

**Vermont Citizens Advisory Committee (VTCAC) on  
Lake Champlain's Future**

**Monday, October 21, 2019, 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm**

**Shelburne Town Offices, Meeting Room 1 (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor)  
5420 Shelburne Road, Shelburne, VT 05482**

**Committee Members Present:** Sen. Randy Brock, Eric Clifford, Bob Fischer, Lori Fisher, Sen. Ginny Lyons, Bill Howland (Vice Chair), Rep. Leland Morgan, Mark Naud (Chair), Rep. Carol Ode, Hilary Solomon, Jeff Wennberg

**Committee Members Absent:** Wayne Elliott, David Mears

**Public Guests:** Crea Lintilhac, Christine Doherty (Town of Williston)

Meeting summary by Bethany Sargent, Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

**5:00 – 5:30 pm**

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

**2. Public Comments**

Crea Lintilhac commented she's concerned about potential outcomes of the International Joint Commission (IJC) Flood Mitigation Study, particularly the potential impact of flooding on the St. Lawrence.

Bill Howland replied that he does not think management strategies currently under consideration would have that impact. The IJC is working with scientists from Canada and the U.S. on an independent group that reviews the draft results of the Flood Mitigation Study. He suggested contacting Mike Laitta for information.

Bob Fischer commented that the pre-treatment program managed by DEC may be pushed to municipalities. He recognized that DEC has limited staff capacity but felt strongly this should not go to municipalities. He expressed concern that municipalities don't have the staffing or funding.

Jeff Wennberg described that the state is going through an evaluation. The program can be implemented two ways: at the municipal level, which is more typical nationwide, or at the state level, which has made sense for Vermont. Municipalities are willing to work with the state to make state implementation more efficient.

Senator Ginny Lyons mentioned that it would be valuable to talk about a nutrient-based system. With climate change, we are seeing reduced flow this time of the year and yet the requirements for new systems or upgrades are based on flow, which can result in higher costs.

Lori Fisher asked how often EPA reviews this. Bethany to inquire.

Hilary Solomon commented that they've underestimated the role of shallow groundwater in transporting phosphorus, so she expressed concern about leachate from private septic systems.

Bill Howland commented that a well-run septic system should make a negligible contribution of phosphorus to surface runoff.

Mark Naud asked when a meaningful and comprehensive analysis of private septic systems was last conducted.

Jeff Wennberg mentioned there are a limited number of facilities that will take septage and the higher the disposal costs get, the less frequently homeowners may pump.

**3. Review and vote on Draft September 9<sup>th</sup> VTCAC Meeting Summary (5 min) – Mark Naud**  
See attached: [190909 Draft VTCAC Meeting Summary.pdf](#)

Bethany to add Leland Morgan and Hilary Solomon to attendance.

Leland Morgan moved to approve with the change above; Eric Clifford seconded. Bob Fischer and Jeff Wennberg abstained.

**4. VTCAC Agriculture Working Group Update (15 min)**

Diane Bothfeld is available on November 18<sup>th</sup>. Bethany to share agriculture working group notes with her, which can inform the focus of her presentation.

**5:30 – 7:00 pm**

**5. Working Session: 2020 Lake Champlain Action Plan (90 min) – Mark Naud and Bill Howland**

The committee discussed the draft action plan. Comments included:

- It is important to acknowledge the legislature and Scott administration for their long-term funding commitment and the increase in funding for water infrastructure.
- We need to get a better return on investment with the use of clean water funding.
- Progress must be measured not by the amount of dollars spent but by actual water quality improvements.
- More research must be conducted to confirm the effectiveness of ag conservation practices.
- Monitoring programs must have adequate resources to serve as performance indicators; modeled results can't be the only way progress is measured.
- Next generation contaminants must be monitored.
- Annually, clean water funding initiatives should be reprioritized to reflect the results of empirical and qualitative evaluation of the relative effectiveness of each existing and proposed program element.
- The state must conduct inspections for all sectors, and not just rely on voluntary compliance.
- The state must increase support for AIS control.
- The state should diversify Fish and Wildlife Department funding, and not rely so heavily on license revenues.
- Public access must not equate to pay for access – equity must be part of the funding discussion.

Bethany to inquire about the number of farm inspections, where they occur and average length of time to get letter back to farm.

Committee members are to send comments and mark-up to Mark, Bill, and Bethany by Monday, October 28<sup>th</sup>.