

WINNEBAGO WATERWAYS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING Minutes

TIME OF MEETING: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

DATE OF MEETING: Thursday, January 30th, 2025

PLACE OF MEETING: In person James P. Coughlin Center, 625 East County Road Y, Oshkosh, Meeting Room B

SUBJECT MATTER OF THE MEETING

Roll Call - Jon Doemel - Winnebago Co, Chuck Farrey - Winnebago Co, Allison McCormick - Waushara Co, Megan Kapp - Waushara Co, (missed the Wausaura Co sup). No quorum met.

Staff: Dani Santy, Todd Wahler, Katie Reed, Jim Wickersham, Jess Schultz, Chad Casper, Heath Hallenberg

Call meeting to order – 9:02am

Approval of minutes from the October 2, 2024 Winnebago Waterways Executive Committee Meeting – Tabled

Members of the public who wish to address the committee on specific agenda items must register their requests at this time, with such comments subject to the reasonable control of the committee chair, as set forth in “Robert’s Rules of Order.”

Introductions of All Members

ALL AGENDA ITEMS ARE ACTIONABLE

A. Winnebago Waterways Program

- a. Overview – Wickersham provided a quick overview of the program for new members.
- b. Communication – Federal Grants Discussion – 96% of the FWWA budget is federally funded in 2025, most of the funds are directed as subawards to the Counties. Shoreline and breakwalls are federally funded, as well as the Climate Smart ag staff housed at the Counties. USDA guidance is to keep moving forward with the grants. Reimbursement requests sent out earlier this week were paid. Frequent communications with federal agencies will take place over the next few months until more certainty is known.

B. Streambank inventory – update

- a. Working on final numbers with the DNR and then moving this to the 9 Key element plans – GEI will be holding trainings for counties in the spring to use the modeling and interpolation. Still working through final details around soil test data with DNR.

C. Breakwall construction/funding update -

- a. 2025 Construction: Anticipating construction in mid-February with current and forecasted ice conditions. Additional funding will add fish sticks / tree drops to the project.

D. Town of Calumet potential new project

- a. funding, partnership, and building momentum – T. Calumet runoff reduction committee secured funding to create an ARTS below the escarpment on the E. Shore of Winnebago. This project targets phosphorus reduction and flood mitigation. FDL Co will oversee the construction.

E. Calumet Streambank Restoration and ARTS project

DNR permits have been submitted for streambank restoration. The contractor has been selected for streambank restoration. ARTS Locations: 3 locations and active talks with the farmers have

been happening in the last few weeks

- F. Water level management update
 - a. Subject expert meeting – ACOE spring fill-up meeting is coming up (no date yet). Updated on current water level stage. (insert latest Graph here). New this year is to look at impacts on wildlife and wild rice. Working on outreach/marketing to educate boaters about the benefits of delayed fill-up to reduce complaints regarding low water levels in the Spring.
- G. Climate Smart Agriculture grant update – discussion revolved around the purchase of equipment with grants, and discussions with the counties on housing or owning equipment and maintenance costs.
- H. 2025 Winnebago Waterways Director Work Plan – tabled.
 - a. Vote will be taken to approve
- I. Watershed Survey (Study)
 - a. History behind the survey (Study) – This study would focus water storage further up the watersheds to help lake level management. Previous efforts to advance a basin-wide hydrology study for upland storage was tabled due to costs of an ACOE Study. Outagamie county will be finalizing a similar study on a smaller level that may be a more cost-effective way to do the analysis.
Current efforts for the survey - ECWRPC is having discussions with the counties to see if funding the ACOE study is a good direction as ACOE requires a match to complete the study. This Study would also take years to go through the budget process before any on the ground work could be started.
- J. DNR Permitting update – Jess provided an update on the Wetland Study Council meetings and discussions. Jess is working external partners to address FWWA's issues. Investigating options for normal farming activities that should be exempt, and what normal conservation practices is also a normal farming activity. Goal is to advance the ag conservation exemption.
- K. Event updates
 - a. The Watershed Conference March, 4th – 5th, UW-Oshkosh Welcome & Conference Center, Oshkosh, WI
 - b. May 3 – Watershed Clean Up.
 - c. Next Meeting: Need to schedule a zoom meeting for formal action items.

H. Adjourn