

Regional Planning Stormwater Advisory and Educational Subcommittee Annual Meeting

Date: November 16, 2023

Location: Fairfield County Records Center, 138 W. Chestnut St. Lancaster, OH 43130

Attendance: **Jonathan Ferbrache** (Fairfield County Soil and Water Conservation District), **Lauren Vires** (Fairfield County Soil and Water Conservation District), **Molly Gilleland** (Fairfield County Soil and Water Conservation District), **Nikki Drake** (Fairfield County Soil and Water Conservation District), **Chad Lucht** (Violet Township/FSWCD), **Katie Wasky**(Fairfield County Department of Health), **Erica White** (Ohio Department of Agriculture), **Amanda Wolin** (Village of Lithopolis), **Josh Anders** (Fairfield County Utilities), **Tony Vogel** (Fairfield County Utilities), **Joshua Hillberry** (Fairfield County Regional Planning Commission), **Levi Arnold** (Ohio Department of Agriculture), **John W. Stertz Sr.** (Village of Lithopolis), **Chris Pancake** (Ohio Department of Agriculture), **Joe Jarvis** (Licking County Soil and Water Conservation District), **Lindy Jackson** (Hunter's Run Conservancy District), **Austin Lynch** (City of Canal Winchester), **Mitch Noland** (Fairfield County Engineers Office), **Jade Heizer** (Ohio Division of Wildlife), **Jon Kochis** (Fairfield County Airport), **Nathan Ralph** (Franklin County Public Health), **Holly Mattei** (Fairfield County Regional Planning Commission), **Steven Wellsted** (City of Lancaster), **Safa Saleh** (Fairfield County Regional Planning Commission), **Pete Thomas** (Buckeye Lake for Tomorrow)

Via Teleconference: **Cathy Jerbic** (Violet Township Citizen), **Matt Weber** (City of Pickerington), **Nate Wagner** (Walnut Township), **David Snider** (Perry County Soil and Water Conservation District/ Rushcreek Conservancy), **Linda Nicodemus** (Licking County Soil and Water Conservation District/ South Fork Licking Watershed Conservancy District), **Kristy Hawthorn** (Licking County Soil and Water Conservation District), **Greg Butcher** (City of Pickerington), **Rachel Secrest** (Ohio Environmental Protection Agency)

Liberty Township not represented at this meeting

Meeting called to order at 2:02pm by subcommittee chair, Jonathan Ferbrache. Jonathan introduced the purpose of this meeting and gave a brief description of the voting process.

Review of subcommittee voting rights:

Violet Township- 2 members (Chad Lucht is their designee when one is not present)

Liberty Township- 1 member

City of Pickerington- 2 members

City of Lancaster- 2 members

City of Canal Winchester- 1 member

Village of Lithopolis- 1 member

County Utilities- 1 member

County Engineer- 1 member

Soil and Water Conservation District- 1 member

Meeting minutes from November 9, 2022 were reviewed. Chad Lucht made a motion to approve the minutes. Mitch Noland seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Jonathan opened the floor for public comments. None were made.

Rachel Secrest with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency gave an update on the Hocking River Total Maximum Daily Load. The 2022 sampling data has been collected. The fish and macroinvertebrate sample data analysis is wrapping up. More sampling will be taking place. The preliminary analysis shows an increase in biodiversity, some areas jumping twenty points. If you have any questions or would like to be emailed the final results, please contact Rachel at Rachel.secrest@epa.ohio.gov or 740-380-5433

Levi Arnold, Erica White, and Chris Pancake from Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) gave a presentation on the completed Scioto, Muskingum, and Hocking River Watershed Plans. These can be found on ODA's website. These plans also provide information on statewide characteristics mapping out land use and giving suggestions for best management practices. The plans will be updated overtime. These plans provide a good comprehensive view of the watersheds overall. To provide any feedback or request information, these individuals can be contacted at levi.arnold@agri.ohio.gov, erica.white@agri.ohio.gov, and Christopher.pancake@agri.ohio.gov.

Election of chair and vice chair for the upcoming year took place.

Chad Lucht nominated Lauren Vires to serve as chair. Lauren accepted the nomination. All in favor. Motion passes.

Jonathan Ferbrache nominated Josh Anders to serve as vice chair. Josh accepted the nomination. All in favor. Motion passes.

Jonathan opened the floor for the roundtable discussion where everyone gave their updates from the last year.

Cathy Jerbic, a citizen of Violet Township, asked if the information provided by Ohio Department of Agriculture's presentations could be shared for township comprehensive plans and consultants, especially for areas with increasing development. Jonathan confirmed this can happen and he would send it over to the Fairfield County Regional Planning Commission.

Matt Weber with the City of Pickerington did not have an update but stated that he enjoyed today's presentations.

David Snider with Perry Soil and Water Conservation District as well as the Rushcreek Conservancy District reported that the Rushcreek Conservancy District has been working on resolving flood control, recreational, and water quality issues. The United States Environmental Protection Agency and Rural Action provided the Brownfield Grant in the upper reaches of Rushcreek. They are currently working on a plan with the Natural Resource Conservation Service. Phase one of assessment has been completed, and phase two of creating a plan for the next ten years is being worked on.

Kristy Hawthorn with Licking County Soil and Water Conservation District (LCSWCD) reported that the Licking County comprehensive planning document, Framework, has been finalized. Chapter 7 will specifically address water management infrastructure so Licking Soil and Water Conservation District will make recommendations and participate in this process. The Licking County Commissioners applied for and were awarded the Federal Emergency Management Agency Hazard Mitigation Grant that impacts the South Fork Licking River, but they are still waiting for the money to come in.

Linda Nicodemus with LCSWCD and Southfork Licking Watershed Conservancy District reported that they are working on a comprehensive flood study and applied for a grant to cover the final section of Raccoon Creek. Their next goal is to update the watershed plan from 1980. Their annual meeting will be held December 1st at 2:00pm at the Licking County Courthouse with all three judges. They received a grant for log jam modeling from the Army Corps of Engineers. The Silver Jackets are working with the community in the upper reaches of the watershed.

Jonathan Ferbrache spoke on behalf of Walnut Township and reported that they are partnering with Fairfield Soil and Water Conservation District and County Engineer and are working on a drainage master plan and seeking finances. The goals are to provide quick recovery after flooding and water quality improvements.

Mitch Noland with the Fairfield County Engineers Office reported that the Fairfield County Stormwater Design Manual went into effect in July, and they are working on implementing it with design engineering. They are working on the Roadway Design Manual as well.

John Kochis with the EMA and Fairfield County Airport reported that the mitigation grant will be used to focus on the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program. They are reviewing building plans, regulations, and funding. They will focus less on small projects and more on post disaster mitigation and funds. Aligning

the airport's master drainage plans to concur with Fairfield Aviation Administration guidelines should be complete.

Nikki Drake with Fairfield Soil and Water Conservation District reported on the Fairfield County Parks roundtable. Fairfield County Parks received the H2Ohio grant for wetland restoration at Two Glaciers Metro Park. They also applied for a grant for the Sensory Trail Park wetland and did not get it, but plan to try again through Fish and Wildlife Services. Nikki also reported that many farmers in the county are implementing a lot of best management practices. There are not a lot of pollution complaints, but there are some for horse manure where there are too many horses in too small a space. There is not a lot of funding available for these small lots.

Jonathan Ferbrache gave an update on behalf of Licking Soil and Water Conservation District for the cooperative efforts in conducting water quality testing to develop a trendline of phosphorus and nitrogen impacts on tributaries affecting Buckeye Lake. The goal is to complete this monthly to create a baseline. This information will be used to reinforce Total Maximum Daily Loads and continue watershed planning.

Pete Thomas with Buckeye Lake for Tomorrow reported that the citizen task force is collecting samples for Buckeye Lake, and they hope to increase in size. Brooks Park Wetland is tested by Wright State who is working with H2Ohio. Pete also reported on Ohio Department of Natural resources discussion on the Feeder Creek in Millersport. Funds are available but haven't been implemented yet. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources is looking to expand the plan to Kirkersville. They are currently looking to move forward with the funding available.

Jade Heizer with the Ohio Division of Wildlife introduced herself and explained her role as a Wildlife Officer in pollution complaints. She will enforce litter and dumping laws. One example would be investigating deer and coyote hide dumps. She will also investigate fish kills and collect information on size, species, and number of individuals to assign restitution fees. Deputy Hummel will also sometimes assist in enforcement and investigations. Please reach out if you witness any of these occurrences on public or private lands. Currently there have not been many dumping complaints, maybe one coyote per year. One investigation that was conducted recently was on a camper potentially dumping sewage in a creek.

Tony Vogel and Josh Anders with Fairfield County Utilities reported that a septic system was taken offline on Basil Western.

Safa Saleh with the Fairfield County Regional Planning Commission introduced herself to the group. She is available for flood plain permitting inquiries.

Amanda Wolin the Village of Lithopolis introduced John Stertz as their new educator to present and plan activities on storm drains and dumping in the community. Amanda also reported that the Fairfield County Storm Water Design Manual will be adopted in the new year.

Nathan Ralph with Franklin County Public Health reported that the annual observation program of discharging systems. They have now developed education palm cards that will now be

available in Spanish. It discusses what not to put in the septic system and about a maintenance program. These cards will be shared with Pickerington and Canal Winchester when available.

Holly Mattei with the Fairfield County Regional Planning Commission is working with townships and villages to explain the comprehensive plan and are always trying to improve it. They will likely be bringing it to the board in January.

Austin Lynch with the City of Canal Winchester reported that Dick Miller does their annual report. Four sites were surveyed for macroinvertebrates and came back with good or excellent ratings. These ratings have been on an upward trend since 2003. Jonathan Ferbrache with Fairfield Soil and Water Conservation District added that there was a public concern about caffeine in Sycamore Creek over the last few years. This project was sponsored by Cathy Jerbic, a citizen of Violet Township, and the samples were collected for testing by Glen Hacker with the City of Pickerington. The results showed that there were no detectable levels.

Katie Wasky with the Fairfield County Department of Health reported that they are in the process of making individuals discharge their aerator systems and connect with the public septic system if the utilities are available to do so. They are also monitoring the mechanical sewer system and have restarted sampling of other systems. They have also created Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) educational handouts to educate homeowners.

Chad Lucht with Violet Township reported that the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency is updating the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) template for consistency and completion. Updates were also made to the rainwater manual.

Lindy Jackson with Hunter's Run Conservancy District reported that they are working on policy procedures and getting Emergency Action Plans done. They are in the reassessment and renovation process of the dam. The dams continue to have sediment storage capacity.

Steven Wellstead with the City of Lancaster introduced himself as he is now the Storm Water Manager.

Joshua Hillberry introduced himself as a new employee with the Fairfield County Regional Planning Commission.

Jonathan Ferbrache with Fairfield Soil and Water Conservation District shared that there were no major updates with the City of Pickerington. Jonathan also introduced Cathy Jerbic's role in the surveying of Sycamore Creek as she conducts a macroinvertebrate survey station north of Tollgate Rd.

Lauren Vires with Fairfield Soil and Water Conservation District was introduced by Jonathan Ferbrache as their new Wildlife and Education Specialist. She reported that the results of the macroinvertebrate survey conducted with Pickerington High School students at Coyote Run Nature Preserve were excellent.

Molly Gilleland with Fairfield Soil and Water Conservation District reported that they have been working with developers and homeowners to keep sediment on site and working with villages to keep a good plan in place. The best management practices that have been implemented seem to be working.

New Business

Josh Anders suggested that we should add the Franklin County Board of Health and Fairfield County Board of Health to the Regional Planning Stormwater Advisory and Educational Subcommittee. Chad Lucht moved to do so. Amanda Wolin seconded it. All in favor. Motion passed.

Jonathan Ferbrache encouraged the public to take their concerns of the County Land Use Plan to the Fairfield County Regional Planning Commission. Holly Mattei with the commission, clarified that while they are not spearheading the County Land Use Plan, but they do offer recommendations and will funnel the concerns they receive to Fairfield County Economic Development and the Fairfield County Commissioners.

Kristy offered to share the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency comprehensive plan for Central Ohio.

Jonathan Ferbrache asked if there were any other comments. There were none.

Josh Anders moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:24pm. Mitch Noland seconded the motion. All in favor. The meeting was adjourned.

Discussed links and publications.

ODA Watershed Plans: [1st Edition Ohio Regional Watershed Plans | Ohio Department of Agriculture](#)

Licking County Framework: <https://frameworklc.org/resources/>

Fairfield County Storm Water Design Manual: <https://www.co.fairfield.oh.us/Engineer/pdf/Storm-Water-Design-Manual.pdf>