



**Cuyahoga River AOC Advisory Committee
MEETING MINUTES**

4.15.2024

The Natatorium – 2345 4th St, Cuyahoga Falls, OH 44221

Quarterly Advisory Committee Meeting (9-10:30a)

Welcome

Attendees:

Voting Members: Jennifer Grieser, Bill Hughes, Mike Sekerak, Bryce Pulley, Pat Gsellman, Joe Hadley, Scott Hardy, Erica Matheny, Katie Wells, Elaine Price, Megan Smith, Peter Bode, Meghan Tinker Paynter, Sam Martin (virtual), Jordyn Stoll (virtual), Carly Beck (virtual), Whitnye Long Jones (virtual), Elaine Marsh, Tom Rayburn, Joe MacDonald (virtual), Anna Burns (alt. for C. Znidarsic), Anna Ediger (alt. for J. Kurdila, virtual)

Ex-Officio/Resource: Hannah Boesinger, Kristin Hall, Brian Hinterberger, Leah Medley (virtual), Beth Sparks-Jackson (virtual), Steve Holland (virtual), Kris Patterson (virtual), Sarah Barrow, Maureen Drinkard (virtual)

Guests: Mackenzie Kaiser (CF), Nate McConoughey (CCBH), Megan Shaeffer (SMP), Seth Hothem (NEORS), Kaylee Acres (CRWP), Sarah Stanzi (NOACA), Pam Davis (NOACA, virtual), Alex Fromberg (CWRU, virtual), Shayan Burns (CWRU, virtual), Peter Kelly (CWRU, virtual), Charles Zhuang (CWRU, virtual)

Approval of Minutes of January 22nd, 2024 – Motion to approve by B. Hughes, seconded by K. Wells. All in favor with no abstentions.

Public Comment – None

Presentation

- CWRU Action Learning Proposal – CWRU Students
 - Students presented* on public messaging to connect public audiences with the AOC.
 - Provided insights on ways to present information that is clear and digestible, with opportunities to find additional information if interested.
 - Future marketing/outreach strategies could focus on the effect/impact of the AOC work, rather than the mission of the committee.
 - *Recording of presentation can be made available on SharePoint.

Old Business

- Outreach & Engagement in the Cuyahoga AOC (Presentation) – W. Long Jones
- Newly Elected Members Short Introductions – All New Members
- Review of Advisory Committee Member Commitments and Requirements – J. Grieser
 - Submission Required: Conflict of Interest Form and Signed Alt. Appt. Letter
 - New Member Orientation (2/14)
- Letter of Support for Facilitating Organization (CSWCD) – GLRI Support Grant 2024-2027

- Signed (3/6), Submitted (3/8), Approved & Executed (4/3)

New Business

- Great Lakes Day Recap (3/6-7) – B. Hughes
 - Representatives from all throughout the Great Lakes region, sponsored by Healing Our Waters Great Lakes Collaborative, sent to Washington D.C. to advocate for clean water legislation (Appx. 10 from Ohio).
 - Investing in Great Lakes restoration & climate action
 - Water infrastructure (lead in pipes)
 - Restoring/strengthening clean water issues
 - Clean Water Farm Bill
 - Met with various congresspeople and senators.
 - Everyone was very supportive of GLRI renewal, across both parties (authorized in 2025, 5-year funding renewal).
 - Pushing for it now so there aren't delays in some of the long-term projects.
- AOC Symposium Recap (3/15) – J. Grieser
 - Successful event, overall positive feedback:
 - One of the best we've had, the highest attendance so far.
 - Attendees enjoyed Trygve Rhude's presentation (featured speaker).
 - Good presentations and data presented.
 - No survey will be sent out, any thoughts/feedback can be sent to N. Lopez
 - Poster feedback will be shared with AOC Committee (PPT summary)
 - Feedback materials can be used by AOC members at future events as needed.
 - Can help with more public engagement.

USEPA Great Lakes National Program Office Update – L. Medley

OLEC Update – H. Boesinger

- GLRI Action Plan 4 open for public comment through May 24th
- OLEC awarded \$5.8M to design an EJ grant program for Lake Erie
 - The 1st year will be spent developing the program.
 - Focused on underserved urban and rural communities throughout the basin.
 - It addresses climate change, water quality, and achieving GLRI goals.
 - Expecting 3 grant cycles, starting in 2025.
 - May be an opportunity to enhance existing AOC projects.
 - W. Long Jones noted that there be considerations to allow opportunities for smaller organizations to be the prime applicant.
- Gorge Dam Update
 - Bids for sediment management have been published. Likely 30-45 days to receive bids. EPA will release a schedule once bids are received.
 - Unsure if we will be able to proceed during this construction season.
 - Recommend going to see Gorge Dam before it's removed. It will be closed for 5 years during construction.

Facilitating Organization Update (Cuyahoga SWCD) – K. Hall

- Financial Overview
 - A big round of applause for Nichole Lopez for hitting the ground running and bringing great energy and ideas to the Cuyahoga AOC.
 - Helped lead the recent brand refresh and prepping for various events.
 - Can share updated brand documents/files on SharePoint.
 - GLRI Support Grant 2022-2024
 - Grant closed 3/31/24. Nearly all funding was spent. Completing reporting by 4/30/24.
 - GLRI Support Grant 2024-2027
 - The new grant started 4/1/24.
 - Funding available for EJ actions/deliverables. Updates will be provided at the July meeting.
 - Will include a website refresh. May utilize feedback from EDG and CWRU Action Learning team to simplify website, without losing valuable science/data.
 - Contact subcommittee chairs and/or Cuyahoga SWCD if you have funding needs for AOC. There may be an opportunity to use some of our AOC funding support for projects or other ideas.

Other Updates

- E. Price provided updates on Cuyahoga Next. Subcommittees are forming and may need some representation from Southern/Summit County communities.

Subcommittee Updates

Governance – E. Price

- 2/2 & 4/1 Meeting Recap
- Committee Member self-reflection survey – K. Wells
 - Continuing it annually. Will release in June. May take appx. 10 minutes to complete.
 - Used to gauge participation from individuals and orgs.
 - Survey is mandatory, not voluntary.

Public Outreach Engagement – S. Hardy

- 2/22 Meeting Recap
- Marketing Refresh – Complete
- 2024 Outreach Events – Sign Up!
 - Signup sheet on SharePoint with various outreach event opportunities.
- Subcommittee is officially “Public Engagement” subcommittee. Please make sure to use this name consistently moving forward.
- Added Champion of the River section to AOC website.
- CWRU Action Learning Project results will provide additional direction for the AOC’s outreach efforts moving forward.
- Student Symposium & Career Expo – May 20th, 2024 @ Educational Services Center (Independence). Judges needed.

Strategic Implementation – J. Stoll

- Next Meeting Scheduled 5/2 @ 10:30am (on Teams)
 - Reach out to J. Stoll or N. Lopez if you need a calendar invite.
- Beach BUI removal docs in progress.
- Collecting dredging data. New Army Corps representative working on it.
- Adding more data/previous work to SIP SharePoint folder.
- Little Cuyahoga projects tentatively funded.

Announcements Pertinent to BUI Delisting Activities

- Beach Closing BUI is currently with GLNPO.
 - Discussed need for public meeting but will need more lead time to get meeting scheduled.
 - The location for the public meeting will likely need PowerPoint access and/or indoor space.
 - CSWCD will follow up to coordinate meeting location, date, format, etc.

Cuyahoga AOC Committee 2024 Quarterly Meeting Schedule – Jul. 15 (MAGNET), Oct. 21 (WSC)

- Considering Sowinski Park for a field trip in July.
- Hoping future meetings to be as in-person as possible. May not offer hybrid options as much in the future.

Adjourn