

NORTH BRANCH CHICAGO RIVER WATERSHED WORKGROUP GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 09, 2022 * 1:00pm – 3:00pm



NORTH BRANCH
CHICAGO RIVER
WATERSHED
WORKGROUP

NBWW GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

1. Introductions

Brandon Janes, North Branch Chicago River Watershed Workgroup (NBWW) President, welcomed attendees at 1:03 pm to the February 09, 2022 NBWW General Membership Meeting. The meeting was held virtually, and Ashley Strelcheck performed roll call of NBWW members and asked for designated NBWW voting delegates (meeting attendees and roll call sheet below). A total of 22-23 members (tallying 81 - 86 votes) were in attendance, so an NBWW meeting quorum was present (see the roll call sheet and meeting participants list below).

2. Public Comment – None

3. NBWW Business

a. Approve NBWW November 10, 2021 General Membership Meeting Summary. First Motion: Matt Farmer, Village of Northbrook, Second Motion: Ramesh Kanapareddy, City of Highland Park. The motion passed with unanimous consensus via roll call vote (see results below).

b. NBWW NARP Presentations:

i. NBWW NARP Workplan Overview

Brian Valleskey, Geosyntec Consultants, gave an overview of NBWW's completed Nutrient Assessment Reduction Plan (NARP) Workplan to the NBWW general membership participants. Brian explained the 2022 monitoring strategy for the NARP to determine if Geosyntec's hypotheses of the watershed characteristics could be causing some of the impairment issues. The hypotheses includes low dissolved oxygen (DO) due to algal growth, limited reaeration due to low flows and small slopes, high sediment oxygen demand, macroinvertebrate respiration might deplete DO levels. The NARP Workplan broke out two alternatives, a targeted approach NARP (Outcome A: Skokie Lagoons and downstream) and a full NARP (Outcome B: extensive evaluation) throughout the watershed by cost and timeline. The 2022 monitoring results will determine which outcome will be necessary to satisfy the requirements of the NARP in the North Branch Chicago River watershed. The results of the NARP will provide watershed planning for the watershed workgroup to continue to support areas of the watershed impacted by non-point source pollution such as urban redevelopment, reduction of existing impervious cover, stormwater retrofits, and projects identified under an approved watershed-based plan.

Questions/Answers

Question: Would the NARP recommendations be delegated to individual agencies/entities to implement?

Answer: Although this will need to be discussed and determined once the NARP is completed it is Brandon Janes' opinion and has been discussed at the Executive Board level that the watershed workgroups will approach recommendations together as a workgroup.

Question: Can you (Brian) explain why there are high(er) chloride levels being seen in the winter?

Answer: The data does show areas that have higher levels of chlorides in the winter (than in the summer). Geosyntec has attributed that to the water conditions are clearer and the sunlight can penetrate the water column. Typically, in the winter, the water flow is slower (water turbidity is lower), because there is lower biological activity and photosynthesis can occur at a higher rate. There are just certain areas or situations where this is observed.

Clarification requested by Leonard Dane; Geosyntec Response: Geosyntec had presented chlorophyll-a (not chloride) levels measured by MWRD in North Branch Chicago River (NBCR) at the Albany Ave. station. The data shows the measured chlorophyll-a levels are higher in winter as compared to summer. The higher chlorophyll-a levels in winter has also been observed by MWRD in Upper North Shore Channel. However typically chlorophyll-a levels are higher in summer because of warmer conditions for algae to grow. The cause of higher chlorophyll-a levels in NBCR is unknown at this time. MWRD may conduct a study to determine the cause of high chlorophyll-a levels in winter sometime in the future.

ii. NBWW FY2022 – FY2024 NARP Approach

Brandon Janes gave a brief overview of the watershed workgroups approach of the NARP over the past year and a half along with the workgroups next steps. The NARP workplan presented two scenarios to the NBWW Monitoring Committee and Executive Board for potential costs between 2022 – 2024. The 2022 monitoring results will dictate which Outcome (A or B) will be necessary for the watershed workgroup to pursue. The costs for both outcomes are higher than year's past so the NBWW Executive Board has been working on potential solutions for membership dues increases, any potential monitoring reductions (while still meeting NPDES in-stream permitting requirements) and any other expenditure limits. The NBWW Executive Board voted on January 12, 2022 to approve the 2nd presented scenario, in which POTWs (Deerfield and NSWRD) are responsible for 50% of the NARP-related increase and the remaining 50% is split among the remaining NBWW agency (MS4) members. This results in a 62% increase to all Agency members 2022 membership dues and only applies to 2022 dues.

Questions/Answers

Comment: Some entities have already set their 2022 budget, so this increase may be difficult to pass for this year.

Question: Can we push this vote to the next meeting?

Answer: May 11, 2022 (next general membership meeting) is too far out to push the budget vote. Without a balanced budget (need approval of increased revenue to balance the budget) no bills can be paid this year.

Comments: Possibility to schedule a Special Meeting in a few weeks to allow NBWW members to speak with their Boards and Committees about increase to membership dues before it goes for a vote. The general membership came up with February 23, 2022 as a NBWW Special Call General Membership meeting date.

Question: Is the increase in membership dues just for this year or will the members see another increase next year?

Answer: The proposed NBWW membership dues increase is only being proposed for this year. The NBWW Executive Board is trying not to have any additional increases beyond this amount in the future years.

c. NBWW Financials

- i. Ratify Expenditures & Revenues: Ashley Strelcheck, NBWW Coordinator, presented the expenditures and revenues for ratification. There was no discussion. First Motion: Matt Ueltzen, Lake County Forest Preserve District, Second Motion: Al Giertych, Lake County Division of Transportation. The motion passed with unanimous consensus via roll call vote (see results below).
- ii. FY2022 NBWW Budget & FY2022 NBWW Membership Dues Structure: Ashley Strelcheck presented the FY2022 NBWW budget and proposed membership dues. Based on agenda 3.b.ii the general membership requested this vote be tabled until the requested February 23, 2022, NBWW Special

Call General Membership meeting to discuss this item. The general membership also asked Ashley to draft an NBWW NARP Memo to better explain the increase in costs that can be used by members to present to their Boards and Committees before the February 23, 2022 meeting.

d. Old Business

- i. Monitoring Committee Update: Rob Flood, NSWRD and Monitoring & Water Quality Impairment Abatement Committee Chair, gave the NBWW Monitoring Committee update to the meeting attendees. The NBWW Monitoring Committee has revised the 2022 NBWW Monitoring Strategy and NARP Workplan to the Illinois EPA for review. The 2018-2019 NBWW Bioassessment Monitoring Report is completed and on NBWW's website. The 2020-2021 NBWW Bioassessment Monitoring Report is currently being compiled by MBI and a draft should be submitted later this year to NBWW Monitoring Committee for review and comments. This year the NBWW will not be bioassessment sampling (see 2022 NBWW Monitoring Strategy for the new cycle of sampling), but MBI will be working the 2020-2021 report and training for the Integrated Prioritization System (IPS) model.

e. New Business – None

4. Guest Speakers

Chicago Calumet River Watershed Council: Natural Solutions Tool (Decision Support Tool)

Adam Flickinger, Friends of the Chicago River; Caroline O'Boyle and Taj Schottland, The Trust for Public Land gave an overview of the Chicago Calumet River Watershed Council's progress on developing a Natural Solutions Tool for the Chicago-Calumet River watershed (which includes the entire NBWW planning area). Through numerous workgroup meetings the watershed council has focused on collaborative regional watershed-based stormwater management, cross jurisdictional cooperation, multi-benefit nature-based stormwater solutions and achieving broader social, environmental, and economic benefits. The Watershed Council's achievements include strong participation from Committee participants and key partners, hosting quarterly workshops, connecting with like-minded local and nation agencies, helping partners with aligned projects and funding/launching two pilot projects. Those two pilot projects include a co-created watershed project prioritization mapping tool: Natural Solutions Tool and on-the-ground pilot project identification and implementation: "Restoration project at Indian Ridge Marsh South".

The Trust for Public Land has been contracted to research and develop a Natural Solutions Tool for the Chicago-Calumet River watershed based on the Council's modeling objectives. Using several completed solution tool interfaces (around the nation), the Trust for Public Land is developing a data-driven planning resource for the watershed council. See the meeting recording for a live demo of an example Natural Solution Tool.

5. Watershed Project Updates or Other Announcements/Discussion

- a. Watershed Updates & Announcements – No updates or announcements
 - i. 2021 NBWW Annual Newsletter: https://www.nbwwil.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/2021-NBWW-Newsletter-V3_final.pdf
- b. Member Remarks - None
- c. **Next NBWW General Membership Meeting:** May 11, 2022; a Special Call General Membership requested by the NBWW general membership for February 23, 2022.

6. Adjournment – 2:52 pm

First Motion: Matt Farmer, Village of Northbrook, Second Motion: Nimrod Warda, City of North Chicago. Approved by voice NBWW Membership roll call vote (see results below).

North Branch Chicago River Watershed Workgroup Meeting Attendees

Name	Organization
Adam Flickinger	Friends of the Chicago River
Al Giertych	Lake County Division of Transportation
Alvaro Melara	Representative of Congressman Brad Schneider
Anitha Das	Cook County Department of Transportation and Highways
Ashley Strelcheck	Lake County Stormwater Management Commission
Ben Gordon	Hey & Associates
Bill Gaeding	Morton Grove Public Works
Brandon Janes	Village of Deerfield
Brian Valleskey	Geosyntec Consultants, Inc.
Camilla Dadey	West Skokie Drainage District
Carol Armstrong	Village of Mettawa Trustee
Caroline O'Boyle	The Trust for Public Land
Chris Bouchard	RHMG/Village of Green Oaks
Chris Tomich	Village of Morton Grove
Chuck Bodden	North Shore Water Reclamation District
Chuck Frank	Sierra Club
Dave Miller	North Shore Water Reclamation District
David Johannesen	James Anderson Company
Dudley Onderdonk	Glencoe Park District
Emily Reed	Integrated Lakes Management (ILM)
Ernesto Huaracha	Lake County Stormwater Management Commission
Frederick Chung	Village of Libertyville
Igor Filipovich	North Shore Water Reclamation District
Jack Bielak	Village of Northbrook
James Tigue	Village of Glencoe
Joe Kenney	Village of Glenview
John Quail	Friends of the Chicago River
Josephine Meincke	North Shore Water Reclamation District
Justin Vick	Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
Karolina Cho	Gewalt Hamilton Associates, Inc.
Kate Amoruso	Village of Wilmette
Kathleen Paap	Wetlands Research Inc.
Leonard Dane	Deuchler Environmental, Inc.
Linda Englund	Illinois Sierra Club
Mac McKavanagh	Union One West Fork Drainage District
Matt Farmer	Village of Northbrook
Matt Ueltzen	Lake County Forest Preserve District
Melissa Madara	Stantec
Mia Gerace	Lake County Stormwater Management Commission
Michael Warner	Gewalt Hamilton Associates, Inc.
Mike Prusila	Lake County Stormwater Management Commission
Mike Zemaitis	Lake County Division of Transportation
Nimrod Warda	City of North Chicago
Ramesh Kanapareddy	City of Highland Park
Rob Flood	North Shore Water Reclamation District
Robert Pilat	Village of Niles
Robyn Flakne	Village of Glenview
Sam Barghi	Village of Lincolnshire
Steve Silic	Forest Preserve District of Cook County
Steve Waters	North Shore Water Reclamation District
Taj Schottland	The Trust for Public Land
Vern Witthuhn	Strand Associates, Inc.

PDHs are self-reporting. If attendees want to apply NBWW meetings towards their professional license, keep the certificate, agenda, and minutes with sign-in sheets. Acceptance of these materials for credit is at the discretion of the licensing authority.

MS4 Program BMP fulfillment. If attendees want to apply NBWW meetings and education towards their MS4 Program BMP Measurable Goals, keep the certificate, agenda and minutes with sign-in sheets. Acceptance of these materials for MS4 program credit is at the discretion of the Illinois EPA.