

Ottawa River Coalition Meeting Minutes
May 28, 2020 Virtual Meeting 8:00 am

In attendance:

Mike Elwood, Hardin SWCD
Jarrett Lange, Kohli & Kaliher Associates
Mitch Siefker, Kohli & Kaliher Associates
Cory Gonya, Nutrien
Roy Baldrige, LACNIP
Shane Coleman, LACRPC
Travis Fillhart, Allen County EMA
Tim Williams, City of Lima Utilities Dept.
Nate Tessler, ODOT Dist. 1
Leslie Riley, Tri-Moraine Audubon Society
Clint Schroeder, OSU Extension Allen County
Brigitte Money maker, OSU Ext. Allen County
Matt Elling, Allen County Health Dept.
Tyler Black, JAMPD
Jarrod Wehinger, Allen SWCD

Scott Strahley, Kohli & Kaliher Associates
Cody Wischmeyer, Kohli & Kaliher Associates
Beth Seibert, Allen County Commissioners
Russ Decker, Nutrien
John Schneider, LACNIP
Tom Berger, Allen County EMA
Emily Kerber, City of Lima Utilities Dept.
Brett Allerding Curfman, ODOT Dist. 1
Jim Morrisey, City of Lima Public Works Dept.
Joe Gearing, Allen County Engineer's Office
Boden Fisher, OSU Extension Allen County
Kevin Cox, Perry Township Trustees
Jessica Begonia, Alloway
Casey Heilman, Allen SWCD
Haley Belisle, Ottawa River Coalition

Haley Belisle welcomed the group to the Virtual May Meeting. Usernames were called to determine who was in attendance.

Chairman, Cory Gonya called the meeting to order at 8:04 am. No additions to the agenda were requested.

A voting form was sent to the voting representative for each dues-paying member prior to the May meeting. The results from this voting form were shared by Haley Belisle.

Cory read from the list of 2020 members to be approved. Haley shared that this passed with ten votes. Cory announced that these members were approved.

Cory introduced the meeting minutes from November 21, 2019 and from January 11, 2020. There are no minutes from the March 26, 2020 meeting as that was cancelled. Haley shared that the November meeting minutes were approved with nine votes and there were no additions or corrections to the minutes. Haley shared that the January meeting minutes were approved with nine votes and there were no additions or corrections to the minutes.

Treasurer's Report

May Financial Report – Chairman Cory Gonya presented the May Financial Report, outlining receipts, expenses and account balances since the November report. Haley Belisle shared that the May Financial Report was approved by ten votes.

Filing of the 2019 Form 990 and Annual Charitable Reg. – Haley Belisle announced that the 2019 Form 990 has been filed with the IRS along with the State's Annual Charitable Organization Registration Statement. Haley reported that these documents have been completed and filed and that copies are available at her office to any person to review by appointment.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee – Chairman Cory Gonya reported on their virtual April 23 meeting where this agenda was prepared, and plans were made for the May virtual meeting.

- Canceled Fish Fry 2020 Funding Capture Plan – Beth Seibert discussed plans to make up the \$4,000 that is normally brought in during that event. \$1,000 of this has been donated by Nutrien. We are still looking to recover \$3,000 to meet our goals. Possible routes for funding include reaching out to organizations/companies/people who normally donate to the silent auction.
- Financial Records Informal Audit Update – Beth Seibert discussed plans for a future informal audit of the financial records. It has been some time since our last informal audit. Beth has spoken to Karen Sneary about performing an audit and plans will be formed to carry this out.
- Approve Executive Director – Haley Belisle shared the voting results that she has been approved to take on the position of Coalition Executive Director. This was approved with ten votes. Ottawa River Coalition has entered into an updated agreement with Allen Soil and Water Conservation District to provide the Executive Director.

Community Relations Committee

- Casey Heilman provided an update on the 2020 Ottawa River Cleanup. This year's cleanup has been rescheduled for Saturday, September 12th from 9 AM – 12 PM. Sign-in will be located at the American Red Cross building at 610 S Collett Street. Those under 18 years of age can participate if accompanied by an adult and after signing a waiver. More information can be found online at LACNIP's website (lacnip.org).
- Casey Heilman provided an update for Lima Clean. The May 17th event was postponed. A new date will be announced once it has been rescheduled.

Stream Monitoring Committee

- Emily Kerber gave an update on the Equalization Basin project, reporting that everything is going well and the project is almost finished. They have completely backfilled everything and the parking lot has been leveled out. The project is currently awaiting a shipment of submersible pumps (weighing over 10k lbs a piece with 15 million-gallons-per-day capacity each!) which should be installed in mid-June. Most of the technical work is to be completed by mid-to-late July. Afterwards, focus will shift to seeding and fixing the bike path.
- Cory Gonya provided a regulatory update.
 - Cory spoke of NOAA's forecast for the Lake Erie algal bloom. Last year was a little worse than normal. On a 0-10 scale, the severity was ranked a 7.5. This year, they are projecting between 3 and 5, but noted that it could be up to 6.
 - Cory provided an update on the H2Ohio program. The COVID-19 pandemic caused many to be concerned regarding the continuation of this program. Fortunately, the state has decided to keep this program for 2020.
 - WOTUS – In 2019 US EPA and USACE released a new rule to repeal the Waters of the US 2015 Obama-era Clean Water Rule. US EPA and USACE has released a list of what is not considered Waters of the US. This includes: groundwater, ephemeral features, diffuse stormwater runoff, ditches, prior converted cropland, artificially irrigated areas, artificial lakes and ponds, water-filled depressions, sand/gravel/fill pits, stormwater control features, groundwater recharge, water reuse and

wastewater recycling structures, and waste treatment systems. Currently the 2015 Rule is effective in 22 states including Ohio.

- Impaired Waters – Ohio EPA has released their 2020 list of impaired waters, which included the Western Lake Erie Basin (WLEB). At the same time, they have announced that they would fast-track a TMDL for the Maumee River Watershed.
- Upper Auglaize River Watershed Study Update – Haley Belisle shared a correspondence from Daniel Glomski, a representative from Ohio EPA, which took place on May 11, 2020. In this correspondence, Daniel stated that the study is in the data management/data evaluation/report writing phase of the project. He noted that they would normally be looking at the causes and sources at impaired sites and deciding if more water chemistry sampling is needed, but everyone at the agency is working remotely for the foreseeable future. Daniel noted that the field season is likely in jeopardy.

Lowhead Dam Committee – Cory Gonya gave an update on the Allentown lowhead dam removal project. Cory reported that Kohli and Kaliher Associates completed an H&H study to see if there were any impacts on the stream flow velocity or impacts on the flood-plain. Their study concluded the changes to be very minor. Cory reported that we have received almost all of the approvals needed to remove the dam. The remaining approval is from FEMA for the minor changes to the flood-plain. Cory also shared that we did receive a letter from Husky stating that their donation for the dam removal has been approved and we should be receiving that donation very soon. Nate Tessler reported that an ideal time of the year to relocate mussels would be September, when it is a little cooler than mid-summer. During the day of construction, mussels will be removed from the immediate area that would be impacted. Then, while the dam is being notched, stranded mussels will be relocated back to suitable habitat. Nate will be submitting a mussel relocation plan to ODNR in the next few weeks.

Stormwater Committee

- Jim Morrissey gave an update on City of Lima projects. The railroad grade separation project is still moving forward and is slated to open by the end of June, or even sooner. The street improvements on Wayne Street have finished improving/repairing storm sewers between Cole and Metcalf. The Schoonover dam project has been affected by the recent rain, but they are hoping to continue with this project soon. The Faurot Park tiling project has been tested with all of the recent rain and worked very well to provide a drainage outlet. The Melrose project has recently started Phase II. The storm sewer projects on the north side of town, near Edgewood, had some issues with settling but contractors are working to solve these issues.
- Casey Heilman spoke of urban stormwater initiatives served by Allen SWCD. Due to COVID-19, all of the educational programs have been cancelled at this time. Allen SWCD is hoping to collaborate with JAMPD for some virtual educational events. Casey announced the arrival of two summer interns that will be working for Allen SWCD. Their focus will be on illicit discharge monitoring, storm drain data collection, and the floating wetlands in Faurot Park.
- Joe Gearing gave an update on Allen County Engineer projects. Joe reported that one of their projects will need to be re-bid as the original bids came in a little high. Their office has received several site plans for development. They have been performing a lot of hydrocleaning to help keep things flowing as a result of the recent rain. Joe announced the arrival of a summer intern who will focus on updating GIS mapping but will also be exposed to survey work and construction sites.

New Business

Member and Partner Reports

- OSU Extension Allen County – Brigitte Moneymaker introduced herself. She is one of the new water quality research associates and is serving Auglaize, Allen, and Mercer counties. She is excited to join the group and looks forward to sharing about the work she has been doing.
- OSU Extension Allen County – Boden Fisher introduced himself. He is one of the new water quality research associates and is serving Hardin, Hancock, and Putnam counties. He is excited to join the group and is looking forward to working with the communities here. Anyone with collaboration opportunities for education and public outreach can feel free to call OSU Extension's office.
- Allen SWCD – Casey Heilman announced that ASWCD has moved offices. They are now located at 951 Commerce Parkway on the second floor. She announced that Beth Seibert has left their office and has assumed her new role of County Commissioner.
- Alloway – Jessica Begonia announced that Alloway has moved their metals laboratory to OEAMC and are working to get their microwave digestion up and running, which will speed up analysis. She reported that they have received requests for Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and noted that regulations for this are developing. They are hoping to start testing this in-house soon.
- Perry Township – Kevin Cox reported that Perry township has been trying to continue with work and life – as much as life will allow right now. He wishes the group to stay safe and conveyed that anyone in need of help are more than welcome to contact him.
- Tri-Moraine Audubon Society – Leslie Riley mentioned that they have had to reschedule many of their events, so the schedule is currently being reworked. They would like to continue to be updated on the progress of the Allentown Lowhead Dam.
- Allen County Emergency Management Agency – Tom Berger discussed EMA's response to COVID-19. They continue to push PPE out to healthcare providers and first responders. EMA will be moving their office to N West Street. They are currently in the process of updating their hazard mitigation plan and HAZMAT plan.
- Johnny Appleseed Metropolitan Park District – Tyler Black reported that they are fortunate to help provide a haven for people during COVID-19 as attendance numbers are up. Programming has been affected by COVID-19 and has shifted towards virtual outlets. He announced that beaches are closed for the season. The campground did open yesterday at noon and was full within twenty minutes. JAMPD currently has 3 ongoing projects: 12-acre parcel of trail access along the canal, one 61-acre new park near State Route 117, and a trail-widening project at Ottawa Metro Park.

Meeting adjourned at 9:26 am. The next meeting of the Ottawa River Coalition is Thursday, July 23, 2020 at 8:00 AM.

Minutes transcribed by Haley Belisle, Executive Director.