

**Minutes of the Executive Committee**  
**Of the**  
**Niagara River Greenway Commission**  
**Beaver Island State Park**  
**January 15, 2008 12:30 p.m.**

The meeting was called to order by Commission Chairman Robert Kresse at 12:42 pm. Based on the roll call by the Secretary of the Commission, a quorum of members was determined to be present.

Attendees: Robert Kresse, Commission Chairman  
Richard Soluri, Commission Vice Chairman  
Paul Leuchner, Commission Secretary  
Paul Dyster, Commission Member, Chair CAC  
Mark Thomas, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
Renee Parsons, NYS Department of State  
Ron Hayes, NYS Department of Transportation  
Ray Goll, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
Angela Berti, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
Rob Belue, Executive Director, Niagara River Greenway Commission  
Rob Daly, New York Power Authority

**Review and Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the December 18, 2007 meeting were reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mark Thomas and seconded by Paul Leuchner. The minutes were approved unanimously as submitted.

**Comments by the Chairman**

Robert Kresse noted that public commentary will not be permitted during the course of any Executive Committee meeting. However, if time allows an opportunity for *informal* public comment will be provided at the end of such meetings. These comments will not be included in the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting. If comments are to be made for the record they should be presented at a regularly scheduled meeting of the full commission.

**Official Statement by the Chairman**

Chairman Kresse read the following prepared statement:

*“The Niagara River Greenway Plan has been approved and now we are beginning the work of implementing that plan. For the past few weeks we have been engaged in the review of a group of projects to determine their consistency with the approved plan. Today, each Commission member will vote on project consistency. During our deliberations we recognized that the Commission as a whole has an important role beyond the simple assent or dissent as to whether a proposed project is consistent with the Greenway*

*Plan. We look forward to defining this role in the future by providing comments on the various projects which we trust will assist the Standing Committees in their funding decisions. The procedures necessary to address these key points will be developed and applied to the next round of projects that are brought before the Niagara River Greenway Commission for review.”*

### **Finance Report**

Rob Belue provided an update on the budget on behalf of Treasurer John Giardino. Based on a funding level of \$160,000 the reported balance for the third quarter was \$97,739.59 with expenses totaling \$62, 260.41. Mr. Belue noted that the Treasurer and the office of the Governor are continuing discussions relating to the future funding of the Niagara River Greenway Commission

### **Working Group**

Rob Belue reported that the working group had met in accordance with the procedures set forth by the Niagara River Greenway Commission for the review of projects. During the process of project review a number of issues surfaced that went to the role of the Niagara River Greenway Commission and its obligation to provide meaningful commentary to the standing committees.

### **Report of the Executive Director**

Rob Belue reported on presentations that were made or were scheduled since the last meeting. He noted that he had provided technical assistance to the Town of Niagara, the Niagara Falls Housing Authority and the City of Niagara Falls and had attended meetings with two of the established standing committees. He also stated that the final fiscal report for the Niagara River Greenway Commission would be delivered during the March 2008 meeting and that the necessary paperwork had been completed for the previously agreed upon transfer of funds from the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation to the Niagara River Greenway Commission. A replacement for Chair of the Local Government Advisory Committee vacated by Ron Moline is expected to be announced in the near future. Communications lines at the Beaver Island State Park Office are in the process of being upgraded and should improve the capability to receive FAX and internet mail and documentation.

Rob Belue advised that upon completion of the project voting process today, the first round of projects would be moved to an archive page on the Niagara River Greenway Commission web site. The next round of projects which are due today will be posted in their place. Members of the public will have until February 23, 2008 to review these projects. Members of the Niagara River Greenway Commission must provide their comments by March 1, 2008. Final action by the members of the Niagara River Greenway Commission will take place at the regular meeting scheduled for March 18, 2008. As before, citizen commission members will continue to receive CD copies of project proposals.

### **Report of the Event Chairman**

*Paddles Up Niagara:* Paul Leuchner reported that this year's event is scheduled for July 26, 2008 at Beaver Island State Park. The Paddles Up event has been posted on the electronic calendars maintained by Sea Kayaker magazine and the web page at Paddling.net. Both sites will provide national exposure and we are looking forward to another successful year

*Wheel Chair Accessible Kayak Launch for the Physically Challenged:* During Paddles Up Niagara 2007 event chairman Paul Leuchner noted that several people participated even though they had a handicapping condition. Based on this observation and the requirement set forth in the Niagara River Greenway Plan that access must be provided for everyone he proceeded to research the possibility of placing a wheelchair transfer kayak launch facility at the East River Marsh Restoration site that is a part of Beaver Island State Park. A Michigan based foundation for the disabled was found to be engaged in a similar project and their project director has agreed to furnish the Commission with the engineering plans and specifications, budget information, material and vendor sources and a Power Point presentation that can be adapted for local use. The project has the support of New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Further details will be provided as they become available.

### **Old Business**

Commission Retreat: The purpose of this retreat will be to develop additional procedures that will be used during the project review process. Chairman Kresse noted that the intent is to have some influence on the deliberations of the Standing Committees. In this regard he directed the Executive Director Rob Belue to schedule this retreat preferably before the end of January. Procedures must be in place so that they can be applied to the next round of project review.

### **New Business**

None.

### **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Paul Leuchner and seconded by Mark Thomas. The meeting ended at 1:05 pm.

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Paul Leuchner, Secretary  
Niagara River Greenway Commission