

**Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative  
Midyear Board of Directors Meeting  
December 10-11, 2009  
Chicago, Illinois**



**Board of Directors Meeting**

The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative Board of Directors met in Chicago on December 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009 for the Midyear Board Meeting. Board members in attendance included Mayor Richard M. Daley, Mayor George Heartwell, Mayor Denis Lapointe, Mayor Brian McMullan, Mayor Eddie Francis, Mayor Régis Labeaume, Mayor Lynn Peterson, Mayor Dave Ross, and Mayor Gérald Tremblay.

**VISION for the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence**

Mayor Daley welcomed Phil Enquist of the Chicago architectural firm Skidmore, Owings, Merrill (SOM) to present a 100 year “vision” for the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River, developed by him and two of his staff. Focusing on the assets the Lakes and River provide and also some of the challenges facing the region, SOM is trying to develop a global plan for the future. With “green cities” playing a prominent role along the Lakes and River, the plan would help advance basin-wide innovation. The Board hopes that the Great Lakes and

St. Lawrence Vision can be taken out to a larger audience in the future.

<http://www.som.com/video/greatlakes/visioplan.html>

**Staff Additions in Québec**

The Board of Directors began their midyear meeting by approving the expansion of Cities Initiative staff to include two consultants in the Province of Québec. A part-time consultant will be located in Montréal and one in Québec City. Staff hopes to have people hired and in place by the spring.

**Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement**

The announcement of the renegotiations of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement last June sparked the Cities Initiative staff to present the Board with a working proposal for the organization’s position. The Cities Initiative position calls for a new focus on the nearshore zone, address toxics, nuisance algae and other emerging chemicals. Aquatic invasive species and the improvement of coastal health would also be at the forefront of the Cities Initiative

position. Most importantly the Board asked for accountability measures and a major role for cities to be in a new agreement.

At the noon press conference, the Mayors called for local governments to be involved in the renegotiation and implementation of the Agreement. The Board also encouraged consideration of the St. Lawrence and its direct connection to the Great Lakes in the Agreement.

### **Aquatic Invasive Species**

The Board welcomed Captain Lorne Thomas of the United States Coast Guard (USCG) to explain the USCG's proposed rule on ballast water discharge. The proposed rule sets a national standard for the quality of ballast water discharged into U.S. waters. The Cities Initiative recently submitted comments on the proposed rule that call for a uniform and highly effective standard to encourage technological innovation in the area.

The Board also heard an update from the Director of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Marc Miller, on the recent electronic barrier maintenance and Asian carp management efforts in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal.

### **Wind Energy on the Great Lakes**

The Great Lakes have become the focus of recent interest in offshore wind energy projects. The Cities Initiative will develop an organizational policy on wind energy. The Board encouraged establishment of a working group of member municipalities to help facilitate the creation of such a policy.

### **Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement/Compact**

Sarah Rang briefed the mayors on the current implementation of the water quantity agreements, the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin Sustainable Water Resources Agreement/Compact. The Board urged the staff to focus on encouraging water conservation, a stricter definition of "need" in requests for water diversions, increasing science and new research tools and to encourage, as much as possible, water withdrawals and return flow to the same basin.

### **Annual Meeting and Conference**

At the opening dinner on Thursday evening, Mayor Tom Barrett provided an update on the activities planned for this year's Annual Meeting and Conference, June 16-18, 2010 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

During the Board meeting, the Directors reviewed proposals from three member municipalities to host the 2011 Annual Meeting and Conference. The Regional Municipality of Niagara was chosen as the 2011 host.

For an overview of the proceedings of the 2009 Cities Initiative Annual Member Meeting and Conference, please visit <http://www.glslcities.org/documents/AGMoverview062309.pdf>