

OWRC SACG Meeting

MINUTES

SEPTEMBER 21, 2016

9:00 AM

OWDA

MEETING CALLED BY	Brian Hall, OEPA - DSW
TYPE OF MEETING	OWRC/SACG Bi-monthly
ATTENDEES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brian Hall, OEPA –DSW• Karl Gebhardt, OEPA• Kevin Fowler, OEPA – DSW• Steve Grossman, OWDA• Zuzanna Bohrerova, OSU – Water Resources Center• Sue Daly, PUCO• Keith Banachowski, USGS• Alauddin Aluaddin, OEPA – DEFA• Pejmaan Fallah, OEPA – DEFA• Lincoln Stanley, USDA• Jim Raab, ODNR• Brian Stubbs, Cleveland Water Alliance
	Next meeting November 10, 2016

Agenda topics

WELCOME AND REVIEW OF THE MEETING NOTES

B. HALL

DISCUSSION	Brian Hall conducted the meeting, which started at 9:00 AM. Brian welcomed everyone, asked for introductions, and went over the agenda.
CONCLUSIONS	Meeting notes from the May 2016 meeting have been posted to the web page. There are no notes from the July meeting since the meeting was canceled.

UPDATE ON SUNSETTING THE OWRC

B. HALL

DISCUSSION	<p>As of early June the OWRC was not listed as a council that would be sunset. The legislature is in recess right now and will not return until after the election. The direction of the OWRC must be discussed. It is a good idea to get agencies together and the value of the OWRC is in the SACG meetings. An MOU is proposed for SACG if the sunsetting does occur.</p> <p>How frequent should the SACG meetings occur going forward? Every 6 months is not often enough but every 4 months is difficult because of other scheduled meetings. Quarterly would probably be best.</p> <p>Would we need to change the bylaws? Probably</p> <p>Would the sunset eliminate the Public Advisory Group? Yes, it would end all three groups.</p> <p>It is proposed that the meetings continue to be held on Wednesdays. The meetings should occur in February, May, August, and November on the second Wednesday of the month. The last meeting of the year will be held with the WMAO Conference. The proposal is adopted.</p>
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CONCLUSIONS

SACG meetings will be held quarterly starting in November. 2017 meetings will be held on the second Wednesday of February, May, August, and November.

LAKE ERIE DREDGING

KARL GEBHARDT

DISCUSSION

Legislation has been passed that prohibits open lake disposal of dredge material in Lake Erie by 2020. That raises the question of what to do with 1.5 million cubic yards of material. There is exception in the law for economic hardship that may be used.

There has been a disagreement with the Army Corps of Engineers over open lake disposal of the sediment. In looking at balancing economic factors and environmental factors, it is more expensive to put it in a disposal facility than dispose of it the lake. The difference in cost between open lake disposal and other disposal methods has to be covered by someone.

The standards on open lake disposal are set by the Corps. They are saying that open lake disposal is safe. Ohio EPA is saying that it is not.

Do you agree with the Assessment? No in the case of Cleveland because of the PCBs present in the dredge material. Perhaps with Toledo but nutrients are such a big issue that open lake disposal is suspected as contributing to the nutrients.

Toledo creates the biggest dredging challenge because the shipping channel needs to be dredged 18 miles out into the lake. In Cleveland 265 ships a year go up the Cuyahoga River to the steel mill. It is critical to the economy that ships are able to navigate through the Cuyahoga River. We definitely do not want to shut down the harbors.

The type of sediment material is more granular the further east on the lake you go, which allows for more options for reuse. Unfortunately, a lot of times dredge material is competing with dirt, which is a much cheaper commodity.

Beneficial uses for dredge material are being explored upland and in water. OEPA is responsible for upland uses such as landfill cover and construction. ODNR is responsible for in water uses such as wetlands and island creation.

There is more immediacy on the in water solutions such as fisheries. Engineers are busy checking on opportunities. In water projects have been identified on Sandusky Bay. The Riverside Dredge Project is taking place on 40 acres of land that is owned by Toledo. The project consists of 4 catch basins between 5 and 6 acres that use a drainage system to dewater the dredge material. The water is discharged back into the river. Once dewatered the material will be used for agriculture to prove that it is good for crops and not harmful.

These projects are funded by a \$10 million bill. We are looking for a business development person. Transportation of the material is the biggest challenge. We are in the process of talking to the railroads about transportation. The best solution might be transporting through a pipeline. We are trying to make the use of the material economically attractive by making sure there aren't too many regulatory hurdles.

Recently OEPA held a workshop for stakeholders. The keynote speaker was Director Butler. Subgroups were set up to facilitate discussion. What resulted was a few hours of productive brainstorming. Feedback from the event was extremely positive, and stakeholders appreciated that OEPA was interested in their opinions.

Another way to approach the problem is to keep the harbors from getting filled up in the first place. To help achieve that goal on Ohio entrepreneur has invented the Bedload Interceptor. This device that sits at the bottom of the river interrupts the flow of the river

	enough to capture particles, which are then moved to the shore. There is currently one installed on the Cuyahoga River and another one will be installed on the Blanchard River.
CONCLUSIONS	

2017 WATER DATA COMPETITION

B. STUBBS

DISCUSSION	<p>The Cleveland Water Alliance is an economic development group (501C) that has created 219 new jobs through water companies. Along with the Gaspe Beaubien Foundation,</p> <p>Cleveland Water Alliance (CWA) has organized a data competition that ranges across all three basins of Lake Erie. Aquahacking of Lake Erie is an opportunity to drive innovation in the water technology sector and engage younger people pursuing technical careers.</p> <p>Partners for Aqua Hacking 2017 are IBM, AT&T, DigitalC, Joyce Foundation, Gund Foundation, Toledo Community Foundation, and Erb Foundation. CWA is also engaging key players from Detroit, Toledo, Cleveland, and Buffalo.</p> <p>The competition will be launching next year and will have \$100,000 in prize money. There are 200 ideas expected to be divided between the three basins that will cover 10-15 issues. The competition will have a semi-final in April and a final competition on May 2-3.</p> <p>The engagement of this competition is pretty broad. They are looking for students and professionals. At this point they do not know what will be developed.</p>
CONCLUSIONS	

PROGRAM UPDATE AND OTHER BUSINESS

SACG MEMBERS

DISCUSSION	<p><u>USGS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still in the process of moving. Hoping for the final transition to take place in October. • October 1 will be the official merger for Michigan and Ohio to be a single cost center. Externally there should be no difference. Internally it will allow USGS to share resources. • Jim Morris, Director, is retiring at the end of the year. <p><u>OEPA - DEFA</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding done for the solicitation of wastewater projects. This year \$5 million was set aside for septic tank improvements while there were requests for a total of \$13.3 million. All of the money was awarded. • Held a successful OEPA compliance assistance conference for air, hazardous waste, and water in late August. Next year OPEA plans on having their first sustainability conference. • \$10 million had been set aside for lead abatement in schools. OWDA added another \$2 million for the project. It is available to schools built prior to 1990. The program went live at the beginning of September. In the first week 12 grants were requested for \$5 million of the fund. • Have set up a package plant initiative to educate those with small systems that have had compliance issues in the last 2 years. Invited those plants to the district offices where they have been given a toolkit and trained on how to use it. A
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library has also been set up in each district. These workshops have occurred in NWDO, SWDO, and SEDO with good results.

- Expanding the E3 Environmental Excellence Award to communities.

OWDA

- The R&D Committee met last month to review this year's grant proposals. The USGS and OSU are the main players. The Committee will meet next week to make recommendations to the OWDA Board.
- Initiative of shared resources partnering for small communities. Trying to spread the word. There will be a webinar early next year with county commissioners.
- Last year OWDA gave out over \$1 billion, this year should be about \$950 million.
- Over the last year OWDA was able to cap interest rates and buy down rates. The result was over \$100 million in savings for communities.
- Also changed interest rate methodology over the last year. Now using an index that does not include extreme economic areas, resulting in lower rates.

ODNR

- No update

OSU

- The Water Resources Center Annual request for proposal for the grant program is due at the end of October. Expect about 20 proposals and will fund about 5.
- Ohio Valley Student Conference Competition is in April. There will be people from 10 universities mostly within Ohio.

USDA

- Had a good year – allocated all resources this year. Hoping for that to continue in 2017.
- Working on outreach.
- There is a historically low interest rates.

OEPA - DSW

- The Public Notice of the 2016 Water Quality Integrated Report went out this summer and the comment period is over. We will be sending the report to USEPA when all of the comments have been addressed.
- Hoping to publish the Nutrient Mass Balance Report soon. It is a report out on 65% of the state nutrient loading and uses data from USGS, Heidelberg, and permitted facilities. The report is currently in the Governor's Office for review.
- There are new phosphorus requirements for NPDES permitted facilities specified in Senate Bill 1. All major municipal facilities need to start reporting orthophosphate beginning December 1. All facilities that do not have a total phosphorus limit in their permit must submit a phosphorous optimization plan by the end of 2017.

DDAGW (by DSW)

- Not a bad season for HABs due to fairly dry weather. Lake Erie had very minimal HABs and the Ohio River did not have an extremely large blooms as it has had in the past. The season is almost over.
- Water treatment plants began genetic ID sampling for HABs this year. Some were found in samples but not in harmful concentrations.

