote until William Murdock rejoined the meeting.

Special Report:

Update on Sustainable Sediment Practices in Northeast Ohio

Gail Hesse introduced Jim White, Director of Sustainable Infrastructure, Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority.

Cuyahoga Bed load Sediments Interception and Sustainable Use

Background- Cuyahoga Ship Channel- (lower 5.5 miles of the Cuyahoga River) is a critical tool of the regional economy, providing access for maritime commerce which supports 17,000 jobs in NE Ohio.

- 800 freighter trips per year average
- Regular deliveries from a fleet of 14 cargo vessels, Operated by eight companies
- Average freighter length of 630-711 ft.
- 12.5 million tons of cargo delivered up river- Primarily iron ore, limestone, cement, salt
- Dredged depth of 23 ft. allows 20,000-23,000 tons per delivery
- 1" of loss of depth = 110 tons of cargo

Sediment Management is critical for our regional economy

Dredged Ship Channel depth of 23 feet acts as a settling basin for sediments

- Each year 200,000 to 250,000 Cubic yards must be dredged.
- Effects of urban run-off and associated latent toxicity require that sediments be placed in Confined Disposal facilities
- CDFs are nearing capacity and are very costly to develop.
New alternatives for managing sediment need to be developed
- Sediment migrates downstream as suspended or as bed load
 - **Suspended Sediments**- Fines and organics.
Moves mostly during higher discharge periods
 - **Bed Load** – heavier material / larger grain sized / bounces along the bottom.
Moves 24- 7- 365
- Bed load interception is comprised of catching sediment before it enters and settles in the ship channel.
- Bed load can be collected passively-
 - Relies on the natural energy of the river
 - Minimal disruption to stream ecology.
- Potential opportunities from bed load interception
 - A significant percentage (+/- 20%) of sediment could be intercepted from the natural river, thus reducing dredging requirements (50,000 cu yds)
 - Bed load sediments have significantly less latent toxicity (less impacted by the effects of urban run- off and discharge from CSOs)
- 3 RAP and Port Studies documented the potential
- July 2011- 10 days at ArcelorMittal
 - Demonstrated proof of technology
- May 2012- 2 locations- W/University of Akron
 - Success with wide flow variability
 - Documented bed load cleanliness
- Oct- Jan- 5 locations over 5 months w/ University of Akron
 - Reinforced previous studies: Bedload Collector study- May 2012

Cuyahoga River sediments are susceptible to bed load interception in all flow conditions

Grain size distribution indicates material that is suitable of a variety of uses

OEPA confirmed harvested bed load is cleaner than background soils and suitable for unrestricted upland purposes

Bed load interception is significantly less costly than dredging and placement in CDFs

Dredging @ ~ \$13.00 per cubic yard

CDF placement @ ~ \$16.00 per cubic yard

vs.

Bed load harvested for reuse- \$6-8 Cubic yard

Clean, harvested bed load is well suited for a wide variety of beneficial upland uses

Beneficial Use Potential- Fill for basements of vacant and abandoned homes.

- 10,000 Homes slated for demo by land bank.
 - 28,000 in the queue
- Basements need an average of 175 cu yds fill.
- Harvested bed load provides a clean and reliable material
- Bed load collection site is with 8 miles of 85% of the targeted properties

- **Next steps for Port of Cleveland-**
 - Modeling refinements to verify how much total bed load material might be harvested in a full range of flow conditions;
 - Engineering and related projections of capital and operating costs to confirm the amortized unit costs;
 - Site determination and permitting process for an at-scale pilot program

Port Environmental Stewardship Initiatives

- Each year, more than 400 cubic yards of debris is introduced into Cleveland Harbor
- Floating Debris is a federally listed impairment to the Cuyahoga River
- The Port Authority is leading an effort to clean-up floating debris through the introduction of a debris harvester boat fleet
- EPA- GLRI grant to develop and deploy

Battle of Lake Erie: How Did It Go...and Who Won?

Gail Hesse introduced Larry Fletcher, Executive Director, Lake Erie Shores and Islands

Event Recap

- Largest Area-wide event ever held
- Over 100,000 visitors in U.S. Ports
- All island marinas and many mainland marinas sold out
- Jet Express 60% passenger increase over Labor Day weekend 2012
- Miller Ferry set new record for passengers to Put-in-Bay on Sept. 1

Labor Day Week 2013 – 2,291 visitors - 188% increase in visitation over 2012

350+ Media Hits

- \$2 Million + in value
- Potential of 380 million impressions
 - Chicago Tribune
 - New York Times
 - Washington Post
 - Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

- USA Today
- CNN
- NPR
- Windsor Star
- National Geographic Traveler
- Discover Magazine

Put-in-Bay

- More than 7,500 tour tickets sold
- 1,450 paid to be part of reenactment
- Estimated 2,000 watercraft at battle site. 8,000-10,000 people
- All lodging sold out Aug. 30 – Sept. 1
- All marinas and mooring balls at capacity

Port Clinton

- Estimated 30,000 visitors over Labor Day Weekend
- More than 3,000 tour tickets sold
- 8,000 people in downtown area for OSU band and 3,000 for Navy Band
- Most lodging sold out Aug. 31 – Sept. 1
- businesses reported best revenue days ever

Middle Bass Island

- Marina sold to capacity all weekend. MBI Ferry running to MBI Put-in-Bay continuously.
- All ship tour activities sold out
- Hundreds of free ship tours given to public
- All island business revenue at record levels

Kelleys Island

- 360 Sail Away tour tickets sold
- All lodging sold out over Labor Day weekend
- KI Ferry ran four boats continuously
- Most island businesses reported 15% - 20% increase over Labor Day weekend 2012

Perry's Monument

- 40% increase in visitation to park over 2013 despite shorter operating schedule
- Visitor Center store sales up 150% over 2012 levels
- PERFORMANCE 7,000 people were on park grounds for the OSU Band performance
- 2,000 people attended programs on Sept. 10

Questions were asked about how the algal bloom was going to be addressed. Fletcher said that handouts were given to participants and media to explain the bloom. The bloom was minimal and ok and not as noticeable that particular weekend that the Bicentennial occurred.

WGTE (public broadcasting) will be airing the reenactment from the bicentennial on Oct. 3, 2013.

Next event in 2016 that will bring the tall ships back to our area is the TallShips Challenge.

Ohio Lake Erie Commission Office Report

Gail Hesse, Executive Director OLEC

- *Lake Erie Quality Index*
 - Targeted Grant Topic
- License Plate Marketing
- 2013 *Coastweeks*
 - 2013 *Lake Erie Protection & Restoration Plan*

State of the Lake Report: Lake Erie Quality Index

- LEQI and LEPR guide the state's efforts to protect and restore Lake Erie.
- LEQI provides a status report on the condition of the lake.
- 11 indicators, including:
 - Aquatic Habitat, Ambient Water Quality, Coastal Recreation, and Economy
- To be updated in 2015.

Lake Erie Protection Fund Targeted Topic

- Lake Erie Quality Index
 - Coastal Wetland Index of Biotic Integrity under the Biological Indicator.
 - For 2004 LEQI, 12 wetland sites were evaluated for plant diversity.
 - Data not collected on a routine basis.
 - Offer opportunity for researcher to revisit 10-20 sites using either the Coastal Wetland Vegetative Index of Biotic Integrity (VIBI) previously developed, or the standard Ohio EPA VIBI.
 - Compare the results to the previous work to update metric.

Lake Erie License Plates

License Plate Marketing –There was a total of 48 plates with the new life ring design (\$720) sold in July and August. In SFY 2012, total plate sales were approx. \$224,000 and in SFY 2013, total plate sales were approx. \$210,000. There continues to be a steady decline. BMV cost estimates for mail inserts for specialty plates for their quarterly mailings are: \$21,000 for a full page, \$10,500 for a half page, and \$5,250 for a quarter page. The January-April mailer reaches an estimated 3.5 million people. OLEC staff are not requesting authorization for marketing expenditure at this time due to the high cost and lack of available information on sales data resulting from the BMV inserts. Staff will continue to pursue this information and to explore other options.

Discussion:

Deputy Director Gebhardt suggested that a joint marketing/outreach might be done with ODNR, Division of Watercraft, with boat licenses.

Coastweeks

- **Twelve new events added in 2013!**
 - Four new universities
 - Put-in-Bay Beach at the Perry's Victory and Peace Monument
 - Lake Erie Bluffs
 - Four private cleanups, including Wendy Park

11:30 a.m., William Murdock, MORPC entered the meeting via teleconference. Chairman Nally called for a vote on the following resolution presented earlier in the meeting for the approval of the two grant proposals to the Lake Erie Protection Fund.

ODOT moved the following resolution:

Resolved, that the following Lake Erie Protection Fund grant proposals be funded:

ODH seconded the motion. No discussion was offered. The Commission members voted all in favor and the motion carried. Murdock abstained from the vote.

Lake Erie Protection Plan

LEPR Priority Areas

- Nonpoint Source Pollution
- Invasive Species
- Coastal Health
- Great Lakes Areas of Concern
- Toxic Pollutants
- Habitat and Species
- Indicators and Information
- Sustainable Development
- Water Withdrawals
- Climate Change
- Jobs and the Economy
- Dredged Sediment Management

2008 to 2013: What's New? What's Different?

- 2 new Priority Areas: Jobs and the Economy, Dredged Sediment Management
- Harmful Algal Blooms initiatives
- Asian carp management, invasive species control
- Near shore monitoring, monitoring collaboration
- Technical Resources: shoreline erosion control
- Restoration: habitat, streams

Changes to Draft LEPR

- Overall Changes:
 - Listed agency/agencies responsible for each Action Item
- Nonpoint Source Pollution:
 - Clarifications related to agriculture and Ohio's Coastal Nonpoint Program
- Invasive Species:
 - Added Action Item related to development of a regional invasive species screening tool
- Coastal Health:
 - Added information to Action Item related to HAB/bacteria monitoring websites
- Water Withdrawals:
 - Changed Goal to reflect the Great Lakes Water Resources Compact
 - "Prohibit significant adverse impacts from new or increased withdrawals and losses in the Great Lakes basin."

- Climate Change:
 - Revised one Action Item to reflect “variability” of lake levels
- Jobs and the Economy:
 - Added introductory narrative

ODNR moved the following resolution:

Resolved, that the 2013 *Lake Erie Protection & Restoration Plan* be conditionally approved with full approval expected within 30 days.

ODOT seconded the motion. No discussion was offered. The Commission members voted all in favor and the motion carried. Murdock abstained from the vote.

Agency Reports

Myron Pakush, ODOT: The governor announced the new Jobs & Transportation Plan. Three billion dollars over six years to revamp the highways. Over 65,000 jobs will be created for Ohio. This is part of the plan that involves the Turnpike Commission funding to the state. There are 41 projects throughout Ohio recommended for construction that could improve motorist safety, reduce congestion, add capacity and improve our economy. \$2.9 billion is the total investment made in the state’s infrastructure using a combination of state, local and federal funds. A lot of work will be created over the next 6 years.

Gene Phillips, ODH: Beach monitoring is wrapped up for the year. The second draft of the sewage treatment rules is available and ready for review. Over 2,000 comments have been received. It will have the official 60-day review period, which will include the Ohio Public Health Advisory Board review, and the Common Sense Initiative review. The rules will then be final and filed with the Joint Committee on Agency Rule Review (65-day process). We anticipate a proposed effective date of spring 2014.

James Zehringer, ODNR: 2 weeks ago there was a Great Lake Commission meeting and a presentation of the Great Lakes Initiative and the Healthy Lake Erie Fund. There were a lot of questions from different states overall.

Commission Chair and Director, Scott Nally, OEPA: Currently, working on modifying HAB protocol for the most recent information. Nutrient management strategy for the state of Ohio has been approved by the USA EPA Region 5.

John Schlichter, ODA: ODA is working with ODNR and Ohio EPA on legislative efforts for Senate Bill 150.

Advisory Group Reports:

- **OSU Sea Grant Program-** Dr. Chris Winslow: Announced a Great Lakes load committee and that Dr. Reutter will be part of it. Farmers have been at the island taking workshops on better practices. There was also a workshop for officials that had a lot of participation. 50 solar panels have been installed at the lab. The electrical is being redone as well as painting and new windows. They are working on the RFP process for the grant reviews. Water quality lab is running.
- **Natural Resources Conservation Service** – not in attendance.
- **Northeast Ohio Area wide Coordinating Agency** – Pam Davis, Water in the NE District office, working on quality. 604B Funds, working with Dan Bogoevski of Ohio EPA – to develop a workshop for measures for control and manageable responsibilities. Grand River - adoptive riparian setbacks. Working in Lorain City with near shore sediment of bacteria. Working with Health Dept. on the home sewer systems.
- **Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments** –not in attendance

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No public comment.

ODNR moved to adjourn the meeting, ODOT seconded the motion. Director Nally adjourned the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Powerpoint presentation slides used at this meeting are on file at the Ohio Lake Erie Commission Office.

NOTE: Next Lake Erie Commission Meeting: Wednesday, December 18, 2013 1:30 at the Vern Riffe Center for Government and the Arts, Executive Conference and Training Center 31st Floor West B & C, 77 S. High Street Columbus, Ohio.