

# **New York Citizens Advisory Committee (NYCAC) on Lake Champlain Management**

**Monday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023**

**1:00 pm – 3:00 pm**

**Zoom**

## **APPROVED MEETING SUMMARY**

**Committee Members Present:** Walt Lender (Chair), Jackie Bowen, James C. Dawson, Steve Kramer, Tom Metz, Colin Powers, Vic Putman

**Committee Members Absent:** Ricky Laurin, Jane Gregware, Laura Klaiber, Charlotte Staats, Fred Woodward

**LCBP Staff:** Mae Kate Campbell, Katie Darr

**Public Guests:** Connie Mandeville (Assemblyman Billy Jones)

Meeting summary by Katie Darr, Lake Champlain Basin Program (LCBP)

### **1. Welcome and Introductions** – Walt Lender

Walt welcomed attendees.

### **2. Public Comments**

No public comments were made.

### **3. ACTION ITEM:** Review and vote on draft June 26<sup>th</sup> and September 25<sup>th</sup> meeting summary– Walt Lender

- Motion to approve the meeting summaries by: Tom Metz
- Seconded by: Jim Dawson
- Discussion on the motion: Tom corrected a typo on page 2 “have” should be “half.” Vic corrected the misspelling of his last name.
- Vote: All in favor
- Abstentions: None

### **4. Clean Water Safe Roads Presentation** – Sawyer Bailey, Hannah Grall

Sawyer Bailey, Executive Director of ADKAction, and Hannah Grall, Project Coordinator, provided an overview of ADKAction’s clean water and safe roads work. The program has been a success and is expanding across the greater Adirondack region. On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, ADK Action launched a new public outreach campaign, visit [adkaction.org/salt](http://adkaction.org/salt) to learn more. The presentation is available [here](#) with the meeting materials.

- Tom asked about the difference between a live edge and a rubber edge or flexible edge. Sawyer noted that there has been a lot of technology being developed in response to the need for more efficient plows. She was not sure of the difference, but offered to check in with their consultant, Phil Sexton.
- Colleen shared some other road salt related projects that are being funded through LCBP including an implementation project at the University of Vermont led by Kris Stepenuk and

Nancy Price at SUNY Plattsburgh who will work with students in grades 6-8 on salt reduction efforts and chloride testing in streams. Steve Kramer will be working with Nancy on this project.

- Colin thanked Sawyer and Hannah and noted that none of the participating communities are in the Boquet watershed. BRASS can do some outreach to encourage participation.
- Jackie thanked Sawyer and Hannah for their important work and noted ADK Action has been a strong advocate over the years.
- Walt asked if salt is showing up in the main part of Lake Champlain. Colleen noted that chloride levels are on the rise in Lake Champlain, though not to the same extent as in smaller lakes. This information is in the State of the Lake Report.
- Jim asked about opportunities to use salt alternatives or if they also have challenges. Sawyer shared there is a table in the [road salt reduction task force report](#) (page 13) that goes over the different alternatives. Pretreating uses one third less salt and results in safer roads if done properly.
- Connie asked if they have worked with the Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages to get the word out about the program. Sawyer noted that ADK Action has a strong relationship with the Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages. They have tended to focus on projects related to the built community but can bring this stage of the Clean Water Safe Roads work to them to see if there are opportunities for engagement.

## 5. Committee Governance Discussion – Walt Lender, Katie Darr

### **ACTION ITEM: Review and vote on draft member manual.**

- Motion to approve the draft member manual by: Vic Putman
- Seconded by: Jim Dawson
- Discussion: Walt suggested reviewing the member manual annually.
- Vote: All in favor
- Abstentions: None

## 6. Updates

### LCBP:

- LCBP staff were very appreciative of the committee's thorough review of the 2021 State of the Lake report, the feedback will help make a stronger report in 2024.
- **Grants:** The Clean Water and Healthy Ecosystems Research Request for Preproposals is accepting proposals until November 10th <https://www.lcbp.org/about-us/grants-rfps/request-for-proposals-rfps/#rfpp>. The Education and Outreach, Streamwise, and Organizational Support Grants will be open for applications soon, Katie will send an email once those are announced.
- **Love the Lake:** Colleen asked if there were topics of interest for an NYCAC/LCBP sponsored Love the Lake Program.
  - Tom was interested in seeing the statistics related to the Boat Launch Stewards inspection program. A Love the Lake Program would be a good way to get AIS mitigation programs some visibility in the general population.

NYSDEC:

- The Champlain Canal is closed for the season. Over the summer there was lots of monitoring by USGS (funded by LCBP) to see if the front of the round goby population would move upstream quickly. Based on monitoring results, they seem to still be just below lock c1 of the Champlain Canal. There are ongoing efforts from different agencies. Canal Corp is working on a feasibility study plan to identify midterm interventions to put in place if round goby move upstream including an electric barrier or filters on the Glens Falls feeder. Work on phase 2 of the all-taxa barrier study is ongoing.

Member updates:

- Jackie shared the Adirondack Council is monitoring the road salt report and is working with ADK Action and others on how to keep the Agency moving this work forward. The Common Ground Alliance Forum was last week and there was lots of discussion on Bond Act funding, there is not a lot of clarity yet. As it progresses, it would be good to figure out if/how the CAC can have input on that.
  - Walt agreed.
- Jim also attended the Common Ground Alliance Forum. He asked about Bond Act funding related to tertiary treatment on WWTPs for PFAS and phosphorus, but did not get an answer on that. In addition to the water quality session, he attended a session on workforce and housing. He raised a question about more housing meaning more septic, but did not get a good response to that question either. He added that he has been tracking the Lake Champlain Committee bulletins and Adirondack Watershed Institute work on cyanobacteria blooms and has been concerned by the high occurrence of blooms associated with the rainfall events throughout the summer.
  - Erin shared that LCBP is funding an Adirondack Watershed Institute research project that will look into drivers of blooms in lakes, especially those with lower nutrient levels.
- Colin attended the Common Ground Alliance forum as well. The output from the forum is the Blueprint for the Blueline which will be released in December. He heard lots of discussion about lobbying to make grant procedures more streamlined and approachable. There was a really valuable and productive set of ideas being presented. After the Blueprint is produced, there may be an opportunity for the CAC to tag on with a statement of solidarity.
  - Walt seconded the need for simplified and streamlined grant procedures. If it's not a simple process, small towns will not have access to the Bond Act funds.
- Vic shared BRASS is updating its website. The highwater levels have been causing a lot of issues including more sedimentation, there are neglected tributaries that need help.
- Steve shared that Miner Institute has a few high school labs coming in this week.
  - Tom asked how the small plot tile project is going. Steve noted slow but steady progress.

Champlain Hudson Power Express (CHPE)

- Nicole Balk provided written updates on the CHPE project in advance of the meeting. At the last CHPE Governance Committee meeting, they were supposed to vote on which projects to fund,

ran out of time and did not vote. There will be another meeting scheduled probably in early November to conduct the vote.

- The Lake Champlain group submitted 3 projects for the first 5-year funding cycle:
  - Lake Champlain Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention and Management
  - Academic Research Focused on Lake Champlain Fish Habitat Assessments
  - Fish Population Assessments
- All the Lake Champlain projects were received well by the Governance Committee. It is possible that more than one will be funded and could start next spring. They tabled one project for the next 5-year funding cycle – Critical Habitat Restoration. The Academic Research on fish habitat project will be used to identify areas for restoration work down the road.

## **7. 2024 Outreach Materials – Katie Darr**

The committee discussed possible updates to the [FOCUS 2023](#) document. The target audience is elected officials and decision makers, including the Lake Champlain Steering Committee. The goal of the document is to highlight key issues of concern and provide recommendations for action or investment.

- Walt suggested expanding the salt piece with the release of the road salt reduction report.
- Tom asked about the spelling of stream gage. Katie confirmed that is the spelling the USGS uses for their [stream gage program](#).
- Colin suggested including something about the CAC's role in liaising with other like-minded NGOs and organizations in the Basin and incorporating the social component of the CAC's work.
  - Tom suggested including partner logos on the first page of the document.
- Colin noted the document doesn't clearly articulate what the CAC is and how it is distinct from LCBP. The CAC is the intermediary between the programs and the residents. The document could better outline what the CAC is, its role in achieving the goals presented.
  - Members were supportive of this suggestion.

## **8. Meeting Wrap-up Discussion – Walt Lender, Katie Darr**

The next meeting is scheduled for **Monday, December 4<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 - 3:00 pm via Zoom**. The committee discussed possible agenda items including aquatic invasive species/boat launch steward program update, update on the USGS streamgage network to follow up on the January 2021 presentation, report on DEC's Rotating Integrative Basin Studies work from the summer.

Vic noted it would be interesting to see if the Department of Transportation is participating in the salt reduction program. Walt confirmed they were at the table for Lake George discussions.