

**Michigan Statewide Public Advisory Council Meeting Minutes**

November 27-28, 2018

Great Lakes Commission Office

Ann Arbor, MI

Attending:

Jon Allan	DNR – Office of the Great Lakes
Dan Ballnik	Rouge River AOC
Jon Beard	Public Sector Consultants
Tricia Blicharski	Friends of Detroit River
Mary Bohling	Detroit River AOC, SPAC chair
Anne Brasie	Clinton River Watershed Council
Bob Burns	Friends of Detroit River
Bill Craig	Rouge River Advisory Council
Matt Doss	Great Lakes Commission
Paulette Duhaime	St. Clair River AOC
Brian James Egen	River Raisin AOC
Kathy Evans	Muskegon Lake AOC
Melanie Foose	DNR – Office of the Great Lakes
Rick Hobrla	DNR – Office of the Great Lakes
Lea Markowski	Muskegon Lake Watershed Partnership
Leah Medley	EPA – Great Lakes National Program Office
Disk Micka	River Raisin AOC
Darren Nichols	Great Lakes Commission
Carly Norris	EPA – Great Lakes National Program Office
Amy Pelka	EPA – Great Lakes National Program Office
Horst Schmidt	Torch Lake Public Action Council
Stephanie Swart	DNR – Office of the Great Lakes
Jen Tewkesbury	DNR – Office of the Great Lakes
Patty Troy	St. Clair River AOC
Dennis Zimmerman	Saginaw River/Bay AOC

Tuesday, November 27, 2018

**Welcome and Introductions** (sign in sheet passed around)

Mary Bohling: Think about who you would want as the Vice Chair of the Statewide Public Advisory Council (SPAC)

**Welcome** – Darren Nichols

The Great Lakes Commission's (GLC) new offices. These offices are the Great Lakes community's office, so come back and visit. Darren talks about his past experience in the Pacific Northwest. He has encouraged the GLC to go back to 1955 and the basin compact when thinking about looking to where the GLC will go in the coming years. The GLC helps all the states and provinces to hold themselves accountable. Asking the GLC "what do we want to be true about the Great Lakes 2-150 years from now", particularly with this unique system of governance.

**Please note these minutes have been reformatted to meet accessibility requirements. The original content has not been changed. 7/2022**

There is a possibility of having some field trips to AOCs (Detroit Riverwalk) during the May commission meeting. **Action Item:** Talk with Matt Doss if have ideas.

**Review/Approve Minutes** from June SPAC Meeting – Dennis Zimmerman: motion to approve minutes, Dick Mika: second. Minutes approved.

### **GLC Update** – Matt Doss

- GLRI Funding – currently under a continuing resolution, level funding at \$300 million with strong support from Congress. It is important to keep up communication with Legislators. SPAC voices are more impactful than just those of the GLC. New Legislators (3), need to establish new relationships with them and educate on Areas of Concern (AOCs) and Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI).

Horst Schmidt: If there is a government shutdown is the GLRI funding locked up? Agencies who haven't had appropriations passed would be closed, sometimes it's portions of an agency.

Horst Schmidt: When should we advocate with our Legislators? Discussions will happen tomorrow re SPAC Legislative Briefing. GLC does a Washington day during Great Lakes week, but SPAC members can also meet with federal legislators here in Michigan.

Kathy Evans: Need for continued funding because final management actions are becoming more technical and BUIs that are left are expensive.

Matt Doss: Need \$80-90 million for Great Lakes Legacy Act (GLLA) projects, there are a lot of projects yet to do.

Bill Craig: Having a list of federal and state representatives in a directory for each AOC is useful. **Action Item:** Matt Doss said he would update the directory for federal members of congress.

Horst Schmidt: Would be helpful to get numbers and background as to why it's costing so much for these projects. <https://www.glc.org/work/advocacy/legislative-priorities> and <https://www.glc.org/wp-content/uploads/GLC-2018LP-OnePg-FINAL.pdf>

- GLRI Economic Impact Study – completed in fall 2018 impacts of the GLRI. A large-scale, rigorous study had not been conducted while GLRI has been underway and we have been making the investments. 2010-2016 impacts: Created 1000s of jobs, increased personal income, and attracted or retained residents. GLRI is a catalyst for other economic/social improvements, deeper perceptions of community/optimism, helped tackle previously insurmountable problems, and increased tourism. Projected future impacts: Every dollar will generate \$3.35 of additional economic activity through 2036, in some communities the longer-term impact will be greater (\$4), increases in regional economic output (tourism) \$1.62, increased local house values by \$1.08, amenities that were valuable to residents. <https://www.glc.org/wp-content/uploads/GLRI-Fact-Sheet-20180924.pdf>

Horst Schmidt: Where is the Office of the Great Lakes (OGL) economic person and how does here work stand currently? She's running two projects. OGL is funding Michigan State University and Earth Economics/ECT. Ongoing, first phase to be completed February/March. Intended for OGL use only.

Horst Schmidt: Does the OGL economics work cover all AOCs? Focused on Michigan AOCs but intended to be used more broadly than that. Not related to Paul Seelbach's work.

Kathy Evans: Muskegon had a different study that showed a 7:1 investment, so some communities are reaping more benefits. Was there a radius from the shoreline for the

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properties are included? Methodology laid out in the report.

Bill Craig: The study is based on investments up to 2016, so more investment would notch these up? Yes, but would need a new study. If we don't invest, we could lose these continued impacts.

Jon Beard: Why a panel of reviewers outside of the Great Lakes? Those folks were users of the REMI model and knew that kind of analysis.

### **USEPA Update – Amy Pelka**

- Amy Pelka (Budgets), Leah Medley (BUIs), Carly Norris (ORISE Fellow)
- Management Action Lists are important, AOC projects are given a higher priority when the list is in place.

Bob Burns: Detroit is in the process of doing the last of the low hanging fruit, turning attention to sediments there are some large GLLA projects that need major funding. Those aren't unrealistic, there are some in Duluth and other areas that in the \$10-40 million range. Priority is given to GLLA when there is a non-federal sponsor.

Horst Schmidt: How does funding get from USEPA to state to get the project paid for? Most projects are not through the state. Can go to other federal agencies, local groups, states, etc. Task Force Lead (TFL) says what the AOC needs, ask if the state on board and if the Public Advisory Council (PAC) on board before funding allocated.

- TFL reassignments Leah Medley-Menominee; Heather Williams-Torch, St. Marys; Megan Kern-Raisin
  - Action Plan III – looking to remove ½ of the remaining BUIs, have management actions for all AOCs, and complete actions for 5 of 10 potential AOCs.
- Mary Bohling: Difficult BUIs are left, are these numbers realistic? Decent goal to shoot for. Only 20 more to get to 100.

Dick Mika: Not all GLRI money goes to AOCs, what do we get? One third goes to AOCs, \$91 million to spend at the \$300 million funding.

Dick Mika: With PFAs are we going to lose more money? No. There is a potential to add an AOC for PFOS. Money might be taken from invasive species, not losing a significant percentage.

- Great Lakes Public Forum – Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) every three years by governments of US and Canada, report outs for each of the Annexes, International Joint Commission (IJC) will be accepting public comments. Milwaukee June 17-19, 2019.

Horst Schmidt: A role for OGL and PACs? OGL co-chaired lake sessions three years ago, not much of a role for PACs.

- AOC Conference – Cleveland September 10-12, 2019
- Kathy Evans: When will GLRI competitive grant request for proposals (RFP) come out? Not going to happen any time soon. They will not do any RFPs until they get complete funding since the continuing resolution runs out in a week.

### **OGL Update – Rick Hobrla, Melanie Foose**

- State GLRI budget – nearing the end of a three-year GLRI grant from USEPA. Amendment approval provided extra funding and allows extension through July 31, 2019. New three-year grant will start in April allowing for an overlap in the grants. Allows for more flexibility in PAC support grants. High priority will be to develop a new grant application for USEPA. OGL has talked with other states about the grant operations and USEPA not allowing flexibility to move the money within the GLRI grant.

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Paulette Duhaime: Current grant extended to July, will that impact PAC grants?

Coordinators will work with AOC to extend PAC support grants if necessary.

Bob Burns: When will we see the RFP for the new PAC grants? Not sure, goal to have them issued in April 2019.

Bob Burns: The transfer between PAC grants need to be smoother. Two week turn around for proposal submittal and OGL sits on them for 4 months.

Mary Bohling: There is going to be a four-month gap, OGL/UoM work will begin in March and there will be no money to fund staff time to assist. How does OGL pay staff during the gap but doesn't work the same way for PAC support? There are internal deadlines and conflicts that result in these gaps. OGL will work on shortening the gap.

Rick Hobrla: Work with coordinators to extend grants, OGL would be open to provide additional funding to the current PAC grants.

- PAC Support grants – OGL will consider putting more money in, limits will be higher in the RFP.

Dennis Zimmerman: What is the percent increase? In the range of a 25-50% increase, maybe.

Bob Burns: When is the RFP coming out? February and grants issued in May.

Paulette Duhaime: Do our submittal dates change? Only if you have an extension, otherwise remains as February. OGL cannot comingle grants.

- OGL budget transfer – SIGMA and the transfer to Michigan Department of Natural Resources has resulted in delayed payments. September bills will be caught up in two weeks. If you submitted an estimate those payments will take into January.
- Office of Auditor General audit – OGL is under audit, first ever audit, sent surveys to PAC members. Thus far some issues have arisen with the PAC support grant RFP.

Bob Burns: The RFP isn't the goal; the money is support for PACs to help OGL get their work done. Support funding not intended to be competitive. Maybe the mechanism is not indicative of the product OGL is trying to put out.

Horst Schmidt: Will this make for more effective grant reporting or giving us more hoops to jump through? Not sure on what to expect.

- AOC review meeting – state advises federal agencies on actions in Michigan's AOCs.
- UoM classes/projects – Paul Seelbach's students have collected all their interviews and are in the midst writing up the information and expect things in April. Paul will have a 2<sup>nd</sup> AOC class (January – April). Looking at the AOCs in the last two buckets, Detroit, Saginaw, Rouge, Kalamazoo, Torch. Also in discussions for a second masters team project.
- Great Lakes Symposium March 5, 2019 at Michigan State University
- Healing Our Waters conference rescheduled, May 8-9, 2019 in Detroit
- Drones – Michigan Department of Environmental Quality has a drone in the southeast Michigan District Office, Melanie Foose is looking having the MDEQ pilot fly AOC sites. Need to be sure we can get approval. **Action Item:** Think about where you could use drone footage, discuss with AOC Coordinator, will discuss a future SPAC meeting about options.

Bill Craig: Good idea for the Rouge because most is hidden from the public, might help for non-federal sponsors.

Dennis Zimmerman: Nothing on Saginaw Bay, have seen other videos on spring thaw/runoff for illicit connections and bad culverts.

## Remarks – Jon Allan

Find a common point of view. The hard work comes with finding what the point of view is, when a community wants something but doesn't know what it is. Talked to the governor-

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elect's transition team about communities manifesting their desire/vision. Thirty years of activity, how can we help the next generation understand the AOC program and know the importance of community level engagement? Deeply moved on how the PACs welcomed the students and were caring and willing to share their stories. The AOC program is a tremendous success and transformative to the soul of the communities. Don't want the mentality of "don't go near water" for us or our kids. What the PACs do makes a difference and we can show visitors what this looks like. We are leading the world on what this looks like.

### **Sustainable Funding for Michigan Watersheds – Kathy Evans, Jon Beard**

Prosperity region grants. Criteria were long-term impact, public/private partnerships, regional impact.

Phase I: Funding Approaches – Mileages, flat fees, watershed management districts, pay for success bonds.

Phase II: Community partners, what path do you think would work best?

Looking for something that is actually implementable.

Mileages – locals are fatigued

Flat Fee – can't charge everyone a single fee and meet the current laws, may need to make it voluntary

Watershed Management District – may be the ideal way to go, might not be achievable in the near term, require a large upfront investment, overlap with existing models

Pay for Success Bonds – interesting idea, fund individual projects, might not be for sustainable revenue, a financing not a funding mechanism.

A combined concept program is the Framework for Sustainable Funding – legislation for a voluntary contribution, enable counties to collect a voluntary watershed contribution through property tax bills. Establish structure for counties to pass funding through to an existing regional planning body and for regional planning bodies to form one or more watershed advisory councils to guide funding allocations. Regional planning bodies are able to enter inter cooperative agreements with each other to enhance coordination and fill capacity where needed.

Wednesday, November 28<sup>th</sup>

### **Election of SPAC Chair and Vice Chair**

Mary Bohling: Do we need another election of the chair? Dennis Zimmerman: No.

Kathy Evans: The by-laws allow you (Mary) to appoint the vice chair in a situation like this.

Bill Craig: When does Mary's chair-ship end? Dennis Zimmerman: Terms are for a year unless re-election. In the new by-laws it would be for two years.

Mary Bohling: Thought that with Jamie's election that she would take over for chair. Horst Schmidt has expressed interest in vice chair.

Dennis Zimmerman: Do we have a quorum? Yes, have eight people.

Mary Bohling: Do we want to form a nominations committee?

Dennis Zimmerman: Move that we vote on Horst Schmidt as vice-chair. Bill Craig: second. Motion passed.

### **Roles and Responsibilities document**

It will be an OGL document and it will be up to OGL to finalize. Not going to rush because of

ongoing audit and UoM work. Will be asking for SPAC comments, but will remain an OGL document. **Action Item:** OGL will bring back to the group at the next meeting to discuss.

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Bylaws will be a SPAC document. Rick Hobrla did not send out, but SPAC members received the roles and responsibilities document in July. **Action Item:** Comments were received from Muskegon, Rouge, St. Clair, and Torch. Make sure they get these to the Coordinators and/or Rick Hobrla.

Dennis Zimmerman: Motion to table the document. Kathy Evans: second. Motion passed.

### **Revised to SPAC bylaws**

Rick Hobrla: The version that was sent to the PAC had edits made to it and we cannot clearly answer who made or why the changes were made.

Mary Bohling: How would the committee like to proceed?

Bill Craig: Need an official explanation as to how/why the document was revised.

Mary Bohling: **Action Item:** Need the most up-to-date document. And, have been talking about the document for several meetings. Could we have a call?

Patty Troy: Need a call with Rick Hobrla, John Riley, etc. discussing the changes, comments.

Bill Craig: We need the revision first and then can take the document to vote.

Dennis Zimmerman: The task of the committee would be to **Action Item:** have a call, draft final to present to SPAC for adoption.

Mary Bohling: Have a call of the entire SPAC for a vote.

Dennis: The vote can be via teleconference or at the next SPAC meeting.

Dennis: **Action Item:** Motion for bylaws committee to create a final draft document after a conference call. Dick: second. Motion passed.

**River Raisin** videos – Brian Egen, Commission on the Environment River Raisin/Henry Ford Development of a brand identity and momentum for River Raisin AOC. Have used PAC support funding for the River Raisin Legacy project brochure, way signs, posters, field guides, radio and social media PSAs, and to create a cache of photographs.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lqfCayXzYzY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KyqabGC8Wpc>

Bill Craig: How much does a video like that cost? \$700 for an introductory project. \$10,000 for the first video. They have used PAC grants to acquire certain assets along the way.

### **PAC Reports**

River Raisin – Dick Mika

- Waiting for designation on Area in Recovery, all management actions are complete

Torch Lake – Horst Schmidt

- OGL visited the PAC to discuss the management actions
- Waiting on Michigan Technological University data for benthos

Saginaw Bay/River – Dennis Zimmerman

- State of the Bay, December 18, 2018
- Updating website and fact sheets
- Looking into removing Eutrophication BUI, need to decide if they are going to accept the state's criteria

St. Clair River – Patty Troy

- ECCC announced removal of three Canadian BUIs, Bird and Animal Deformities, Dredging, and Beach Closings.

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- Fish and wildlife consumption and drinking water BUIs. Waiting on sampling for fish consumption. Sub committee for drinking water asking for verification on spill prevention plans.
- Some concerns with how the habitat projects are being managed.

#### Rouge River – Bill Craig

- Pictures of the Henry Ford fishway, completion spring 2019
- No BUIs removed yet
- Oxbow completion will be in spring 2019
- Nankin Lake in design phase, three other projects under consideration by USEPA
- Old channel GLLA project moving along, getting media coverage
- PAC is fine-tuning habitat project proposals

#### Muskegon Lake – Kathy Evans

- Have the Aesthetics BUI removal draft
- Monitoring for eutrophication and benthos BUIs
- All management actions are in place in varying stages
- Four habitat projects complete - mill debris, Zephyr wetlands, Bear Creek removed a dike opened wetlands, and Veteran's Memorial Park reconnection of the Muskegon River to 12 acres of habitat. Other habitat projects are scheduled for completion in 2019.
- PAC support is helping create a data repository for BUIs, monitoring, public meetings/outreach, doing a video
- Ryerson GLLA is scheduled for 2019

#### Clinton River – Anne Brasie

- Submitted BUI removal recommendation for Aesthetics
- Quite a bit of monitoring
- Waiting on habitat projects, monitoring
- Macomb County looking develop the spillway as a resource
- St. Clair Metropark beach project is ongoing
- Relief drain project, green infrastructure day light the lateral drains with some wetland habitat

#### Detroit River – Mary Bohling

- Eight habitat projects ongoing or just finished, only had 10 projects on the list
- Working with USEPA to develop a list of partners for sediment projects
- PAC support grant is allowing for story mapping

#### St. Marys River – Rick Hobrla

- In the process of removing fish and wildlife and habitat BUIs

#### Kalamazoo River – Rick Hobrla

- Looking to fill Jamie McCarthy's position
- Completed work on Otsego Township dam, discussions ongoing for Trowbridge dam funding
- City of Otsego still pursuing removal of the city's dam

#### Lower Menominee River – Stephanie Swart

- Final two BUIs off public notice November 21<sup>st</sup>, removal expected in December
- Delisting document is in draft and with Wisconsin

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- The Citizen's Advisory Committee is pursuing development of a watershed management association

**Governor's funding proposals** – Mary Bohling, Matt Doss

- Renew Michigan's Environment – replacement for the Clean Michigan Initiative
- Rebuild Michigan's Water Infrastructure – improvements and build out

Rick Hobrla: Clarification that SPAC and those that receive PAC support funding cannot lobby but can be advocates. Mentioned the weakening wetlands senate bill (SB 1211).

**Next Meetings**

- Legislative Briefing – spring, including a business meeting. **Action Item:** Need to reserve the Mackinac Room ASAP and choose dates. Make sure invitations to Legislators and find a speaker and sponsors. **Action Item:** SPAC members provide suggestions for sponsors and keynote speakers.  
 Mary Bohling: Stephanie Chang  
 Kathy Evans: Terry Sabo, John Bumstead possibility for Muskegon Mayor, Steve Gowren as speaker  
 Patty Troy: Candice Miller for speaker  
 Dick Mika: Joe Bellino, Dale Zorn, Jason Shepherd  
 Rick Hobrla: February is mostly booked (6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> available), March booked, April open early but likely spring break. **Action Item:** Need to work with MDNR Legislative Liaison.

Mary Bohling, Matt Doss, Horst Schmidt to work with Rick Hobrla to find a date and sponsors for the meeting.

- Summer meeting – Torch Lake July (weeks of the 8<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>)
- Fall meeting – River Raisin October (weeks of the 7<sup>th</sup> or the 14<sup>th</sup>)

**Adjourn** – 11:59 a.m.

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