



## Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (GLS)

Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

September 6, 2022

Meeting Held in Person and via Teleconference

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### **PRESENT**

David McMillan (Advisory Board Chairperson), William Mielke (Advisory Board Member), Dr. Arthur Sulzer (Advisory Board Member), Craig H. Middlebrook (Deputy Administrator), Jeffrey Scharf (Associate Administrator and Director of Maintenance and Engineering), Carrie Lavigne (Chief Counsel), Martin Welles (Executive Officer), Elizabeth Fox (Director of Congressional and Public Relations), Christopher Guimond (Director of Lock Operations and Marine Services), Peter Hirthe (Great Lakes Regional Representative), Kevin O'Malley (Strategic Advisor for Financial and Resource Management), and Rebecca Yackley (Director of Trade and Economic Development).

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

In his capacity as Board Chairperson, David McMillan welcomed all participants to the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (GLS) Advisory Board meeting, noting the presence of quorum, he called the meeting to order at 2:07 p.m. (Eastern).

### **II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On motion by Board member Mr. William Mielke, which was seconded by Board member Dr. Arthur Sulzer, the Board approved the minutes without objection, the motion passed, and the minutes from the May 24, 2022, meeting were approved as drafted.

### **III. DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

- GLS Deputy Administrator Craig Middlebrook announced that he is retiring on September 30 after 27 years of service at the GLS and a total of 34 years of Federal service.
- Mr. Middlebrook briefly spoke of senior-level transitions and reported the Deputy Administrator position has been posted. Marty Welles, GLS's Executive Officer, accepted a position with the Air Line Pilots Association (ALPA) and will retire from the Federal Government on September 10. Craig also reported that Jeffrey Scharf has assumed the responsibilities of Associate Administrator.
- Mr. Middlebrook also spoke of plans for the new Seaway Visitor Center and a groundbreaking ceremony scheduled for September 29 in Massena to include Secretary Buttigieg and Deputy Secretary Trottenberg.
- Mr. Middlebrook concluded his report by discussing plans to modernize the GLS's facilities in Massena as well as the relaunching of efforts with the Department's Volpe Center to modernize the binational vessel traffic management system with the Voyage Information System (VIS).



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### III. QUARTERLY UPDATES

- Mr. Middlebrook briefed the board on Lake Ontario/St. Lawrence River water levels, stating that water levels are slightly lower than this time last year.
- Christopher Guimond, Director of Lock Operations and Marine Services, reported that the GLS's buoy barge was transported across Lake Ontario in June for shipyard modifications and should return to Massena in the fall. Mr. Guimond also spoke about the GLS's participation in a recent local emergency response exercise on the St. Lawrence River using the incident command system. Finally, he reported that he is working with human resources on an internal understudy program that will allow for promotions from within.
- Jeffrey Scharf, Associate Administrator, reported that the GLS recently broke ground for the new Seaway Visitor Center at Eisenhower Lock, and a position dedicated to the new center is being developed. He also mentioned that the facilities master plan study was completed and GLS management is reviewing the results and working to incorporate workplace capital projects in the Seaway Infrastructure Program (SIP).
- Kevin O'Malley, Strategic Advisor for Financial and Resource Management, provided an update on GLS funding/appropriations and noted that the FY 2022 financial statements audit continues and will wrap up in early November. Mr. O'Malley mentioned several GLS vacancies in finance and acquisitions and the fact that DOT is currently having a hard time hiring for professional positions. Finally, he reported that an update to the Great Lakes Seaway System economic impact study is going to be completed in 2023 based on 2022 traffic results and economic conditions.
- Rebecca Yackley, Director of Trade and Economic Development, provided an update on the GLS's participation at various trade and transportation exhibitions and shows. In particular, she highlighted the GLS's participation at the Posidonia Exhibition in Greece in June.
- Peter Hirthe, International Trade Specialist/Great Lakes Regional Representative, reported that he will be participating at the Breakbulk Americas trade show in Houston the end of September. Mr. Hirthe also spoke about the results of 2022 commercial shipping season.
- Elizabeth Fox, Director of Congressional and Public Relations, reported on the GLS's Port Pacesetter Awards, continued work on GLS newsletters (*Compass* and *Soundings*), and on-going efforts for the September 29 Secretarial Seaway Visitor Center groundbreaking event in Massena.



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### **V. OLD AND NEW BUSINESS**

The next GLS Advisory Board meeting is scheduled virtually for November 15, 2022.

### **VI. CLOSING DISCUSSION AND ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:34 p.m. (Eastern), with a motion to adjourn from Mr. McMillan and seconded by Mr. Mielke.

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