

Ottawa River Coalition Meeting Minutes March 24, 2022 Virtual Meeting 8:00 am

In attendance:

Beth Seibert, Allen County Commissioners

Teresa Adams, Allen SWCD

Kim Stiles, Allen Water District

Jim Morrisey, City of Lima Public Works

Adam Haunhorst, LACRPC

Cory Gonya, Nutrien

Boden Fisher, Ohio Department of Agriculture

Kevin Cox, Perry Township Trustees

Haley Belisle, Ottawa River Coalition

Joe Gearing, AC Engineer's Office

Lydia Archambo, Allen SWCD

Jessica Begonia, Alloway

Tyler Black, JAMPD

Shane Coleman, LACRPC

Russ Decker, Nutrien

Clint Schroeder, OSU Extension Allen County

Leslie Riley, Tri-Moraine Audubon Society

Chairman, Joe Gearing called the meeting to order at 8:02 am.

Joe welcomed the group to the Virtual March Meeting. Online members introduced themselves.

Executive Director, Haley Belisle read from the list of 2022 memberships to be approved. *The Coalition voted to approve the list of 2022 memberships.*

Joe introduced the meeting minutes from November 18, 2021. There were no requests for additions or corrections to the minutes. *Motion by Kevin Cox to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2021 meeting. Motion seconded by Cory Gonya and carried.*

Treasurer's Report

March Financial Report – Treasurer, Clint Schroeder presented the March Financial Report, outlining receipts, expenses and account balances since 11/18/2021. The report included income from AmazonSmile. Expenses included meeting expenses and annual awards. *Motion by Adam Haunhorst to approve the March Financial Report. Motion seconded by Kevin Cox and carried.*

Committee Reports

Executive Committee – Chairman Joe Gearing reported on their February 17 meeting where this agenda was prepared and plans were made for the March virtual meeting.

- Good Friday Fish Fry Update – Plans are going forward with having the April 15 GFFF be eat-in or carry-out and plans are going forward with having the silent auction take place during the event. There is currently a fish shortage so the fish meal price has increased from \$6.60 to \$9.50 per meal. The type of fish has changed from Alaskan Pollock to Hake. Normally, not much money is raised from the sale of fish meals but what is raised does help with annual expenses. To compare with profit margins of meals in the past, we would have to raise the price of the fish meal ticket to \$18. The Committee feels that this is too high of a price to ask and has set the ticket price to \$15 although there will be less margin of profit. We will be including a kayak raffle to the event this year. Nutrien has set up ads with the local radio stations and DJ JB with T-102 will be on-site at the event. We have already ordered 1000 fish meals and have until April 4th to add any additional meals to our order. Many thanks to the members who have helped with the silent auction and already signing up to volunteer!

Community Relations Committee – Lydia Archambo provided an update on education events and community outreach events. Lydia noted that there has been increased interest in education activities and Adopt-A-Roadway participation. She has several classes scheduled to get into the stream to conduct a Stream Assessment and collect macroinvertebrates. Tomorrow is the Stormwater Superstars event at the Lima Civic Center. The Ottawa River Cleanup will be taking place on April 23rd from 9AM – 12PM at the American Red Cross.

Stream Monitoring Committee – Cory Gonya provided a regulatory update. Cory spoke on the Waters of the United States (WOTUS) ruling. From the Congressional Research Service: “On January 24, 2022, the Supreme Court agreed to review Sackett v. EPA, a long-running dispute regarding whether certain wetlands are “waters of the United States” (WOTUS) subject to protection under the Clean Water Act (CWA). In Sackett, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit upheld the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA’s) assertion of jurisdiction over certain wetlands because the wetlands are WOTUS under a standard described in a prior Supreme Court decision. The precise definition of WOTUS is important because it determines which waters are subject to federal government regulations and protections. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and EPA—the two agencies tasked with implementing the CWA—use the definition of WOTUS to determine which water bodies are subject to a variety of requirements under the statute, including coverage in CWA permitting programs.” Cory also spoke of the draft NPDES Industrial Stormwater Permit released by Ohio EPA. Many graphical and numerical errors have been corrected and there have been updates to benchmark sampling. The annual reporting system has also been updated.

Stormwater Committee

- Jim Morrissey gave an update on City of Lima projects. They are currently preparing for the new roundabout project downtown. With the Melrose Project completed, the City is currently looking at which area of Lima to focus their next project on.
- Haley Belisle and Lydia Archambo spoke of urban stormwater initiatives served by Allen SWCD. Annual MS4 reporting is underway for the 2021 Program. Several outreach events will be taking place over the next couple of weeks including Stormwater Superstars, Family Fun Night at OSU, and the Ottawa River Cleanup. Allen SWCD is also preparing for summer interns.
- Joe Gearing gave an update on Allen County Engineer projects. ACE has petition projects ongoing and is advancing with the Baughman Ditch project with potential GLRI funds.

Watershed Committee

- Maumee TMDL Coalition – Ottawa River Coalition has joined the Maumee TMDL Coalition under the umbrella of Allen County’s stakeholder involvement. Haley Belisle shared an infographic with the group showing Ohio EPA’s projected timeline for the TMDL. OEPA continues to work on the Preliminary Modeling Results of the TMDL and has pushed back the projected completion of the PMR to July 2022. There will be a stakeholder meeting at Ohio Northern University on March 29th.

Scholarship Committee – Haley Belisle provided an update. The Committee met on March 4th to discuss the draft application and have advanced towards a final version of the application.

New Business

Member and Partner Reports

- Perry Township – Kevin Cox provided an updated and spoke of how Perry Township will be hosting a Pancake Day.
- Johnny Appleseed Metropolitan Park District – Tyler Black provided an update on JAMPD's 50th anniversary year. The new office project is currently 3 weeks ahead of schedule and they are planning to move at the beginning on June. Playgrounds at Kendrick Woods and Ottawa Metro Park are being updated. Restrooms are being replaced at Heritage Park.
- Tri-Moraine Audubon Society – Leslie Riley provided an update. The TMAS Annual Environmental Education Weekend is scheduled for April 30, 2022.
- Ohio Department of Agriculture – Boden Fisher provided an update on the ODA Watershed Program. The first characterization of the watershed for the Watershed Plan is underway. The Annual Partnership meeting recently took place with regional soil and water conservation districts and the annual Conservation Drainage Network meeting will be taking place soon.
- Alloway – Jessica Begonia provided an update. Alloway recently released a campaign regarding toxicity monitory. These tests usually take 2-3 days or even a week for results. Alloway will now be offering new screening tools using bioluminescent bacterium. This does not replace NPDES permit monitoring, but can return results in hours to help screen if there is toxicity in the wastewater being discharged. This screening is cheaper, faster, and uses less sample volume.
- Lima Allen County Regional Planning Commission – Adam Haunhorst provided an update and spoke of the upcoming FEMA updates to the floodplain. Floodplain regulation updates are scheduled to be completed by December.

Motion by Kevin Cox to adjourn the March meeting. Motion seconded by Tyler Black and carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:15 AM. The next meeting of the Ottawa River Coalition is Thursday, May 26, 2022 at 8:00 AM.

Minutes transcribed by Haley Belisle, Executive Director.

