

WINNEBAGO WATERWAYS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

JULY 16, 2021 – 2:00 P.M.

FOND DU LAC COUNTY

CITY COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER

MEETING ROOMS G&H

Roll Call: Alan Buechel, Mike Hofberger, Alice Connors, Martin Farrell, Jon Doemel, Dan Theel

Others Present: Erin Gerred, Paul Tollard, Chad Casper, Thomas Mace, Alan Weir, Brian Valleskey, Dani Santry, Jessica Schultz, Korin Doering, Emily Henrigillis

AGENDA:

1. Call to order – 2:02pm called to Order.
2. Approval of minutes from the January 25, 2021, meeting. Motion to approve minutes moved by Farrell, seconded by Connors. M/C
3. Members of the public who wish to address the committee on specific agenda items must register their requests at this time, with such comments subject to the reasonable control of the committee chair, as set forth in “Robert’s Rules of Order.”
 - a. No comments were presented.
4. Introductions of All Members:
 - a. Committee Members -
 - b. Emily Henrigillis – Emily introduced herself.
5. Winnebago Waterways Executive Committee Officer Selection

Chairperson – Farrell nominated Alan Buechel for Chair, Connors moved to close nominations. M/C.

Vice Chairperson – Connors nominated Martin Farrell for VC. Mike motioned to approve Farrell as Vice Chair. Connors Second. M/C.

Secretary – Buechel nominated for Dani Santry to be secretary. Farrell motioned to approve Santry as Secretary. Connors Seconded. M/C.

Alice recommended to forgo the treasurer position at this time.
6. Program Updates:
 - a. Original Purpose of Winnebago Waterways Program – Korin gave a review of the program. Please refer to notes in this link.

b. Implementation Phase Update Highlights

- i. \$33K Evaluation of breakwall effectiveness
- ii. \$747K Pipe Creek Watershed Soil Health
- iii. 1300 lbs/P/yr from this project from the 2 farm contracts on the project.
- iv. \$1 mil – Lake Butte Des Morts wetland and common tern habitat restoration project
- v. \$40K - 2021 CBCW Contract with DNR
- vi. \$50K – Regional AIS prevention program
- vii. \$251K – Soil Health Conservation Systems – Rat River Watershed
- viii. **\$271K – Kick Start Implementation Program.**
 - ☐ Sunset Bay Management Plan – Completed an Aquatic Plant Management Plan for the Bay with input from property owners
 - Plan provides guidance for property owners to management the needs of navigation/nuisance plants with protecting high quality aquatic plant vegetation.
 - The larger group is looking at purchasing a plant harvester.
 - DNR was able to issue the first APM permit with an approved Plan, streamlining the permit process. This provides a cost savings and a time savings for both DNR and the property owners.
 - Shoreline Program –
 - Assist Groups/property owners with Healthy lakes grants
 - Sell Shoreline practices to property owners
 - Provide Technical Assistance
 - Create shoreline restoration demonstration sites
 - Create and Implement shoreline stewards recognition program
 - Coordinate volunteer -based winter sowing program for native plants.

7. Discussion of Ag Implementation Projects:

- a. New Grant Award - Discussed the Rat River Watershed grant is further detail. Grant will help advance conservation practices in Winnebago County
- b. Key Role of LWCD Staff – Discussed how vital the increase capacity at the Counties has been critical to advancing the agricultural practices needed in the subwatershed. Fond du Lac and Calumet have added staff to provide technical assistance to producers. Winnebago has a request in the 2021 budget to add a staff person. Producers in the basin projects have expressed a need for technical assistance now that they have had several years of experience with the soil health practices.

8. Increased Capacity of Recovery Efforts

- a. Overview of Growth – this discussion is an overlap of Item 7.b.
- b. Challenges – 15% of the current local biologist’s position is dedicated to the Winnebago System. This is a drastic change from pre-2010 when 2 DNR FTE

biologists (one water quality, one habitat) were working on the system. As retirements took shape, DNR reallocated staffing, leaving only a fraction of a job description to cover the entire system outside of Fisheries. Jon Doemel recommended executive action to support increasing DNR staffing support to the Winnebago System.

Alan recommended to reach out to DNR to let them know we will be asking.

c. Opportunities (Executive Committee Support) –

Alice recommended that we make sure the state representatives are aware of the project and to keep them engaged in the effort.

9. 5-Minute Evaluation (Input from Executive Committee)

a. How are we doing? – Committee was given the opportunity to share what items they felt may be missing with all the work that is going on with the Winnebago Waterways program. Comments included:

- Confident doing very well, getting stuff done. Continue to create outreach that is clear, simple and short enough to make sure everyone knows what is going on.
- The quantity and the quality of the work is top notch. Ask: More outreach through the media. Report the to EDCs around the counties. Ask for 15 minutes to give a brief overview.
- Reflecting on where we started, with a room full of people concerned about the water quality and the weeds on the south end. It is impressive with how much implementation is going on. Outstanding job.
- Very impressed with the work while reviewing to get up to speed.

b. Are there expectations that haven't been met? None were given.

c. Is there anything you haven't seen in the program but would like to see?

- A request for talking points was made.

10. Acknowledge Executive Committee support – Jessica acknowledge the support of both past and current committee members.

11. Future Agenda Items – to entice elected officials – invite them to a WW Executive committee, but make it in the morning.

12. Future meeting date - try to see if there is a good date for the elected officials. Mid September/Early October. Alice indicated she would to work on a date. Doodle for October

13. Adjourn - Motion to adjourn by Hofberger, Seconded by Farrell. M/C. 3:32pm.