

# Middle Cedar Watershed Management Authority

## Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024, 3:00pm

Virtual Location: [Zoom Link](#), Meeting ID: 858 9914 3444, Passcode: 557108

### Agenda

#### I. Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 pm by Chair Stevenson.

#### II. Call to Order and Roll Call

##### Board Members Present:

Maria Perez (Cedar Falls), Mary Beth Stevenson (Cedar Rapids), Joshua Balk (Iowa DNR, Alternate for Sherman Lundy), Wayne Castle (Waterloo), Chris Schwartz (Black Hawk County), John Kurtz (Buchanan County), Barbara Smith (Grundy County), Steph Lientz (Linn County), Bruce Frana (Linn SWCD), Tracy Seeman (Benton County), Justin Schroeder (Cedar Rapids)

##### Others Present:

Karen Kurt (ECICOG), Alyssa Comer (ECICOG), Jenna Curran (Black Hawk SWCD), Shaffer Ridgeway (Black Hawk SWCD), Jeri Thornsberry (Black Hawk SWCD), Cynthia Farmer (Center for Rural Affairs)

#### III. Minutes of Previous Meeting- July 18, 2024- Action Item

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

#### IV. ECICOG Administrative Update (Karen Kurt)

- a. Stevenson introduced Comer to board. Comer gave a brief introduction.
- b. Kurt explained the Quarterly Financial Summary to the board.
- c. Kurt explained that the dues for the budget are based on a \$50,000 budget to fund a watershed coordinator. Kurt then explained that the difference in Benton County's invoice was based on a conversation had with Tracy Seeman. The FY25 budget was adjusted to \$46,640 to reflect Benton County's altered invoice.

Kurt discussed invoicing and let the board know they will be receiving invoices in the mail. This mailing will include the invoice, a letter, and a Middle Cedar Watershed Conservation Impacts pamphlet. For larger organizations, the board member can expect to receive the invoice and distribute to proper entity.

Kurt also explained the ECICOG administration and grant match column of budget.

- d. Board voted to approve ECICOG Transfer Authorization Form for administrative services this quarter. Motion by Kurtz, seconded by Frana. Motion carried.
- e. Kurt explained that she will be reviewing the ECICOG Middle Cedar WMA Service Agreement and make the same modifications that Indian Creek WMA has made for consistency. Will be ready to review at January meeting.

**V. Middle Cedar Historically Underserved Farmer Grant**

Stevenson introduced Black Hawk SWCD presenters, Jenna Curran and Shaffer Ridgeway.

Jeri Thornsberry provided background information on the grant before the presentation began. The Conservation Innovation grant was awarded in the Fall of 2020, with two main objectives; to provide outreach to historically underserved famers and come up with an innovative Culturally Competent Outreach Plan.

Ridgeway and Curran presented the accomplishments of the grant and announced that the Black Hawk SWCD received a three-year grant expected to end June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2027. The grant is for \$250,000 and will hire a project coordinator to implement.

Stevenson asked the group if there were any questions.

The board discussed ways the WMA could offer support for this project.

Stevenson then explained the letter that will be going out with the FY25 invoices and received feedback on what to change or add before sending.

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

Steven explained that the purpose of the scoping sessions is to get feedback on how the WMA should move forward in hiring a watershed coordinator. Stevenson then asked what the board would like to see a watershed coordinator do.

Balk provided insight to the group that a watershed coordinator would provide help and boots on the ground for outreach and projects.

The board discussed landowner participation, nutrient reduction, public health concerns, education, lobbying and advocacy efforts.

**VII. Watershed Project Updates**

Stevenson asked the board members for updates on projects within the watershed.

Castle announced that the land needed for a water quality project has been obtained and will be going to DNR for approval and hopefully out for bid in November 2024. Construction would start in January on this timeline.

Balk announced that IDALS has RFP for Urban Conservation out right now due in mid-November. It has been posted on [cleanwateriowa.org](http://cleanwateriowa.org).

Balk also announced that there will be a “Build your own Rain Barrel” event in Cedar Falls on Tuesday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Stevenson updated the group on where the Batch and Build Project is at. There were four bioreactors built in Buchanan County, a couple in Black Hawk County with more to be built in Black Hawk Count and Grundy County. There have been 31 edge of field practices implemented with this project. The project will wrap up in December 2024. Later this fall there will be another round of edge of field practice implementation.

**VIII. January Meeting Location**

The board decided the January meeting will be held virtually because of potential weather.

Balk explained the wetland site in Hudson could be a potential meeting spot for the quarterly spring meeting.

**IX. Announcements and/or Board Member Updates**

Frana announced Linn SWCD is planning to meet with newly elected officials after the November election. Linn SWCD is wanting to host a meeting at a farm to educate elected officials about what the SWCD and WMAs are trying to accomplish. They are running into scheduling problems.

**X. Public Comment**

None

**XI. 2024 Meeting Calendar**

Next meeting, January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 3:00pm, virtual.

**XII. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm.