



OHIO COASTAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COUNCIL



Tom Denbow, Chair
Dr. Robert Heath, Vice Chair

Mission: To advise the Director of ODNR on the Ohio Coastal Management Program and to promote, protect, enhance, and encourage the wise use of Lake Erie's coastal resources and its watershed.

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 14, 2013

Meeting location:
Ritter Public Library
5680 Liberty Avenue
Vermilion, Ohio

Members Present: George Goudreau, Eric Dodrill, Jim O'Connor, Robert Heath, Tom Denbow, Joe Hayberger, Debbie Hymore-Tester, Vince Urbanski, Doug Natoce, John Hageman, Leslie Korenko, John Willey, Tom Szabo.

ODNR Staff Present: Scudder Mackey, Laurie Cleaver, Debi Beck, Brenda Culler, ,

Partner Agencies Staff Present: Sarah Orlando (Ohio Sea Grant)

Others Present: Richard Konik, Scott Duncan, Don Finke, Jerry Yonkey and Ron Eickholt.

10:00 am - Call to Order by Chair, Tom Denbow

Meeting called to order by Tom Denbow. Welcome/Introductions of new council members Mr. John Willey and Mr. Doug Natoce. Mr. Willey has a personal interest and attachment to the Sandusky River and he is looking forward to doing whatever he can do to help. Mr. Natoce has been involved with natural resources for 28 years. He also does liaison work for United States military projects around the world. Doug continues to explore the Great Lakes as much as he can. He is looking forward to being a resource.

John Keenan submitted his resignation due to inability to attend meetings due to a work conflict.

10:09 a.m. Approval of December Meeting Minutes

A motion was made by George Goudreau to approve the meeting minutes, seconded by Joe Hayberger. Unanimously approved and motion carried.

10:15 a.m. – Presentation on Water levels and adaptation given by Chief Mackey (attached)

- Water Levels and Adaptation –Thresholds and “Coping Zones”
- How might we incorporate into Office of Coastal Management (OCM) Policy and Guidance materials?

Questions on the presentation: Mr. Denbow asked if the Ohio Coastal Management Program(OCMP) document will be redrafted or was Chief Mackey referring to program policies. Chief Mackey explained it is programmatic, but the OCMP policies may be redrafted. He will be in Washington DC for a meeting and will discuss regulatory changes with Liz Mountz and ensure NOAA is kept informed.

Ms. Bihn commented on the impacts to Lake Erie water levels and revisiting the Upper Great Lakes water levels. Chief Mackey said the impacts are on Lake Erie if diversions are created in Upper Great Lakes. There is data and it can be presented but not at the point where action needs to be taken. Need to see what sequestration effects there will be. Dr. Heath expressed the idea to be proactive regarding issues on the Great Lakes in general, especially those upstream. We need to keep a watchful eye on these issues because it could have a large impact on Lake Erie. Chief Mackey stated this is an issue on ODNR’s radar screen. As actions are proposed that will impact Ohio’s fisheries, marinas and a number of other things that are important, the ODNR and Michigan fisheries people are well represented on those panels in the discussions of putting control structures in the rivers. Mr. Denbow asked how to begin to share the information so people can take the best data and react appropriately. Chief Mackey explained his point is to present the information in a conceptual way, noting the problem of climate change and identifying thresholds. How would the system respond, how would each member plan for that and how would they react to it? How can that be incorporated into our decision making process?

Mr. Natoce noted that this topic is looked at on a long-term basis. The acute situation is that people want to hear what the Army Corps of Engineers wants to do but they do not have funding or authorizations. Long term effects are driven by the media and what is pushed. Take Katrina for example and where the money has been spent. The acute situation and chronic situation: address both simultaneously.

Mr. Goudreau said he has to leave soon. He stated there are many changes coming about but current priorities have been evaluated. It doesn’t mean the other concerns should be abandoned but the priority level may change. We all agree that there is unanimity, not just consensus.

Mr. Denbow discussed restructuring the council and focusing on Adaptation. One of the things with Superstorm Sandy that came through last fall (Nov. presentation by Brenda and Scudder) highlighted the need for better planning by looking at various scenarios in terms of storm severity. How can we work as a department to help locals, businesses, residents, etc. to prepare for more frequent weather events such as storms, water variability, etc.? The presentation focused on Lake Erie and several areas within the Great Lakes. Chief Mackey was previously in contract with the IJC in regard to water level regulation. There are interesting approaches that he developed that could be applicable in Lake Erie. These are potential ways to address changes in climate and water levels.

11:30 am - Office of Coastal Management (OCM) Quarterly Updates

Debi Beck gave the quarterly updates for OCM and partners. She extended her thanks to the council members that passed along groups to contact for LESEMP.

Sarah Orlando gave an update on the Ohio Clean Marinas Program. She added the goal of the Facebook page is to reach out to new audiences to provide a greater awareness of program. They are continuing to grow and develop the Ohio monofilament recycling program. Sarah explained they will be developing education components for that with NOAA Great Lakes Marine Debris Program. She explained two marinas have pledged, and there are more than 1,000 Ohio Clean Boaters. People can sign up online to be part of the Ohio Clean Boaters Program.

Chief Mackey discussed the state budget. ODNR appears to be okay. There could be a 47% hit for the Office of Coastal Management's overall budget but the program's core funding is okay. The majority of the cut is related to pass-through money for acquisition programs that OCM successfully competed for. Coastal will need to go to the controlling board for approval to encumber those funds. OCM's federal budget could have an 8.2% reduction. The Ohio Coastal Management Program annual draft grant application will be submitted to NOAA today. Ohio Sea Grant was zeroed out in the proposed state budget as well as Heidelberg University's water quality lab. Chief Mackey expressed that these groups and their research is extremely important to Lake Erie and to ODNR. Anything the council can do to restore and/or maintain the funding would be appropriate.

Chief Mackey also discussed the Office of Coastal Management being moved from Deputy Director Andy Ware to Deputy Director Karl Gebhardt. Deputy Director Gebhardt is also the Chief of Soil and Water Resources.

Ms. Bihn discussed the Healthy Lake Erie Fund and the interim budget for \$3 million. Those monies are directed to the Ag process. She said they asked for in-lake monitoring to help

reduce nutrients in the short run but it did not occur. \$350,000 was tacked on for inland lake monitoring but Lake Erie got nothing. She would like to reinstate the HLE Fund for in-lake monitoring. Last year charter captains monitored it.

11:35 am - Public Comment

Mr. Richard Konik is big in supporting maritime in the Great Lakes. His organization is environmentally concerned because they understand how much water it takes. Water is the cheapest and most environmentally friendly way to transport goods. HB535 is the Harbor Maintenance Trust Issue. Congressman Gibbs, Latta, Ryan, Renacci are all preparing to support HB535. Senator Rob Portman and Senator Brown are both supporting language for commercial harbors. Some of the acts will include money to work on the noncommercial harbors. Jobs are highly linked to maritime. This is the most productive region in the country. The eight Great Lakes states have 118 members of Congress. Fifty-five are in the watershed. Seven of those are in Ohio.

11:45 am – Local Updates/council member reports

Mr. Szabo had nothing to report at this time. **Mr. Willey** wanted to report on the Ballville Dam removal /drinking water reservoir. ODNR has supplied some money and the plan to remove the Ballville Dam from the Sandusky River. Removal of the dam is stalled right now. He plans to keep everyone informed as much as possible. One concern is that sediment will make its way into the bay when the dam is removed. **Ms. Korenko** explained not much happens on the island in the winter time. The water intake is only in 8-10 feet of water and about 300 feet from shore near commercial boat docks where the Jet Express comes in. **Mr. Hageman** explained there are proposed windmills at Lake Erie Camp Perry Industrial Park despite the protests from the local birders. The local government seems to be unable to address the environmental concerns. It is uncertain if they will wait to put them up or study the BG use of the shoreline. Can we handle that? Chief Mackey explained there was a denial for the request for the permit under federal consistency and it also had over than 180 negative comments. The issue is that if it is below 5 megawatts, the Power Siting Board does not have authority to review the proposal. There will be a meeting with the Division of Wildlife and Director's office for options that ODNR has. It has to be regulated at the local level. Mr. Hageman said there is discussion with the USF&WS getting involved because it is within a ½ mile of an eagles' nest. He also discussed a high tension electric line going through a nature preserve. It will be on Channel 13 tonight. Mr. Willey said the preserve is on the Sandusky River north of Fremont. It is really a unique place, historically and ecologically. The lines would go right through the center. Mr. Hageman said there was no usable ice this year is affecting the island economy from bed and breakfasts to the local airlines. Put-In-Bay is proposing to extend the Christmas in July from one weekend to the 12 days of Christmas. This would encompass 2 weekends and cover all the days in between. Julie Market put out a letter of support. This is a huge tax on the community in general and

takes away the opportunities for families who want to avoid the large crowds. **Mr. Natoce** has nothing to report at this time. **Mr. Urbanski** said Lake Metroparks is working on the Lake Erie Bluffs 600-acre park in Perry Township. Started in 2010 and hope to finish the acquisition this year. To date, they have lined up \$7.5 million of funding. Thanks to OCM with obtaining CELCP funding. OCM also recently applied for a grant from USF&WS for the project and was successful in getting \$1 million through that. **Mrs. Hymore-Tester** discussed the Tall Ships in Port Clinton and they have gotten over \$20,000 in funding so far with the goal being \$35,000. They have been working hard on getting the foundation done on the Lighthouse restoration. **Mr. Hayberger** discussed Sandusky having a good economic development over the past four to five years. Bike path and Lions Park will all hook up from Cedar Point to Toft's one day. There are major sewage issues in Bay View, west of Sandusky with uncertainty as to who will pay for the sewer lines to be installed. **Dr. Heath** explained the initiation; the freshwater institute was born in November. The Alliance for Water Future (AWF) has, on Jan. 30, sponsored a lecture on fracking and the implications of it in Ohio. It did not take a position. The AWF does not take positions but the intent is to serve as a broad credible information source in the region. Given at the Cleveland City Club and carried live on public radio stations. This is an active credible source of information. The AWF is a consortium of academia and non-government organizations including the Great Lakes Science Center, and the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District. Ecosystems science has to deal with how this impacts human activity, which is often best quantified in dollars. **Mr. O'Connor** discussed the Lorain County Port Authority. The local kayak group and others are sponsoring a cleanup in the Black River on Sunday May 5. The Jet Express and Port will be taking 40 trips from the Black River this summer starting in June and going through fall including islands, Browns games, etc. A local artist from North Ridgeville, Jim Gundlach, will be displaying his art sculptures at Lorain County Community College. **Mr. Dodrill** discussed the budget situation for 2013 in Perkins Township is not good. He runs the highway department and they were running with a crew of three instead of six for the department. They are now seeing 20 to 40 percent cuts. On the upside, they just received a certificate of occupancy on the new administrative complex and will be moving into that the next month. They received an EPA grant to do porous concrete and that will be monitored for volume of runoff reduction over the next three years. They will be acquiring data from that instillation to see volume reduction in storm water. **Ms. Bihn** discussed the Detroit Water NPDES hearing and noted concerns regarding sewage from the Detroit Waste Water Treatment Plant coming down the Detroit River and into Lake Erie. The people speaking at the hearing were Lake Erie people and people who lived in the near the plant. They commented about noise, odors, etc. 3,000 miles of pipelines that go to the plant. From the time the sewage goes down the pipeline, it is already a problem. She said there isn't a large enough voice from this sector. They are reducing the phosphorus loading to 0.6 and 0.7. Between 5 and 20 percent of Lake Erie's phosphorus volume is believed to be coming from that plant. She said council will have to sign a letter next week if interested.

Mr. Natoce asked if it's appropriate for the ODNR Council to encourage the ODNR to get the governor to voice support and have the letter come from the state. He suggested since it's a state-wide issue, council should take action on it.

Mr. Denbow said Council gives the authority for the executive committee to draft a letter and act on it. Under work group structure, can discuss what the council's functions are. Then it would go out under Tom Denbow's name to the director.

Mr. Doug Natoce made a motion for council to direct a letter to the ODNR Director in supporting restrictions on the Detroit Waste Water Treatment Plant. Seconded by Debbie Hymore-Tester.

To recommend that the state of Ohio have the most stringent reductions in nutrients, specifically:

- 1.) WWTP and CSO limit the untreated sewage flow into the river
- 2.) Nutrient Reduction
- 3.) Part of NPDES Permit that is technologically and economically feasible.

MOTION: The Coastal Resources Advisory Council's Executive Committee draft and send a letter to the ODNR Director recommending that the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the state of Ohio take the position of supporting efforts that require the Detroit Waste Water Sewer District, through their pending federal NPDES permit, to reduce to the lowest technologically and economically feasible means the amount of untreated sewage and nutrients, specifically phosphorus, being released by the Detroit Waste Water Sewer District's water treatment plant and combined sewer overflow systems. Unanimously approved and motion carried.

12:15 pm – Lunch

12:45 pm - Council Business

Executive Committee Report (Committee Structures)

Mr. Denbow explained the Executive Committee met a few times to discuss how to re-organize committees. The group met after Christmas and came up with the information on the handout. Priorities were discussed and ranked. These are things the council should be focused on. The topics were assigned to Work Groups. There needs to be an understanding of the purpose, goals, objectives and areas of focus. There will be four workgroups: Outreach/Education; Regulatory; Habitat; and Adaptive Management. Mr. Denbow understands the challenges and additional workloads but it's also important to help the department by outlining expectations. Coastal will assign staff resources to each work group

and offer conference call information. Laurie will help organize calls and send out the calling information. Chief Mackey explained it's important to evaluate the benefit of the program. What is the value of the services provided? The four workgroups will have the task of evaluating what benefits are occurring. What is benefiting the state of Ohio, the resources of Lake Erie, the economy, the people, etc.

Mr. Denbow asked council if they feel the information is correct. Each group would meet and refine what each work group needs to do. The government doesn't always do a good job of promoting our economy or our ability as citizens to earn a living and find a job. This is reflected in the priorities on the grid. The bottom and the fifth priority are socio-economic. Mr. Denbow explained he sees ODNR and the Ohio Coastal Management Program group as a lot of wonderful resources that could be matched up with other state agencies to do an outstanding job and make Ohio the leader in using its resources to its economic benefit. Mr. Denbow explained he tries to get the Lake Erie Public Access Guide into as many people's hands as possible and link up groups to the websites. This feeds directly into what the Lake County Visitors Bureau does. He sees a lot of resources that could have a vast positive economic impact for our state.

Mr. Szabo said we all respond to the way that we are measured. Some of the measurements should be: what is the economic benefit to the state of Ohio and its citizens. Is there a way to tie it into the GDP of the state? A relationship to what we pay in taxes to the revenue dollars that the state brings in. The real money comes in jobs that up the Goals need to reflect how you can help drive some of the mid-level jobs economically. There is a need to help the state economically.

Chief Mackey explained, as state entities, we are limited by the authorities vested in us by the legislature through the Ohio Revised code. How these things are implemented is regulated by the Ohio Administrative Code. OCM is trying to reconstitute the programs to be positive to the state, ODNR and OCM. There is a need to review our regulatory programs. The sequencing is to do this quickly then move on to the things along the shoreline that attract people. It's also about protecting the resource. He explained the limitations in authority. Mr. Natoce asked how can what the council does be used to promote job growth and economic development and done in a way that is ecologically sustainable. Chief Mackey commented that Mr. Natoce's point is excellent. It's important to take action along the shore and show what has been done.

Mr. Natoce understands the statutory requirement and boundaries, and we still need to promote and protect the wise use of the state's resources. The protection is on the Code side. The promotion is if the regulatory process can be streamlined. People will be more willing to take action and locate their businesses along the Lake Erie coast. Each of these should have a

regulatory component and its outcome. Chief Mackey said each work group will bring forth the examples of successes on the ground. He also explained there are statutory requirements in the Ohio Revised Code and there is also a Coastal Management Program Document. All of these are part of the Ohio Coastal Management Program.

Mr. O'Connor explained there is a lot of mistrust from the coastal property owners. The property owners are very concerned about structures that aren't permitted, dumping and concerned about water quality. These are all items that should have been brought to focus since day one. The points are very valid. With the right outreach, many things can be put aside and go in the direction needed.

Chief Mackey said he wants to have an effective and efficient regulatory program that negates environmental impacts. Can OCM provide the coastal landowner with guidance and technical assistance? When someone makes an investment in coastal property, are they ensured their structure is well designed? Building trust to the coastal constituents is a priority. Mr. O'Connor said it's going to take some time but it can be done. Chief Mackey said the regulatory group could make the connection needed. Work groups are needed and there needs to be a different mindset that includes adaptation and restoration. Another step is reprocessing the ugly and makes it a more resilient shoreline. Fixing things is the goal. Mr. Szabo asked what interaction Coastal has with the Ohio Department of Development. Chief Mackey said one of the recommendations coming out of your work group is to strengthen those connections.

Chief Mackey expressed for work groups to not be constrained and to think outside the box. There is a need to be more efficient, effective and action oriented. Mr. Denbow said for groups to meet sooner rather than later. He wants to assemble the new executive committee quickly. Each committee chair will report out at the next meeting. Ask if there are any questions. Rely on OCM staff to help where needed.

Old Business

No old business to report

New Business

No new business to report

2:05 pm – Adjourn

A motion was made by Joe Hayberger to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Mrs. Hymore-Tester. Unanimously approved and motion carried.