

Middle Cedar Watershed Management Authority
Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, January 16th, 2025, 3:00pm

Virtual Location: [Zoom Link](#), Meeting ID: 820 7230 1155, Passcode: 140199

In-Person Location: ECICOG Office 700 16th St NE, Ste 301, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402

Agenda

I. Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 3:02 pm by Chair Stevenson.

II. Call to Order and Roll Call

Board Members Present:

Maria Perez (Cedar Falls), Mary Beth Stevenson (Cedar Rapids), Wayne Castle (Waterloo), John Kurtz (Buchanan County), Bruce Frana (Linn SWCD), Tracy Seeman (Benton County), Sherman Lundy (Black Hawk SWCD), Cara Matteson (Linn County), Dan Bangasser (Grundy Center), Chris Schares (Evansdale)

Others Present:

Alyssa Comer (ECICOG), Joshua Balk (IDALS), John Rathbun (IDALS), James Martin (IDALS), Ethan Meyer (IDALS), Cecilia Dirks (Benton CCB), Karen Wilke (TNC), Julie Althaus (Buchanan SWCD), Rick Wulfekuhle (Buchanan County), Steph Lientz (Linn County), Justin Schroeder (Cedar Rapids)

III. Minutes of Previous Meeting- October 17th, 2024- Action Item

Motion by Lundy, seconded by Frana to approve. Motion carried.

IV. Reaffirm or Elect Officers

Lundy suggests reaffirming current positions until next year. The board agrees, and officers commit to maintain their positions until next year.

Motion by Lundy, seconded by Kurtz. Motion carried.

V. ECICOG Administrative Update (Alyssa Comer)

- a. Comer explained the Quarterly Financial Summary to the board.
- b. Comer explained the Budget to Actual spreadsheet to the board.
- c. Board voted to approve ECICOG Transfer Authorization Form for administrative services and outreach costs this quarter.
Motion by Lundy, seconded by Kurtz. Motion carried.
- d. Comer informed the board that the service agreement is currently being worked on with ECICOGs attorney and will be hopefully ready for review next quarter.

VI. Strategic Planning Session: Middle Cedar WMA Coordinator- Scoping & Brainstorming for 2025 Grant Application (Mary Beth Stevenson)

Stevenson explained the EPA Farmer to Farmer BIL grant opportunity that is due January 28th, 2025. The proposal is to hire a full-time watershed coordinator for the Middle Cedar watershed, to be housed in Cedar Rapids. The role of the WMA would be to provide overall guidance and project reports.

Discussion occurred with suggestions among board members for partnership ideas and events to include if funding is awarded. Kurtz suggested a screening of Kiss the Ground or Common Ground, Lundy suggested an opening meeting, Frana suggested a field day.

VII. Farmer to Farmer BIL Grant Application – Action Item

Stevenson asks for a motion to approve submitting the EPA grant application on behalf of the WMA.

Motion by Lundy, seconded by Frana. Motion carried.

VIII. Watershed Project Updates

- a. Martin introduced Ethan Meyer, and shared the area of support Meyer will be working in. Meyer then introduced himself to the board and gave an overview of his background and experience.
- b. Rathbun shared that Grundy/Black Hawk 2nd Batch & Build project is nearly wrapped up. Rathbun then shared that Benton County's Batch & Build project went to bid and included 12 practices treating 16 tile outlets.
- c. Balk shared updates on several projects in Black Hawk County including native prairie and stormwater retention cells at the Cedar Falls high school, native projects in other urban areas being explored, Cedar Falls Nature Center project, Hickory Hills fish habitat and sedimentation reduction project update, and Hudson's WQI wetland and oxbow restoration project.
Dry Run Creek was then suggested as a potential future meeting place.
- d. Comer shared that Rathbun had let her know that Benton/Tama cover crop acres are up 23% compared to Fall of 2023.

IX. WQI Middle Cedar Watershed (James Martin)

Martin presented the growth of WQI over the last 11 years, giving an overview of Middle Cedar watershed projects compared to other watersheds in Iowa, and emphasized how much work has been done and how much is anticipated to be done in the future. Martin also shared that 67,192.99 acres of cover crops are established in the Middle Cedar watershed.

X. Letter of Support for the Nature Conservancy Five Star and Urban Waters Grant-Action Item

Wilke with The Nature Conservancy gave an overview of their proposal and asked for the board's support in collaboration and planning an educational event, and a letter of support.

The board agreed to provide a letter of support and to collaborate on an educational event.

Motion by Frana, seconded by Kurtz. Motion carried.

XI. Announcements and/or Board Member Updates

Lundy shared that Black Hawk CCB/NRCS reestablished 90 acres of CRP.

Seeman shared that Benton CCB just acquired land in Wildcat Bluff.

XII. Public Comment

None

XIII. 2025 Meeting Calendar: Next meeting April 17th, 2025, 3:00 pm

Stevenson asked for project site ideas to meet in-person for the April meeting.

Hickory Hill was suggested for either the April or October meeting. Comer and Stevenson will touch base with Balk to see when would be better.

Perez suggested a lunch meeting.

Location is still tbd.

XIV. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 4:19pm.