



DRAFT MINUTES
Public Awareness and
Communications Committee
October 12, 2012
Agency Meeting
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**PUBLIC AWARENESS AND COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 12, 2012**

The Public Awareness and Communications Committee convened at 9:08 AM.

Public Awareness and Communications Committee Members Present:

William Valentino (Committee Chair), Frank Mezzano, Sherman Craig, Patrick Hooker (DED) and Dierdre Scozzafava (DOS)

Other Members or Designees Present:

Lani Ulrich (Agency Chairwoman), William Thomas, Richard Booth, Arthur Lussi, Cecil Wray and Robert Stegeman (DEC)

Agency Staff Present:

Terry Martino (Executive Director), Sarah Reynolds (Acting Counsel), Keith McKeever (Public Information Officer), Mary Palmer, Dan Kelleher (Special Assistant-Economic Affairs), Richard Weber (Deputy Director Regulatory Programs), James Connolly (Deputy Director Planning), Brian Grisi, Kathy Regan, Mark Rooks, Ed Snizek, Colleen Parker, Elizabeth Phillips, Dan Spada, Milt Adams and Ariel Lynch

Others Present:

Frederick Monroe (Executive Director, Local Government Review Board)

Approval of Draft Committee Minutes of September 2012: Sherman Craig made a motion to approve the September 2012 minutes. Frank Mezzano seconded the motion and the September 2012 minutes were approved unanimously.

William Valentino (Committee Chair) began the first of the committees' presentations by introducing David Wick, Executive Director of the Lake George Park Commission. Mr. Wick introduced Kenneth Parker and Joe Stanek, Commissioners for the LGPC.

Mr. Wick's presentation (attached) is an overview of the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species in Lake George.

Arthur Lussi asked about the assumption of elevation and water temperature that impair invasive species. Mr. Wick said that the common theme on invasive species is that every assumption about where a species can thrive has generally proven to be false.

Frank Mezzano asked what the impact of controlling Asian Clams has on other invasive species and if they have to shift their focus and funding? Mr. Wick said that this is exactly what the impact is so they are trying to run parallel battles on invasive species.

Chairwoman Ulrich asked about the boat wash areas, where do they set this up, where is the run off going, and how far from the waterfront? Mr. Wick said that all of the water is re-circulated so there is no run off. It is a completely self-contained system.

Chairwoman Ulrich asked if a local town could not afford this system would a local car wash do the same? Mr. Wick said that because of where the invasive species can collect it would not clean it completely.

Frank Mezzano asked how they address the launching of a boat from a private home, and if the boat patrols would routinely check boats? Mr. Wick replied that it is a risk management effort and the boat patrols would be able to check boats.

Sherman Craig inquired about the funding sources and how the private donations are working? Mr. Wick said that the private donations have gone almost exclusively for Asian Clams.

Richard Booth stated that this is a never ending problem and asked about the idea of a permanent funding mechanism? And that an assessment district, something that has a lot of experience, is something to think about. Mr. Wick said that the assessment district is the one that they are primarily looking at.

Cecil Wray asked if there is very little risk for non-motorized vessels? Mr. Wick said yes, there has been two studies on that subject and because those types of boats dry very quickly and do not have areas where invasives can hide.

Robert Stegeman asked if it has been discussed of what is going to be done to boats leaving Lake George and going to neighboring lakes? Mr. Wick said this has been discussed and if we tried to

go to 100% decontamination of all boats leaving the lake that the costs are monumental so education is very important.

Frederick Monroe commented that Warren County is considering local laws to deal with mandatory boat inspections because they can act faster than the Park Commission, but this would only affect Warren County. He said that a statewide problem would need a broader attack than just local government or the Park Commission.

Frank Mezzano asked if a statewide bill that would ban the transport of invasive species address that? And is there any advocacy coming from the Lake George Park Commission, Warren County or others to bring this into law? Mr. Wick said there is a significant amount of support for this but the challenge on this is enforcement. He said the biggest benefit is the educational component.

Terry Martino (Executive Director) said we note that you are going to be lead agency on the SEQOR process that you are undertaking to look at alternatives in regard to invasive species management, do you anticipate that there will be additional public meetings and outreach? Mr. Wick said absolutely. He said they want to get this out there early to get public response and the best ideas. He said they are always inviting outside suggestion and comment.

The second portion of the Public Awareness and Communications Committee convened at 10:25 AM.

James Connolly (Deputy Director Planning) introduced Bill Howland, Manager of the Lake Champlain Basin Program.

Mr. Howland's presentation (attached) provided an update on the various initiatives being conducted through the Lake Champlain Basin Program.

Chairwoman Ulrich asked about TMDL? Mr. Howland said it stands for "Total Maximum Daily Load" which describes the value of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a body of water can receive while still meeting water quality standards. Robert Stegeman added that TMDL for phosphorous levels in Lake Champlain is a very important number because the levels of permitting are set to help meet that.

Sherman Craig asked about the working relations with the APA. Mr. Howland said they have had the opportunity to work more closely than in the past. He said they are also seeing good collaboration cross-boundary with New York, Vermont and Quebec.

Richard Booth asked with Lake Champlain being a bigger lake does it have an Asian Clam problem yet, and if not, how do you know that? How much surveying do you have to do to be reasonably confident that you don't? Mr. Howland said they await the first report, but they are actually managing and monitoring, as is DEC, the Champlain Cannel area.

Richard Booth asked if you can realistically have a lake-wide monitoring program or are there particular places you could monitor? Mr. Howland said they do have monitoring programs for invasive species, but cannot say it is comprehensive or lake-wide. They have also set up a rapid response taskforce with the help of Quebec, Vermont and New York with funds that are available for rapid response. So if something is discovered where they, or the state agency or Park Commission can do something to intervene they can authorize it without going through a yearly cycle of funds. He said they are always going to be fighting this battle, and they have to learn how to handle those things every time they come close.