

## **Central South Branch Kishwaukee River Watershed Steering Committee Minutes (October 19, 2023)**

The Central South Branch Kishwaukee River Watershed Steering Committee (WSC) met on October 19, 2023 at 3:00 pm in the DeKalb County Administrative Building, Conference Room-East, in Sycamore, Illinois. In attendance were: Committee Members: Josh Clark, Michael Haines, Derek Hiland, Dean Johnson, Paul Kuhn, Maureen Little, John Lynch, Janice Melton, and Teri Spartz, along with WSC Staff, Marcellus Anderson. Also, in attendance were: Alyssa Seguss, City Administrator for the City of Genoa; Peggy Anice (formerly Doty); Paul Koeppen, jr.; and, Cecily Cunz, of Baxter & Woodman Consulting Engineers.

### **Call to Order / Roll Call**

WSC members Paul Bafia, Ryan Block, and Nathan Schwartz were absent.

The Committee members and attendees introduced themselves.

### **Approval of Agenda**

*Committee Action: Mr. Kuhn moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. Spartz, and the motion carried unanimously.*

### **Approval of the Meeting Minutes**

*Committee Action: Mr. Haines moved to approve the minutes of the August 31, 2023 meeting, seconded by Mr. Hiland, and the motion carried unanimously.*

### **Education Strategy Update**

Mr. Johnson shared with the Committee that he was looking for some assistance with the requirements of the Watershed Grant issued by IEPA. He informed that one of things that they were required to do was provide educational components as part of the watershed planning process. He talked about the following as some of the draft items he submitted to the IEPA, noting that they would need willing participants to step forward and assist with making them happen.

- He described how they had held bus tours of the previous two watersheds, and were looking at having one for this watershed. He described the benefits of having a bus tour and informed the WSC members that they were looking for ideas some good sites to go visit on the tour, and people to host stops along the tour. He estimated that the tour would likely occur sometime around June 28, 2024.
- He talked about the water quality monitoring being done by NIU.
- He noted that they were looking to the communities to help with planning a municipal green infrastructure workshop. The hope being to bring together the community leaders and public to learn about green infrastructure, and educate people about retro-fits and how it could fit with new construction. He noted that these plans could be used by communities to get implementation grants. This workshop is slated to occur sometime in the fall of 2024.

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- He noted that they want to set up some farmer shop talks, where they hope to bring together the farming community in small groups to educate them about the watershed in their local area and the benefits of watershed planning.
- He informed the WSC that he was working with Ms. Anice to try and set up a Watershed Educators Workshop. He expects this will likely occur prior to the Bus Tour.
- He talked about the Watershed website and the information contained on it. He noted that he was hoping to add video segments to the website.

Mr. Johnson informed the WSC that at the end of the process, in addition to the actual Watershed Plan, there will be an executive summary of the plan that will be available to the communities, which can be easily shared and understood by community members. He reiterated that he was looking for help and ideas from everyone to make the process work.

Ms. Cunz noted that during the development of the previous watershed plan, they had invited in a speaker to talk about mussels.

### **Watershed Characteristics Assessment (Part 1)**

Ms. Cunz gave a presentation on the history and present conditions of the watershed. Her presentation detailed the geology of the watershed, how it formed, and how it was affected by settlement and development of the area. She also elaborated on how the watershed was broken down into sub-watersheds.

Mr. Johnson asked Ms. Cunz to elaborate on the need for wetlands, and she talked about the benefits and role wetlands play in a watershed.

Mr. Haines inquired whether there were any incentives in place to restore wetlands. Ms. Cunz and Mr. Johnson explained that there are programs in place, noting the existence of Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and other wetland restoration programs, and pointing out other options, such as wetland mitigation banking.

Ms. Cunz talked about the communities within the watershed and their demographics.

Ms. Cunz then gave an overview of the draft ordinance that will be prepared and presented to the Communities and the County. She talked the things the communities will need to do as part of the process, explaining what will be needed to develop it. She talked about the Code & Ordinance Worksheet, and the role it will play.

Mr. Johnson emphasized to the WSC that the ordinance and the watershed plan will not be requirements, but voluntary tools that the communities can use, and talked about the opportunities that doing so could bring.

Ms. Spartz highlighted that having a watershed plan in place is a lever for other grant opportunities.

Ms. Cunz noted that she would be sending out the forms for the communities to begin working on, and talked to the members about who she should be directing the forms to.

### **Next Meeting Date**

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Mr. Cunz detailed the following rough schedule of upcoming items to occur at future meetings:

January	Watershed Characteristics, part 2
March	Water Quality and Initial Modeling
April	Goals Workshop
June	Bus Tour
August	Critical Areas and Action Plan
October	Implementation and Outreach Plan

Mr. Johnson elaborated on the Goals Workshop, its purpose and what they hoped to get out of it.

Mr. Haines noted that one of the most important things about the plan was that it will allow communities access to funding that otherwise would not be available.

The WSC decided the next meeting date would be January 18, 2024, at 3:00 pm in the East Conference Room of the DeKalb County Administrative Building.

**Adjournment**

*Committee Action: The WSC unanimously moved to adjourn.*

**Respectfully submitted,**

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**Dean Johnson**  
**Chair, WSC**

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