



Black River Advisory Committee

LoCo 'Yaks | Facilitating Organization
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BRAC (NOT) FINAL GRANT-CYCLE MEETING | Thursday, March 3, 2022 @ 1:30PM via Zoom

Minutes

- ❖ Welcome / Call to Order
 - Meeting called to order by Don Romancak at 1:31PM with the note that Don needs to be out in an hour so if we're not done, Max will take over.
 - In attendance (as reported by Zoom meeting logs and recording): Stephanie Koscho, facilitator; Jason Matyac, Senior Recreation Specialist, LCMP; Mark Adams, Health Commissioner, LCPH; Amy Pelka, GLNPO with US EPA (Isom substitute); Jennifer Scott-Wasilk, President of Amherst City Council and Professional Environmental & Safety Consultant; Vanessa Steigerwald, OhEPA, Division of Surface Water Technical Support; Dick; Matthew Nahorn, Beaver Creek Watershed; Pamela Davis, Senior Water Quality Planner, NOACA; Don Romancak, Committee Chair, LCCD; Kristen Risch, Coldwater Consulting; Jill Lis, Director of Environmental Health, LCPH; Kate Golden, Engineering Department, City of Lorain; Julie Mackey, OSU Lorain Ext.; Amber Bellamy, USFWS; Melanie Barbis, OhEPA, AOC Coordinator in transition to another position; Max Schaefer, Vice-Chair, Main Street Lorain Executive Director; Lynn Garrity, OLEC.
- ❖ Fiscal Report – screenshare + talk numbers:
 - After potential payroll and Emerge commitments, we have \$5517.54 to spend. Potential expenditures coming up later in agenda.
- ❖ Old Business
 - Approval of Meeting Minutes 11/17/2021 and 1/11/2022
 - Motion to approve by Jennifer; Second by Kate (because I could not hear the person talking at the same as her). All in favor; none opposed. Motion carries.
 - App updates
 - Don: Lynn has been working on things with them. Stephanie: We still need a final invoice. Don: please include Lynn. They are working on final details, including “accessibility” for disabilities. Has been a little slower than we thought, but progress has been moving forward.
 - FireFish project updates
 - Stephanie: They are not done. Hoping to be partially complete for LCMP’s Black River Celebration. Maybe we can have it partially done and use that with an iPad for “advertising”. Ideas for this specific event are pending based on progress.
 - Ohio AOC Conference
 - Don: Kate, myself & Stephanie attended from our Committee. Melanie & Vanessa were the stars of the show. It was engaging and informative. Enjoyed it.
 - Stephanie: It was nice to see everyone’s progress and realistic timelines for delisting, with Black River expected in 2024-2025.
 - Kate: It was helpful with other funding options presented for future events.
 - Don: Jill, LCPH hosted and it was a great facility. We are very appreciative of the facility, technology, and the ability to host an outstanding event.

- Jill: I've been a little out of touch due to pandemic priorities, so this was nice to get an inclusive overview at our facility.
- Melanie: Facility was awesome. Agree with Stephanie's comment that dates are more realistic. It was great to bring everyone from across the state together and we very much appreciated everyone's attendance.
- Don: It was nice to see the list of BUI categories with corresponding AOCs. It's easy to get lost in the numbers & names so I appreciated the clarity of how the information was presented.
- Vanessa: Very proud and excited about the progress throughout all the Ohio AOCs.
- ❖ Black River Watershed Restoration Project Updates
 - County
 - Don: On 2/22/22 the Phase III grant, invasive species eradication and stream restoration ended. Also submitted the final grant report on Willow Creek which included the prairie and multiple stream restorations. We spent all \$1, 150,000 allotted. No field or outside work lately due to weather. Projects & monitoring are completed. I do not have report approval yet, but we will share it as soon as it is released.
 - City
 - Kate: 2 active projects. One just started – larger aquatic habitat restoration project has just begun bringing in material & equipment. Expecting substantial completeness by the end of April. Ongoing seep modification project is also moving and is actively being worked on. Kristen will have more.
 - Kristen: Kate cover it.
 - Kate: On target to finalize the larger AOC grant on time at the end of this summer. Lynn Garrity will have more updates.
- ❖ Ohio AOC Program Updates
 - Dredge BUI, etc. (Melanie) – announcement about leaving PLUS Program updates
 - Maleanie: Everyone should have time to review, but wanted committee's comments before going to the public.
 - Stephanie: I did not receive any comments.
 - Kate: We had comments that we sent to Don this morning.
 - Melanie: Vanessa is state dredge coordinator here to answer any questions.
 - Don: I did not have anything and have not reviewed comments. Sent it to Coldwater but have not had the opportunity to review and understand their comments.
 - Kristen & Kate have let Corey do the review and they can be confidently forwarded to Vanessa.
 - Melanie: Hoping to review committee's comments, then release to the public for 2 weeks, address and public concerns. Public Comment Period is our next step if that's ok with the BRAC.
 - Don agrees that Public Meetings have not been a big success so we will use social media and virtual means to ensure the public understands the opportunity to review and make comments. It seems to get more traction than an in-person meeting.
 - Don opens for a motion to accept the dredge removal recommendation pending any major comments or concerns are submitted before the deadline. Max makes a motion to accept pending any significant comments be submitted beforehand. Julie seconds. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.

- Melanie: Looking ahead, I have started a preliminary outline and we are hoping to get the process started to remove the beaches & recreational use impairment. Touched on it lightly at the Ohio AOC Summit. On the schedule to make significant progress later this year. I am planning to get the draft started before I formally transition out of this position. Recreational use should be next after the Dredge BUI.
- Melanie: Recently received data from USFWS on the fish tumor sampling from spring of 2021. Had a call to discuss results and they are working to compile all the data and submit an official report. So, Fish Tumors BUI should be the next after the recreational use BUI. Planning for follow-up sampling in summer of 2023 to get updated data on the last 3 biological BUIs.
- Don: Concerned about what he forgot that has pushed the recreational BUI before the fish tumor BUI.
 - Melanie: We've been waiting on fish tumor data for so long that that's just how we put it into our timeline.
- Management Actions updates (Lynn) just kidding. Lynn talked about Melanie leaving.
 - Lynn: BRAC may want to consider adding Amber USFWS to a future agenda to discuss the fish tumor data.
 - Lynn: US EPA & OhEPA will be adding an "expansion" to one item on Black's MAP list. It is not a new item, just recognizing that there is more work that can be done in addition to what is being done and by adding this expansion, more funding may be available to complete the management action.
 - Kate: The cap & cover of 40 acres (adjacent to floodplain) is now a green hillside. Fourteen acres were not able to be capped & covered through budget limitations. Through working on the seep modifications, we have determined that in order for these management actions to function appropriately, we must cap & cover the remaining 14 acres. Intent is to use similar material as on the other project – 18 inches of clay cap and 6 inches topsoil. Don't quote me on that, but that's what I think it is. [I'm quoting you anyway.] If funding becomes available for this additional work, the City will work expeditiously to secure the contracts and complete the work, hopefully before the end of this year.

❖ New Business

- Current Grant Extension
 - Stephanie explained that OhEPA is offering 30 or 60 days extension with overlap -or- rollover. After a short discussion, everyone agrees that we take the extension and make an in-person Summit happen.
 - Don: Entertaining motion to allow Stephanie to file the extension paperwork with the State. Motion by Max. Jill seconds. No discussion. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.
 - Date needs to be chosen while considering other events in May. Small discussion and week of May 16th. Charles will help with marketing. Sinibaldi will help with video editing. Max will reach out to Radhika and CC Stephanie.
 - Stephanie reviewed the deliverables that need to be completed:
 - Newsletter
 - Informational brochures
 - Longer video
 - Summit

- Stephanie asked about offering a tour behind the steel mill – please offer ideas.
- Next Grant FY22 begins April 1, 2022. \$42,000 for 1 year.
 - Stephanie explained the guidelines for the next grant cycle: 5% boost this year, then 10% decrease each year for the next 4
 - State would like to see more promotion for MAPs on website + social media, etc. Robb logged on to talk about his website updates. No one else had any comments or suggestions for the site.
 - Need committee approval and LOS.
 - Max would like a motion to accept Stephanie and LoCo 'Yaks to continue as facilitator through the next grant cycle. Julie makes a motion to accept. Jill seconds. No discussion. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.
 - Max would like a motion to approve accepting \$42,000 for the next grant cycle. Kate makes a motion to accept. Julie seconds. No discussion. All in favor. None opposed. Motion carries.
 - Committee agrees to wait for LOS and take a digital vote to accept it.
- ~~Virtual Summit Video Presentation~~
- ❖ Announcements
 - Kristen Isom is taking a different position within the USEPA but moving to San Francisco. The Great Lake Region will miss her. She will be working with same group that Kate used to work with from Nevada.
 - Lynn: Amy Pelka will be Isom's sub until her position is filled.
 - Next Meetings
 - Doodle Poll results:
 - Tuesday, May 3 @ 1:00PM
 - Wednesday, Aug. 3 @ 2:00PM
 - Tuesday, Nov. 15 @ 1:00PM
 - Lynn: Regional AOC Conference in-person event in Muskegon. Scholarships will be available. Link for registration is online.
 - Max: Wanted to note President Biden & Director Regan were in Lorain to announce Great Lakes funding. Publicity & media coverage were nationwide.
- ❖ Adjourn: Max called the meeting adjourned at 2:45PM.