

Ottawa River Coalition Meeting Minutes

May 25, 2023 8:00 am Reginal Planning Commission

In attendance:

Beth Seibert, Allen County Commissioners	Joe Gearing, AC Engineer's Office
Lydia Archambo, Allen SWCD	Jessica Begonia, City of Lima
Jim Morrissey, City of Lima Public Works	Adam Haunhorst, LACRPC
Brad Niemeyer, Allen County Sanitary Engineer's Office	Jeff Gopp, Allen SWCD
Michael Keith, Shawnee Township	Casey Heilman, Allen SWCD
Sara Phipps, Allen SWCD Intern	Mitchell Kutz, Allen SWCD Intern
Russ Decker, Nutrien (online)	Kevin Cox, Perry Township
Sydni Winkler, City of Lima	Megan Hurd, Alloway (online)

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

Joe Gearing welcomed the group to the May 2023 Meeting. Members introduced themselves.

Joe Gearing introduced the minutes from March 16, 2023 meeting. Jim Morrissey made correction requests.

Motion by Jim Morrissey to table the March 16, 2023 meeting minutes to be approved at the July 2023 meeting. Motion seconded by Adam Haunhorst and carried.

Treasurer's Report

May Financial Report-

- Treasurer Jim Morrissey presented the May 2023 Financial Report, outlining receipts, expenses and account balances since 5/5/2023. The report included income from membership dues, sponsorships, amazon smile donation, and the fair ground refund. Expenses included meeting supplies, insurance policy, ASWCD Annual Director's Fee, website fee, banquet awards, and the annual meeting meal.

Motion by Casey Heilman to approve the May 2023 Financial Report. Motion seconded by Brad Niemeyer and carried.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee-

- Chairman Joe Gearing reported on their April 20th, 2023 meeting where discussion of possible fundraising and public outreach events took place.

Annual Nonprofit Filing with IRS and State of Ohio-

- Beth Siebert reported that the annual nonprofit report filing was submitted to the IRS and The Ohio Attorney General Office for the year 2022. Copies of these 2022 documents (as well as past filings since ORC's establishment in 1993) are available at the Allen Soil and Water Conservation District office for viewing by appointment.
- Beth Siebert notes that the 2020 and 2021 IRS filings need amended. ORC may have to report to the Ohio Attorney General Office that these are amended. ORC holds conservation easements within Allen East and LCC, because we hold these easements, ORC cannot qualify for the 990EZ Check form (that which was filed in 2020 and 2021). These forms (2020 and 2021) need amended to standard 990 forms. Another amendment needed in the 2020 report is as follows; it was reported that all contributions made for the Allentown low head dam removal were "program revenue receipts". This is not correct, they were contributions. Beth did ensure that the 2022 filing was accurate and with Lydia Archambo's help Beth will be able to amend the 2020 and 2021 documents. It is unclear if there will be a fee for this and would like the board to made aware of that now. These amendments will take place after the Stormwater Management Plan is complete. Beth ensured that the 2020 and 2021 reports were not posted to the IRS website yet. She believes that it will be easier to amend them "pre-posting".
- Beth Siebert mentions that the January 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes need amended. It is noted in "Stormwater updates" that there is a new "ORC Vehicle purchased", ORC does not, nor has it ever, owned or purchased a vehicle. Beth notes anytime the executive committee is making a purchase outside of these general meetings there needs to be documentation of this purchase in the minutes.
 - What is considered a major expense? Beth Siebert states the Coordinator can spend up to \$1,000 without approval. approval should be attempted, and the purchase does need to be reported to ORC and documented in the minutes at the next general meeting.

- **NOTE:** After further research and discussion with Joe Gearing about the bylaws it was discovered, the amount allowed is \$200.00 not the \$1,000.00 that Beth Siebert originally mentioned during the meeting.
- These January 19, 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes will note a “Pen and Ink” change. This note will refer the reader to the minutes of May 25, 2023 (These minutes) for reference of why the amendment was made.
- Beth Siebert comments on the treasurer’s report that the \$200 within the “fund balance for scholarships” needs to be transferred to the scholarship fund in Lima Communities Foundation. ORC needs to be more purposeful with the finances for the rest of this year. This could include helping Allen SWCD on MCM’s 1 and 2 but ORC needs to be able to show that these funds are being used for charitable events.
- Beth Siebert asks the committee if it was a conscious decision to not have membership dues go to The Lima Chamber of Commerce? The chamber has been a tool used for spreading ORC news throughout The City of Lima and Allen County for many years.

Motion by Beth Siebert to amend/revise January 19, 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes. Motion seconded by Jim Morrissey and carried.

Motion by Brad Niemeyer to research and join The Chamber of Commerce under the condition that the cost does not exceed \$250 a year. Motion Seconded by Beth Siebert and carried.

Staffing Updates-

- Casey Heilman provides an update stating Lydia Archambo has expressed interest in taking over as the Executive Director of ORC. After ensuring that no motion needs to be made to pass this role onto Lydia, Casey and Lydia plan to make this transition as early as the July General meeting.
- Casey Heilman introduces Jeff Gopp Allen Soil and Water Conservation District’s new Stormwater Technician.

Fundraising Committee-

- Russ Decker spoke about the April 14th Fundraising Committee meeting at Perry Township. Some suggestions include; a raffle, a fishing derby, silent auction, and stream day. The committee will meet again June 16th at Perry township at 8:30am. Their plan is to use a multi-level strategy to raise funds. The committee is hoping to roll out a new event(s) in 2024 and is very optimistic.

Possible Projects:

-Jim Morrisey suggested from a city standpoint there is a section of river that has been affected by the invasive eurasian milfoil and suggests that maybe this could be project the coalition could tackle in the future

-Adam Haunhorst and Regional Planning are pushing for “Blue ways” or public access to water ways. Adam suggests we talk to City Parks and Johnny Appleseed Park Districts to see if this could be a future project.

-Jessica Begonia with The City of Lima adds that there may be a pot of funds from the state becoming available for “river front access” and suggests the coalition keep an eye on this possibility.

Community Relations Committee-

Education Updates-

- Lydia Archambo provided an update on education and community outreach events. Noting two (2) local school days she participated in in the last month. These school days include:

-Elida Elementary April 26th, Enviroscope day

-Perry Elementary May 4th, Macros and “Survival in the Stream”

- Lydia Archambo also welcomes the Allen SWCD 2023 summer interns, Mitchell Kuts and Sara Phipps. She is looking forward to a great summer with the college students and hopes they learn a ton as well as have fun.

Stream Monitoring Committee-

- Joe Gearing gives an update on the new General Construction Permit issued by the Ohio EPA on April 23, 2023. This permit will be in effect until 2028. There are not many changes made in this new permit however the changes that were made need to be looked at while creating the new Stormwater Management Plan and many other regulation updates.

Stormwater Committee-

- Jim Morrissey describes The City of Lima's new engineer hire (Dakota Clay) who will be starting next Tuesday (May 30, 2023).
- Jim Morrissey also gave an update on City of Lima projects including:
 - Spring Street Project
 - Starts today with a completion date of August 1, 2023
 - Spencerville Road Project
 - Almost complete and very ahead of schedule
- Jim Morrissey mentions his goal to implement a new curb rebate program within the city. As well as encourages everyone to utilize the tree rebate program.
- Lydia Archambo states she plans to train both the Allen SWCD interns as well as Jeff on dry-weather outfall monitoring this week and hopes to have the interns in the field as much as possible this summer.
- Jeff Gopp expresses his excitement to start his position as Stormwater Technician at Allen SWCD and is looking forward to learning a lot and working with the community.
- Joe Gearing announces that Allen County Engineer will be hiring a new engineer. This new hire was a previous intern and they are thrilled to have him on full time in three weeks.
- Joe Gearing gives an update on the wetland project west of Bluelick as it is finally in its starting stages. Joe and the County Engineers office has been working on agreements with residents and land owners. Allen County Engineers have been approved for working on projects with the Allen County Board of Commissioners for long term maintenance and two stage ditches. The county does have to front this money but is a reimbursable grant. Joe has also been researching other grants for the future that may not need to be reimbursable/paid upfront.

Watershed Committee-

- Sydni Winkler gave an update on the 2023 Ottawa River Clean up. The Cleanup is now housed with The City of Lima. The 2023 event (April 22, 2023) saw 73 participants through the drive-thru at Collett street. There will be a meeting in January 2024 to discuss the 2024 clean up. Sydni wanted to note that school groups will be contacted more frequently in 2024 as in the past they accounted for a huge turnout. The turn out was successful for the amount of change this event saw in 2023.

- Beth Siebert notes that ORC funds had been used in the past for this event (as well as Allen SWCD events). Suggestions include: bussing, porta pottys, and refreshments.
- Russ Decker adds that in years past someone would go to the Mayor's Press Conference after the clean up and give a report on the turn out and the amount of tonnage cleaned up. This would help spread awareness as well as encourage those who attended that they did make an impact.

Maumee TMDL Coalition-

- Brad Niemeyer contacted Steve Samuels for updates. A mass email was sent out with a draft permit. Ohio EPA needs this draft approved by June 30th, if they do not act than U.S EPA will get involved. Ohio EPA is hosting a meeting on June 1st 10:30-12:30. This meeting can be attended in person or via teams. Mr. Samuels plans to give an update on Maumee Coalition at this meeting. There has been nothing moved on the .007 phosphorus limit since the general push back issued by the EPA. If anyone would like a copy of the draft, please let Brad know and he will get a copy sent to you. Please review it and get any questions or commits to Mr. Samuels before June 1st. The general permit will come out, with the TMDL soon to follow.
- Beth notes that Allen County, The City of Lima, the refinery, and Nutrien all are cooperatively paying for legal representation in this matter. It is important to look at this with a critical eye as it will have a great effect on all of us within the watershed. A fear that everyone expresses the involvement of the U.S. EPA.
- Joe Gearing expresses that the TMDL does make grant funding very easy to receive. H2Ohio being one of the largest funding supplies for planning and installing BMP's. Joe fears that if we do not do it voluntarily now, in a few years it will be mandated.

Scholarship Committee-

- Russ Decker gave an update on the progress of the Beth Siebert Scholarship fund, stating that there is about \$5,100 in the account. There are three individuals who have agreed to donate \$5,000 meaning by June we will have doubled our funds. The next meeting will be June 9th and again in July. The goal is to award two or three \$1,500 scholarships.

New Business

- Kevin Cox would like to invite everyone to the Perry Twp. Ice cream social June 8th at 7:00pm.
- Brad Niemeyer and the sanitary engineer's office are finishing up their Gomer project and have provided sewer service to 143 properties in the area. Their other big focus is

the Shawnee Wastewater Treatment Plant and working to eliminate the last SSO on that system.

- Casey Heilman notes that the Allen SWCD June Board Meeting will be taking place June 14th 5:30, at Johnny Appleseed's Slabtown Road office.
- Adam Haunhorst Regional Planning has a draft Floodplain Regulations out and are hoping it will go to public comment soon. Subdivision Regulation plans are lined up to be updated as well.
- Jessica Begonia the Mayors Spring Clean-up will continue on June 3rd and 10th. Dumpster locations are listening on the city website, twitter, and Facebook. The City will be launching a rent a Kayak program and Schoonover lake and Ottawa Metro park. This will be a kiosk type program where participants can go, rent all the equipment needed, and enjoy a nice day on the water.
- Jeff Gopp expresses his excitement to starting his position as Stormwater Technician at Allen SWCD and is looking forward to learning a lot and working with the community.
- Megan Hurd states Alloway is moving into busy season with many interns starting.

Motion by Adam Haunhorst to adjourn the September meeting. Motion seconded by Casey Heilman and carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:32 AM. The next meeting of the Ottawa River Coalition is Thursday, November 17, 2022 at 8:00 AM.

Minutes transcribed by Lydia Archambo, Executive Director