

**Maquoketa River Watershed Management Authority**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Tuesday October 24, 2023 • 6:30 pm**  
**Monticello Eagles Club at 102 Lindner Court**  
**Monticello, Iowa.**

**Meeting Minutes**

1. **Call to Order, Welcome** –Michel called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. with 22 in attendance (6 members, 16 guests). With 34 WMA members, 18 is quorum. There were 4 members of the 7-member Executive Committee participating which met quorum requirements.

**6WMA Members in attendance were:** Tim Vick, City of Manchester; Russ Farnum, City of Monticello; Mick Michel, City of Dyersville; Shirley Helmrichs, Delaware County BoS;; Sarah Helle, City of Hopkinton and John Kurtz (Zoom), Buchanan Co. BoS.

**16 WMA Partners & Guests in attendance included:** Lynette Seigly; Dean Zimmerman; Miranda Haes, DNR; John Haes; Kim Brooks, Monticello Express; Carol Sherman; William Roller; David Gossman, Chemright Water Lab; Kate Giannini, Iowa Flood Center (IFC); Logan Mahoney IFC; Nate Young, IFC; Dan Gilles, IFC; Dave Mack Delaware SWCD; Scott Bishop, Limestone Bluffs RC&D treasurer; Stephanie Sagers, Limestone Bluffs RC&D and Erin Erickson, MR WMA Watershed Coordinator

2. **Approve Agenda-** Vick made the motion to approve. Kurtz seconded. All Ayes. Motion carried.
3. **Approve Minutes from March 1st, 2023 Meeting** – Farnum made the motion to approve. Vick seconded. All Ayes. Motion carried.
4. **Financial Report** – Scott Bishop Treasurer, Limestone Bluffs RC&D,
  - a. **Finances: The end of September MR WMA Balance (FY24) \$155,152.26** Bishop reported that there was a revenue of \$20,539.00 for the month from member funding and \$51,725.00 for FY23 so far. The expenses for the year \$23,560.93. There was a \$30,000 donation to the WMA. The ending cash balance for FY24 is approximately \$58,201.33. **Kurtz made the motion to approve the financial statement. Vick seconded. All ayes. Motion carried.**
  - b. **Explanation of separate restricted money market account for the WMA**–Erickson reported members of the Executive Committee met with members of the Limestone Bluffs RC&D Board on Sept 12, 2023 to discuss the fiscal agent contract with Limestone Bluffs RC&D. Out of this meeting the following was voted on and approved:
    - The WMA will have a separate restricted money market account for all of the WMA funds and transactions managed by the RC&D.
    - Erickson, watershed coordinator, will be a contract employee with the WMA instead of the RC&D. (this contract to be approved at the early 2024 BoD meeting).

- The WMA will continue to use the RC&D as their fiscal agent with the \$10,000 flat fee annually. Other details to be determined. This is to be voted on and approved at the early 2024 meeting).
- c. **Review of Voluntary Member Financial Commitments FY24**—Erickson explained all invoices were shared and the ledger sheet from the financial report showing all of the membership payments for FY24. These included support payments from members: Cascade, Delaware County, Buchanan County, Jackson County unincorporated towns and County support, Clinton County, Linn County, City of Dyersville, City of Manchester, Jones County, Lake Delhi, and Hopkinton.
- d. **Sustaining Watershed Coordinator position for additional year FY 24-** idea supported by the Executive Committee and brought to full board for approval.
- e. **FY25 Invoice Letters to be sent out by end of October/ Early November for budgeting purposes.**

## 5. Project Update- Erin Erickson, Watershed Coordinator

- a. **Farmer to Farmer Grant Award \$250,000 creating the Maquoketa River Cover Crop Initiative for historically underserved farmers within the watershed.**  
Erickson reported that the contract with the DNR has been signed and she is meeting with a representative from Practical Farmers of Iowa (PFI) on Thursday 10/26/23 to discuss their cash match of \$10/acre. This program will offer a cost share to farmers who are [historically underserved according to the USDA](#) of \$40/ acre to install cover crops over the watershed. This will allow for approximately 7300 acres of row cropland to be protected with cover crops. More details of exact restrictions will be worked on and announced early 2024. This is a subaward with monies coming from the EPA and awarded to the Iowa DNR, therefore programs is not applicable to be used with NRCS cost shares like EQUIP or other federal funding.
- b. **Iowa DNR County Sign Grant Award- \$30,500- Most installed –**  
Erickson reported that she has distributed most of the watershed signs and all but 4 are installed over the entire watershed. These were installed by the secondary road crews of each county. The counties then invoice the WMA for materials such as posts/hardware and labor to be billed to the DNR as part of the grant.
- c. **WMP and Website Resource**  
Erickson shared that she has been working on giving the website a facelift to be able to share the completed Watershed Management Plan in a separate tab. This is a work in progress but hopes to have it fully updated with the Cover Crop Initiative Tab for applications by spring 2024.
- d. **Clif Family Foundation Grant- ask \$25,000-**  
Erickson shared that she attended the Rodale Midwest Organic Center Field Day in August and had a table for the WMA. She was approached by Cliff Family Foundation (which also funds Rodale Farm and PFI) and asked to apply for their Small Grant application. Erickson worked with the Iowa Flood Center to ask for funding to support stream sensors in the Maquoketa Watershed. The Iowa Flood Center created a two page summary and budget document for the sensor cost and maintenance which Erickson submitted on October 1, 2023. The award announcement will be in December 2023.
- e. **Maquoketa River Water trail Planning- Delaware County- Steering Committee-** Erickson shared that she was asked by ECIA to be part of the steering committee for the water trail plan for

Delaware County south of Baileys Ford to the county line. The plan will identify access challenges and needed signage on that stretch of the Maquoketa. There are representatives from Delaware County Conservation, DNR, NRCS, and local emergency responders on the committee.

**f. Event partnered/ hosted recap:**

Erickson shared that she had a table for the WMA or hosted the following events since the last board of directors meeting. She also attended conferences and a streambank stabilization training from the Iowa DNR toolbox workshop. Photos of the events were shared in the monthly newsletter. Archived editions found on the [website](#).

- Manchester Wetland Unveiling- August 3, 2023
- ii. Maquoketa Day at Monticello Heritage March 26th
- Dyersville River Town of the Year -May 31,2023
- Manchester River Days June 3
- Rodale field day- August 16,2023
- Maqtober Fest- Sept 16,2023
- Conservation Day Dyersville- Sept 17. 2023

**6. Overview: 2023 Maquoketa River Water Monitoring Results - Lynette Seigley/Dave Mack**  
PowerPoint can be viewed [here](#).

- Chloride and sulfate concentrations for the Maquoketa WMA sites were low and showed little variability in concentration. Concentrations for most sites were less than the statewide stream average of 21 mg/L for chloride and 34 mg/L for sulfate.
- Higher turbidity levels occurred in tributaries to the North Fork and southern portion of the South Fork.
- In general, dissolved reactive phosphorus concentrations were highest in tributaries to the North Fork Maquoketa River. Overall highest mean concentrations based on five years of monitoring was 0.75 mg/L at DU3 (John Creek) and 0.73 mg/L at DU1 (North Fork Maquoketa River).
- Higher nitrate-N concentrations occurred in tributaries in the upper portions of both the North Fork and South Fork watersheds with lower concentrations in the lower reaches of both watersheds. Overall highest mean concentrations based on five years of monitoring was 12.3 mg/L at DE6 (Spring Branch) and 11.8 mg/L at DE7 (Plum Creek).
- Elevated E. coli bacteria occurred at scattered locations throughout the Maquoketa Watershed. Highest median E. coli bacteria level was 14,684 CFU/100 ml occurred at LD5 (Unnamed Creek at 197th Ave; based on three years of data). Otherwise, DU5 (Lytle Creek) had a median E. coli bacteria of 4,106 CFU/100 ml.
- When compared to streams statewide, Maquoketa WMA results for 2019-2023 were:
  - Higher for Nitrate-N, E. coli Bacteria, and Dissolved Reactive Phosphorus
  - Lower for Chloride and Sulfate
  - Similar for turbidity

Erickson shared the anticipated changes to the 2024 season. Our past water sampling lab contact from Coe College has taken a position at the University of Iowa Flood Center. After a meeting with Lynette, Dave and lab rep, it was determined they can still run the lab work on our samples. However, if we collect an additional bottle of water at about 10 locations (for their own study on pfas, metals and neonicotinoids), in return they will not charge us to run our samples.

Other updates – since the last 5 years of sampling three times year provided a snapshot and not able to show trends, we would like to sample about a dozen of the existing locations monthly. We are working with a lab in Maquoketa to run the samples and still figuring out the details as far as if volunteers would be able to assist with this additional effort. Having additional data will aid in seeking funding for edge of field projects in priority areas.

**7. Project Update of Iowa Flood Center Hydro Network and Modeling Project – Kate Giannini, Program Manager, and Nate Young, Research, Engineer –**

IIHR—Hydro science & Engineering | Iowa Flood Center | University of Iowa

Maquoketa River and Lower Cedar Watersheds \$1 million from Rep. Hinson and Miller- Meeks in Community Project Funding announced for in-stream monitoring and will share details and anticipated start date. [Press release.](#)

- Kate shared an update of the hydro sensor project showing the equipment that will be used and explaining that they will be doing a desk assessment to determine ideal locations. They are seeking locations that are upland and in an easily access area for example county conservation land. If you have suggestions for locations, email Erin and she can share with the Flood Center staff. There will be one sensor per county in Congressional district 1 & 2.
- Nate Young- shared the modeling project which will Investigate the effects of BMPs on flooding in the MR watershed under both current and future climate conditions.
- The model breaks the watershed down into 1025 sub basins at ~1.8 sq. mile each for further analysis. One of the studies looks at the dams in the watershed and seeking information on Lake Delhi and Lake Hurst Dam.
- Kate Giannini and Nate Young will give updates on both projects at future BoD meetings.

**8. Committee Updates**

- a. Executive Committee – Vice Chair, Mick Michel. No further update.
- b. Technical Committee – Jeff Tisl, IDALS- No update
- c. Water Monitoring Committee – Dave Mack, NRCS - Update already shared. Now seeking use of Chemright Lab in Maquoketa owned and operated by Dave and Sue Gossmann

**9. New Business**

- a. Review Limestone Bluffs RC&D Fiscal Agent Contract- to be approved February 2024- Shared in packet and will be reviewed again and approved at next BoD meeting in 2024
- b. Consider funding Watershed Coordinator position for FY25- Will be voting on at next BoD meeting in 2024

**10. Other business**

- a. Review Mission Statement and Vision- multiple versions- to be shared in Executive Committee meeting- most recent mission statement on website.
- b. Resignation of Stephanie Sagers, Limestone Bluffs RC&D Executive Director- She has taken a full-time position in Maquoketa and the RC&D board is working to create a job announcement to be shared.

**Next Meeting: Board of Directors meeting in Early 2024, unknown format.** Location, Date and time- to be determined.

**14. Adjourn** – Vick made the motion to adjourn at 7:54pm. Kurtz seconded. All Ayes. Motion carried.

-Respectively submitted by Erin Erickson, MR WMA Watershed Coordinator