

# Middle Cedar Watershed Management Authority (MCWMA)

## MCWMA Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, October 19, 2017 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm  
US Bank Community Room (414 A Ave, Vinton, IA)

### Agenda

**Board Members Present:** Todd Wiley (Benton County), Jim Lindaman (Butler County), Lawrence Green (Franklin SWCD), Jeremy Sills (Benton SWCD), Wayne Castle (City of Waterloo), Brian Wirtz (City of Evansdale), Dean McKenna (Tama SWCD), Dan Bangasser (City of Grundy Center), Jim Everts (Grundy SWCD), Steve Jordan (City of Hudson), Les Beck (Linn County), Sherman Lundy (Black Hawk SWCD), Zach Parmater (City of Vinton), Clark Porter (Grundy County), Cara Matteson (City of Cedar Rapids).

**Others Present:** Adam Rodenberg (MCWMA), Sean McMahon (Iowa Agriculture Water Alliance), Pat Conrad (Emmons & Olivier Resources, Inc.), Jessica Turba (Iowa Homeland Security and Hazard Mitigation), Janet Riley (Iowa Homeland Security and Hazard Mitigation), Jim Jordahl (Iowa Agriculture Water Alliance), Chris Jones (University of Iowa), Keith Schilling (Iowa Geologic Survey-University of Iowa), John Breune (Natural Resources Conservation Service-Linn County), Charles Ikenberry (FYRA Engineering), Stephanie Surine (Iowa Geologic Survey), Jeff Geertz (Iowa Economic Development Authority), Mary Beth Stevenson (Iowa Department of Natural Resources), Elyssa McFarland (Soil Health Partnership), Mario Fenu (Houston Engineering), Karl Gesch (Iowa Soybean Association), Jennifer Fencl (East Central Iowa Council of Governments), Julie Kearny (University of Iowa-Center for Evaluation and Assessment), Nick Longbucco (The Nature Conservancy), Breanna Shea (Iowa Flood Center).

### MCWMA Board of Directors Meeting

#### I. Call to Order & Introductions

- Meeting was called to order at 3:04pm by Chairperson Todd Wiley.
  - o There was not a quorum at the start of the meeting. Began with Watershed Management Plan presentations until a quorum was established.

#### II. Minutes of Previous Meeting – July 25, 2017

- Sherman Lundy motioned to approve the minutes from the Board meeting 7-25-2017. Clark Porter 2<sup>nd</sup> motion. Motion carried.

#### III. Watershed Management Plan

- Pat Conrad of Emmons and Olivier Resources, Inc. provided an introduction and planning update on the status of the Middle Cedar Watershed Plan. Conrad presented information on the online planning management tools (Trello and Slack) to be used throughout the planning process. Conrad announced the first of a series of public engagement meetings is scheduled for November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017 from 4:00-6:00pm, location yet to be determined.
- Jeff Geertz, Special Projects Manager with the Iowa Economic Development Authority provided an introduction and update on the Iowa Watershed Approach (IWA) Project. Geertz clarified that no Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds as part of the IWA Project may be used for detailed planning in non-disaster declared counties. Black Hawk County is the only non-disaster declared county

in the Middle Cedar. As a result, the Wilson Creek-Black Hawk Creek HUC-12 watershed plan and the Greenbrier Neighborhood case study cannot be funded through the IWA project.

A few questions from the group were addressed.

1. **Can the project coordinator's time be spent in non-disaster declared counties?** Yes, the project coordinator time can be spent in non-disaster declared counties as long as it is not direct landowner assistance.
2. **Can the project coordinator's time be spent on urban work?** Yes, the project coordinator's time, to a point, can be spent on urban work as long as it is for outreach and education purposes for the overall HUC-8 level planning efforts.

#### **IV. Iowa Agriculture Water Alliance**

- Rodenberg introduced Sean McMahon, executive director of the Iowa Agriculture Water Alliance (IAWA). Rodenberg stated that the MCWMA technical team approached IAWA in regards to HUC-12 watershed planning in Black Hawk County. McMahon indicated that IAWA would be willing to divert up to \$25,000 of the funding they plan to donate to the MCWMA for technical assistance to fund the Wilson Creek-Black Hawk Creek watershed plan, provided that there is sufficient local engagement and participation.
- Rodenberg reviewed the commitment letter from IAWA for donating up to \$155,000 for technical assistance to increase capacity for the MCWMA, funding one staff position for two years. The position will promote the implementation of water quality conservation practices within the Middle Cedar Watershed. McMahon discussed the idea of creating a Middle Cedar Implementation Fund and utilizing the IAWA funding as seed money to attract other donations to fund work within the Middle Cedar.

o Sherman Lundy motioned that the MCWMA accept the IAWA funding of up to \$155,000 for technical assistance capacity building in the Middle Cedar Watershed. Clark Porter 2<sup>nd</sup> motion. Motion carried.

Discussion held on how to move forward in the process of hiring additional staff.

o Sherman Lundy motioned to task the Executive Committee to figure out the hiring process, explore options for a contract position, and bring a recommendation back to the full board. Wayne Castle 2<sup>nd</sup> motion. Motioned carried.

- Jim Jordahl presented information on the Conservation Collaboration Grant (CCG) IAWA was awarded to enhance watershed planning tools. Through the CCG, IAWA will use the Prioritize, Target, and Measure Application (PTMApp) and will integrate PTMApp with output of the Agricultural Conservation Planning Framework (ACPF) tool to potentially increase the efficiency and effectiveness of watershed planning in the Middle Cedar Watershed and beyond. The project will also evaluate the tools developed by the Chesapeake Conservancy's Conservation Innovation Center. As part of the grant, IAWA will also be working on expanding stakeholder engagement in conjunction with the Iowa Soybeans Association's watershed planning efforts in Holland Creek (Grundy County).

#### **V. Iowa Watershed Approach Update**

- Julie Kearney from the University of Iowa, Center for Evaluation and Assessment provided a brief introduction and their role in the IWA and distributed a voluntary survey to evaluate the project so far.
- Keith Schilling and Stephanie Surine from the Iowa Geological Survey (IGS) provided an introduction and background information on the IGS and current staff. Surine presented information on the geology

of the Middle Cedar Watershed, the State Map program (geology mapping for the state), and reviewed past and current studies throughout the state of Iowa.

- Antonio Arenas from the University of Iowa-IIHR presented information on precipitation data from 2017. Arenas showed maps of precipitation and percent change for the state throughout the year.

A few questions were addressed after the presentation.

- **Is below normal precipitation for 2017 enough to affect crop yields?** Data is not available yet.
- **Are rain events abnormally high? More rain, faster?** Trends in the data indicate that there are more intense rainfall events in the Midwest.

- Chris Jones from the University of Iowa-IIHR presented information on water quality monitoring and testing in the Middle Cedar Watershed. Jones illustrated how to access water quality and flood data in through the Iowa Flood Information System (<http://ifis.iowafloodcenter.org/ifis/en/>) and the Iowa Water Quality Information System (<https://iwqis.iowawis.org/>) websites.

Jones reported that two new water quality monitoring stations have been installed on Mud Creek at Vinton and Wolf Creek at Dysart. Rodenberg mentioned that three hydro stations are being deployed within the Middle Cedar to monitor above ground weather conditions as well as soil and shallow ground water conditions. Stations are to be located in Grundy, Benton, and Tama Counties.

Jones presented on a National Science Foundation project, "Citizen Science Project" to do water quality monitoring through test strips and a cell phone application. Jones will be looking for 50 volunteers throughout the Middle Cedar next spring to participate in this project.

## VI. Implementation Update (lost a quorum)

- Rodenberg reviewed the Request for Qualifications developed to solicit engineering services for the Iowa Watershed Approach Project. Rodenberg asked to move through selection and contracting and bring a final selection to the January Board meeting.

It was the consensus by 13 board members to move forward with the Request for Qualification process for engineering services.

- Rodenberg reviewed the financial assistance application to be used for practice implementation.

It was the consensus by 13 board members to start using the financial assistance application developed.

- Rodenberg asked the board to consider an upgrade to the Middle Cedar WMA website for more functionality and professional look. Moved to January agenda.
- Rodenberg outlined the AGREN online software tool and its ability to generate cost estimates for structural conservation practices. Seeking board approval to purchase the software license and Wiley stated that Benton County could purchase and request grant reimbursement.

It was the consensus by 13 board members to have Rodenberg pursue purchase of AGREN software.

## VII. Other Business

- Karl Gesch gave an update on the Iowa Soybean Association's planning efforts in Holland Creek (Grundy County).

## **VIII. Public Comment**

- Wiley described an opportunity to work with the University of Minnesota on a research project looking at the future of agriculture. Nick Jordan from the U of MN requested a letter of support for a workshop to develop a vision and goals for 20-30 years and explore corporate partner opportunities to meet those goals.

It was the consensus of 13 board members to provide a letter of support for the University of Minnesota research project.

## **IX. Next Meeting**

- The next MCWMA Board Meeting will be held on January 11, 2018 from 3-5pm. Tentative location set at the US Bank Community Room (414 A Avenue, Vinton, IA). The Board is open to alternate locations to host meetings.

## **X. Adjourn**

- By the authority of the Chair of the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:23pm.