

## Minutes

**The Seventeenth Meeting  
Of the  
Niagara River Greenway Commission  
Beaver Island State Park  
Grand Island, NY  
July 17, 2007 2:00 pm**

The meeting was called to order by Commission Chairman Robert Kresse at 2:05 pm. Commission Secretary Paul Leuchner was directed to call the roll and a quorum of members was determined to be present.

The following Commissioners or their designated representatives were in attendance:

Robert Kresse, Chairman  
Richard Soluri, Vice-Chairman  
John Giardino, Treasurer  
Paul Leuchner, Secretary  
Ron Moline, Commissioner  
Paul Dyster, Commissioner  
Louis Ciminelli, Commissioner  
Brett Sommer, Commissioner  
Mark Thomas, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation  
Daniel David, for Abby Snyder New York State Department of Environmental Conservation  
Ron Hayes, New York State Department of Transportation  
Elise Cusack, New York Power Authority  
Tim Doolittle, Empire State Development Corporation  
Rob Belue, Executive Director Niagara River Greenway Commission

### Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the April 17, 2007 meeting of the Niagara River Greenway Commission (NRGC) were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Robert Kresse and seconded by Elise Cusack. The minutes were approved unanimously.

### Comments from the Chairman –

Chairman Robert Kresse noted that many tasks have been completed and that now the Niagara River Greenway Commission will become the threshold for the consultation and review of projects.

## Committee Reports

### Financial Report

Treasurer John Giardino reported that austerity funding was necessary for the first quarter of FY 07-08 and even so actual spending was well below planned expenditure levels. Actual expenses amounted to \$20,898 with the majority being utilized for the salary and benefits of the executive director. The first quarter expenses were funded by the Quality Community Planning Grant received last year.

Dedicated line item funding by the State of New York will not occur this year but is likely for the next fiscal year of operation. In the interim a plan is being worked out between the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and the New York Power Authority to jointly fund the operation of the Commission with a grant of \$160,000.

Event Committee Chairman Paul Leuchner reported that most of the planning and organization tasks for Paddles Up Niagara 2007 had been completed. He noted that the event will take place in Beaver Island State Park on July 28, 2007 and that additional details can be found on the Commission web site. Executive Director Rob Belue noted that participant registrations were arriving daily and that several new sponsors had come on board.

Executive Directors Report On May 17, 2007 the Commissioner of New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Carol Ash approved the Niagara River Greenway Plan. The approval ceremony took place at Harry's Harbor Place in Buffalo following a tour of selected project sites within the Niagara River Greenway.

Rob Belue briefed everyone on the recently published Paddles Up Niagara Trail map and brochure. He noted that Paul Leuchner had developed a rough draft of the brochure providing the text, photos and other useful elements. This draft was turned over to Mathew Balling at the New York State Department of Transportation. Utilizing seemingly limitless artistic and creative skills Mr. Balling transformed the draft into the current trail map and brochure. His assistance was acknowledged and appreciated by Commission members who also expressed gratitude for the printing of 10,000 copies of the trail brochure by the NYSDOT.

Rob Belue reported that the required Annual Report of the Niagara River Greenway Commission had been prepared and distributed. He also noted that the Niagara River Greenway Plan had received the Comprehensive Planning Award from the Western New York Chapter of the American Planning Association.

### Old Business

#### Project Profile and Instructions

Chairman Kresse reported that there had been considerable discussion during the Executive Committee meeting on the proposed Project Profile and Instructions document and the

procedures for review and consultation. He noted that further discussions would be deferred for two weeks while he consults with the New York Power Authority staff. Another meeting to further discuss consultation and review will be convened and the meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 31, 2007.

### **New Business**

#### Nominating Committee

Bob Kresse appointed Commission member Paul Dyster as Chairman of the Nominating Committee and Paul Leuchner and Ron Moline as members of that committee. The election of officers will be held in September.

### **Public Comment**

- Julie O'Neil-Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper Ms. O'Neil thanked the Commission for all of the work completed thus far. She noted that the Riverkeeper is working to focus public attention on ecotourism opportunities along the Niagara River. Ms. O'Neil also expressed concern about the plan by the State of Alabama to try to divert waters from the Great Lakes for use by their residents..

### **Meeting Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Elise Cusack and seconded by Paul Leuchner. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Paul Leuchner, Secretary  
Niagara River Greenway Commission