

Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Don Shonka at 1:34pm.

Motion to approve the agenda was made by John Kurtz, and seconded by Duane Meihost. Motion Passed.

Board Members present: Steven Smolik, *Mitchell County Supervisor*, Randy Leach, *City of Fredericksburg*, Jerry Steven, *Howard County*, David Lehman, *Bremer County*, Don Shonka, *Buchanan County Supervisor*, John Kurtz, *City of Independence*, Duane Meihost, *City of Frederika*, Gregg Eschweiler, *City of Tripoli*, Julie Althaus, *Buchanan County SWCD*, Kip Ladage, *Bremer County and City of Sumner*, Ron Lenth, *Bremer County SWCD*.

Others Present: Brian Keierleber, *Buchanan County Engineer*, Colleen Kinney, *Homeland Security and Emergency Management Department (IHSEMD)*, Rick Wulfekuhle, *Buchanan Emergency Management*, Kate Giannini, *Iowa Flood Center*, Ross Evelsizer, *Northeast Iowa RC&D*, Tori Nimrod, *Northeast Iowa RC&D*, Hilary Pierce, *Iowa Learning Farms*, Luke Monat, *Shive-Hattery Engineering*, Josh Balk, *IDNR*, Dave Mack, *Buchanan County NRCS*.

There was no quorum at this meeting, therefore, February 25th, 2020 meeting minutes were not brought to motion.

New Business

- **Watershed Planning Update: Northeast Iowa RC&D**

Tori Nimrod and Ross Evelsizer, Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed Coordinators with Northeast Iowa RC&D presented updates on the IWA implementation projects. Projects included in the first bid package, bid in December of 2019, have been constructed or will be finishing construction this fall. One of those projects is a wetland located just outside of the City of Quasqueton, on City and Buchanan County property. Bid packet #2 was awarded in late July to German Enterprises LLC for \$132,763. The bid packet includes 5 pond projects, which will be constructed this fall or spring of 2021. Bid packets 3 and 4 are waiting for approval of the Tier 2 environmental review before they can be bid out. This packet will include 7 projects, 4 located on IDNR property and 3 located on private property. Because of the high cost estimate of approximately \$629,000 these projects will likely be split into two bid packets. The next group of projects are currently being put into a Tier 2 review packet that will be sent to IDEA for approval. This packet includes 6 projects for an estimated \$499,200. Following approval of the Tier 2 review, these projects will be bid out in the winter of 2020-2021 and constructed during the 2021 construction season. The remaining 6 projects are still in the planning phase. Engineer drawings and cost estimates are being finalized and waiting for landowner approval. Total cost estimate for all projects is just over 2 million dollars, which is close to the allotted construction budget for the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed. Project coordinators will be monitoring construction costs and estimates closely to ensure they are spending as close to the total grant funds as possible. All construction of IWA projects has to be completed by December 2021. Project coordinators are hoping for another mild weathered 2021 construction season.

Project coordinators shared 2019 Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed water sampling results. Currently in 2019, samples are collected twice a month during May and June (on the first and third Monday of the month) and once a month (on the third Monday) from July to October. Samples are gathered from 22 locations across

the UWRW. This data provides a snapshot of the entire watershed on a given day each month and allows the comparison of one stream/watershed to the next. Once samples are gathered they are packed on ice, and sent to the Coe College laboratory for analysis. The samples are analyzed for concentrations of E.coli Bacteria, Nitrate, Total Phosphate as P, Dissolved Reactive Phosphorus, Chloride, Sulfate, and Total Suspended Solids. 2019 results show that many of the sampling locations resulted in very high average sample concentrations of E.coli Bacteria. Upper Wapsipinicon River Sampling report is attached with these minutes. The 2020 water sampling year is almost complete, with just one sampling day left in October. Suspect results from Coe College in 2021. To see more detailed water quality data or to compare data from different water sampling years visit <https://upperwapsi.org/plan/challenges-and-opportunities/water-quality/>.

Project Coordinators also updated attendees on an upcoming event hosted by Iowa Learning Farms. Iowa Learning farms is hosting a virtual field day on October 15th that highlights the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed IWA projects. Project Coordinators, Chad Staton (Quasky Mayor) and a private landowner will be pre-recording video interviews and other content for the event of the 15th. Project coordinators and Project engineers from Shive-Hattery will be available during the virtual field day to answer questions views may have about the WMA and IWA project. Project Coordinators will be sending out more information about the event in the near future.

- **Future of the Upper Wapsipinicon River WMA Project Coordinator**

Project Coordinator, Ross Evelsizer continued the discussion about how the WMA board would like to continue after the completion of the IWA project. Evelsizer summarized funding strategies Watershed Management Authorities could use to raise funds to continue the support of a watershed coordinator. Ross explained that the Turkey River WMA requests each WMA Member entity donates a flat fee towards their Project Coordinator to perform duties such as, coordinate WMA meetings, apply for outside funding and update the WMA website. The Upper Wapsipinicon River WMA 28E agreement does not allow the WMA to collect annual fees from member entities. Donations from member entities would have to be completely voluntary. Multiple board members suggested that Northeast Iowa RC&D put together funding scenarios for discussion at the next WMA meeting. Scenarios would include total funding goal and coordination duties associated with each goal amount.

- **Community Flood Resilience Action Plan for the City of Quasky**

Northeast Iowa RC&D, Ross Evelsizer, updated the WMA board on the Flood Resilience Action Planning with the City of Quasqueton. After completion of the vulnerable population survey project coordinators received lots of valuable information and insights about the community and how residents are currently responding and mitigating flooding in their homes. The next step was to conduct larger public meetings that would include discussion between city officials and residents about how they can both better manage their current infrastructure to reduce the impacts of flooding. Due to the implications of COVID-19, project coordinators have not been able to facilitate public meetings. Project coordinators met with the Resiliency team at the University of Iowa to talk about alternative methods for continuing the Resilience Action Planning. After discussion, project coordinators decided to not conduct public meetings, but instead focus on developing a more detailed analysis of current and potential mitigation efforts that would benefit the community. Plan will include specific actions that the city can take to create a more flood resilient community.

- **Partner Updates**

Kate Giannini, *Iowa Flood Center* presented updates on projects from other IWA watersheds in the state. She explained that the Middle Cedar, Upper Iowa, and the English River Watersheds all have project completed. She also updated the board on the status of the Iowa Flood Center COVID protocol. Employees continue to work from home and attend virtual meetings and events.

Josh Balk, Iowa DNR introduced himself to the board. Josh has taken Mary Beth Stevenson's position with the Iowa DNR. Josh also updated the board on a couple of grants available such as the RCPP due November 4th and the Comprehensive Water Quality Management Planning Grant due November 6th.

Hilary Pierce, Iowa State University Extension Outreach Specialist, is working on completing the Education and Outreach Plan for the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed. She requested that if people have photos of the Wapsi to send them her way for use in the Plan.

- **Next Meeting Date**

Project Coordinators will be reaching out to board members about potential meeting dates.

Meeting adjourned at 2:14pm.