

Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed Management Authority
Buchanan County Public Health Building
1413 1st St. West, Independence, Iowa
Tuesday, May 8, 2018
1:30 p.m.

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Gary Gissel at 1:35 p.m.

Motion and second to approve the agenda was made. Motion passed.

Members present: Kip Ladage, City of Readlyn, City of Dunkerton & Bremer County; Ron Lenth, Bremer County SWCD; Frank Magsaman, Black Hawk County; Gary Gissel, Buchanan County; Julie Althaus, Buchanan SWCD; Steve Goertz, Chickasaw County; Sylvan Mutschler, City of Frederika; Jan McGovern, Howard County; John Kurtz, City of Independence; Chuck Unga, Linn County; Steven Smolik, Mitchell County; Greg Eschweiler, City of Tripoli; Elaine Hughes, City of Quasqueton; Mary Ryan, City of Winthrop. Lora Friest, Ross Elsevier, & Tori Hartman of NE Iowa RC&D; Angie Auel, Project Coordinator; and representatives of nine additional organizations were present.

Minutes of the January 9, 2018 minutes were approved as read.

New Business

- **IWA Flood Resilience Update – Craig Just, Iowa Flood Center**

Craig Just gave a slide presentation reviewing the IWA goals and overview of products developed on the Iowa Flood Center Website at <http://iowafloodcenter.org/>.

Iowa Watershed Approach-Iowa Flood Center Flood Resiliency Team (FRT) report:

- Currently the FRT is developing interactive visualization tool for social vulnerability at the intersection of floods, including flood damage estimations. This should be ready to showcase by Fall of 2018
- Ashlee is preparing Flood Resilience Action Plans, these will be utilized by the planners to integrate into the watershed management plans
- The FRT has offered assistance for Pre-Disaster Mitigation (PDM) Grant Preparation. This is FEMA money. It is a big goal to have MEFA fund at a watershed level and see that priorities in a watershed management plan can be eligible for PDS funding.
- FRT is also working with local community organizations active in disaster (COADS) this generally includes Emergency Management agencies and local community organizations (United Way, Salvation Army, animal control, etc).

- FRT is also working with HACAP on the 211 services and how it can be improved during a flood event.

- **IWA Hydro Update - Antonio Arenas, Iowa Flood Center**

No report.

- **Survey of Meeting Attendees – Julie Kearney, UI Center for Education**

Julie distributed a meeting survey to be completed by attendees and handed in at the end of the meeting. The evaluation is a HUD-required part of the IWA project as well as providing good information for the project coordinator, the WMA and the IWA partners.

- **Watershed Planning Update - Ross Evelsizer, NE Iowa RC&D**

Northeast Iowa RC&D is working on the 20 year watershed resiliency plan for the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed. The Plan will include but not limited to:

Watershed Background

- Historical watershed conditions will be conducted by researching historical documents and databases.
- Current watershed conditions will be gathered from a variety of current databases and through analysis.

Stakeholder Engagement

- Organized community team meetings where we talked with many communities in the watershed about where they could implement urban conservation throughout their city.
- Conducted landowner meetings where we educated attendees about conservation in both the rural and urban settings and about the Upper Wapsi River Watershed as a whole.
- Landowner survey allowed us to gather information about the views, interests and experiences that landowners have in the watershed.

Connecting the Pieces

- Plan will work together with other supporting documents like the Hydrologic Assessment and County Hazard Mitigation plans.

GIS Analysis

- Agricultural Conservation Planning Framework tool allows us to analyze potential locations for flood reduction practices within the Upper Wapsi River Watershed.
- The Iowa Best Management Practice Mapping project allows us to see conservation practices that are already on the ground.
- Conducted a cover crop inventory that mapped fields showing cover crops in

their 2017 rotation. Cover crops are very important in improving soil infiltration which in return reduces flooding. Using the example of the Village of Oran HUC 12 sub-watershed, only 1-2% of the farm acres in this watershed have cover crops. This is not a sufficient area to have effects on reducing flooding in the watershed.

- Working with county engineers to analyze road and bridge infrastructure within the watershed.

WMA

- Will be gathering input from WMA members about goals and strategies for moving the watershed forward in the future.

- **Report on Landowner Information Meetings March 8th & March 14th – Angie Auel**

- March 8th landowner meeting was held at the Brandon Community Center. Meal was provided by the Buchanan County Pheasants Forever Chapter. Middle Cedar and Upper Wapsi watersheds co-hosted this meeting with 49 landowners and 12 agency people attending.
- March 14th landowner meeting was held at Wolfy's in Quasqueton. Pizza was provided by Ronnie Wolfe. 13 landowners attended this meeting.

- **Project Coordinator Update – Angie Auel**

- 12 Landowners have returned applications for projects on their property. The County Engineer submitted a project to reduce a bridge size. Two projects have been submitted by the DNR.
- Angie has gone on 12 site visits. Two more visits are to be set up.
- Practices of interest by the landowners include: 5 ponds, 4 wetlands, 4 oxbow restorations, 1 water control structure.
- The next step is to wait for paperwork to be completed with the engineering firm. Once an engineer is hired project discussions will begin. The viable projects will be reviewed by the Technical Committee. Then projects will be submitted for environmental reviews and remaining steps.

- **Community Assistance for Obtaining River Gages – Shirley Johnson, Hydrologist, Hydrologic and Hydraulic Branch, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, Rock Island**

Shirley Johnson was unable to attend the meeting. Angie Auel reported that Crane Creek will receive a river gage.

- **Water Monitoring Needs for 2018 – Discussion**

Elaine Hughes reported that she will not be coordinating the water sampling this year. Angie Auel, Ashley Sherrets and Elaine will meet to discuss future plans.

- **Other**

Ron Lenth announced that there will be a Bremer County Field Day June 6th at 1:30 to learn about the new IFC weather stations the Iowa Flood Center is deploying. I have attached a flyer with all the details.

The Iowa Watershed Approach (IWA) program is partnering with the Northeast Iowa RC&D and Turkey River WMA to host a bus tour in the Otter Creek Watershed in northeast Iowa on June 8th. Otter Creek is located within the Turkey River Watershed, and was part of the Iowa Watersheds Project (IWP), which served as a model for the IWA. Reservations are required.

- **Next Meeting**

The date for the next meeting has been set for July 17, 2018 at 1:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Elaine Hughes
Secretary