

## Thames River PRC Meeting Minutes

June 27<sup>th</sup> 2018

Summary:

Attendance:

Co-Chairs: Mayor Randy Hope (Chatham-Kent) and Mark Reuser (OFA)

**Present:** Nicola Crawhall (Cities Initiative), Charles Lalonde (Project Manager), Lois Harris (PRC Communications), Jason Bent (OFA), Emma Young (Chippewas On The Thames First Nations), Keith Reid (AAFC), John Nyenhuis (Ontario Pork), Ron Faubert (Kent Federation of Agriculture), Louis Roesch (OFA), Lyle Hall (Essex Federation of Agriculture) Gary Eagleson (Chatham-Kent Advocate), Peter Johnson (LICO), Colin Little (LTVCA), Mark Wales (OFVGA), Tony Kime (Bluewater Pipe Inc.), Mark Huston (GFO), Karen Alexander (Nature Conservancy Canada), Owen Steele (Ducks Unlimited), Brad Glasman (UTRCA), Lyle Hall, Pat Donnelly (London), Tim Dick (Chatham-Kent).

**Regrets:** Leo Guilbeault (GFO), Raj Gill (Freshwater Alliance), Ron Campbell (OABA), Tina Schankula (OFA), and Provincial Government staff due to Travel restrictions.

**Opening Remarks:** Randy and Mark both commented on the recent Great Lakes St Lawrence Cities Initiative Convention recently held in Ajax. Mark presented an overview of the Thames River PRC project. Feedback from both US and Canadian Mayors on our initiative was very positive of our structure as no one had seen such a collaborative effort. It does open the door for greater collaboration. Chatham Kent may be hosting the 2020 Cities Initiative Convention and the event could benefit from a project tour.

**Review of Terms of Reference:** Charlie Lalonde presented updated TOR to match the new phase for implementing PRC projects. Comments received:

- There will be 4 committees reporting to the PRC: The Executive Committee, Communications, Finance and Regional Implementation to match project locations
- The Executive Committee should have two at-large members in addition to the Chairs of the Finance and Communications Committees
- The Implementation Committee will be formed specific to geographical areas and will have input into site selection, project development, data gathering and monitoring results
- It was recommended that the Project Manager reach out to funding member staff with expertise in finance and communications to serve on the subcommittees
- Gantt charts submitted with ECCC and AAC applications will be integrated post approval
- Measures of success discussion focused on demonstrating progress in agricultural areas. The objective is to work on the agricultural issues in areas where the water is not impaired by other land uses. This will allow the PRC to deliver results without over promising. The use of term waterways is too broad, and a term will be substituted to match the purpose of the PRC effort. The following will be used as a measure: "Demonstrate cohesive and real progress on P loss reduction from agricultural lands"

A revised TOR is attached.

Project Plan: Charlie Lalonde outlined the details from the ECCC and the AAC applications, noting that authorization had yet to be obtained. While the scope is similar the projects will be differentiated by sites. Accordingly, the information was presented as tentative. However, given the work ahead to implement projects, this meeting was being used to inform participants of the scope of the project and proceed with as much planning as possible. A copy of the slide deck is attached.

### **Committee Formation**

- Role of local farm representatives (federations and Commodity) encouraged to lead site selection process as the peer to peer approach is powerful
- Tony Kime indicated interest in the Communications sub-committee
- Randy Hope offered the services of Jim Blake for the Communications sub-committee
- Peter Johnson had interest in the regional implementation. However, the group felt Peter should be on the Executive Committee and local contractors could serve on regional sub-committees.
- Gary Gleason expressed interest in the Regional Committees
- The Project Manager and Co-Chairs will formalize the membership

### **Project Plan**

A copy of slides distributed at the meeting are attached. Comments received included:

- Meetings with CA s are needed once funding approvals have been received. Projects are complimentary and need to find synergies. A meeting will be organized for mid-July
- Other funding opportunities were discussed where leverage to ECCC funds could work. Farm organization offering research funds are a possibility.
- There could be “research” associated with various sites and worthy of exploration
- GFO has a mid-July Letter of Intent deadline to their Research Fund.
- From a Cities perspective, Community Futures funding needs to be explored
- It was recommended to reach out to Universities. Tim Dick will provide a contact for University of Windsor. The Project manager has contacts for Western, Waterloo and Guelph.
- Community Colleges should be approached for involvement with water sampling
- A competitive process was discussed to secure Lab analysis. Other opportunities may exist through Health Units and with City of London. Health Units should be willing to analyze samples as the project aims to improve water quality.
- Keith Reid offered to work with Project Manager to define water analysis parameters to ensure the different fractions of nutrients were measured.

### **Technology Selection**

A number of companies were identified as having potential to offer solutions for our sites. The selection will be based on standard criteria which will be updated in July followed by an RFP process. Randy Hope suggested we issue a RFI to give companies more time to respond.

The Project Manager will work with Nicola Crawhall to update the standards and the RFI. Members will be invited to participate and provide input. It will be important to request info at which range of P levels the technology is effective.

## **Site Selection**

Charlie Lalonde presented draft criteria for site selection. A discussion followed with respect to advantages and disadvantages of choosing hot spots. In the end, a combination of hot spots and normal cropping sites was preferred to show the range of successes. Some members anticipated that cropping sites may only lead to mediocre results and therefore we needed to be able to test technologies where more leakage was expected.

Sites for edge of field trials could include:

- farm with bunker silos
- horticulture farms with irrigation
- farms with grain elevators
- grain based production systems where soil P is known to be high.

Technologies to remove P from municipal water would need to operate in hot spot areas and could be based on a BMP train concept.

The group had a brief discussion on what info would be collected in addition to the water sample. Generally, we would like to access the 4R Nutrient stewardship Plan and field history including tile installation info. This will become part of the site characterization work. The Project Manager will check with CA s to standardize.

A producer agreement will also be prepared.

## **Potential Sites in London**

Pat Donnelly presented slides with maps of the London area focusing on potential sites in agricultural areas. One site with a pump station on the Medway would fit requirements. Further discussions are planned in mi-July with both the City and western researchers.

## **Potential Sites on the Chippewas on the Thames First Nation Lands**

Emma Young presented maps with potential sites that could be of interest. The agricultural lands are rented to local farmers. An area closer to Longwoods Road was of interest as it was remote and had no housing influencing the site. Discussions will continue during the summer.

## **Administration**

Administration was discussed with respect to the potential funds from both ECCC and AAC. Participants will be alerted to requirements once approval has been secured.

## **Updates**

Nicola Crawhall reminded the group of an IJC webinar on July 12<sup>th</sup> where Algae Bloom forecast will be presented.

Mark Wales reported on a future IJC report examining nutrient management practices around the Great Lakes and surrounding states, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Netherlands and Denmark. It is anticipated the report will be released in October.

Peter Johnson reported that the February flood destroyed several erosion control structures.

Mark Huston reported that Laura Ferrier had been hired by GFO to promote cover crops

Charlie Lalonde reported that the 4R Nutrient Stewardship Tour will be held on July 24<sup>th</sup> in Norwich area.

Mike Battenham reminded the group that the LOI for the GFO research program are due July 16<sup>th</sup>.

UTRCA reported that they were moving forward with a project to measure water quality on a large track of agricultural lands.

**Group Picture**

Lois Harris took pictures during the meeting as well as a group picture. These will be uploaded to the website.

End