

## **Ottawa River Coalition Meeting Minutes**

### **November 16, 2017 8:00 AM Potash Corp**

*In attendance:*

Beth Seibert, Ottawa River Coalition

Kevin Cox, Perry Township

Roy Baldrige, LACNIP

Eric Markley, City of Lima Utilities

Leslie Riley, Tri-Moraine Audubon Society

Joe Gearing, City of Lima Public Works

David Belton, Shawnee Township

Sophie Finlayson-Schueler, LACRPC

Anne Decker, Anne Decker Marketing

Cory Gonya, Potash Corp

Mike Elwood, Hardin SWCD

Alaina Morman, Allen SWCD

Brian Riedmaier, National Lime and Stone

Becky Core, Allen SWCD

Pat Beam, Beam Designs

Katie Andrews, Husky Lima Refinery

Vice Chairman Cory Gonya opened the meeting at 8:08 am and welcomed the group to Potash Corp. No additions to the agenda were requested. Secretary/Coordinator, Beth Seibert presented the minutes of the September 28<sup>th</sup> meeting for approval. *Motion by Joe Gearing, seconded by Kevin Cox to approve the minutes of the September 28, 2017 meeting. Motion carried.* Self-introductions were made around the room.

Treasurer Mike Elwood presented the **November Financial Report**, outlining receipts, expenses and account balances since the Sept report. *Roy Baldrige moved to approve the financial report with Leslie Riley seconding this motion that carried.*

### **Committee Reports**

#### Executive Committee

- Cory Gonya reported that they have been working on annual meeting plans. The committee is considering moving the meeting into February and since the bylaws states the annual meeting is to be conducted in the month of January this limitation would need to be addressed. *Motion by Eric Markley to conduct the 2018 Annual Meeting in February if necessary. Kevin Cox seconded this motion that carried.* The annual meeting program will not feature a speaker this year, rather an Ottawa River Game is being prepared.
- Cory Gonya also talked about the Watershed Visualization Project which required a redesign of the Coalition's website. The Executive Committee called a small group of partners together to discuss how an interactive watershed map could be featured. He gave much credit to Anne Decker for making this happen quickly, as the committee wishes to showcase the changes at the annual meeting. Cory was projecting the new website for the Coalition members to view in this meeting today. He stated that the intention is that the site be fluid and evergreen. Anne reported this morning that the website is 70% done and she is now looking for input. She has inserted quite a bit of materials and quotes from last year's membership video footage. The domain name is thisismyriver.org and Roy Baldrige suggested that OttawaRiverCoalition.org be purchased and both be linked to our website. Cory thanked the group for their continued input on this subject.
- Beth Seibert presented the Nominating Committee Report. The following slate of officers was prepared for 2018 by the Executive Committee: John Hoffman representing Alloway as Chairman, Cory Gonya representing Nutrien as Vice Chairman, and Mike Elwood representing Hardin Soil and Water Conservation District as Treasurer. The election will be conducted at the upcoming annual meeting and at that time additional nominations can come from the voting body present.

## Stream Monitoring Committee

- Pat Beam gave an update on Lima's river corridor tree planting and enhancement. He reported 100% survival from the spring tree planting. The bare root native sycamore trees that were planted this year seem to have been the most successful. In this second year past the ground cover planting, they are able to see most of the species that were planted. Control of noxious weeds and invasive species such as Canada thistle, poison hemlock and honeysuckle continues by the contractor. The goliard has been three years of aggressive control. The plants that were very showy this year include the verbena, golden rod and virgin mountain mint. Pat is celebrating a great growing season. Ohio EPA was here to inspect in June and seemed very pleased with what they saw. The end of October report from the contractor, Davey Resource Group is due anytime. No re-seeding next year is anticipated, just monthly maintenance service in 2018.
- Cory Gonya provided a Regulatory Update. He noted that it has been kind of quiet in Ohio on the regulatory front. The recently released Ohio Domestic Action Plan for Phosphorus Reduction is focused on addressing harmful algal blooms (HABs). The report lists all the priorities and goals of the various state agencies – ODA, OEPA, ODNR, ODH and others. The Lake Erie Commission is leading this process. Lake Erie algal blooms this summer are reported as the 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> worst season on record according to the State of Ohio.
- Eric Markley gave an update on the damages suffered by the Lima Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) on June 22<sup>nd</sup> when a main switch gear was hit by lightning. Ohio EPA Peggy Christie was in to the plant for an inspection on Tuesday of this week and seemed very pleased with their progress. The lightning hit took out all power to the plant including the generator service. Calls went out immediately for contractors to come in and assist. The only permit issue that came out of the event was regarding the failure to measure temperature and pH at the outfall. A new switch gear will take 18 to 20 weeks to get into place. Hurricanes in the southern states complicated the demand for this mechanism. The plant is now on a temporary wire until mid-January. Cory Gonya asked if they had trained for this type of event and Eric admitted that they were completely shooting from the hip beginning at 5AM on June 22. He did applaud the support and assistance they received from Peterson Construction and Woolace Electric – both tremendous partners and assets. Otherwise the event could have been quite catastrophic.
- Eric Markley also reported that Lima's \$30 million project to improve the WWTP headworks is now complete and that they are just tying up loose ends now. The bid packet goes out next week for the 13 million gallon equalization basin that will cost over \$40 million. They hope to break ground in Spring 2018 and complete the project by the close of 2021. The basin will be 35' deep and have a concrete bottom so they will be blasting through bedrock to reach that depth. The basin dimensions are 350'x250'x25'. Twelve foot of earth/soil will cover the basin and the area will be returned to park land. \$1.4 million alone will be spent in concrete anchors to tie into the bedrock.

Lowhead Dam Committee – Cory Gonya reported that we are hosting a meeting with Ohio EPA and their Biologist Chuck Boucher on December 4<sup>th</sup> to discuss the extent of the modification to the Allentown lowhead dam that is needed to facilitate the movement of fish upstream of that point in the Ottawa River. Cory spoke about considerations to environmental permits. Beth Seibert said they have been discussing the solids behind the dam. Joe Gearing reflected on how flow captured from the Auglaize River into the Bresler and Williams Reservoirs is actually enhancing the flow at Allentown, downstream of the City of Lima. Eric Markley noted that Lima's WWTP is largely

responsible for the stream flow volume downstream of Lima. Cory invited everyone to attend the 1pm meeting on December 4<sup>th</sup> at Allentown Church.

#### Stormwater Committee

- Joe Gearing, Lima Stormwater Manager spoke about a variety of initiatives and projects. They are wrapping up the 2017 season for various stormwater improvements. North Cole Street is done and so is the Meadowbrook Project. Fernwood and West Market Street has just recently been grassed. The Adopt A Roadway program received a lot of attention this year through the efforts of Allen SWCD. Erosion and sediment control on active construction sites receives weekly inspections. Their mapping project is still under development and they are moving with a project in Lima's north end. Joe is working with the Ohio Stormwater Association and they want to conduct a workshop specifically in Northwest Ohio. Joe will keep the Coalition partners aware of any such training opportunities as there will be professional development credits associated. He reflected on water quality challenges for communities in NW Ohio including implementation of the six minimum control measures defined in the urban stormwater permit process, agricultural runoff, and Lake Erie HABs. Please contact Joe if you have any ideas to share. Cory Gonya asked if Lima has best management practices of their own to showcase in such an event.
- Allen SWCD reported on various stormwater initiatives and projects. Becky Core noted that Adopt A Roadway saw 21 groups enrolled in the City of Lima this year, 4 others in the urban portion of Allen County and 4 more in the rural areas. Groups are ranging from 1-50 persons in size. The ultimate goals of Adopt A Roadway is a twice a year (spring and fall) cleanup commitment on a mile stretch of roadway. She has been exercising much flexibility with those assignments, tailoring them to the needs and objectives of the participant group. Parks and other greenspaces are a popular target. Becky displayed the signage that has gone up to mark those areas. Alaina Morman spoke of her work to inspect construction sites for erosion and sediment controls in the City of Lima. She is currently covering Shawnee Lakes, Dominion Headquarters, and the new Health Partners facility. Albert Suniga is covering sites inspections in Allen County.

Watershed Committee – Beth Seibert reported on a recent meeting she attended regarding the Lima Source Water Protection Plan update. Educational efforts and opportunities with the public were discussed.

#### Old Business

Beth Seibert reported that the Allen County Engineer's (ACE) Office has stepped up to help Guardian to complete their easements with Ohio EPA and US Army Corps of Engineers. ACE plans to do this through their drainage maintenance program, very similarly to how they have an agreement in place with a mitigation channel on National Lima and Stone's property.

#### New Business

Treasurer Mike Elwood reported that the Executive Committee is proposing that 2018 annual voting membership dues remain at \$100. *Motion by Kevin Cox to set the 2018 voting membership dues at \$100 per member organization. Motion was seconded by Pat Beam and carried.*

## Member and Partner Reports

- Cory Gonya thanked everyone for coming out to Potash Corp today.
- Mike Elwood reported that 30 wind turbines are going up in the Hog Creek Marsh in Hardin County. They may be powered up by the first of the year.
- Pat Beam reported that Beam Designs is officially in their new digs in Dublin now, on the bank of the Scioto River. He is working on some significant Clean Ohio funded projects in Russells Point and Grand Lake Celina. The Russells Point project honors John and Mary Rudolph with a nature preserve.
- Roy Baldrige reported that LACNIP is celebrating a very successful year with their community gardening project. Rob Cotrell is the program manager and Allen SWCD assisted the gardeners this year. Their signature showcase garden is located at Spring and Collett and is sponsored by St. Ritas. Over 80 kids were involved this year and 12 gardens are planned for 2018. They did recently receive a \$10,000 grant for urban farming and that project will involve a large production garden and entrepreneur training. Roy has passed the gavel to a new LACNIP President, Jessie Roark and her officer team. They recently conducted their annual meeting with 120m in attendance. The Shirley Daley award was presented to Rob Cotrell. And Allen SWCD was honored with the Good Neighbor Award.
- Kevin Cox reported for Perry Township. Roschman Drive improvements are done and looking good. They are using a DuraPatcher machine for other Township road improvements and if anyone wants to know how that is working, Kevin invited inquiries. He also noted they are very proud of their Perry High School football team. They are looking forward to a successful basketball season!
- Eric Markley reported that they are in the initial stages of installing a new lift station at the Allen Correctional Institution. That will be a Gorman Rupp unit.
- Katie Andrews reported that Husky is moving forward with their water reuse project. The deep wells have been drilled and operating permits are being secured. Their plan is to have that system fully operational by the end of 2018. There was a group discussion about reduction in water use with the City of Lima, and the Selenium and Mercury wastewater discharge limits that are driving this project.
- David Belton gave a Shawnee Township update. When he was fire chief he recalls a small vial of mercury was dropped at the high school by a student. They had to shut the school down for two days and it cost \$90,000 to cleanup. Outgoing Township Trustee Russ Holly was recognized for his tremendous contributions to the Township. David say they are welcoming newly elected Trustee Clark Spieles.

*Motion by Roy Baldrige, seconded by Joe Gearing to adjourn the meeting. Motion Carried.*  
Meeting adjourned at 9:51 AM.

Minutes transcribed by Coalition Coordinator Beth Seibert.