

**Ohio Lake Erie Commission Quarterly Meeting
Port of Cleveland Conference Center**

June 12, 2019

10:30 a.m.

Call to Order and Roll Call – Laurie Stevenson, Director, Ohio EPA and Commission Chair

The Ohio Lake Erie Commission (OLEC) meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m.

Commission Members Present:

Laurie Stevenson, Director, Ohio EPA, OLEC Chairman
Jack Marchbanks, Director, Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
Tim Hill, Director's Designee, Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT)
Mindy Bankey, Assistant Director, Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR)
Lyn Tolan, Director's Designee, Ohio Development Services Agency (ODSA)
Gene Phillips, Director's Designee, Ohio Department of Health (ODH)
Emily Heppner, Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA)
Harry Allen, Commissioner
Dr. Amanda Bryant- Friedrich, Commissioner (enters at 10:40)
Jim Stouffer, Commissioner
Richard Hylant, Commissioner (ex officio)

Staff Present:

Joy Mulinex, OLEC
Sandra Kosek-Sills, OLEC
Lynn Garrity, OLEC
David Emerman, OLEC

(15 observers)

Welcome and agenda overview – Laurie Stevenson, Director Ohio EPA

Director Stevenson called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to meeting. She asked for a roll call.

(roll call)

Introduction to the Cuyahoga – Dave Gutheil, Chief Commercial Officer

Mr. Gutheil welcomed the group to the new board office space which opened in Sept. 2018. He gave an overview of the Port of Cleveland's role and his work as the CCO in business development. The port has a staff of 17 which operates the terminal and provides services to cargo and passenger vessels. The port is one of the 4th largest, by tonnage, in the great lakes and handles 4 to 4.5-tons of cargo a year. There are international vessels that use the Cleveland port for cargo, mostly shipping high grade steel not manufactured in the US. Arcelor Mittal is a prominent user of the port for transportation of their iron ore. Dave was excited to announce that a new U.S. Navy

combat vessel, U.S. Billings, was temporarily docked in Cleveland, as well as the Lake Guardian. The Port is involved in environmental projects, which include the Irish town bend project (bulkhead restoration) and partner projects related to Lake Erie Water trail in the region and Scranton Peninsula. The port operates two debris harvester vessels for clearing the harbors and channels. There has been in growth in passenger vessels since 2017, with numerous ships taking passengers around the great lakes on week-long cruises that originate in Toronto.

Mr. Gutheil discussed the Port's disposal site for dredge material and how it the material is reused. Finally, Mr. Gutheil provided an overview on container traffic at the Port of Cleveland.

Chairman's report:

- Approval of March 2019 meeting minutes

Commissioner Jim Stouffer moved to the following resolution:

Resolved, that the Commission approves the meeting minutes from March 20, 2019.

Seconded the motion: Commissioner Harry Allen

- Commission Chair

Commission Designee Mindy Bankey moved to following resolution:

Resolved, that the commission approves the appointment of Director Laurie Stevenson as the OLEC chairperson until 2019.

Seconded the motion: Director Jack Marchbanks

- MOA with OLEC and Ohio EPA for SFY 2020

Commission Designee Lyn Tolan moved to the following resolution:

Approval of Ohio EPA has the fiscal administration until end of SFY 2020 and the renewal of the MOA.

Seconded the motion: Commission Designee Gene Phillips

- LEPF grant budget SFY 2020

Move to the following resolution: Director Jack Marchbanks

Resolved, the commission approved the \$175,000 grant budget for SFY 2020

Seconded the motion: Commissioner Dr. Amanda Bryant-Friedrich

Lake Erie Protection Fund

Lynn Garrity, OLEC, discussed the FY19 Quarter 4 grant awards.

\$200,000 small and targeted grant summary of SFY 2019

Q2 funded \$100,000

Q4 Recommended \$97,014

14 applications were received, with the total requested through the applications was \$624,259.

OLEC reviewed the applications and proposed funding two projects that will total \$97,014.

- First grant recommendation is to fund a study by Teresa Cutright, Univ. of Akron and the City of Akron. The study will focus on ways to reduce PO₄, nutrients and land application methods.
Move to approve the first grant: Commissioner Richard Hylant
Second: Commissioner Dr. Amanda Bryant-Fredrich
- Second grant recommendation is to fund research on HAB and Hypoxia impacts on Lake Erie food Web and fisheries, by Stuart Ludsin, The Ohio State University, for \$49,924. Stuart Ludsin's research will uncover the dynamic of stressors of fisheries and how they will respond to anticipated HAB's.

Clarifying question that there isn't a duplicate effort with this grant and Sea Grant.

Move to approve the second grant: Assistant Director Bankey
Second the motion: Commissioner Jim Stouffer.

Special Report

Todd Nettesheim, U.S. EPA GLNPO, gave an overview of the functions of the Lake Guardian, the U.S. EPA research vessel. Chris Korleski regrets he wasn't able to attend, he is planning the Great Lakes Public Forum. Todd gave an overview of the current and past Lake Erie surveys and monitoring done by the Lake Guardian crew. He specifically mentioned dissolved oxygen monitoring, long-term contaminant monitoring in sediment and specimen, and costal monitoring.

During the 2019 monitoring period, sampling will focus on the lower food web, *phytoplankton* activity, and manganese. Summary to be presented to OLEC at the conclusion of the monitoring period.

Ohio Lake Erie Commission office report – Joy Mulinex, OLEC Executive Director

Thank you for traveling in from NW Ohio and Columbus today.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the OLEC members will tour the U.S. EPA vessel Lake Guardian and lunch will be provided. There is limited guest space on Lake Guardian for the tour, prior responses were needed.

The commission is wrapping up the Lake Erie Protection Fund grant cycle for FY18. Lake Erie license plate sales have continued their slow decline; therefore, funding for FY19 will be slightly reduced. The commission will focus on funding larger grants that have more impact and are easier to administer. Sandra Kosek-Sills is transferring the grant oversight to Lynn Garrity and some changes will occur on how the grants are administered.

Dr. Amanda Bryant-Friedrich asked a clarifying question regarding the need to change the grant funding process. There is a need to streamline and to keep-up with current practices, but the majority of the changes will be to modernize the files to digital access. Grant reviewers were sent applications digitally. Commissioner Stouffer asked if there are other resources for funding.

Lynn provided an update on the development of the Lake Erie Protection and Restoration Strategy and its associated timeline in coordination with the Commission Agencies and other Commissioners.

Joy announced two new staff members that will be working on Lake Erie Programs through Ohio EPA in conjunction with OLEC staff:

- Vanessa Steigerwald-Dick, Ohio EPA, NEDO, will be working with David Emerman on dredge work.
- Melanie Barbis, Ohio EPA, NEDO, will be working with Lynn Garrity on the Area of Concern program for the Cuyahoga.

OLEC has been referenced in some legislative bills; Joy will keep the group posted on any developments.

Agency / Commissioner Reports –

- Director Marchbanks, ODOT, highlighted a few of the 24 projects near Lake Erie, i.e. streetscapes, bike paths, and erosion repairs, specifically the Northshore trail and the western reserve green way. Work will begin this summer.
- Gene Phillips, ODH, announced that beach monitoring contracts are in place and operating. The upgrade to the Beach Guard application will be finished in a few weeks. The fish consumption advisory booklet transitioned over to ODH this year. The booklet is complete and being distributed in state parks, sporting goods stores, OSU, etc,
- Lyn Tolan, ODSA announced broadcast advertising campaign on Ohio Tourism. Partnering with Brand USA for international advertising, the focus will be Lake Erie, Cedar Point and Lake Erie Shores and Islands. There will be a focused campaign on road trips on the Ohio.org website. The ODSA is finding that visitors travel to Ohio equally throughout all four seasons with 3.5 million visitors a year. ODSA is also developing a co-op program for advertising destinations and events. Your events and highlights can be posted for free on the Ohio.org website.
- Emily Heppner (ODA) – ODA is doing a lot of work in the Western Lake Erie Basin area to coordinate sign-ups for the new programs in SB 299. Also a working to engage participation in the Lake Erie CREP.
- Assistant Director Mindy Bankey on behalf of Director Mary Mertz, ODNR - Last month in Toledo, H2Ohio program hosted a boat tour attended by the directors to view potential wetland / beneficial use of dredge material project sites on the Maumee River in Toledo. Office of Coastal Management is busy with shore structure permits and how to address current high lake levels.
- Director Laurie Stevenson, Ohio EPA – Director Stevenson thanked the Commission for the appointment as Chairperson and she is excited to work closely with Ohio Dept. of Ag, ODNR, ODOT, and ODH on Lake Erie and H2Ohio. She thanked ODH for their work on the recreational strategy on HAB responses, public notifications and the development and distribution of the fish consumption advisory. This is the 50th

Anniversary of the 1969 Cuyahoga River fire and there are many events planned in the Cleveland area to commemorate the progress being made since then.

- Commissioner Harry Allen mentioned developments with Mentor harbor and Mentor lagoons. He also noted the problems that Lake County is having with high water levels.
- Commissioner Jim Stouffer discussed how the Lake Erie Foundation was working with legislators and the Governor's office on developing some aspects of H2Ohio.
- Commissioner Richard Hylant reviewed items that were discussed at the Great Lake Protection Fund board meeting last week. They give grants in-house as well as competitive grants. Items included: research on HABs, a storm water presentation from Xylem included nanotechnology and AI looking at improving water infrastructure. There was also a presentation from a Southeast Michigan farm based effort on ways to produce CAFOS and organic materials from manure.
- Commissioner Dr. Amanda Bryant-Friedrich announced that the Univ. of Toledo is doing research using rice to remove contaminants among other projects for protecting water resources.

Partner Reports:

- Kurt Princic, District Chief, Ohio EPA, announced several celebrations in Cleveland, Akron and Kent to recognize the Cuyahoga river recovery efforts. Events start next week, which marks the 50th anniversary of the Cuyahoga river fire.
- Chris Winslow, Ohio Sea Grant – Not present
- Kris Barnswell, TMACOG – Present but no report.
- NOACA – Not Present
- NRCS – Not Present

Public Comment:

Tom Parkoski, Conneaut Port Authority, announced great walleye, yellow perch, and steelhead fishing in the Conneaut area, as well as the D-Day reenactment coming up. This event brings in a lot of tourism to the area and is scheduled for Aug. 17.

Sandy Bihn, Lake Erie Waterkeeper – Thank you to ODOT for their support of the Toledo lighthouse restoration. Once completed, it will be a tourist attraction. Sandy also spoke about concerns regarding the confined animal feeding operations, manure as fertilizer, and land application of manure. They see that the goals of the Western Basin of Lake Erie Collaboration for phosphorous in the western Lake Erie basin, and the Maumee River are not being met.

Lynn Tolan moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:42 a.m.

Signature of Chair: *Kevin A. Stevens*

Date: 9/25/19