

**Ottawa River Coalition Meeting Minutes**  
**Nov 18, 2021 Hybrid Meeting 8:00 am**

*In attendance:*

Beth Seibert, Allen County Commissioners	Joe Gearing, AC Engineer's Office
Steve Kayatin, Allen County Sanitary Eng. Dept.	Anna Cotterman, Allen SWCD
Casey Heilman, Allen SWCD	Jarrold Wehinger, Allen SWCD
Lydia Archambo, Allen SWCD	Jessica Begonia, Alloway
Mike Elwood, Hardin SWCD	Adam Haunhorst, LACRPC
Cory Gonya, Nutrien	Brett Allerding Curfman, ODOT Dist. 1
Clint Schroeder, OSU Extension Allen County	Kevin Cox, Perry Township Trustees
Leslie Riley, Tri-Moraine Audubon Society	Haley Belisle, Ottawa River Coalition

Chairman, Joe Gearing called the meeting to order at 8:04 am.

Joe welcomed the group to the Hybrid November Meeting. In-person and online members introduced themselves.

Haley Belisle requested an addition to the agenda to discuss the 2022 membership cost.

Joe introduced the meeting minutes from September 23, 2021. There were no requests for additions or corrections to the minutes. *Motion by Casey Heilman to approve the minutes of the September 23, 2021 meeting. Motion seconded by Kevin Cox and carried.*

### **Treasurer's Report**

November Financial Report – Executive Director, Haley Belisle presented the November Financial Report, outlining receipts, expenses and account balances since 09/23/2021. The report included income from the online auction. Expenses included liability insurance and the director's fee. *Motion by Clint Schroeder to approve the November Financial Report. Motion seconded by Mike Elwood and carried.*

### **Committee Reports**

Executive Committee – Chairman Joe Gearing reported on their October 28 meeting where this agenda was prepared and plans were made for the November hybrid meeting.

- Halloween PSA & Auction Update – ORC presented a recent Halloween PSA to the public and to local schools. The PSA, informational flyers and radio ad, targeted school-aged trick-or-treaters regarding river safety and pollution prevention. The flyers were distributed to the classes of approximately 8,000 local k-8 children. ORC also hosted an online auction in association with the PSA. The auction met our goals of selling over half of our donated items and raising over \$300 before the end of the year. The online auction is not currently a program that will be repeated every year, but will be an option for future needs if they arise.
- Annual Meeting Update – The annual meeting will be held virtually this year on January 20, 2022. The nominating committee will meet next month to discuss nominations for the 2022 executive committee.
- Good Friday Fish Fry Update – Plans are going forward with having the GFFF be eat-in or carry-out and plans are going forward with having the silent auction take place during the event. This will take place on April 15, 2022.

Community Relations Committee – Casey Heilman and Lydia Archambo provided an update on education events and community outreach events. Lydia will be joining the Committee and will be providing future updates.

Stream Monitoring Committee – Cory Gonya and Anna Cotterman provided a regulatory update. Cory spoke on the amendment to the Regulatory Reform Bill which originally had a goal of reducing the number of rules impacting the regulating community by 30%. This amendment will allow for more precise removal of certain rules. There is an update on an Ohio House Bill and Ohio Senate Bill regarding PFAS where certain firefighting foams would be prohibited during fire training. Additionally, updates to the ongoing WOTUS rule changes where an upcoming Ohio House Bill would potentially have ephemeral features be unregulated again. This Bill has not passed but is being considered. Ohio is proposing to establish Maximum Contaminant Levels for certain PFAS chemicals in drinking water (Ohio is currently using a system of “Action Levels”). USEPA Region 5 appointed Debra Shore as the new Regional Administrator. Ohio Department of Agriculture has opened sign-ups for next year’s H2Ohio program in all of the original counties as well as ten additional counties. There is ongoing interest in creating local Nine Element Plans or Nonpoint Source Implementation Strategic Plan (NPS-IS) in the surrounding watersheds as well as the Ottawa River Watershed. ORC will continue to help as needed in the creation of these plans. Discussion of NPS-IS plans was continued by the group. After many talks at looking at different aspects of a possible NPS-IS plan as well as the ongoing Maumee TMDL, the group discussed the possible formation of an outreach program geared towards the reduction of non-point source pollution as well as support programs such as H2Ohio and support the interest in creating a local NPS-IS plan. This pollution reduction program will be seen over by a new committee dedicated towards outreach.

Lowhead Dam Committee – Joe provided an update on the FEMA fee associated with the removal of the Allentown Lowhead Dam. After much research and many talks with FEMA, it has been determined that ORC will not have to pay the \$8,000 fee for map revisions. This had been discussed as a potential for several months, but ORC received the confirmation that this fee would not be instituted. Much thanks and appreciation to Adam Haunhorst with LACRPC for all of his hard work and research!

#### Stormwater Committee

- Casey Heilman and Lydia Archambo spoke of urban stormwater initiatives served by Allen SWCD. The Adopt-A-Roadway program has seen several clean-up events over the past couple of months. The Tree Rebate has been very popular this year and some recent media releases has spurred even more interest. Haley Belisle spoke of stormwater training events for municipal employees.
- Joe Gearing gave an update on Allen County Engineer projects. ACE is looking for potential projects with H2Ohio and GLRI funds. ACE is creating new ariel photos/mapping of the county. ACE is also working to update topographic maps of the county which have not been updated since 2003.

## Watershed Committee

- Maumee TMDL Coalition – Ottawa River Coalition has joined the Maumee TMDL Coalition under the umbrella of Allen County’s stakeholder involvement. Steve Kayatin has been chosen to be the representative for Allen County with the support of other local stakeholders. There was a recent public meeting held by OEPA and other state departments regarding the status of the TMDL and looking ahead towards future drafts. The TMDL is currently in the draft Loading Analysis Plan and is open to receive public comment. The group discussed some of the updates that were given at the meeting. OEPA is hoping to release the Draft Preliminary Modeling Results by March 2022.
- Special Presentation – Members discussed the Maumee TMDL and the connections to the upcoming outreach project in lieu of a special presentation.

Scholarship Committee – Haley Belisle provided an update. The Committee has met to discuss general plans for the scholarship. An application sub-committee will be meeting soon to put together the application and grading rubric.

## **New Business**

2022 Membership – Haley Belisle discussed the plans for 2022 membership and requested a motion to keep the price of membership at \$100.00.

*Motion by Kevin Cox to approve the price of dues at \$100.00. Motion seconded by Steve Kayatin and carried.*

## Member and Partner Reports

- Perry Township – Kevin Cox provided an update and spoke of how Perry Township is preparing for upcoming winter weather.
- Allen Water District – Steven Kayatin provided an update and spoke of the \$11 million water project in Harrod/Lafayette.
- Allen Soil and Water Conservation District – ASWCD office has moved to 1870 Slabtown Road. Gary Werling has retired and Casey Heilman has assumed the position of District Administrator. Haley Belisle has assumed the role of Watershed & Stormwater Manager. Lydia Archambo, previous ASWCD intern, has been hired on as the new Stormwater Coordinator. Ohio Department of Agriculture has created a new position of Regional Watershed Manager as a way to help continue overseeing goals of pollution reduction throughout Ohio. The Regional Watershed Manager for our region will be starting soon and is overseeing much of the Northwest Ohio/Maumee Watershed area.
- OSU Extension Allen County – Clint Schroeder provided an update and spoke of the Agricultural Conservation Planwork and provided handouts that include maps of high risk pollutant areas in Ohio. These maps help determine the best areas impacted by implementing conservation practices. Conservation Tillage Conference is coming up in March and planning for the event is underway.
- Lima Allen County Regional Planning Commission – Adam Haunhorst provided an update and spoke of the upcoming FEMA updates to the floodplain. The comment period for the plans are currently open to the public.
- Alloway – Jessica Begonia provided an update. Alloway will be hosting a workshop event out of the Allen County Sanitary Engineer’s training facility on Friday November 19<sup>th</sup>. Training will focus on activated sludge and how to diagnose problems at WWTP’s using examination of microorganisms and respirometry.

- Tri-Moraine Audubon Society – Leslie Riley provided an update and spoke of TMAS offering hybrid meetings. The TMAS Annual Environmental Education Weekend is scheduled for April 29 – May 1, 2022. Some members have been very active in supporting the efforts to bring the BP Birch Solar Project to Allen/Auglaize Counties. The chapter is in the process of finalizing the environmental education mini-grants program.
- ODOT Dist. 1 – Brett Allerding Curfman provided an update and noted that ODOT has a new mobile app that will be used to complete stormwater inspections.

*Motion by Mike Elwood to adjourn the November meeting. Motion seconded by Steve Kayatin and carried.* Meeting adjourned at 10:07 am. The next meeting of the Ottawa River Coalition is Thursday, January 20, 2022 at 8:00 AM.

Minutes transcribed by Haley Belisle, Executive Director