



## **MINUTES**

### **Cuyahoga River AOC Advisory Committee Meeting, April 16, 2015 Summit Metro Parks, Brushwood Pavilion, Richfield**

Meeting called to order 4:03pm

Present: Pam Davis (for Grace Gallucci,) Jan Rybka, Kathleen Bradley, Elaine Price, Frank Greenland, Bill Hughes, Joe Hadley, Rob Curtis (for Mike Johnson,) Tom Denbow, Claire Posius, Pat Gsellman, Bryan Stubbs, Jane Goodman, Jenn Grieser, Meiring Borchers, Ellen Brown-Armstrong, Phil Hillman, Ed Wilk  
Staff – Peter Bode  
Public – Aritree Samanta

Chairwoman Grieser announced that the meeting would convene as the existing Coordinating Committee, then vote on appointments, adjourn, and reconvene as the new Advisory Committee.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Rybka moved to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2015 meeting. Borchers seconded. Approved unanimously.

### **Public Comment**

The floor was opened to public comments, of which there were none.

### **Election of Advisory Committee Members**

Grieser gave an overview of the new process and rationale, committee member expectations for attendance and event support, membership on sub-committees, application process, ethics, and commitment to work on delisting the AOC.

Grieser then introduced the slate of nominees and their terms:

Jennifer Grieser, Cleveland Metroparks, Chair - 2 years  
Meiring Borchers, Mill Creek Watershed Partnership, Vice Chair - 2 years  
Kathleen Bradley, Public Member - 1 year  
Amy Holtshouse Brennan, The Nature Conservancy - 1 year  
Ellen Brown-Armstrong, Public Member – 2 years  
Tom Denbow, Biohabitats - 1 year  
Grace Gallucci, NOACA - 1 year  
Bob Gardin, Big Creek Connects - 1 year  
Jane Goodman, Cuyahoga River Restoration - 1 year  
Babette Gowda, Tinker’s Creek Watershed Partners – 2 years

Frank Greenland, NEORS - 2 years  
Joe Gregory, Davey Resources - 1 year  
Pat Gsellman, City of Akron - 2 years  
Joe Hadley, NEFCO - 2 years  
Bill Hughes, Public Member - 2 years  
Mike Johnson, Summit County Metro Parks - 1 year  
Elaine Marsh, Friends of the Crooked River - 2 years  
Rebecca McCleary, City of Cuyahoga Falls - 2 years  
Jenita McGowan, City of Cleveland - 1 year  
Claire Posius, Euclid Creek - 2 years  
Elaine Price, Cuyahoga County Planning - 1 year  
Jan Rybka, Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation - 1 year  
Derek Schafer, West Creek Preservation - 1 year  
Howard Simon, Public Member - 1 year  
Bryan Stubbs, Cleveland Water Alliance - 2 years  
Phil Hillman, ODNR (ex officio)  
Ed Wilk, OEPA (ex officio)

Grieser asked for a motion to accept the slate as nominated, with members voting “yes” for everyone on the list except oneself. Price moved the vote. Bradley seconded the motion. Slate was approved unanimously.

Borcherds moved to adjourn the meeting of the former Coordinating Committee. Rybka seconded. Motion approved unanimously.

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The meeting of the newly-elected AOC Advisory Committee was called to order.

Grieser noted that the next election will be in January, so the attendance requirement includes only three remaining meetings. Grieser mentioned that additional applications had been received after the deadline, and those will be held on file for the 2016 candidacy. If anyone expresses an interest, encourage them to come to advisory and sub-committee meetings and apply for the next round of appointments.

Hughes asked about a limit to the size of the committee, to which Grieser responded that there was a loose goal of 16 members, but that was taken liberally this time around. We’ll see how it goes, and we still need to seek balance among categories of representation.

Hadley asked about procedures for replacing a member in case of resignation.

The procedures just say that a vacancy will be filled by the committee. Section 4 of the by-laws states that “Any vacancies will be filled by the Cuyahoga AOC within two meetings of the occurrence of the vacancy. The new member will serve for the remainder of the term to which he or she has been appointed, or, should the vacancy occur after the second quarterly meeting, the position may be left vacant until the next application period.”

Davis recommended that in any case if an alternate is not available we should go back to the stack of applications to fill a vacancy.

Grieser reminded everyone that we should all follow-up on identification of alternates and get the letter from our employers stating that we are representing them in to CRR as soon as possible.

Issues referred to the governance committee:

- A) replacement of vacancy

## B) public member alternates **Debrief of Great Lakes AOC Conference**

Grieser reported that the conference provided a good overview of how our work fits in with the overall AOC delisting program. The conference gave us an opportunity to talk with federal staff regarding how they prioritize funding and support to AOCs. The big takeaway for Grieser was that the GLRI funding we see in RFPs is a small piece of the available funds relative to the larger funding directed at AOCs closer to delisting in the near term – on the fast track. There was also a lot of information on how AOCs managed to aggregate funds to get things done, look more at partnerships.

Regarding our status in the line-up for funding priority, the Cuyahoga is in the post-2020 group of AOCs, thus those AOCs expected to take longer than five years to delist. So how can we help CRR and OEPA move the needle and get us onto a faster track, assuming that the federal money may not last forever?

When asked why some AOCs are on a faster track, Goodman explained that they are easier, smaller geographic areas, with fewer beneficial use impairments. In some cases the AOC is only a few miles long, and/or only the mainstem.

Davis mentioned that the Black River Advisory Committee may soon be voting to shrink the AOC to include the mainstem only, which was how they were originally designated before they petitioned some years ago to expand it to the larger watershed.

Greenland asked how the decisions are made as to where the money should go. Grieser replied that their highest priorities were to spend money either in areas in crisis (like the Maumee) or in AOCs where the money would move the AOC into the recovery/delisting phase most quickly, as in places where one management action would turn the tide. She described that CRR and OEPA have been working together to get more GLRI funding into our AOC, such as the overall habitat plan. Denbow having been involved in the Ashtabula delisting work, said that they just went in and cleared out all the contaminated sediment, with major local funding, and then did a big habitat project, and that was all they needed to do in their smaller AOC.

Borcherds and Stubbs advanced and supported the idea of having an advocacy sub-committee to look at lobbying for funding to be directed towards the Cuyahoga AOC.

### **Approval of Cuyahoga AOC Website**

Goodman explained that the website is not necessarily something that a committee like this can vote on, since it changes weekly. But since it represents the AOC, it would be appropriate to make it an agenda item at regular intervals to review and comment on content. Goodman suggested that everyone should look at the website and send her their recommendations and suggestions. [www.cuyahogaoc.org](http://www.cuyahogaoc.org)

Gsellman recommended that we work toward adding a discussion/ forum, and Goodman said she would look into doing that. Goodman stated that someone would have to monitor such a service, and perhaps that's something that a sub-committee member might be interested in doing.

### **Cuyahoga River Restoration (CRR) Updates**

Goodman shared the quarterly fiscal report that CRR submits to OhioEPA, which showed that approximately \$25,000, or a quarter of the full year grant, was expended in the January-March 2015 quarter. Of that, slightly less than \$21,000 represented personnel costs for the three-month period.

Goodman gave an update on CRR activities during the quarter, in which a large amount of time was

spent on activities related to the AOC reorganization (meetings, procedures documents, member application, etc.) building the new AOC website and graphics, publishing e-newsletters, planning, promoting and presenting 2 public meetings, new power points and displays, giving presentations and staffing event exhibits, providing technical support to Mill Creek, Big Creek, Doan Brook and other watershed groups, work on the progress/stage 2 report, starting work on the new ship channel habitat project (SOGL) and initiating the Cooperative Weed Management grant, writing new grants, and planning for spring tours, clean-ups, and other events, including RiverDay, of which the AOC is a co-sponsor.

## **Announcements**

Grieser reported on the Woods for Waters workshop and the follow-up tree planting to take place on April 18. Grieser will be participating in a June 10, 5-8pm, pecha kucha style program for the Year of Clean Water at Music Box in Cleveland Ohio and will be presenting on the work done by the Cuyahoga AOC Advisory Committee.

Davis reported that NOACA gets federal Clean Water money for help with a Big Creek PCB study, compliance, and inventory that could lead to one big project.

Gsellman said there is an upcoming Gorge Dam assessment update meeting with TetraTech on April 27, a kickoff meeting for the project, at 1pm at Akron Water Reclamation discussing hydraulics, sediment, slope stability, etc. Wilk mentioned that OhioEPA has used the money from Erie10 (GLRI grant to OhioEPA) for the Gorge Dam project.

Gsellman also announced the May 9th Blue Heron Homecoming open house event at the Water Reclamation Facility. Goodman added that CRR would have a kids activity planting and distributing tree seeds.

Posius described Euclid Creek's upcoming giveaway of trees and shrubs to riparian property owners over almost 4 miles of the Euclid Creek, on April 30th and May 2nd, plus up-coming workshops, and RiverDay activities at Wildwood Metropark.

Borcherds reported on Mill Creek's, Johnston Mill Run RiverSweep cleanup on May 9th, Mt. Zion property wetland receiving \$17,500 from ALCOA for re-planting, the Highland Hills golf course riparian restoration project, and a tree planting at Eastwood Elementary school, and the Kerruish Park basin restoration plan.

Wilk talked about beginning the delisting process for the aesthetics BUI; that it should be a strategic implementation committee focus area.

## **Cuyahoga AOC Committee 2015 Meeting Schedule:**

July 23, 9am, possibly in Akron;

October 15, 9am, (possibly move to a lunchtime working meeting?)

Grieser mentioned that October 15<sup>th</sup> is the Kent Water Symposium, so maybe we should reschedule the Advisory Committee meeting, or combine the two events. The biennial Cuyahoga River Symposium is scheduled for October 16<sup>th</sup>, could also be combined/coordinated with the Kent event.

All were reminded to sign the Conflict of Interest disclosure statement and return to CRR as soon as possible.

Subcommittees – Governance (Stubbs, Chair), Strategic Implementation (Greenland, Chair,) Public Outreach, and Member Recruitment – were invited to meet after adjournment of the main meeting to select chair/coordinator, begin to discuss goals and work plans, and set-up follow-up meetings.

### **Adjourn**

Gsellman moved to adjourn, Borcherds second, all ayes. Meeting adjourned at 5:30pm.