



Cuyahoga River AOC Advisory Committee Meeting

January 23, 2018 – 9:00am

Cleveland Metroparks Watershed Stewardship Center, Parma

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Grieser at 9:09am.

Present (voting pre-appointments): Jennifer Grieser, Meiring Borchers, Bryan Stubbs, Ellen Brown Armstrong, Leila Jackson, Bill Hughes, Elaine Price (for A. Ball,) Tom Denbow, Joe Hadley, Pam Davis (for G. Gallucci,) Becky McCleary, Jacki Zevenbergen, Scott Hardy, Pat Gsellman, Kate Chapel, Matt Gray, Howard Simon, Claire Posius, Jane Goodman

New appointees: Kate Evans, Ana Burns, Robert Brand, Jordyn Stoll, Peter Bode

Ex-Officio: Ted Conlin, Melanie Barbis

Guests: Heather Elmer

Quorum of current (2017) members present to vote on appointments.

Chairwoman Grieser thanked Ted Conlin for his work on the BUI removal requests.

Election of Members and Committee Chairs

The Chair read the following resolution:

“BE IT RESOLVED, that the following individuals are hereby elected to the Committee to a term beginning at the Board’s January 2018 meeting and ending December 31, 2019:

1. Alison Ball
2. Peter Bode
3. Ana Burns
4. Robert Brand
5. Tom Denbow
6. Katie Evans
7. Grace Gallucci
8. Matt Gray
9. Scott Hardy
10. Kevin Kratt
11. Elaine Marsh
12. Howard Simon
13. Jordyn Stoll”

Resolution to appoint passed unanimously.

A motion was made to appoint the following as committee and subcommittee chairs:

Jennifer Grieser, AOC Advisory Committee Chair

Meiring Borchers, Vice Chair

Frank Greenland, Strategic Implementation Committee Chair

Bryan Stubbs, Governance Committee Chair

Scott Hardy, Outreach & Education Chair

Appointment of chairpersons passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the October 2017 meeting were approved with a correction removing the phrase “until the SIP committee makes its recommendations” in Old Business, as that committee is not currently working on such recommendations.

Presentation

Meiring Borchers presented an update on work the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District is doing. Borchers has taken new employment with NEORS, and invited people to contact him if they have questions about specific projects. The District is working on master plans and projects for Cuyahoga north and south, Rocky River, Chagrin and direct Lake Erie tributaries. As master plans are finished there will be more projects, but there are now a lot of projects in design and construction, and a few finished. Most projects are in Cuyahoga River north, since it is the most urbanized area with 36% impervious surface. The stormwater master plans study area includes some areas outside the District’s service area.

Conveyance is the primary goal, though bank stabilization and culverts are also major concerns. (See slides to be posted on AOC Advisory Committee page of cuyahogaoc.org website)

He described the construction plan process - nominations, validation, rush exposure scoring, plan. 2018 plans are in place.

They are modeling flow in the subwatersheds. Eventually they will have imagery for walking the streams, monitoring flow data with cams and stream gauges and flow meters.

Questions –

Hughes: What are they doing regarding prevention of stormwater problems? Answer: modeling flooding, coming up with plans for construction and Green Infrastructure projects, getting easements and identifying easement holders if needed, etc.

Hadley: Aside from physical metrics, there’s a political algorithm, and how does that fit in?

Answer: Meiring can’t really speak to that, but for example, while Cleveland’s at the bottom of the pipe, the money goes back into the community where the flow starts. So it’s geared more toward prevention at the source than to remediation at the end.

Grieser: Consider that projects might be geared toward nominations that might have come in from communities that got theirs in first, or had longstanding projects waiting for money. For example, there are a lot of issues in Brecksville, creating major problems in Chippewa Creek.

Old Business

BUI removals: EPA did a press release.

New Business

Conlin: The next BUI to work on would be fish consumption. The only species causing impairment is white suckers in the lacustary. Upstream all white suckers get the one meal per month exemption. In lacustary you’re supposed to compare to the same species in Lake Erie, but sport fish monitors don’t sample white suckers in Lake Erie, so he has to get a letter from the sport fish program saying that since they don’t use the same geographic areas that the AOC does, that can’t apply. And they only looked at white suckers in the lacustary twice, and those would have fit within the general one meal per month dictum. They didn’t want to write a letter, though they essentially say it’s no different in any rivers flowing to Lake Erie, which could be a problem in terms of a GLNPO review. Anyway, he has a high degree of confidence that this will be the next removal.

Simon: Can you include both arguments – same as others, or not applicable – in the request?

Conlin: Yes, but one way goes around the criteria, while the other way confuses the issue. Better to simplify with one at a time. If they don't like the first argument we can try the second. We'll build the argument, put it on paper, and work with them to speed the process.

Borcherds: Does Metroparks have survey cards like CWRU used with their subsistence fishing survey?

Conlin: In Canada they did a survey but it didn't follow Ohio's removal target data.

Brand: He/CCBH just finished another survey for the immigrant population, but it doesn't include white suckers.

Conlin: There's been a white sucker consumption advisory in the whole river for a long time. They have the data for the advisory levels, using mercury.

Subcommittee Updates

Governance

Work completed on recruiting and installing new members, and new chairs. The Committee won't be meeting over next few months.

Outreach

Will be meeting in next few months. Discussing how to celebrate the removal of the two BUIs, publicly, in a place relative to the BUIs, like Merwin's. Timing is a consideration, tentatively the first May weekend, before RiverSweep and River Day, supporting those events, getting momentum, people's attention. It would be good if Flotsam, Jetsam, and the water taxi can be in water earlier than usual.

A suggestion was made about incorporating repeat photography images (a technique whereby a new photo is taken from the same point of view as a historical image and you dissolve from the historical one to the current image.) Goodman mentioned that as something that could be done for the digital version of the book that's being prepared for the 2019 kickoff.

2018 Symposium date is October 26, location tbd.

Davis and Simon have been gathering images/photos.

Strategic Implementation (Borcherds reporting for Frank Greenland, who could not be present)

Sea Grant has issued a new paper on plastics pollution.

No meeting was held in the last quarter, they will probably have two meetings over the next week or two.

Ohio EPA Updates

Conlin/OhioEPA

We have to develop a management action list. GLNPO, according to their review system, cannot release money to an AOC without a management action list. OhioEPA never knew this, so, as of their last meeting, the 90-day deadline to develop a list runs out in February. Ted used Tetra Tech and Bode's scoring systems, and imagines we can expect to get around \$20 million. Since the Tetra Tech report comes to \$140 million, he and Frank have been going through and narrowing the list. Mark Loomis, our AOC's Task Team Leader at GLNPO, couldn't come because of the government shutdown. There will be one SIP meeting to discuss, then a second with Loomis to decide what to present. Decisions to be based on how much will a project move the needle, as well as cost/benefit. One thing not covered in the prioritization to date is long term operation and maintenance, but that's now a factor.

The SIP committee, once the management list is done, should start looking at exemptions to

meeting targets - fish population, benthos, etc.

In terms of Eutrophication, the algae in the Mogadore reservoir, which is they only real problem, is no worse than comparable sites, but it could bring up other issues.

We should start looking at a mainstream exemption for recreational contact and beaches, using the long-term control plan exemption.

Brocherds: There's an impervious shapefile map that Leila Jackson developed for the AOC, so as to be able to compare to other areas, which could be helpful.

Jackson: Some areas have less data, some have more.

Goodman/CRR

Working on completion of deliverables for 2017 subgrant – project cards/videos delayed while waiting for a final project list; new AOC exhibit backdrop and elements in production, as is annual report. New subgrant to begin in April, started working with Cherie Blair/OhioEPA on it. Drafted press release for BUI removals.

Aquatic Habitat projects in the works: Led tour of river for OSU students through Kent Urban Design Collaborative project, got good press with Steve Litt's Plain Dealer article, which led to a meeting with Great Lakes Brewing about behind-the-bulkhead habitat at their proposed expansion on Scranton Peninsula across from The Foundry. Port/Ohio City included habitat in Irishtown Bend conceptual design.

Assistance to tribes: In October, planted 90 trees at Metroparks Astorhurst property along Tinker's Creek through an Alliance for Community Trees/CSX grant, gave away 175 more at Tinker's event.

Dredged Sediment: Working with USEPA Cleveland office and contractor on reuse strategies, and presented poster at Kent Land & Water Conference.

Gave testimony on plastic bag fee to Cuyahoga County Council.

Presented at "Save the EPA" press conference.

Presented to Hudson League of Women Voters.

Meeting schedule

Note change to April time from morning to 4:00pm. NOACA (Davis) assisting OhioEPA with a public meeting on TMDL changes, new sampling plan, and scheduling it from 6pm to 7:30 pm on the same day, at same place. Location tbd.

Hughes moved to adjourn, Borcherds second, meeting adjourned at 10:30am.