



A clean lake reflects well
on all of us.

ONONDAGA LAKE PARTNERSHIP (OLP)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

June 30, 2011

ATTENDEES

Committee Members Present:

Mr. Seth Ausubel, Chief, New York Watershed Management Section, USEPA, Region 2 (vtc)
Mr. David Coburn, Director, Onondaga County Office of the Environment
Mr. Kenneth Lynch, Regional Director, NYSDEC, Region 7
Mr. Andrew Maxwell, Director of Planning and Sustainability, City of Syracuse
Dr. Charles Silver, Environmental Scientist, NYS Office of the Attorney General (tc)

Others In Attendance:

Mr. Bj Adigun, Program Coordinator, CH2M Hill, OLP Outreach Committee Chair
Mr. Peter Brandt, Public Affairs Director for Estuaries & Lakes and Senior Communications Advisor, USEPA Region 2 (vtc)
Ms. Argie Cirillo, USEPA Office of Regional Counsel, Region 2 (tc)
Ms. Maria Clark, Environmental Scientist, USEPA Region 2 (tc)
Mr. Chris Dere, Onondaga Lake Program Manager (vtc)
Ms. Thane Joyal, Representative for the Onondaga Nation
Dr. Edward Michalenko, President, OEI
Ms. Mary Jane Peachey, Regional Engineer, NYSDEC, OLP Project Committee Chair
Ms. Meredith Perreault, Project Manager, OEI

Committee Members Absent:

None

MEETING ARRANGEMENTS: The meeting was held on Thursday, June 30, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Office in Syracuse, New York.

1. OPENING REMARKS: Mr. Ausubel noted USEPA chaired the June meeting. The OLP Executive Committee agreed to a rotating chairmanship. In addition, EPA travel budgets currently do not allow for USEPA attendance in Syracuse.

2. EXECUTIVE SESSION: An executive session was not deemed necessary for this meeting.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE:

a. Review of May 10, 2011 Meeting Minutes:

Committee members requested several edits, including on pages five and seven under Section C., to write out the abbreviated name for Atlantic States Legal Foundation; in Section D, the word Operation

should be capitalized; to regularize the use of capitalization throughout the three lines at the bottom of the page; on page 6, Section E, at the top of the page, on the second to last line, add “send *them* to Executive Committee”; on the Action Items list, simplify the E10-4 Tasking by ending the statement after the word *strategy*. In the section on mini grant awards, correct the phrasing to “*on ecology*”. On page six, Section E, the two sentences starting with *USACE*, move both sentences after the motion. Ms. Joyal requested a correction to the phrasing that Nation *continue* to be included.

Motion: To approve the May 10, 2011 meeting minutes as amended was moved by Mr. Coburn, seconded by Mr. Silver, and approved unanimously.

b. Action Items: Committee members discussed modifying two action items: E10-6, Mr. Ausubel and Mr. Dere should continue to provide USEPA grant budget updates to the Executive Committee, rather than to Mr. Vriesen; secondly, for E10-7, both committees will continue to assess and free up monies.

c. Correspondence: No correspondence was reported.

4. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

a. Project Committee Update: Ms. Peachey reported on the Project Committee’s June 23, 2011 meeting. The following are highlights from that meeting:

- **Onondaga Lake Water Quality Model (OLWQM) Update:** On June 1, 2011, Ms. Peachey received a positive evaluation from the scientific peer review panel on the sediment flux calculations and the preliminary long-term predictions. The modeling team has proceeded with the model development. Onondaga County instructed AnchorQEA to run six model scenarios, with validation. The Technical Working Group will develop other model scenarios. There will be a meeting on July 6, 2011, where AnchorQEA will present and interpret model runs. The Technical Working Group will plan to develop additional runs at a second meeting planned for mid- to late-July.

- **Mudboils:** Project Committee effort has focused on the closure program, coordinated by OEI and USGS. Two well closure Requests for Proposals (RFPs) were drafted; the first for the deep permitted wells, and the second for the remaining, non-permitted, shallower wells. The timeframe to release RFPs is early July, 2011. Ms. Peachey and Dr. Michalenko reported to the Executive Committee that meetings of a well closure group, comprised of representatives from the Onondaga Nation, USEPA, USGS, and OEI, discussed which wells would remain open and which would be closed this year. Concurrently, USEPA has conducted environmental impact (or NEPA) review of the well closure program. Ms. Joyal noted that Onondaga Nation would appreciate being informed early on concerning the NEPA process. Mr. Ausubel noted that NEPA must be complete before contracts can be awarded. Ms. Clark confirmed that USEPA is moving ahead with NEPA review as a parallel process and reported that she provided a draft document to her supervisor.

Ms. Joyal noted that the Onondaga Nation appreciates being involved in discussions on well closure. She requests that the Executive Committee review well data, including data gaps, and asks that this information be made publically available. Ms. Joyal noted that some wells appear to have limited water quality data, yet they may be of additional interest during lake clean up. Dr. Michalenko suggested that the purpose of the wells be identified in the data matrix developed by OEI and USGS.

The Executive Committee discussed the well closure Request for Proposal (RFP). The Executive Committee agreed to move forward with the RFPs as they are, and address remaining, open wells (those associated with depressurizing in the Tully Valley). They will address remaining wells either before contracts for current RFPs are in place, or with a process document to identify key dates, expectations, and legal obligations to close wells in 2012. The Committee asked OEI to produce this document for the Executive and Project Committees, and the well closure meeting group. The document should include clarification as to which wells need to remain open, how/when data will be collected, and how outreach will occur to recruit potential new owners for open wells.

MOTION: A motion to release the RFPs, with an option to add wells to contracts before finalization with consensus from Onondaga Nation, USGS and New York State, was moved by Mr. Lynch, seconded by Mr. Maxwell, and approved unanimously.

Related to the mudboils, Dr. Michalenko noted that OEI has requested the renewal of its land access agreement with Honeywell International, Inc for 2012. The letter included a request to leave the mudboil depression area impoundment dam on the Honeywell-owned land as a permanent structure. Dr. Michalenko noted that keeping the dam as a permanent structure will be a significant savings to the OLP program.

- **EPA Budget:** Ms. Peachey reported that the Project Committee discussed existing shortfalls. Dr. Michalenko had informed the Project Committee that more funds will be available after the scientific peer review panel has finished evaluating the OLWQM. Ms. Peachey noted that the OLWQM team is moving forward without significant additional tasks anticipated. She will continue to report to the Executive Committee on that process.

- **Mission Statement:** Ms. Peachey reported that the Project Committee is working on a draft mission statement for the post-OLP time period. The draft will be sent in the next read ahead package to Executive Committee.

b. Outreach Committee Update: Mr. Adigun reported that the Outreach Committee has not met in May and June, but will meet in July.

- **Watershed Signs:** He reported that the original Onondaga Lake watershed signs quote was not accurate. A new vendor was secured and a new quote received. The new quote includes posting watershed signs on both city and county roads. Ms. Perreault requested that the watershed signs price quote be shared with OEI.

- **Budget:** Mr. Adigun reported that a newsletter was completed in March. The additional funding remaining in the newsletter budget would be used for an annual report. He reported that there is a request pending to fund Water Monitoring Day, the Outreach Committee must determine if funding is available for that event.

- **Interpretive Signs:** The draft interpretive signs were distributed to the Executive Committee on June 29, 2011. According to Mr. Adigun, stated that the next step was to work with OEI to issue an RFP. Once the draft interpretive signs are approved by Executive Committee, Mr. Adigun will need to re-introduce them to County Parks for their approval. Mr. Adigun requested that Executive

Committee comments be directed to him and Ms. Stephanie Harrington at the DEC by July 15, 2011. OEI requested that the RFP specifications be completed, so that OLP receives the signs they want.

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

a. Executive Committee Chair for next meeting: Mr. Ausubel requested a volunteer to chair next meeting; Mr. Lynch volunteered to do so.

b. Onondaga Valley groundwater update: This item was discussed in the Projects Committee update.

c. Settlement Funds update: Mr. Lynch and Ms. Peachey noted that there has not been movement forward, because of the focus on well closure. Mr. Lynch informed the committee that the DEC has received input from the Onondaga Nation, which expands the scope of the original outline proposed by the DEC. The DEC requested that USEPA send concluding work on the NEPA process, as this needs to be included in next planning step. The DEC proposes a public forum, to define next steps and other settlement fund project ideas. The Executive Committee discussed the timing and amount of the settlement fund expenditure. Mr. Lynch confirmed the time period is likely five years, up to \$250,000 per year, but this may be negotiable. Mr. Lynch requested further comments from the Committee on draft outlines.

d. Contact Recreation Forum: Mr. Lynch suggested that the contact recreation forum could be tied in to the forum on the future of watershed management, which will likely occur this fall, noting that this is one of many priorities. Dr. Michalenko informed the committee that a draft Microbial Trackdown report was submitted to DEC, noting that public release of that report may be beneficial to the contact recreation forum. Mr. Lynch suggested that the forum would be a good follow up to a public release of the report.

e. OLP Budget update: Mr. Ausubel reported that the budget update was made available to the Executive Committee members. Mr. Ausubel noted the importance to be conservative as possible, and will continue to update the Executive Committee.

f. Forum on Future Watershed Management: Mr. Ausubel stated that the idea of this forum arose during the OLP mission statement discussion at the last annual meeting. He noted the need to lay groundwork for lake management after the OLP expires and into the future. Ms. Judith Enck, Director of USEPA Region 2, is extremely interested in and personally committed to future lake management. The USEPA proposed a plan using an existing grant with Syracuse University's Environmental Finance Center (EFC), concerns about that plan were raised by the Onondaga Nation, and subsequently, the EFC has withdrawn their proposal. EPA would like to move actively forward with the OLP. USEPA proposes a forum in the fall 2011, to explore issues and work to develop a consensus for how stakeholders will engage in decision making, and identify stakeholders, key funding needs, the future plan, and what elements are being built on, i.e., the Onondaga Lake Management Plan, Amended Consent Judgment, and Onondaga Creek Revitalization Plan. Mr. Ausubel would like to discuss how to proceed; USEPA would like to take a leadership role with personal involvement of Ms. Judith Enck.

Ms. Joyal pointed out the benefit of the Onondaga Nation's attendance at mudboil meetings, she emphasized the Onondaga Nation's sovereign government and government-to-government

relationships. Ms. Joyal encourages the OLP to explore how to include Onondaga Nation involvement. In terms of “stakeholders”, the Onondaga Nation’s role should never be understated.

Mr. Lynch stated that ongoing Onondaga Lake outreach was potentially overwhelming to the public. He proposed there is a need as a group, including the Onondaga Nation, to step back. He cited the numerous lake-related meetings and initiatives. Mr. Lynch proposed bringing initiatives together, inspire new participation, convene people and move forward. He suggested and is willing to chair a subcommittee meeting for this purpose. Mr. Maxwell acknowledged Ms. Joyal’s statement and his support for Mr. Lynch’s proposal to approach a lake meeting in a holistic manner. The Executive Committee discussed members’ interest in participating in a July/August timeframe for the subcommittee meeting and coordination with the Onondaga Lake Citizens Participation Working Group and the EFC.

6. NEW BUSINESS: No new business.

7. OTHER BUSINESS: No other business.

8. ISSUES: None.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

10. FUTURE MEETINGS:

The next OLP Executive Committee meeting was scheduled for September 8th, 2011, at 10:00am.

11. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

Number	Date of Origin	Due Date	Action Officer	Tasking	Status
E10-3	13-Apr-10	Ongoing	NYSDEC	Project Committee will review OLP projects funded by USEPA grants to ensure completion by September 30, 2012 and recommend agencies to leverage ongoing projects.	Ongoing
E10-4	13-Apr-10	Ongoing	Onondaga County	Outreach Committee is directed to reassess their 2010-11 outreach plan and budget as a close-out strategy.	Ongoing
E10-6	15-Jun-10	Ongoing	USEPA	Mr. Ausubel/Dere to provide any updates or new information for the USEPA grant budget standing Agenda item to Executive Committee.	Ongoing
E10-7	04-Oct-10	31-Dec-10	Outreach Cmte NYSDEC	Project and Outreach Committees will provide a balanced budget for EPA-funded projects by the end of December 2011.	Ongoing