

**Rouge River Advisory Council (RRAC)
Draft Meeting Summary
May 1, 2017**

Attendees:

Attended?	Name	Attended?	Names
Y	Dan Ballnik, Chair	N	Karen Mondora, Farmington Hills
Y	John Beisel, Farmington Hills	Y	Noel Mullett, Wayne County Dept. of Public Services
N	Marty Boote, Alliance of Rouge Communities (ARC)	Y	Rob Myllyoja, Stantec
Y	Cory Borton, Hubbell Roth and Clark, Inc.	Y	Chris O'Meara, ARC
Y	Jeff Braunscheidel, MDNR	Y	John O'Meara, ARC
Y	Bill Craig, Vice Chair and SPAC representative	N	Sally Petrella, Friends of the Rouge
N	Annette DeMaria, ARC	Y	Heather Rice, Washtenaw County Water Resource Commissioners Office
N	Rose Ellison, EPA Representative	N	Devan Rosturfer, SEMCOG
Y	Jacy Garrison, Oakland County Water Resources Commissioners Office	Y	Brandy Siedlaczek, Southfield
N	Orin Gelderloos, U-M Dearborn	Y	Jennifer Tewkesbury, MDEQ Coordinator (via phone)
N	Kevin Goodwin, MDEQ	N	Dean Tuomari, Citizen
N	Barb Goryca, Dearborn citizen		
N	Marie McCormick, Friends of the Rouge		

Introductions

Introductions were completed.

Meeting Summary

The meeting summary from February 2, 2017 was reviewed and approved with one correction by the Council.

Old Business

C. O'Meara was asked to follow-up with Annette DeMaria regarding preparing a letter supporting the ARC's collaborative efforts.

SPAC Report

B. Craig reported that he attended the Michigan Statewide Public Advisory Council spring 2017 business meeting in Grand Rapids on March 28, 2017. Jen Tewkesbury and Dan Ballnik also attended the meeting. The SPAC vice chair, Anne Vaara, resigned as she has taken a new position with the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner's Office. She may be continuing her role as the Clinton River SPAC representative. There was also an update on the PAC grants and the future f GLRI funding.

B. Craig, D. Ballnik and J. Braunscheidel attended the 2017 Areas of Concern Conference in March which was held at Grand Valley State University. There were various breakout sessions which will be available on the EPA website. D. Ballnik added that it was great to have the Canadian representatives in attendance at the AOC Conference.

B. Craig reported that the most recent report from MDEQ is that the new PAC grants will be funded through next March 2018 but may not be approved until late May 2017 as they are awaiting official EPA commitment, which is expected.

MDEQ Update

J. Tewkesbury stated that no BUI's have been removed yet. The Lower Rouge old channel is up right now for public comment and they hope to begin this summer.

She reported that there may be some CMI funds that will be available to use for the Middle channel. MDEQ is doing some background work to select private partners to assist in the funding of the work. It could be a Great Lakes Legacy Act project.

EPA Update

R. Ellison was not in attendance, however, J. Tewkesbury reported that R. Ellison continues to work as a taskforce lead. J. Tewkesbury stated that Sue Virgilio will be helping on some of the projects in the area.

Existing Grants Update

2016 GLC PAC support Grant

J. O'Meara reported that the current 2016 SPAC grant is finishing up. The new 2017 grant application for SPAC funding also includes fish monitoring in it. MDEQ's hopeful start date is sometime in May. J. O'Meara handed out the five habitat project descriptions which have been set up as grant narrative submittals which will allow for easy preparation if funding agencies are looking to fund some projects with monies left over from other activities. The new 2017 grant that was turned in will continue to draft more project descriptions and include more fish monitoring and the preparation of a public education piece regarding the fish survey results.

Wayne County Invasives

N. Mullett reported that 108 acres have been treated for invasive control during 142 events. There were 1,800 volunteers and 11,000 cubic yards of invasive plants were removed during the project so far. More activities will increase after Rouge Rescue and late treatments will also occur including Newburgh Lake. He stated that they are also looking at treating Phragmites again at sites from the fall and are looking for additional sites as well, mostly on public land.

ARC-NOAA HFE Dam Fishway Design

J. O'Meara reported that the NOAA grant has ended and the design of the HFE Fishway is complete. The MDEQ permit is out for public notice until May 12. C. O'Meara was asked to send the public education piece to the RRAC members for use when discussing the project with others.

Wayne County EPA Habitat Grant – HFE Fishway Implementation and Oxbow Phase 3 Implementation

N. Mullett stated that the subgrant agreement with the ARC is being reviewed by the Wayne County Commission and he anticipates that it will be approved within the week. Once approved then they can start to prepare the contract bid documents.

Wayne County EPA Habitat Grant – Nankin Lake Restoration

N. Mullett stated that he expects the request for bid on the design for Nankin out once the above subgrant has been completed. All three projects are expected to be done in 2019. B. Craig asked if the Nankin Dam needed to be surveyed. J. O'Meara stated that it would part of the WC scheduled dam inspection which would report any issues, but at this time he feels that there are no visual issues that would be of concern that he is aware of.

FDR – NOAA Habitat Partnership Grant

J. O'Meara reiterated that this is a funding mechanism if money becomes available or if EPA has extra to fund some projects. The initial grant funds are going to Detroit River AOC projects totaling \$14M through 2018. Then funding will go to an additional Detroit River project and then can start to fund Rouge River projects.

2017 GLC PAC Support Grant

J. O'Meara reviewed the application that was submitted to the PAC for 2017 funding to continue the work of the RRAC including facilitation of RRAC, continued fish surveys, and continued drafting of more project descriptions from our list and a public education piece to report on the findings of the FOTR fish surveys.

New Business

B. Craig stated that he attended the International Joint Commission session on March 21 at the Outdoor Adventure Center on getting feedback on the AOC program. Annette DeMaria was in attendance on behalf of the ARC.

There was some discussion on removing BUI's – possibly the benthos. The state seems to have a better handle on it and it's not just one thing to solve it. Bill asked if the Main channel is responsible for most of the benthos problems. J. Tewksbury stated that the navigation channel is not part of the benthos problem because it is dredged. Issues include: toxic sediments, which could qualify for Legacy funding; CSO discharges as contaminants; and nonpoint. There are 6 toxic hot spots. Dealing with nonpoint contaminants would need to happen. These are not problems everywhere and we would need to determine the locations that area affected, not the whole channel. N. Mullett said the surveys are mostly fair and poor, which makes it difficult to delist. J. Tewksbury state that it is determined by the local criteria and we can't remove the benthos until the dredging BUI has been removed.

There was some discussion about updating the Report Card and reporting on where we are on our BUIs. J. O'Meara stated that this may be a good project to be completed under the 2018 RRAC PAC Support Grant tasks. RRAC can plan to do an update to the report card in 2018. The watershed is different than the AOC and many projects are ready to go and our permit activities are doing a lot within the communities.

J. Tewksbury stated that the federal level support and funding for the sediment projects are still moving forward for both the Main and the concrete channel.

Comments

Members

B. Craig discussed his concern for the Wayne County Executive's proposal regarding selling parkland and the Warren Valley golf course. He stated that selling and developing it is counterproductive. The City of Dearborn has talked about purchasing the property themselves and keeping it as a golf course.

The motion was made to adjourn the meeting by B. Craig and supported by N. Mullett. The motion passed.