

## Minutes

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

Motion to approve the agenda was made by, Steve Smolik and seconded by John Kurtz. Motion Passed.

Board Members present: Steve Smolik, *Mitchell County Supervisor*, Randy Leach, *City of Fredericksburg*, David Lehman, *Bremer County*, Don Shonka, *Buchanan County Supervisor*, John Kurtz, *City of Independence*, Duane Meihost, *City of Frederika*, Gregg Eschweiler, *City of Tripoli*, Kip Ladage, *Bremer County and City of Sumner*, Ron Lenth, *Bremer County SWCD*, Chris Eibey, *Delaware County SWCD*, Thomas Eiben, *Central City*, Dennis Goemaat, *Linn County*.

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*, Dan Jensen, *Shive-Hattery Engineering*, Josh Balk, *IDNR*, Dave Mack, *Buchanan County NRCS*, Andrew Dunham, *Tallgrass Prairie Center*, Allen Bonini, *IDNR*, Marty St. Clair, *Coe College*, Julie Kearney, *Univ. of Iowa Center for Evaluation and Assessment*, Staci Mueller, *Tallgrass Prairie Center*, Larry Gioffredi, *Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Department (IHSEMD)*, Huan Liu .

Motion to approve the Minutes from both the February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and September 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2020 Meetings was made by John Kurtz and seconded by Gregg Eschweiler. Motion Passed.

## New Business

- **Tile Line Video Project - Andrew Dunham, Prairie on Farms Program Manager, Iowa Tallgrass Prairie Center**

Andrew presented his project that investigates root growth in tile drainage systems by collecting video from inside tile lines. His research aims to gain insight into ways different vegetation, such as native perennials, affect tile lines. Andrew showed a video from inside a tile line. The video showed root growth in the tile line that was from vegetation such as Reed Canary grass and a variety of weed tree species such as willow and cottonwood. Andrew explained they are continuing this research and are currently looking for more tile systems to collect video on. If anyone is interested in having their tile line looked at or know a landowner that may be interested they should contact Andrew.

Email: [Andrew.dunham@uni.edu](mailto:Andrew.dunham@uni.edu)

Office Phone: 319-273-3828

Cell Phone: 641-990-5249

- **Watershed Coordinator Update: Tori Nimrod, Northeast Iowa RC&D**

Tori Nimrod Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed Coordinator with Northeast Iowa RC&D presented updates on the IWA implementation project. Projects included in the first bid package, bid in December of 2019, have been constructed and were frost seeded in November. 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, two of the projects have been

graded, one is currently under construction, and the other two will likely be constructed in the 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 were submitted to IDEA for the Tier 2 review in October. Currently waiting on approval of Tier 2 Review. 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.

Tori also updated attendees on the Virtual Field Day event that was hosted by Iowa Learning Farms in October. The field day highlighted the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed IWA projects. Tori and Ross, Upper Wapsi Watershed Coordinators, Chad Staton, Quasky Mayor, and Daniel Jensen, Project Engineer with Shive-Hattery were featured during the field day. If you were not able to view the field day live, below are links where you can watch the recorded version.

[Watch the Virtual Field Day on YouTube](#)

Iowa Learning Farms Link: <https://www.iowalearningfarms.org/virtual-field-day-archive>

- **Future of the Upper Wapsipinicon River WMA Project Coordinator – Ross Evelsizer, Northeast Iowa RC&D**

Ross explained and outlined two scenarios each with a correlating annual funding goal. Scenario 1 includes basic tasks that work to keep the WMA functioning as a group, while also identifying and applying for grants that fit the priorities of the UWRWMA Board as detailed in the Resiliency Plan. Scenario 1 has a goal funding amount of \$7,500. Based on the number of member entities (32) and the assumption that not every entity will donate to the WMA (60% of entities do contribute), the RC&D recommends a \$300 request be made to each WMA member entity. Scenario 2 includes all tasks in scenario 1 with the addition of outreach and education, water sampling coordination, and additional grant proposal opportunities. Scenario 2 has a goal funding amount of \$15,000. Based on the number of member entities (32) and the assumption that not every entity will donate to the WMA, the RC&D recommends a \$500 request be made to each WMA member entity for this scenario.

During discussion, board members and others in attendance indicated that they would like to shoot for the funding goal outlined in Scenario 2. They also indicated the continuation of the water sampling is important, so they want to make sure that continues. Originally, the cost of analysis of water samples by Coe College was not included in the total cost estimate of scenario 2 that was presented at this WMA meeting. Board members indicated that it is easier for member entities if the cost for water sampling were spread more evenly throughout the watershed, and if it were figured into the total goal amount so as not to have multiple requests each year. Ross and Tori indicated that they would adjust the water sampling task and annual financial goal for scenario 2 and send the updated version to each WMA Board Member.

Many board members in attendance indicated they were going to go back to their respective councils, supervisors, and commissioners to ask that their entity make a financial contribution to the Upper Wapsipinicon WMA. Ross reminded the board and attendees that this funding request is completely **voluntary**. According to the bylaws, the Upper Wapsi WMA cannot require a membership fee. Ross also emphasized that this funding proposal is for the **budget year 2022**, so councils, supervisors, and commissioners should adjust the timing of their requests accordingly. The IWA project continues to fund the Upper Wapsi Project Coordinator until the end of calendar year 2021. Ross and/or Tori with Northeast Iowa RC&D are available and very willing to attend WMA member entity meetings to discuss the Upper Wapsi WMA and funding request if requested.

- **Partner Updates**

Kate Giannini, *Iowa Flood Center* presented updates on projects from other IWA watersheds in the state. Watersheds are summarized below:

- Upper Iowa River: 11 Projects constructed or being constructed this fall.
- Clear Creek: 15 projects constructed or being constructed this fall.
- Middle Cedar River: 66 Projects constructed
- English River: 326 projects constructed. Majority of them are small water and sediment control basins (WASCOB) structures that were widely accepted by landowners in this area.
- North Raccoon River: 4 Projects to be bid this winter.
- East and West Nishnabotna River: All projects will be combined into one bid packet, which will be implemented in steps during the 2021 construction season.

Allen Bonini, Iowa DNR updated the board on some role changes that are occurring within the Iowa DNR. Josh Balk will now be serving multiple roles including implementation of the Dry Run Creek Project, and source water protection planning and implementation with area communities. Temporarily he will continue to serve as the Eastern Iowa Basin Coordinator until that position is refilled.

- **Next Meeting Date**

Project Coordinators will be reaching out to board members about potential meeting dates for February or March.

Meeting adjourned at 2:32pm. Motion made to adjourn by Duane Meihost seconded by Chris Eibey