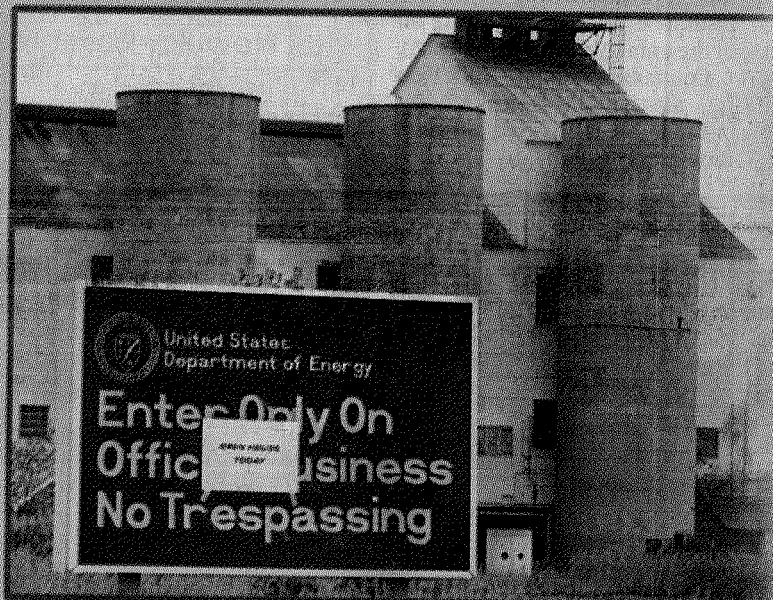


# LOOKING FOR A LEADER

After recent resignation, LOOW Restoration Advisory Board in search of new 'catalyst'



FILE PHOTO

**CLEANUP:** A portion of the Niagara Falls Storage Site on the Lake Ontario Ordnance Works is open to the public, as shown this October 1987 photo. The public-process arm of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' cleanup of the LOOW site is searching for a chair after the resignation of Sean Kelly in September.

BY AARON BESECKER  
beseckera@gnewspring.com

The group charged with providing a public voice in the cleanup of the federal radiological dump site in northwest Niagara County was shocked in late September when Chair Sean Kelly announced his departure.

But now, the Lake Ontario Ordnance Works Restoration Advisory Board, in its first meeting since Kelly's resignation, will try to fill several organizational holes when it gathers early next week.

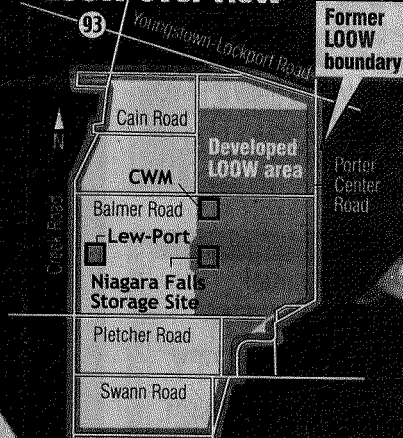
Committee members will discuss possible nominations to two big jobs at the RAB —

SEE RAB ON PAGE 4A

## Past RAB chairs

- Sean Kelly: January to September 2005
- Ann Roberts: 2002 to 2004
- Nils Olsen and Stephen Yaksich

## LOOW overview



# RAB ...

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

the top post and a new chair for the RAB's radiological committee.

Chair of the RAB could be called the catalyst of the organization, the thrust behind its work.

The second empty spot comes after Paul Dicky, the supervising public health engineer for the Niagara County Health Department, recently stepped down from the top committee post.

Dicky had served as chair for more than the two-year term, as defined in the recently adopted operational guidelines. He will stay on as a regular RAB member.

The man Kelly recommended when he resigned was current Chemical Committee Chair Terry Yonker.

Yonker believes his name will be considered for the post on Monday, and says the next RAB chair should prioritize openness with the public.

"There's nothing that we, as a RAB, have to hide from anyone," he said. "Our functions have to be the most transparent of all."

In the middle of the 20th century, the federal government buried waste from the development of atomic weapons during the Manhattan Project at a former TNT-production site in Lewiston and Porter.

A fragmented record of work at the site, a fact which many acknowledge, has made the cleanup process now headed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers more difficult.

Besides Yonker, no other names have been publicly circulated as Steering Committee members want to address the issue in public at the meeting.

Little information or description about the chair's duties exists in the group's operating guidelines, though the position is held to be important for the overall progress made by the group.

RAB Vice Chair Rebecca Zayatz, environmental engineering manager at CWM Chemical Services, has held her position on the RAB for more than two years, and has been involved with the RAB since its inception. She also served as temporary head of the board when Ann Roberts, the last chair before Kelly, resigned.

Roberts, who stepped down because she was moving out of the area, led the RAB for almost two years.

Zayatz will run Monday's meeting, which will also include discussions about a new ad hoc committee to deal with issues of the group's transparency, about future public meetings and a presen-

## If you go

- **WHAT:** Restoration Advisory Board Steering Committee meeting
- **WHEN:** 1 p.m. Monday
- **WHERE:** Lewiston Public Library, 305 South Eighth St.
- **MORE INFO:** The meeting is open to the public. Committee members will discuss several organizational items as well as listen to a presentation by a representative of the Community LOOW Project.

## Duties of RAB chair

- The chair is a designated member of the steering committee
- Serves for two-year term
- No limit to number of times a member may be nominated or elected to chair position

Source: Restoration Advisory Board Operating Guidelines

tation from Scott King on the Community LOOW Project.

That project, initiated by the Niagara County Public Health Director Paulette Kline, is compiling information on the history of the LOOW site in order to ultimately gather the most comprehensive record of site information.

Before Kelly's resignation, the Steering Committee discussed its own expansion. The group still plans to consider that idea, Zayatz said.

Some members floated ideas at the last meeting about slowly adding members to the steering committee — the RAB group that ultimately directs the work of the group.

Membership committee chair William Choboy said he's been contacted by four individuals interested in becoming regular members since the end of September, with one of those people possibly interested in becoming a member of the steering committee.

The steering committee consists of the RAB chair and vice chair, as well as the chairs of each of the six committees, which include Outreach, Membership, Advocacy, Historical, Chemical and Radiological.

Susan Senecah, a professor at the State University of New York's College of Environmental Science, helped to reorganize the RAB following problems with its initial structure.

Senecah, coordinator of the graduate program in Environmental Communication and Participatory Processes, said the job of the RAB chair is to keep the group focused and productive.

The candidate for the chair position should be able to promote collaboration, give confidence to other RAB members and be able to "keep a lot of plates in the air."

And the fact that the group has not been around very long means there's lots of room to grow.

"It is what they want it to become," Senecah said.

Contact Aaron Besecker  
at (716) 282-2311, Ext. 2263.

LOCAL

Niagara Gazette

4A Friday, Oct 28, 2005

## RAB mission statement

*"To influence the investigation and promote the satisfactory remediation of the entire Lake Ontario Ordnance Works site (including all publicly and privately owned parcels). The RAB endeavors to ensure that the community is provided the opportunity as early as possible to obtain information about, provide input to, and have an impact on, the decisions regarding all investigations and restoration activities."*

Source: Restoration Advisory Board Operating Guidelines

IN TIME  
NEED