

**SUMMARY OF MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MUSKINGUM WATERSHED CONSERVANCY DISTRICT
Held at Kent State University Tuscarawas
February 23, 2024, 9:00 a.m.**

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District was held at Kent State University Tuscarawas, 330 University Drive NE, New Philadelphia, Ohio, on Friday, February 23, 2024, at 9:00 a.m., pursuant to notice duly given all Directors, and the general public in accordance with law.

1. ROLL CALL

Directors present were: Ronald Dziedzicki, James Gresh, Gordon Maupin, Robert Moorehead, and Jennifer Ponchak. Mr. Gresh, President of the Board of Directors, presided.

MWCD staff in attendance were Adria Bergeron, Julie Bickis, Mary Burley, Craig Butler, Jamie Carlisle James Crandall, Wendy Derr, David Lautenschlager, Daniel Louwers, Jonathan Mizer, Pete Novotny, Aaron Stump, Matt Thomas, and Ethan Zucal.

2. INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS AND PUBLIC COMMENT

Also, in attendance for all or portions of this meeting were: Tim Riley (*Briar Hill Hunt Club at Piedmont Lake*); and Gary Barker (*MWCD Board of Appraisers*).

Mr. Riley addressed the Board. Mr. Riley is a member of the Briar Hill Hunt Club at Piedmont Lake. He requested that the Board consider permitting hunting, in specific, archery, on a piece of MWCD land that borders the Hunt Club's land. The strip of land was very small. Mr. Butler said that MWCD staff could investigate and consider changing this zone to a hunting zone. Mr. Butler took Mr. Riley's information in order to contact him and gather details regarding the exact parcel of land.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Mr. Maupin, seconded by Mr. Dziedzicki, the minutes of the January 26, 2024, meeting of the Board of Directors were approved.

4. FINANCIAL

Attached (copies on file) is the financial report for the one-month period ending January 31, 2023. The total operating loss is (\$136,839) compared to a loss of (\$804,648) in 2023. Note: the economic engine format has been updated with the following changes – allocated the percentage of interest income budgeted to the operational accounts and moved the Utica Shale royalties out of operations, below the line.

The operational revenue is \$1,265,947 compared to \$536,346 in 2023, an increase of 128%.

- Natural Resources and Land Management revenue is \$384,584, an increase of 253% over the prior year. This increase is due to a substantial increase in timber revenue. Timber revenue is \$320,879 (92% over budget). Some of the projects were accelerated due to market and weather conditions. Most of the revenue will be received in the first half of 2024, with this account projected to exceed the budget.

- Park revenue is \$591,406, an increase of 107% over the prior year, however, mostly due to timing of seasonal camping payments received. Seasonal letters were sent out earlier this year and likely caused payments to begin earlier.
- Marina revenue is \$152,486, an increase of 169% over the prior year, again due to timing of seasonal docking payments.

Operational expenses are \$1,402,786 an increase of 3% over the prior year. Natural Resources/Land Management is up 32% due to the final payment for the cottage re-appraisal contract. Rangers is up 45% due to purchase of replacement Marcs Radios.

Wages make up \$837,355 of the operational expenses, up 16% from the prior year. The increase is attributable to the wage increase given to staff, higher vacation and termination payouts than the prior year, and the increased expense accrual moving to the fully insured health plan. Utility expenses are \$123,262, down 38% from the prior year. This is partially due to lower utility costs compared with the prior year as well as timing. Several February payments were entered in January in the prior year.

Oil and Gas royalties are \$1,687,375, 4% of the budget and a 28% decrease from the prior year. Royalty revenue is expected to uptick in the 2nd quarter when new wells come online.

On motion by Mr. Dziejicki, seconded by Mr. Moorehead, the financial report was accepted as presented.

Mr. Crandall requested that the minutes reflect the fact that he distributed to the Board members a letter from Rea & Associates regarding the annual audit. A copy of the letter is on file. The letter simply outlines the audit process.*

5. PAYMENT OF BILLS

On motion by Mr. Maupin, seconded by Ms. Ponchak, the report of the payment of bills for the period ending January 31, 2024, was approved as presented. *(Copies on file)*

6. BUSINESS

6.01a LEASE TRANSACTIONS

On motion by Mr. Maupin, seconded by Mr. Moorehead, the assignments, cancellations, new leases, farm leases, mortgage consent and agreement cancellations, and mortgage consent and agreements were approved and execution by the proper officers of the MWCD authorized.

6.01b GRANT OF EASEMENT

On motion by Mr. Maupin, seconded by Mr. Dziejicki, proposed easement, as recommended and set forth in the above memorandum, was approved.

6.01c COTTAGE SITE LEASE RATE ADJUSTMENTS FOR 2024

On motion by Mr. Maupin, seconded by Ms. Ponchak, proposed rate adjustments for 2024, as recommended and set forth in the above memorandum, were approved. On roll call: Mr. Dziejicki—abstained; Mr. Gresh—yes; Mr. Maupin—yes; Mr. Moorehead—abstained; and Ms. Ponchak—yes.

6.02a INVOICES PRIOR TO PURCHASE ORDERS

On motion by Mr. Maupin, seconded by Mr. Moorehead, a “then and now” certificate for invoices received prior to processing of a purchase order, as recommended and set forth in the above memorandum, was authorized.

6.03a HUMAN RESOURCES SUMMARY

On motion by Mr. Maupin, seconded by Mr. Moorehead, human resources activities, as recommended and set forth in the above memorandum, were approved.

6.03b PERSONNEL POLICY REVIEWS

On motion by Mr. Maupin, seconded by Ms. Ponchak, proposed revisions to personnel policies, as recommended and set forth in the above memorandum, were approved.

6.04a CLENDENING LAKE MARINA CABIN AREA IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT | BID AND AWARDS RESULTS

No Board action required.

6.04b ATWOOD LAKE PARK ACTIVITY CENTER RENOVATION REQUEST TO AMEND DESIGN CONTRACT

On motion by Mr. Maupin, seconded by Mr. Dziejicki, proposed request to amend design contract, as recommended and set forth in the above memorandum, was approved.

6.04c ATWOOD LAKE PARK TRAIL PAVING | REQUEST TO BID AND AWARD

On motion by Mr. Dziejicki, seconded by Ms. Ponchak, proposed request to authorize the bid and award of subject project, as recommended and set forth in the above memorandum, was approved.

**6.04d ATWOOD LAKE PINES COTTAGE AREA ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS
REQUEST TO BID AND AWARD**

On motion by Mr. Maupin, seconded by Mr. Dziejicki, proposed request to authorize the bid and award of subject project, as recommended and set forth in the above memorandum, was approved.

6.04e SENECA SPLASH PAD RATES

On motion by Mr. Maupin, seconded by Mr. Dziejicki, proposed rates, as recommended and set forth in the above memorandum, were approved.

6.05 RECORDS RETENTION | RANGERS

On motion by Mr. Maupin, seconded by Ms. Ponchak, proposed retention schedule, as recommended and set forth in the above memorandum, was approved.

6.06 OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Butler gave updates to the Board on the following items:

- 1.) Strategic Planning: MWCD is engaging Elizabeth Schuster of Sustainable Economies Consulting to develop more detailed metrics/measurables to track the progress made on the Strategic Plan.
- 2.) Everything DiSC Management Training with CDM Partners Limited. In the month of March, MWCD Management staff will participate in management training. This training aligns with parts of Human Resources strategic plan initiatives.
- 3.) Work on Flood Mitigation Communication Plan:
 - a. Plan listening sessions to determine how to better meet community needs;
 - b. Restructure the Partners in Watershed Management Program (PWM);
 - c. Continue work with Foundation for Appalachian Ohio (FAO) to develop grants.
- 4.) No update on application status for funding from the State of Ohio Appalachian Fund.
- 5.) Meetings to be scheduled with Conservancy Court Judges in preparation for Conservancy Court which will occur in June.
- 6.) Update on the creation of an Endowment. Staff continues to work with outside legal counsel on developing legislation. Representative Hillyer has indicated that he would be willing to bring the proposed bill to the House Floor when it is ready.
- 7.) Mr. Butler provided an updated regarding State Lands Leasing. He explained that many of the main operators once bidding for the lease had withdrawn due to extremely restrictive covenants placed on the lease.
- 8.) Later in the afternoon (Friday, February 23, 2024), Mr. Butler would be participating in a Podcast with Troy Balderson at Tappan Marina.

7. REPORTS

7.01 UTICA ROYALTY REVENUE REPORT

Utica royalty revenue is currently generated by **116** producing wells at Tappan, Clendening, Seneca, Dover, Piedmont, Atwood, and Leesville Reservoirs. A breakdown of the monthly royalty revenue can be seen on the attached page.

Utica royalties for **January** totaled **\$1.69M** (\$1,687,374.99) which was an approximate **1% decrease** in month-over-month revenue from December (\$1.83M).

Royalty Report Exhibit *copy is on file*.

7.02 NATURAL RESOURCES AND LAND MANAGEMENT REPORT

- Forestry has been working through several timber sales this winter. Good weather through the beginning of February has brought on ideal logging conditions, especially for winter logging. In total Forestry was able to complete four logging operations. These harvests were at Mohawk, Wills Creek,

and two operations at Leesville Lake. In total these sales harvested more than 600,000 bdft of hardwood sawlogs.

- Timber stand improvement projects have been on-going. Vine control including wild grapevines and oriental bittersweet, were completed by a contractor within a 50-acre pine stand at Atwood. This vine control work is in preparation of future timber operation that is in the planning phases.
- In an effort to upgrade technology used by the forestry department, we are working towards the purchase of new timber cruising handhelds and software. This new technology will allow remote users to upload any collected field data to a cloud-based server, ensuring the retention of collected data and quicker availability to forest managers. The new software will also aid in setting up timber cruises on the fly and aid in timber sales by automatically collecting GPS locations of any tree marked for harvest. Additionally, timber cruise statistics are automatically collected in the field allowing for enhanced data collection accuracy and efficiency.
- A potential orphan oil and gas well casing has been identified near the park beach at Atwood. MWCD worked in conjunction with the ODNR to conduct excavation and dewatering around the well casing. The contractor was able to weld an additional casing string to both seal the well and mark the well above recreational pool level. The well has been assigned an API number by ODNR and planning will begin to plug and abandon this well during the 2024-2025 drawdown period. MWCD will be working to implement safety measures on and around the well until plugging operations can commence.



7.03 ENGINEERING REPORT

MASTER PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND RECREATION IMPROVEMENT (ONGOING)

Projects in Design

- **Charles Mill Beach Area Campground and Amenities Development**
- **Clendening Marina Building and Site Improvements**
- **Leesville South Fork Launch Ramp Parking Improvements**
- **Tappan Lake Park Area 1 Walking Bridge Replacement**
- **Tappan Lake Activity Center Amenities**

Projects Under Construction

- **Atwood Activity Center Renovation:** The metal roofing is complete. Work continues on the inside of the kitchen and retail area. Tongue and groove ceiling is complete in the large gathering area. Generator has been delivered. Completion is scheduled for July 2024.
- **Clendening WWTP and Sewer Improvements:** Construction of the operations building is complete. Earthtek has been installing the WWTP equipment. The contractor has been working on final waterline installation. Substantial completion is scheduled for April 2024.
- **Clendening Lake Marina Cabin Area Improvements:** Bids were received on Feb. 8th and project will be awarded to Stanley Miller Construction. The project will consist of a new building that will contain a water treatment plant in addition to an adjoining laundry facility for use by Clendening staff and customers.
- **Leesville North Fork Wastewater Treatment Plant:** Mainline sewer, lateral and manhole installation is ongoing. Completion is scheduled for November 2024.
- **Leesville North Fork Marina Lift Station Generator:** Work cannot begin until wastewater treatment plant contractor has lift station work complete. Substantial completion is scheduled for December 2024.
- **Pleasant Hill Lake Park Area A Lift Station Generator:** Project is ongoing. Substantial Completion is scheduled for September 2024.
- **Pleasant Hill Covert Road Culvert Replacement:** Project was awarded to Stanley Miller Construction. Substantial completion is scheduled for April 2024.
- **Seneca Beach Amenity and Activity Areas:** Contractor is working on installation of underground piping and foundations for the splashpad structures. Completion is scheduled for May 2024.
- **Tappan Marina Building Backup Generator:** Wood Electric has installed new panels in the marina basement and has poured the pad for the new generator. Generator delivery has been delayed again by manufacturer to March 2024.
- **Tappan Lake Welcome Center:** The Contractor is waiting for long lead-time items (Heavy timbers, trusses, and other major systems are in production/fabrication.) and will resume vertical construction in mid-March.
- **Tappan Cabin Hill Water Booster Pump Improvements:** The building shell has been constructed, and interior piping and electrical work will be complete once equipment is delivered. Final completion is expected in April 2024.
- **Tappan Beach Solar:** Construction of the 24 solar panel array is tentatively scheduled to start mid-April.

DREDGING AND SHORELINE (ongoing)

Dredging Program

- **Pleasant Hill Boat Club Dredging:** Dredging and shoreline work is complete. Restoration work will be complete once site conditions allow.

Shoreline Program

- **Atwood Lake – Arcadia Drive:** Shoreline work is complete. Final seeding and restoration will be complete once site conditions allow.
- **Charles Mill Lake – South Peninsula:** The coir log and riprap installation is approximately 40% complete and is expected to be done in early March. Substantial Completion is scheduled for July 31, 2024.

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS PROJECTS/PROGRAMS (ongoing)

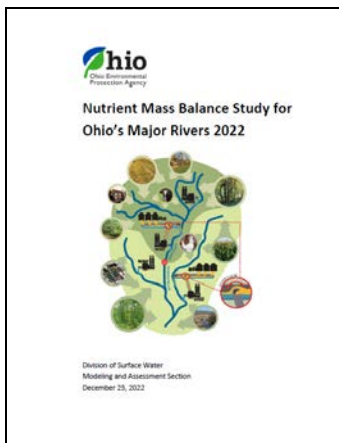
Zoar Levee

- Project Complete. Post Implementation Evaluation is underway in addition to the Dam Safety Action Class (DSAC) review.

Magnolia Levee

- Project cost estimate is \$14.6M with MWCD's non-federal cost share anticipated to be \$500k. Waiting for approval for supplement to dam safety modification report. Senior oversight approved funding for FY24. The Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) will be sent to MWCD in Spring.

7.04 CONSERVATION



Putting into action MWCD's Conservation Core Initiatives (water quality, healthy habitats, building partnerships) MWCD's Conservation Department, in coordination with the Voinovich School of Leadership and Public Service, Ohio University hosted the first of three regional workgroup meetings focused on updating Ohio's Nutrient Reduction Strategy (ONRS).

This is a collaborative effort to update priorities, monitoring efforts and goals for Ohio in relation to the Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Task Force (interim target of a 20% reduction of nitrogen and phosphorus loading by 2025 and 48% reduction by year 2035).

MWCD's continued support for the stream gage network maintained through our Joint Funding Agreement with USGS is critical to the better understanding, monitoring, and modeling of the Muskingum River Watershed which helps maintain Ohio's cleanest water.

Conservation Outreach and Engagement Activities (Jan - Feb)

- 1/30 Coshocton Co., Oxford Township, Flooding Assistance meeting, Newcomerstown Ohio
- 1/30 Permaculture and Tree-nut Farm Tour, Empire Chestnut Co., Carrollton Ohio
- 2/1 Ohio Shrink-wrap Recycling Working Group, Virtual
- 2/2 MWCD DAC Q1 Meeting, Virtual
- 2/5-7 OPRA Conference, Sandusky Ohio

- 2/6 ODNR – MRM Highwall Reclamation Planning Site Visit, Coshocton Ohio
- 2/8 Prairie Pollinator and Prescribed Burn Training, Athen Ohio
- 2/8 Appalachian Ohio Watershed Council, Virtual
- 2/12 Tuscarawas County Commissioners, MWCD Recognition, New Philadelphia Ohio
- 2/12 Harrison County SWCD 2024 project planning, New Philadelphia Ohio
- 2/13 Kraton Pine Chemicals, Earth Day planning meeting, Dover Ohio
- 2/13 MWCD Trail Implementation Group meeting, New Philadelphia Ohio
- 2/14 ONRS Regional Roundtable, Dennison Ohio

7.05 RECREATION REPORT

Oral report.

7.06 MARKETING/COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

ONGOING/UPCOMING PROJECTS

- Updates to website/social media
- Marketing/advertising for 2024
- Brochures/rack cards for 2024
- Website redesign
- Solar Eclipse
- Conservation videos
- Anti-litter campaign collaborative with ODNR

OUTREACH COORDINATOR PROJECTS

- Development Advisory Committee – 3 new members (23 total)
 - 4 full DAC quarterly meetings (next meeting: April 26, 2024)
 - 3 subcommittees (Conservation, Trails, Revenue and Development)
 - 12 planned subcommittee meetings (minimum – 4 per subcommittee)
- Appalachian Community Grant
 - Carroll, Coshocton, Harrison, Muskingum, Tuscarawas Counties
 - Development Grant Round 2 Award Announcement: February/March 2024
- 2023 MWCD Annual Report – working with designer on layout
- One-Time Strategic Community Investments Fund
 - Tappan Lake Regional Safety Center – Awarded \$450,000 by House of Representatives
- Camp Firebird Safety Planning
- LakeViews
 - New Design starting with Spring 2024 Edition
 - Spring Edition – late March
- 90th Anniversary
 - Museum display will be extended through 2025
- MWCD recognized by Tuscarawas County Commissioners for recent awards
- Congressman Troy Balderson Podcast: “Troy Talks” featuring Craig Butler – Tappan – February 23
- Earth Day/Arbor Day Collaboration – MWCD/MWCF/Kraton/Encino
- Ohio River Basin Alliance
 - Governance Meeting: Cincinnati – January 2024
 - Ohio River Basin Hill Day: Washington D.C. – May 2024
 - Ohio River Basin Alliance Summit – November 2024

PROGRAMMING AND EVENTS

- 2024 Event Rack Cards have been printed and are being distributed. We are currently working on event details and contracts.
- Six open positions are posted and our goal is to fill the positions by April 1.
- We have developed several sponsorship packages and advertising opportunities in conjunction with weekly programs and special events.
- Event Recap
 - “Soup”er Bowl Weekend – Tappan on February 10
 - Sweetheart Hike – Pleasant Hill on February 10
- Upcoming Events:
 - Full Moon Winter Hike – Atwood on February 24
 - Hunter Education Course – Tappan on March 2-3
 - Pi(e) Day Hike – Atwood and Pleasant Hill on March 14
 - Easter Celebration & Egg Hunts – Atwood, Charles Mill, Pleasant Hill, Seneca, & Tappan on March 30
 - Welcome Weekend & Solar Eclipse – Atwood, Charles Mill, Pleasant Hill, & Tappan on April 5-7
 - Welcome Weekend – Seneca on April 5-6

PRESS RELEASES IN JANUARY

- January 8: MWCD Names Chief of Engineering
- January 29: MWCD Rangers Receive Ohio Collaborative

Social Media Analytics

Jan. 2024	Facebook (followers)	Instagram
MWCD	7017	633
Atwood	15,504	1397
Charles Mill	5,261	1001
Clendening	2,036	134
Piedmont	5,689	231
Pleasant Hill	17,968	1,602
Seneca Marina	1,331	728
Seneca Park	13,591	728
Tappan	13,854	1,064

2024 COMMUNITY PRESENTATIONS

- January 10: New Philadelphia, OH – Tuscarawas Co. Board of Development Disabilities: Conservation Overview (Zucal, Thomas, Hay, Marinelli, Suggs)
- January 23: Zanesville, OH – Mid-East Career and Technology Centers: Natural Resources Conservation & Criminal Justice (Zucal, Brockmeier, Mahaffey)
- February 1: New Philadelphia, OH – MWCD Solar Partners: MWCD Overview (Butler & Zucal)
- February 17: Stow, OH – Ohio Muskie Club Annual Banquet: MWCD Fishing Overview (Butler & Zucal)
- TBD: Cambridge, OH – Cambridge Rotary: MWCD Overview & Seneca/Piedmont Updates (Zucal)
- TBD: Uhrichsville, OH – Claymont HS FFA Class: Conservation Overview (Conservation)
- TBD: Location TBD – Claymont HS FFA Class Field Trip: Conservation Overview and Hands on Education (Conservation)

7.07 IMMEDIATE OR PENDING LITIGATION

None.

8. SUBDISTRICTS

8.01 PAYMENT OF BILLS – CHIPPEWA SUBDISTRICT

Attached is the Payment of Bills report for the Chippewa Subdistrict for the period January 1, 2024, through January 31, 2024.

The January report is for check numbers 3039 through 3041 totaling \$733.83.

All payments have been reviewed and found to be in order. It is recommended that the Board approve the January 2024 payment of bills for the Chippewa Subdistrict.

Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District			
Chippewa Subdistrict			
Payment of Bills			
January 1, 2024 through January 31, 2024			
CHECK NUMBER	PAYMENT DATE	PAY TO NAME	PAYMENT AMOUNT
0000003039	1/10/2024	COMDOC	44.52
0000003040	1/19/2024	ENTERPRISE FLEET MANAGEMENT	560.59
0000003041	1/19/2024	USDA-APHIS, GENERAL	128.72
			\$733.83

On motion by Mr. Maupin, seconded by Mr. Moorehead, the report of the payment of bills for the period ending January 31, 2024, for the Chippewa Subdistrict, was approved as presented.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION

None.

10. ADJOURN

There being no further business, on motion by Mr. Dziedzicki, seconded by Ms. Ponchak, the meeting of the Board of Directors was adjourned. The next regularly scheduled meeting is Friday, March 22, 2024, at 9:00 a.m., at Kent State University Tuscarawas.

James M. Gresh, President

ATTEST:

Craig W. Butler, Secretary