

**Maquoketa River Watershed Management Authority  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Wednesday March 1, 2023 • 6 pm  
Monticello Chamber Media Center 200 E 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Monticello, IA 52310  
Virtual Option also available via Zoom courtesy of the City Account**

**Meeting Minutes**

1. **Call to Order, Welcome** – Erickson called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. with 21 in attendance (9 members, 12 guests). With 34 WMA members, 18 is quorum. There were 4 members of the 7-member Executive Committee participating which met quorum requirements.

**9 WMA Members in attendance were:** Don Schwenker, Jackson County BoS; Joe Oswald, Jones County BoS; Tim Vick, City of Manchester; Russ Farnum, City of Monticello; Mick Michel, City of Dyersville; Shirley Helmrichs, Delaware County BoS; Pat Kearny, City of Cascade; Joe Trumm, Jone County SWCD; and John Kurtz (Zoom), Buchanan Co. BoS.

**12 WMA Partners & Guests in attendance included:** Lynette Seigly (Zoom)and Dave Mack; Dean Zimmerman; Miranda Haes, DNR; John Haes; Kim Brooks, Monticello Express; John Schroeder, Forester at New Melleray Abbey; Carol Sherman(Zoom), Delaware County Landowner; Kate Giannini, Iowa Flood Center; Scott Bishop, Limestone Bluffs RC&D treasurer; Stephanie Sagers, Limestone Bluffs RC&D and Erin Erickson, MR WMA Watershed Coordinator

2. **Approve Agenda-** Helmrichs made the motion to approve. Vick seconded. All Ayes. Motion carried.
3. **Public Comment-** none
4. **Approve Minutes from October 26, 2022 Meeting** – Oswald made the motion to approve. Vick seconded. All Ayes. Motion carried.
5. **FY23 Annual Report-** Erickson shared with committee in meeting packet prior to meeting.
6. **Financial Report** – Scott Bishop Treasurer, Limestone Bluffs RC&D,
  - a. **Finances: The end of January MR WMA Balance (FY23) \$102,058.32.** Bishop reported that there was a revenue of \$17,390 for the month from member funding and \$64,032 for FY23 so far. The expenses for the year \$31,847. The coordinator compensation for the rest of FY23 is approximately \$17,000. The ending cash balance for FY23 is approximately \$84,000. **Michel made the motion to approve the financial statement. Schwenker seconded. All ayes. Motion carried.**
  - b. **Review of Voluntary Member Financial Commitments FY23**—Erickson shared the ledger sheet from the financial report showing all of the membership payments for FY23 which is also included in the draft budget page for FY24.
  - c. **Sustaining Watershed Coordinator position for additional year FY 24-** idea supported by the Executive Committee and brought to full board for approval.
  - d. **Review Limestone Bluffs RC&D Fiscal Agent Contract and Coordinator term-**Erickson reviewed the contract explaining that the \$42,000 would be for the entire FY 24 salary and the \$10,000 would be paid to Limestone Bluffs RCD for the fiscal agent duties. It was explained that the \$10,000 number

was determined to cover support services like software and general liability and in FY23. Michel added that the Executive Committee had reviewed the contract and supported it to move forward to full board for approval.

## **6. Iowa DNR Watershed Update-** Erin Erickson, Watershed Coord.

- a. Erin shared slide show about project updates.
- This included an update on the Watershed Management Plan. The 2 phases that the University of Iowa students completed will be deconstructed to apply to the working outline that was created in 2018, making sure all components are present. Erin shared a draft of the website with the interactive map.
  - The Mural at the Manchester Fish Hatchery was installed at the end of October and a ribbon cutting ceremony will be held in Spring 2023.
  - The WMA was awarded \$30,500 for the DNR County Watershed Sign Grant. Erin is working with the Iowa Prison Industries and all 8 county engineers for installation on secondary roads over the next 18 months. She shared a map of the new locations focusing on the HUC 8 Boundary and the interior creek signs.
  - The Center for Rural Affairs wrote an article about the Maquoketa Watershed highlighting all of the work that we have done and education plans for the future. Erin also joined the CFRA at the Capital in Des Moines to reinforce the need for project coordinators for WMA's across the state. Speaking to legislative members who represent our watershed and making those connections for support is important.
  - Shared the FY 24 Budget Request letters have been sent out shared a sample.
  - Virtual Water Sampling presentation was in November and the recording is available on our website. The Info Graphic created from the data results is available in print or PDF.
  - Camp Courageous is continuing work on their Source water protection plan as a continuation of the U of Iowa design project from Fall of 2021.
  - Erin created a giving Tuesday Campaign and raised \$1335.

## **7. New Melleray Abbey Watershed Project Plan Summary—John Schroeder, Forester**

- Located in Peosta ~ 3400 acres =1200 Forests, 1800 Agriculture land.
- Have used beavers for projects in the past, creating wetlands naturally.
- Multi-phase plan- Phase 1 to focus on the upper reaches first.
- The plan is to reinforce stream bank by inducing meandering using low tech methods and let the water do the work of both Catfish Creek on the east and Prairie Creek on the west.
- Adding buffers to both streams
- In the end will have the largest tree planting in 50 years and largest prairie planting in Dubuque County, including 12 acres of wetland to restore.
- End objective: to prove that large scale restoration is possible in Iowa and can be done in 3 years without heavy equipment
- Saturated Buffer proposed to be installed on Prairie Creek
- All of the permits have been obtained and it is shovel ready
- Ask from the WMA is \$40,000 over 3 years. ~\$13,333 a year- this would provide prairie seed and deer protection for seedlings for the Lytle Creek and Prairie Creek portions of the

project.

- See Attachments: New Melleray Abbey Summary Sheet and Project Map

Discussion after presentation: 1.) Coordinate a field tour for any members or partners of the WMA to see the projects and get a tour of the Abbey property. 2.) WMA can use the property for field days and to showcase the water quality projects in the future.

## 8. Project Overview of Iowa Flood Center Hydro Network and Modeling Project – Kate Giannini, Program Manager IIHR—*Hydro science & Engineering | Iowa Flood Center | University of Iowa*

Maquoketa River and Lower Cedar watersheds recently included in funding for flood and drought monitoring.

- 2008 flood led to the Iowa Flood Center (IFC) and opened in 2009.
- Real time stream sensors- ultrasonic radar measuring between the unit and creek bed- about 300 across the state. Can be viewed online:  
<https://iowafloodcenter.org/projects/iowa-watershed-approach-hydrologic-network-4-3/>
- Iowa Flood Center submitted a funding proposal to Representative Hinson and Representative Miller-Meeks for community project funding- IFC received word that they got the funding of \$1 million dollars for the Maquoketa Watershed and the Lower Cedar Watershed projects.
- The project will be to expand the hydro network in Congressional Districts 1 and 2- Eastern Iowa.
- The project will also include hydrologic modeling which was a missing component of the MR WMA Watershed Management Plan. The team will present updates to the board on the modeling is doing. This component is a 1-year project.
- They are working with Hinson's office for communications of press releases, field days and invitation to the watershed.
- Hydro stations started as an Iowa Watershed Approach Project- they measure rainfall, wind speed, wind direction, soil temp and moisture at varying depths, include shallow groundwater well. They cost about \$14,000 to install and maintain
- The hydro stations can be used as a focus for field days and how the information will be used for flooding and drought forecasting.
- The goal is to have one in every county and will work together to identify sites.

### Committee Updates

#### a. Executive Committee –

##### 1. Consider Appointment for office of MR WMA Chair.

Nomination for Mick Michel but he declined due to existing workload.

**Nomination for Don Schwenker. Vick motioned to have Schwenker as the Chair, Michel as Vice Chair and Steve Leonard to remain treasurer. Helmricks seconded. All ayes. Motion Carried.**

##### 2. Officer Election Renewals. See 1. above

3. Consider Appointment for Executive Committee vacancy- (Possibly from Dubuque, Clinton or Buchanan Counties as there is currently no one from these counties on our Exec. Committee) John Kurtz was on Zoom and added that he is the chair for the Upper Wapsi WMA and willing to serve on our Executive Committee.

**Farnum motioned to approve John Kurtz (Buchanan County Supervisor) as serving on the**

Cont. from Page3. Executive Committee Vick Seconded. All Ayes. Motion Carried.

- b. Technical Committee – Jeff Tisl, IDALS- No updates-Erickson reported that once the WMP is online and live the Tech Committee will plan another meeting.
- c. Water Monitoring Committee – Dave Mack, NRCS-
  - Mack reported that the committee met on Wed 3.22.23 and they propose keep the same locations and frequencies of previous year for the 2023 season.
  - The cost will stay the same at \$18/ per sample for a total cost of \$2030 for the year.
  - Discussed adding an additional project in the future to focus on priority areas yet retaining the same original sites.
  - Pat Kearney (member for Cascade and water committee)- added that he would like to see a possible testing around above and below towns.
  - It was suggested to utilize students for the additional project who can monitor more frequently and help with the overall effort.
  - Kate Giannini added that if there is a list of the priority areas then IFC could potentially install instream sensors that upload data every 15 minutes. They cost ~\$30,000 so when funding is available , it might be possible.
  - Mack added the current monitoring of the 45 locations is a huge effort with all the volunteers that it takes to make it happen so there is value in keeping the same schedule and sites.

11. New Business

Erickson shared the FY24 Budget Draft. Showing if all members gave contributions the revenue would be ~\$84,000. The current revenue from members for FY23 is ~ \$63,000

- a. Consider funding Watershed Coordinator position for additional year FY24.  
Vick made the motion to approve the coordinator. Mick seconded. All ayes. Motion carried.
- b. Consider Adoption of the FY24 WMA Budget:  
Vick made the motion to approve the budget as presented. Farnum seconded. All ayes. Motion carried.
- c. Consider 2023 Water Monitoring Program: Sampling dates TBD:  
Vick made the motion to approve the 2023 monitoring program. Schwenker seconded. All ayes. Motion Carried.
- d. Consider FY24 Contract with Limestone Bluffs RC&D:  
Mick made the motion to approve the FY24 Contract with RCD. Vick seconded. All ayes. Motion Carried.

12. Other business:

13. Comments

**Next Meeting: Annual Meeting in Fall 2023, In person.** Location, Date and time- to be determined.

- 14. **Adjourn** – Schwenker made the motion to adjourn at 7:38pm. Oswald seconded. All Ayes. Motion carried.

-Respectively submitted by Erin Erickson, MR WMA Watershed Coordinator

## **CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS**

\*Please note that no partners have approved final allocations of funds, this is based on a best case scenario. New Melleray Abbey leadership have allocated funding to complete the project in house if needed however they believe that seeking outside investment is important to maximize their own cash inputs to improve common good resources.

<b>Contributing Partner</b>	<b>Partner category</b> <i>(Fed/State/County/NGO/Business)</i>	<b>Project Need Addressed</b> <i>(Equipment, Materials, Labor)</i>	<b>Cash</b>	<b>In-kind</b>	<b>Total Amount</b>
USDA (CRP)	Federal	Planting labor and materials	\$223,774		\$223,774
FWS (DARE)	Federal	planting protection and monitoring	\$30,000		\$30,000
MRWMA	Multi-City	Planting labor and materials	\$40,000		\$40,000
REAP	State of IA	Planting labor and materials	\$18,000		\$18,000
CCWMA	City of Dubuque	Planting labor and materials	\$36,000		\$36,000
DBQ WQI	County of Dubuque	Planting labor and materials	\$91,000		\$91,000
IA Habitat Grants	State of IA	Planting labor and materials	\$10,000		\$10,000
DCC	County	RX Burn assistance		\$2,500	\$2,500
Pat Hayes	Farmer/Hunter	Wildlife monitoring		\$500	\$500
FWS (FF)	Federal	Financing – Low tech restoration and monitoring	\$20,000		\$20,000
FWS (DARE)	Federal	Upland habitat creation and browse protection	20,000		20,000
Mississippi River Museum	PVT	Wildlife monitoring		\$4,800	\$4,800
Total In Kind				\$7,800	
Total Cash					\$488,774
Total all					\$546,574

contributions					
New Melleray Abbey Match					<u>\$53,426</u>

### New Melleray Project Summary Sheet

- 20 acres of new riparian trees
- 70 acres of new upland trees (10 acres of oak woodland)
- 8 acres of new pine woods
- 22 acres of new shrubs
- 70 acres of new prairies
- 17 acres of new, restored and expanded wetlands
- 130 low tech restoration structures
- 2 miles of creeks restored

50%-90% reduction of overland ag pollution

12 small headcuts/ gullies addressed

3 miles of new trails for recreation at New Melleray Abbey

Emissions offset of 105 Dubuquers

Largest tree planting in the state in 50 years

Largest prairie planting in county history

35% increase in prairie on the property

5% increase in woodland cover

Creates 1 supports another 3 existing jobs

# New Melleray Abbey Riparian Restoration Plan Summary Map

