

Middle Cedar Watershed Management Authority

Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, July 17th, 2025, 3:00pm

Virtual Location: Zoom

In-person Location: ECICOG, 700 16th St NE, Suite 301, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402

Agenda

I. Agenda

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

II. Call to Order and Roll Call

Board Members Present:

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

Others Present:

Alyssa Comer (ECICOG), Cynthia Farmer (Center for Rural Affairs), Miranda Haes (Iowa DNR), Jenna Curran (Black Hawk SWCD), Josh Balk (Black Hawk SWCD), James Martin (IDALS), Stacie Buhr (Tama County), Ethan Meyer (Tama SWCD), Arlyn Wingate (Grundy SWCD), Lindsey Barnes (Cedar Rapids), Michael Miller (Black Hawk SWCD), Paola Trujillo-Lopez (Black Hawk SWCD), Kammy (Black Hawk SWCD)

III. Minutes of Previous Meeting- April 17th, 2025- Action Item

M/S by Schwartz and Frana to approve April meeting minutes. Motion carried.

IV. ECICOG Administrative Update (Alyssa Comer)

a. Quarterly Financial Statement

Comer shared the MCWMA quarterly financial statement.

b. Quarterly Budget to Actual

Comer shared the MCWMA budget to actual for FY25, and the projected for FY26. Matteson asked for clarification on the Black Hawk grant match. Curran and Stevenson shared that the funding for this grant is through DNR and secure.

c. Invoices for FY26 & Planning for FY27

Stevenson asked the board when we should be making our contribution asks to members. Kurtz shared that we should reach out in November or December to get on the January meeting agenda, so the member councils and supervisors have time to build an MCWMA contribution into their budget.

d. Quarterly Account Transfer Authorization for Administration Services

Comer shares the ECICOG costs incurred from April-June.

M/S by Lundy and Kurtz to approve the transfer of \$2,452.50 from MCWMA to ECICOG. Motion carried.

V. Urban Outreach Coordinator (Paola Trujillo-Lopez & Jenna Curran)

Stevenson introduced Trujillo-Lopez as the new Urban Ag Outreach Coordinator with Black Hawk County. The grant to fund this work was received in August 2024, and Trujillo-Lopez was interviewed in November 2024, but did not start working until June 2025, to verify grant security. Trujillo-Lopez shared that their main goal is to build meaningful relationships in the Middle Cedar watershed that support urban and small-scale agriculture.

VI. EPA Grant Update (Mary Beth Stevenson)

Stevenson shared that the EPA Farmer to Farmer grant will be funded in the full amount requested, \$1.3 million, which will be available in January 2026. Stevenson will begin developing a project management plan and establish working groups for support. Stevenson asked the board to consider if they would be willing to be a part of working groups to support the grant efforts, including a hiring committee and oxbow restoration committee.

Lundy asked how this grant project will interface with the original plan developed for the watershed. Stevenson shared that the application/scope of the project prioritizes the high priority watersheds that were identified in the watershed plan, natural infrastructure prioritization, development or enhancement of existing watershed models, and a goal to restore one oxbow in each county of the WMA.

VII. Watershed Project Updates

- Rathbun was unable to attend so Comer gave an update on his behalf. Benton County's batch is still on schedule; the contractor is scheduled to start late summer 2025. Cover crops sign up in Benton/Buchanan Counties is around

4,500 acres to date. Two non-batch bioreactors were installed recently in Benton County.

- Wingate is working on a Batch & Build and putting together an advisory team to build trust and connection.
- Meyer is waiting for the engineering review for 7 Batch & Build projects in Black Hawk County. He will begin surveying this fall for 7 more Batch & Build projects in Tama County.
- Baulk announced that Dry Run Creek is celebrating its 20th anniversary and is planning a community fair this fall. The residential native prairie initiative is ramping up & there is a large rain garden at the BHSWCD office.
- Martin shared that the last quarter has been filled with a lot of trainings for watershed coordinators including oxbow restoration and saturated buffer trainings. Oxbow training and Batch & Build design capacity trainings are upcoming. WQI's cover crop cost-share has ~\$8million in requests on week 2. The plan is to keep it open for a few more weeks and give priority to first-time users.

VIII. Announcements and/or Board Member Updates

None.

IX. Public Comment

None.

X. 2025 Meeting Calendar:

Next meeting is scheduled for October 16th, 2025, at 3:00pm. The board discussed either meeting in Hudson or Dry Run Creek if the restoration at Hudson is not on the ground by October.

XI. Adjourn

Chairperson Stevenson adjourned the meeting at 3:50pm.