

Vermont Citizen Advisory Committee (VT CAC) Meeting

Monday, March 12, 2018

5:00 – 7:00 pm

Shelburne Town Offices, Meeting Room 1
5420 Shelburne Road, Shelburne

Meeting Summary (Approved)

Committee members present: Eric Clifford, Wayne Elliott, Bob Fischer, Lori Fisher (Chair), Sen. Ginny Lyons, Mark Naud, Rep. Carol Ode (5:43 pm on), Jeff Wennberg

Committee members absent: Rep. Steve Beyor, Sen. Carolyn Branagan, James Ehlers, David Mears, Denise Smith

Others present: Tom Berry (US Senator Leahy's Office), Jordyn Geller (Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation – VTDEC), Bob Paquin, Dean Pierce (Town of Shelburne; until 6:00 pm), Ryan Mitchell (Lake Champlain Basin Program – LCBP), Chris Robinson (Town of Shelburne), Matt Vaughan (LCBP), Nancy Wennberg, Pastor Nancy Wright (Ascension Lutheran Church)

Meeting summary by Bethany Sargent (VTDEC).

Welcome and introductions (5:05 pm)

Introductions were made around the room. A quorum was not yet present, so Lori Fisher requested the vote on the draft January meeting summary be made after the presentation by LCBP staff.

Public comments

None.

Review State of the Lake graphics (5:08 – 6:30 pm)

LCBP Technical Coordinator Matt Vaughan and Communications and Publications Coordinator Ryan Mitchell explained the purpose of the State of the Lake report and the timeline for updating it. The new report will be released in June and will be structured after Opportunities for Action (<http://www.lcbp.org/about-us/opportunities-for-action/>), which was released in June 2017. The State of the Lake will be available in print, and LCBP staff are currently discussing ways to make graphics more interactive in the online version. Matt and Ryan reviewed the following graphics, with key comments/suggestions by CAC members and public guests bulleted below:

- Pressure-state-response
 - Increasing pressure, decreasing response
 - Include different images for pressure (faucet makes one think of water pressure)
- Phosphorus concentrations
 - Changes to the colors of the graphic create a different visual perspective, bars seemed more objective than current presentation
 - Bethany to send Bob Fischer link to Long-Term Monitoring Project data
 - Current representation does a better job of focusing attention on the true problem areas

- Chart is busy, adding trend lines might help
- Adding and bolding the single statement that no segment has experienced a decrease in annual mean phosphorus concentration
- Label key
- Colors are distorting, should be related to deviation from the target
- Makes some compromises, but likes the way the information is presented, as no one experiences the lake all at once anyway, so it's helpful to have it in segments
- For those areas over the target, but not statistically significant, consider coloring yellow
- Phosphorus loading from wastewater treatment facilities
 - Consider those that are color blind when choosing color combinations
 - Add a key
 - Helpful to have gallons treated by facilities, but make symbols proportional
- Phosphorus loading by land use in the Lake Champlain Basin
 - Add percentages
- Public beach closures
 - Would be useful to note how many closures were prompted by cyanobacteria and how many were coliform
 - Difficult to show if there has been an increase in frequency of beach closures due to how data is collected, more qualitative (response by LCBP staff)
 - Sand Bar State Park has a typo
- Mercury in Lake Champlain by indicator species
- Sea lamprey wound rates in Lake Champlain
 - Helpful to note dates of key management actions
- Aquatic non-native species
 - Include language that invasive species have been shown to cause harm and non-native species haven't yet been shown to cause harm, but we may not have investigated it yet
 - Add species and when they arrived
 - Powerful graph
- Non-native threats to Lake Champlain from connected waterways
 - Add number of species that are native
 - List those that are rare, threatened, or endangered
- Boat Launch Steward Program summary
- Ten most recent and next visited waterbodies
 - Connect areas of concern better based on arrow color
 - In narrative add non-native species came in via the canal system, and of canal systems, most came in through southern canal (Marsden and Malchoff study)
- Water chestnut control in Lake Champlain
- Lake Champlain freeze-over record

Sen. Lyons suggested adding a reference to the Citizens Advisory Committees in the State of the Lake report. Lori Fisher concurred, that this is a publicly accessible document and it would be helpful to include a reference to the CACs and how members of the public can get involved. Matt suggested it could be added to the Informed and Involved Public section.

Review and vote on January 11th draft meeting summary (6:35 pm)

Mark Naud moved to approve the January 11th meeting summary; Jeff seconded. Vote unanimous.

Legislative Day Debrief

Lori Fisher reviewed the Legislative Day agenda, the committees and VTCAC members that testified before them. She mentioned that she was also trying to coordinate a time to testify before Senate Institutions.

Committee members shared their feedback on the day. Mark Naud and Wayne Elliott appreciated the frank conversations with Sen. Ashe and Lt. Gov. Zuckerman. Mark Naud felt legislators were receptive and asked informed questions. Bob Fischer suggested shortening the presentation to allow more time for questions.

Sen. Lyons provided an update on clean water related bills. Senate Natural Resources passed its bill to Senate Agriculture, which calls for a study on long-term clean water funding. The bill was sent to Senate Finance. Sen. Lyons had worked on a proposal, but the bill was voted out of Senate Finance with the original studies proposed by Senate Natural Resources and Agriculture moved forward. It then goes to Senate Appropriations, where they are likely to merge the two study proposals. She wanted to see broader representation on the Clean Water Fund Board included, but it was not. She expressed frustration that some legislators have not focused on the issue or have a lack of understanding about the urgency of the matter.

For next year's action plan, add recycled materials symbol/language and a description of the Vermont Citizens Advisory Committee.

Options for recording VTCAC meetings

Bethany Sargent reviewed options for recording VTCAC meetings, including CCTV estimate, using an iPhone or GoPro camera, and meeting at Vermont PBS studios in Colchester. Bethany had contacted Scott Campitelli, Vice President of Content Development and Distribution for Vermont PBS, who reiterated his interest in supporting the VTCAC's work. Bethany will follow up with Scott.

Lori Fisher will follow up with Lauren Glenn at CCTV.

Rep. Ode suggested utilizing an intern to record meetings or if using CCTV, decide what meetings are most important to record and only record one or two, due to budget limitations.

Committee members' terms

Alex McDonald resigned due to health reasons. Denise Smith expressed in an email that she would not be seeking reappointment because of work and family commitments.

Bethany will follow up with Denise about the timing of her resignation.

Bethany will bring cards to the next meeting for VTCAC members to sign thanking Alex and Denise for their service.

Bob Paquin and Bill Howland expressed renewed interest in serving on the committee. Bob Fischer and Mark Naud are seeking reappointment. James Ehlers had not yet responded to several inquiries about his interest in reappointment.

Bob Fischer will follow up with James Ehlers.

Rep. Ode will follow up with Rep. Beyor.

Sen. Lyons will follow up with Sen. Branagan.

Lori has been collecting bios, statements of interest and contact information for new CAC nominees and members seeking re-appointment and will send them by mid-March to Agency of Natural Resources Secretary Moore for consideration.

Topics/presenters for upcoming meetings

The next VTCAC meeting is Monday, April 9th in Shelburne. Committee members decided to postpone the May 14th to coincide with the release of the State of the Lake report, likely in mid- to late June. They suggested holding and recording a meeting, jointly with Quebec and New York CACs, if possible.

Wayne Elliott expressed an interest in hearing about the adequacy of Agency of Agriculture actions related to Act 64, including tile drains. Bethany Sargent suggested Laura Dipietro and Marli Rupe as presenters. The move from conventional agriculture to regenerative agriculture was also suggested as a topic, and Jeff Carter, as a presenter. Eric Clifford suggested a presentation on the data being used for modelling and a report on progress to date.

Bethany suggested inviting Mike Middleman and Emily Bird to speak about the ag partner database and our capacity to quantify nutrient load reductions of agricultural best management practices.

Any other topic or presenter ideas should be emailed to Bethany and Lori by 4:30 pm on Wednesday March 14 in order to allow for schedule coordination.

VTCAC budget update

Bethany Sargent will provide a budget update at the April meeting.

Sen. Lyons moved to adjourn. Eric Clifford seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:16 pm.