

Euclid Creek Watershed Council Minutes  
July 26, 2018 - South Euclid, Telling Mansion

Present: Andrew Blackley (South Euclid), Chris Cheraso (Cleveland Metroparks), Jeff Filarski (Lyndhurst), Elizabeth Hiser (Cuyahoga SWCD), Mayor Kirsten Holzheimer Gail (Euclid), Jeff Jowett (NEORS), **Mayor David Roche, Vice Council Chair (Richmond Heights)**, Jan Rybka (Cuyahoga SWCD), Charles Sawyer (Watershed Resident), Laura Travers (Euclid), **Chris Vild, Council Chair (Beachwood)**, Mayor Patrick Ward (Lyndhurst), Mayor Georgine Welo (South Euclid), Chuck Zibbel (Highland Heights), John Zampino (Manik/Smith), and Rachid Zoghaib (Cleveland)

The meeting was called to order at 8:10 AM.

The Chair called the meeting to order. Mayor Ward then moved to approve the minutes from the April 5, 2018 meeting as is, and Mayor Roche seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by the Council.

Next Sarah Orlando from Ohio Sea Grant presented to the group about research into the causes of Algal Blooms in Lake Erie. She provided background information on Ohio Sea Grant and their efforts to educate the public about issues with algal blooms in Lake Erie. Lake Erie being the shallowest of the Great Lakes has a residence time of about 2-3 years, meaning if we can reduce phosphorus loading by 40% we can see improvements in the lake within a short time span. Key take away was that most of the total phosphorus load and algal blooms are caused by spring rain events and dissolved reactive phosphorus. Targeting phosphorus management to address spring runoff events is key.

Mr. Filarski asked about Red Tide and respiratory issues and if the algal blooms in Lake Erie could also cause issues upon inhalation.

Answer: No, our algal blooms are a concern for skin contact or consumption, not inhalation.

Follow-up question: Can we eat fish, or do we need to worry about toxins in the fish.

Answer: We can eat the fish flesh if properly filleted and cooked. The toxins are stored in the fish's fatty tissue.

Mayor Holzheimer Gail asked about where the algal blooms go when they leave our beaches like the July 4<sup>th</sup> bloom?

Answer: The algal plants are moved by wind and waves and eventually die off and fall to the bottom of the lake. They can contribute to the "dead zones" or areas in Lake Erie lacking oxygen.

Mayor Ward asked about where to get soil testing done (to follow 4 R's).

Answer: University of Massachusetts Extension and University of Michigan Soil Labs. Cuyahoga SWCD can help interpret results.

Mr. Vild asked what the term "bloom" means.

Answer: Bloom means the expansion/duplication/replication of the algal plants due to nutrient inundation.

Mr. Filarski asked if farmers are following the recommendations of Ohio Sea Grant and Soil and Water Districts.

Answer: It depends, many good players following the rules, but there are those out there that are not. Plans need to be implemented farm by farm based on the specific needs and soils at a site.

Mr. Blackley brought up that current bills to address nutrients from agriculture are stalled in government, that Farm Bureau denies that agriculture is the issue and they blame waste water treatment plants (WWTP).

Response: Ohio Sea Grant strives to provide scientific data to support decision making to address issues in Lake Erie. One way to engage the farming community is doing field trips onto the Lake during algal blooms.

Mr. Vild asked about other contributors like Indiana who are not right next to the Lake.

Answer: 40% phosphorus reduction goal is shared across state boundaries with Ohio, Michigan, and Indiana. Canada will likely also implement this goal.

Mayor Roche asked what Government can do? What are the urban drivers? Water treatment waste? WWTP waste? CSO waste etc.?

Answer: Combination of urban sources including all the above as well as septic's and urban land use (stormwater runoff).

Ms. Hiser discussed that WWTPs are held to standards based on technological ability. Each WWTP has an Ohio EPA NPDES permit with phosphorus limits.

Mr. Jowett discussed that as a part of Project Clean Lake the NEORSW WWTPs are updating their phosphorus treatment technologies to treat more phosphorus.

Mr. Vild mentioned that in addition to NEORSW WWTPs we also have local/community level WWTPs that contribute phosphorus to the Lake Erie Watershed.

Ms. Orlando emphasized that it is important to be able to communicate why we need solutions to address all the issues discussed.

Mr. Jowett asked if the July 4<sup>th</sup> bloom in Cleveland was forecasted.

Answer: It was not. It occurred earlier than usual forecast meetings due to early hot temperatures this summer.

Mayor Roche asked if lack of dissolved oxygen was the cause of the Fish Kill in Vermillion.

Answer: Explained the dead zone and lack of oxygen and how certain species of fish without air bladders essentially suffocate when anoxic (lack of oxygen) conditions occur.

The group thanked Ms. Orlando for a great presentation.

Next the Watershed Program Manager provided an updated work plan report and PIPE work plan report to the Council. She highlighted that the updated Nine-Element Nonpoint Source Implementation Strategic Plan (NP-SIS) V1.1 was approved by EPA on 7/13/18 which allowed for the Cleveland Clinic Stream Restoration Project to be recommended for 319 grant funding. She also requested that communities provide her projects that they would like to be included in the next draft of the NP-SIS. She mentioned that many PIPE events have already occurred, but planning is still in the works for Mayfield Village, Shaker Heights, Pepper Pike, and South Euclid. Her last update was that the Cuyahoga Area of Concern is looking for government representatives to join their advisory committee. Mayor Welo requested that a description of what the position entails be sent to the group.

Next Mr. Vild discussed the watershed council and how it was done in the past. The watershed program manager discussed the concept for this year to join the Euclid Creek Watershed Summit with the Cuyahoga SWCD annual meeting. Tentatively there will be some tours and a speaker from the City of Euclid to highlight efforts the city is making in the watershed. Mr. Vild highlighted the Green Creek inventories, bike friendly groups, treatment plant updates that are occurring. Potential Paul Beno could be a key note speaker. Ms.

Rybka suggested that the summit focus on Euclid Creek water quality and the interconnectedness and common goals that are spring boards for economic benefits as well as water quality. Ms. Travers mentioned a recent tour of green space sites with college students that could serve as one of the tours. Mayor Holzheimer Gail suggested there could be three tours, one of the lakefront improvements, one of the WWTP improvements, and one of the green space acquisition sites.

Next Mayor Roche highlighted the upcoming Nature Festival at Greenwood Farm on September 8<sup>th</sup>. There will be live music and several learning areas.

Next the Watershed Program Manager and Mr. Vild highlighted the upcoming Perils of Plastics presentation at Beachwood Community Center on August 14<sup>th</sup>. A formal invite will be sent to the Mayors.

Next Mr. Vild mentioned that the Tour of Trees is coming to Cleveland and will be stopping at the Mandel Center in Beachwood on August 1<sup>st</sup> and will feature Professors Elwood Pricklethorn. Will be a great event for kids.

Mr. Vild highlighted the upcoming Ethics and Engineering workshop that Tinkers Creek will be providing.

Mr. Jowett highlighted the upcoming NEORSD open house at the Southerly WWTP in Cuyahoga Heights.

Ms. Orlando highlighted the upcoming decision maker 1-day workshops on August 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> at the lab in Put-In-Bay. Ms. Travers emphasized that the event last year was worthwhile and a great relaxing day explaining what decision makers can do to help with Lake Erie issues.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:31 (Motioned by Mayor Ward and seconded by Mayor Roche)

Minutes compiled by Elizabeth Hiser, Euclid Creek Watershed Program Manager