

Minutes

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Don Shonka at 1:31pm.

Motion to approve the agenda was made by, Steve Smolik and seconded by Chad Staton. 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*, 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*, Chad Staton, *City of Quasqueton*, Sheila Steffen *City of Dunkerton*.

Others Present: Brian Keierleber, *Buchanan County Engineer*, 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*, Andrew Dunham, *Tallgrass Prairie Center*, Valerie Decker, *Univ. of Iowa Center for Evaluation and Assessment*, Dan Cohen, *Buchanan County Conservation*.

Motion to approve the Minutes from both the November 24, 2020 Meeting was made by John Kurtz and seconded by Chad Staton. Motion Passed.

New Business

- **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. A table was presented showing the cost estimates, awarded contractors and project status of each project planned for the Upper Wapsipinicon WMA project. A total of just under \$2 million dollars is allocated towards projects in the eligible area located in Buchanan and Delaware Counties. Landowner contributions to the projects is estimated to be over \$88,000. See Attachment 1 for more information. Coordinators will continue to monitor 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.

Board members in attendance brought up the idea of implementing signage at some of the project locations, specifically the ones on DNR/ public property that are accessible to the public. Project Coordinator and Kate Giannini, Iowa Flood Center explained that the Flood Center is donating a limited number of 8' by 4' IWA project signs to each watershed than can be installed at project sites. If more are needed, Project Coordinators will explore implementing additional signs at other project locations throughout the watershed.

- **Water Sampling 2020 Results: Tori Nimrod, Northeast Iowa RC&D**

Project Coordinator, Tori Nimrod presented results from the 2020 water sampling year. A short report was given to the board showing the average results for each sampling site in the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed (See Attachment 2). Because a small number of data points are recorded each year, coordinators are hesitant to make conclusions about the data at this time. Overall majority of sample averages were over

the recommended Phosphorus and E. coli levels, which are based on drinking water standards of 0.1mg/L and 235CFU/100ml respectively. Continued analysis and sampling in future years will help build a large database that can be used for grant applications and other future funding opportunities. Board members requested that data be shown in a way that compares sampling data year to year to see if there are any general trends. Project Coordinator, Ross Evlaiser warned board members to not make any hard conclusions from the data due to a small sample size, but would be more than willing to put that together to share with the board to analyze.

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

Based on questions after the previous board meeting in November, 2020 Project Coordinators wanted to provide the opportunity for board members to discuss and ask questions about the future coordinator funding strategies. Ross explained after the previous board meeting it seemed members present were interested in exploring duties associated with “scenario 2” with a total goal amount of \$18,000. 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 2 includes all tasks in scenario 1 with the addition of outreach and education, water sampling analysis and coordination, and additional grant proposal opportunities. Scenario 2 has a goal funding amount of \$18,000. 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 \$600 request be made to each WMA member entity for this scenario.

During discussion, several board members indicated they have discussed budgets with their entities and have set aside funds for the WMA for fiscal year 2022. Questions arose regarding the difficulty for counties who are members of multiple WMA's, each asking for contributions. Project coordinators acknowledged the difficulty and reminded members that their contribution is completely voluntary, and that coordinators are more than happy to attend City Council, Supervisor, or Commissioner meetings to help alleviate any questions entity boards may have. Since cities, counties and SWCD's have different budget periods, it was discussed that the board should make a formal funding requests before March 1st to member entities, so that there is ample time for member entities to plan for fiscal year 2022.

Board Member Chad Staton, Quasqueton Mayor, made the motion to have Project Coordinators (Northeast Iowa RC&D) send a letter (See attachment 3) from the WMA Board to each Upper Wapsipinicon WMA member entity requesting a **voluntary** contribution of \$600 for fiscal year 2022, so that the WMA board can reach their total goal amount of \$18,000 per year, which is equal to the amount of funds needed to continue Northeast Iowa RC&D's role as part time Project Coordinators responsible for completing all tasks associated with Appendix A, included in attachment 3 with these minutes.

Motion was seconded by Randy Leach. Motion Passed

- **Partner Updates**

Board Member John Kurtz updated the board that the City of Independence is implementing a Stormwater Utility Fee. If you would like to view a more detailed description of the City's Stormwater Utility Fee, please contact Ross or Tori and they will send it to you directly.

Kate Giannini with the Iowa Flood Center shared with the board that the 2021 Iowa Water Conference will be a virtual event held on April 6-8th, 2021.

Registration information: <https://www.regcytes.extension.iastate.edu/iwc2021/register/>

- **Next Meeting Date**

To be determined

Meeting adjourned at 2:26pm. Motion made to adjourn by Kip Ladage seconded by John Kurtz.

Attachment 1: Project Coordinator Update

Project Name	Project Type	BID #	Cost-share paid	Total Project Cost*	Contractor	Project Status
UW-001	Pond	UW-BID-001	\$ 1,900.00	\$ 26,265.20	Dan Obereckling Concrete and Excavating	Completed Fall 2020
UW-003	Pond		\$ 4,240.00	\$ 51,176.00		
UW-022-CITY OF QUASQUETON	Wetland		\$ -	\$ 22,239.10		
UW-002	Pond	UW-BID-002	\$ 3,570.00	\$ 25,487.92	German Enterprises	Spring 2021
UW-006	Pond		\$ 2,340.00	\$ 19,129.74		Complete, need seeding
UW-011	Pond		\$ 5,150.00	\$ 52,817.02		Spring 2021
UW-020	Grade Stablization Sturcture		\$ 1,010.00	\$ 11,091.92		Complete, need seeding
UW-023	Pond		\$ 3,430.00	\$ 24,236.92		Spring 2021
UW-010	Pond	UW-BID-003 (A)	\$ 2,274.80	\$ 24,639.50	Dan Obereckling Concrete and Excavating	Construction Spring 2021
UW-012	Oxbow		\$ 1,560.00	\$ 25,675.00		
UW-027	Pond		\$ 5,020.00	\$ 60,084.75		
UW-016-IDNR CEDAR ROCK	Oxbow	UW-BID-003 (B)	\$ -	\$ 198,984.00	Cole Excavating	
UW-015-IDNR MANGOLD TRACT	Wetland	UW-BID-004	\$ -	\$ 215,121.50	Crane Construction	Construction Spring 2021
UW-024-IDNR BUFFALO CREEK	WETLAND		\$ -	\$ 78,385.60		
UW-028-IDNR	WETLAND		\$ -	\$ 22,992.00		
UW-019	Wetland	UW-BID-005	\$ 5,820.00	\$ 59,700.00	TBD	BID out Feburary
UW-029	Pond		\$ 6,830.00	\$ 82,130.00		
UW-032	Oxbow		\$ 1,070.00	\$ 12,700.00		
UW-033	Oxbow		\$ 930.00	\$ 11,300.00		
UW-030	pond	UW-BID-006		\$ 86,100.00	TBD	Bid out March
UW-031 (Buchanan County)	On-Road Detention		\$ -	\$ 345,500.00		
UW-007	Oxbow, Pond			\$ 39,820.00		Tier 2 Review Submitted, Designs being finalized
UW-034	Grass Waterway			\$ 64,400.00		
UW-037	Grass Waterway			\$ 111,500.00		
UW-040 (Buchanan County)	On-Road Detention			\$ 143,600.00		
UW-042	Pond			\$ 86,600.00		
UW-044	WASCOBs			\$ 51,810.00		
UW-045	Pond			\$ 41,900.00		
TOTAL			\$ 45,144.80	\$ 1,995,386.17		

* Total Project Costs represent bid or estimated amounts, not actual spent at the completion of the project.



Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed 2020 Sampling Results

The Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed Management Authority started water sampling with the help from partner organizations in 2015. Since then, samples were gathered in 2016, 2017, 2019, and 2020. Due to lack of funding and volunteers no samples were collected during the 2018 season. In 2020, 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. Water samples are collected on the same day by volunteers and members of private organizations including, Buchanan SWCD, Buchanan County Conservation, Iowa State Extension, NRCS, Linn County Conservation, Black Hawk County Health Department, Chickasaw County Conservation, and many more. 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. Below is a summary of results from the 2020 sampling season.

Table1. 2020 sampling results for each sampling site.

site_id	Watershed	TSS	DRP	CI	NO3-N	SO4	E coli	Total P
Blackhawk_12	Lower Crane Creek	10.56	0.35	23.50	6.98	16.13	330.88	0.45
Blackhawk_13	Camp Creek-Wapsi River	20.28	0.13	14.79	5.38	16.25	69.25	0.39
Bremer Baskin	Unknown	21.66	0.14	17.76	8.07	15.75	2132.15	0.28
Bremer_12A	Upper Crane Creek	14.30	0.10	21.10	7.10	18.60	571.36	0.29
Bremer_14	Unknown	19.70	0.13	17.90	7.60	22.60	1249.80	0.29
Bremer_8	Lower East Branch Wapsi River	23.30	0.20	15.90	7.00	23.80	2398.20	0.43
Buchanan_15	Village of Fairbank-Little Wapsi River	15.10	0.14	15.90	7.80	22.50	791.91	0.26
Buchanan_18	Otter Creek	12.60	0.11	18.50	6.80	21.90	586.49	0.23
Buchanan_19	Pine Creek	13.30	0.08	14.70	7.60	20.70	242.06	0.17
Buchanan_20	Silver Creek-Buffalo Creek	20.40	0.10	15.10	7.40	20.80	440.15	0.23
Chickasaw_3	Mead Creek	23.60	0.12	13.20	6.10	19.30	558.13	0.29
Chickasaw_4	Elk Creek	10.95	0.09	12.51	5.19	12.69	562.27	0.15
Chickasaw_5	Village of Ionia-Wapsi River	28.90	0.17	12.80	5.90	14.70	248.03	0.37
Chickasaw_6	Spring Branch-Little Wapsi River	26.50	0.13	13.80	5.40	17.20	321.34	0.30
Chickasaw_7	Middle East Branch Wapsi River	16.00	0.12	14.20	7.00	25.20	366.93	0.21
Delaware_21	Silver Creek-Buffalo Creek	8.30	0.08	17.40	10.30	19.70	624.99	0.12
Delaware_23	Nugents Creek-Buffalo Creek	6.00	0.08	21.50	11.20	17.90	1267.00	0.10
Linn_22	Walton Creek-Wapsi River	35.00	0.28	16.50	4.60	17.80	305.00	0.58
Linn_23	Nugents Creek-Buffalo Creek	32.80	0.15	15.40	4.80	17.70	115.67	0.41
Linn_24	Heatons Creek-Wapsi River	33.30	0.14	15.40	4.70	17.60	134.71	0.41
Linn_25	Crows Creek-Wapsi River	56.50	0.17	14.40	5.50	16.90	2352.00	0.48
Linn_26	Crows Creek-Wapsi River	23.50	0.13	15.60	7.30	19.00	847.11	0.25

Table 1. shows the average value for each sampling location in 2020. According to the EPA, Iowa's nitrate water quality standard for fish and water consumption is 10 mg/L as Nitrate-N. 2020 averages above 10mg/L for nitrate are shown in red. E. coli concentrations above 235CFU/100ml E. coli represents Iowa's single sample maximum water quality standard for primary contact recreational use. Majority of 2020 sampling location averaged above 253CFU/100ml. These values are also shown in red. E. coli bacteria as an indicator species continues to be a great concern for the UWR watershed. The EPA also recommends concentrations of total phosphorus to be less than 0.1mg/L to prevent excessive growth of aquatic plants in surface waters, which can lead to eutrophication. Phosphorus concentrations often directly correlates to sedimentation and erosion of soils into surface waters. All sampling sites in the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed exceed this recommendation. Therefore, phosphorus and sedimentation are another major concern for the watershed.

For more information on the 2020 sampling year, and other Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed Sampling results go to <https://upperwapsi.org/plan/challenges-and-opportunities/water-quality/>.

Continued data collection over a wide spatial area of the UWR Watershed allows for a better understanding of the water quality problems in the Watershed, and allows landowners, citizens and organizations to find ways to solve the issues related to poor water quality. Extensive water monitoring data can result in increased funding for effective watershed projects, bringing tens of millions of dollars in state and federal cost share to help private landowners implement voluntary conservation practices, as well as funding for SWCDs and other organizations to hire conservation professionals, including technicians and engineers, to provide free technical assistance to watershed residents.

Attachment 3: Draft Letter and Project Coordinator Tasks



To Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed Management Authority Board Members:

Dear UWRWMA Member,

In 2015, 32 political cities, counties and soil and water conservation districts in the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed came together as a board to reduce the risks of flooding and to improve and protect water quality in the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed. Since that time, dozens of projects have been implemented across the watershed to move toward these goals. As a part of the State Iowa Watershed Approach Project, we helped the Iowa Flood Center prove their flood prevention models in the entire watershed, while at the same time proving to ourselves that implementation of private and public structures in a watershed can reduce flooding. Our Upper Wapsipinicon River WMA also developed an online interactive Watershed Resiliency Plan, which serves as a model plan for Iowa watersheds. Our UWRWMA Board is active in the state WMAs of Iowa organization, which advocates for dedicated state funding for WMA plan implementation.

The UWRWMA Board has discussed the need for coordination and technical assistance that will help guide and inform the efforts of our multijurisdictional group. Northeast Iowa RC&D has provided exceptional coordination and technical assistance in the past. As a nonprofit, the RC&D was able to provide coordination, technical assistance and will help us secure project funding by writing and helping us write state, federal and private grants. However, most of the projects have now concluded.

The UWRWMA Board feels that continued *coordination and technical assistance is vital for several reasons*. 1) There are now 26 WMAs. WMAs are the way of the future. 2) In Iowa, state and federal partners and funders recognize the importance of the WMAs and are discussing continued allocation of dedicated funding to *active* WMAs. At the same time, they are also discussing that WMAs will need to demonstrate local support. Several WMAs now pay for ongoing coordination and technical assistance through member contributions. 3) The UWRWMA Board has engaged in a learning process since its formation and as a result has become one of the most respected and knowledgeable group of watershed advocates in Iowa. 4) We currently have momentum that would be difficult to regain if lost. 5) Without coordination and technical assistance, we are unlikely to develop new projects and secure future grants.

The UWRWMA Board unanimously agreed to ask each UWRWMA city, county and soil and water conservation district member for a *voluntary* financial contribution. In order for the UWRWMA to reach our annual goal, we are asking each member entity to *voluntarily* contribute **\$600** annually for coordination and technical assistance from the RC&D. Our goal is to, raise at least **\$18,000/year** for continued coordination from Northeast Iowa RC&D. This funding will allow Northeast Iowa RC&D to have dedicated funding to pay a part-time UWRWMA Coordinator to the following tasks identified in **Attachment A**, which is included with this letter.

We appreciate your participation and support in our continued effort in the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed. If you have questions you may call me at 319-361-4541 or speak with Ross Eversizer or Tori Nimrod, who have been acting as our WMA Coordinators, at the RC&D 563-864-7112.

You may send your financial contribution to Northeast Iowa RC&D at PO Box 916 Postville, IA 52162 or your representative may deliver your contribution to the UWRWMA Board at the next WMA meeting. If you need to be invoiced, please contact RC&D.

Sincerely,

Don Shonka
UWRWMA Board Chair

Appendix A

The **UWRWMA Coordinator**, hired through Northeast Iowa RC&D will be responsible for the following tasks as time and funding allow.



Scenario 1:

Goal Amount: \$7,500/year

- **Task 1: Coordinate and Facilitate UWRWMA Quarterly and Annual Board Meetings**
 - Work with UWRWMA Board Chair to develop and distribute agendas, which are by law required to be publicly posted by members
 - Record and distribute UWRWMA Board minutes
 - Help the UWRWMA Board track and manage appointed representatives, reappointments, and contact information
- **Task 2: Coordinate and Facilitate UWRWMA Executive Committee and Other Committee Meetings as Assigned**
- **Task 3: Support and Represent the UWRWMA Board at Statewide Meetings and Conferences**
 - Prepare and provide supporting materials and presentations for UWRWMA Board members as needed
 - Attend and present on behalf of the UWRWMA Board as needed
 - Attend meetings as the UWRWMA Coordinator: WMA Coordinators from all Iowa WMAs are asked to attend and report or present at *WMAs of Iowa* meetings and Iowa DNR statewide WMA meetings (the WMA Coordinator is a designated voting member)
 - Attend and present as needed at other statewide meetings held by partners, including but not limited to meetings of potential funders for WMAs, SWCDs, cities and counties.
 - Attend and present at other conferences (Conference organizers who bring together our partner entities such as ISAC, Iowa League of Cities, Iowa Water Conference, etc., have asked us to develop presentations and present at their conferences.)
- **Task 4: Website Maintenance for www.upperwapsi.org, the UWRWMA's Main Communication Method**
 - Post agendas and minutes, news and events relevant to the UWRWMA or Iowa WMAs
 - Maintain website functionality and update data and maps as needed
- **Task 5 Grant Identification (up to 2 per year)**
 - Research and identify grants that fit priorities of the UWRWMA Board as detailed in the Resiliency Plan
 - Maintain a Data Base of potential grants for the UWRWMA Board
 - Distribute information about potential grants to the WMA members at WMA Board meetings
 - Work with UWRWMA Board and/or committees to identify specific priority grants
- **Task 6 Grant Proposal Development and Coordination**
 - Work with the UWRWMA Executive Committee to identify priority project goals, areas, and potential partners for specific grants
 - Identifying and secure matching funds for grants as needed
 - Develop proposal narratives and required documents to complete and grant applications
 - Submit grant applications through state and federal grant submission programs and other means

Scenario 2:

Goal Amount: \$18,000/year

- **Task 1: Perform all tasks associated with Scenario 1**
- **Task 2: Coordinate Yearly Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed water sampling efforts**
 - Includes cost of analysis for 21 sampling sites throughout the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed
 - Work with UWRWMA Partners in each county to continue water sampling efforts by organizing volunteers
 - Develop a yearly water quality report from water sampling data results

- Update water quality database on the Upper Wapsi WMA website.
- **Task 3: Grant Proposal Development for Member Entities (up to 3 per year)**
 - Work with the UWRWMA member entities to identify priority project goals, areas, and potential partners for specific grants
 - Identifying and secure matching funds for grants as needed
 - Develop proposal narratives and required documents to complete and grant applications
 - Submit grant applications through state and federal grant submission programs and other means

Note: Competing grant applications from WMA member entities will be prioritized by the WMA board

- **Task 4: Coordinate Watershed Outreach**
 - Develop presentations, and promotional materials for distribution by WMA Members and Watershed Coordinator
 - Develop a Quarterly Newsletter that outlines WMA tasks, watershed news and up-coming events.
 - Attend City Council, Commissioner, and Supervisor meetings as requested to inform WMA member entities about WMA activities, implementation progress and partnership opportunities.

Work with the WMA board to design, determine location and develop a funding strategy for watershed boundary signage throughout the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed.