

MINUTES - ORBA Steering Committee Conference Call, 27 April 2020

1. **Call to Order** – approximately 1:00 PM EDT

2. **Roll Call**

Steering Committee Members Present – Richard Harrison, Marty Hettel, Sarah Hippensteel-Hall, Carey Johnson, John King, Chris Lorentz, Heather Mayfield, Robin Peak, Chuck Somerville, Mike Steinmaus, Harry Stone, Jeff Thomas

Steering Committee Members Absent – Laurel Cornell, Brian Farkas, Kari Mackenbach

ORBA Advisors Present – Heather Davis Miller (new), Charles Goad, Gail Hesse (new), Jim Lazorchak, Jordan Lubetkin (new), Laura Mattingly, Brewster Rhoads (new), David Wicks (new), Klancey Burford (new)

3. **Adoption of the Agenda** – the following changes to the regular agenda were requested by Chuck Somerville (CS) and were distributed with the agenda. There were no objections to the requested changes.

- a. upon approval of minutes proceed to 8d to discuss ORBA summit timing, schedule and fee structure
- b. then move to 8f for a continued discussion of re-structured working groups and nominations for working group leaders
- c. then move to 8b for discussion of ORBA organizational strategic planning
- d. resume regular agenda as time allows, reserving time for determining next meeting date

4. **Review and approval of minutes of the 24 February and 23 March Conference Calls** – minutes adopted as distributed.

5. **Report from the Chairperson** (Chuck Somerville) – no report in favor of other discussions

6. **Regular Reports from Other Committee Members** – no reports in favor of amended agenda

- a. Financial Update (Chuck)
- b. Update on Website/Social Media (John King/Heather Mayfield)
- c. Update from the AWI Liaison (Marty Hettel)
- d. Update from the ORBCRE Liaison (Chris Lorentz)

7. **Reports from Working Group Leaders** – no reports in favor of amended agenda.

- a. Sustainable Growth & Competitiveness (Harry Stone)
- b. Water Quality, Availability, and Management (Richard Harrison)

- c. Restoration and Protection (Sarah Hippensteel-Hall/Chris Lorentz)
- d. Enterprise and Infrastructure (Kari Mackenbach)
- e. Research & Education (Heather Mayfield/Chris Lorentz)

8. Unfinished Business

- a. PAS Agreement – Next Steps (H. Stone/Laura Mattingly)

- b. ORBA Strategic Planning for 2020-2023

- i. ORBA Vision Statement

- ii. ORBA SWOT Analysis

[this discussion was intended to follow discussions of the ORBCRE/ORBA meetings and progress on reconstituting working groups. This was the third topic of discussion on the call] With approximately nine minutes to go in the scheduled one-hour call, CS noted that there would likely not be time for the discussion on ORBA Strategic Planning, as opposed to the completion of the Strategic Plan for the basin under the PAS process. It is critical for ORBA not to lose momentum as the basin plan is being finalized, because ORBA must now identify the elements of the plan that it is required to carry out, and make sure that they are done. So, we have to look out for the health of the organization as a whole. CS circulated with the agenda and minutes for this call, a document that included a vision statement for ORBA, and also guidance on performing a SWOT analysis. Time working on this effort has been small because of the level of effort required on the basin plan, and now on planning for the fall meeting. CS asked members of the SC to read through the SWOT document, and to respond with their own SWOT assessments.

- c. ORBA Reception/Visits on Capitol Hill

- d. **How should ORBA engage with ORBCRE 2020 meeting** – [this discussion occurred directly following the approval of the minutes] CS reminded the committee that recent discussion had centered around having one to two days of ORBA meetings immediately preceding the ORBCRE meetings, and co-located with ORBCRE at the University of Louisville. A preliminary draft agenda of the ORBA meetings, created by Harry Stone (HS) was sent out with the materials for the call. HS informed the committee that he had participated in a conference call with Tamara Sluss (from UL, organizer for the ORBCRE meetings) and that Tamara had expressed a concern that ORBA starting our meetings on Tuesday (29 September) would make the overall meetings too long for some attendees. HS felt certain that the ORBA business will require a full day of meetings, and that putting all of those meetings on Wednesday (30 Sept) would create conflict with field trips scheduled by ORBCRE. Also, some of the working group leaders would like additional time to meet with their groups. Chris Lorentz (CL) also supported the argument that a meeting lasting from Tuesday through Friday would be both expensive and create time conflicts for a number of potential attendees. David Wicks (DW) said that the Botanical Gardens had been

selected for the Wednesday evening celebration of the Ohio River. DW is also working to schedule the field trips for the meeting, and is flexible in terms of having field trips on Wednesday or Friday. HS stated that ORBA needed a full day to complete the business planned for the fall meeting in order to move forward with planning for strategic actions. We are also hoping to have legislators or their aides present for part of the ORBA working sessions. This will require a full-day, although there might be time for additional working group meetings later in the week. CS asked if there was a sense of how subscribed the field trips would be, and if the field trips were flexible. DW indicated that he was both flexible in terms of the timing of the field trip, and that he wanted to participate in the ORBA discussions around the strategic plan. CS asked about the possible use of Tuesday late afternoon or early evening to reduce concerns over the long week. CL suggested moving all field trips to Friday and leaving the entire day on Wednesday for ORBA work. DW suggested that ORBA could schedule its work on Wednesday and Friday morning, and leave Wednesday afternoon for field trips and Thursday as the primary day for ORBCRE. We do not know how many abstracts will be submitted, so it is difficult to determine how the schedule should be constructed. CS recommended the formation of a sub-committee to work on the ORBA-ORBCRE schedule, which could then report back to the Steering Committee with findings and recommendations. Heather Mayfield, CL, HS and CS agreed to work with Tamara Sluss on the schedule for the meeting.

CS moved the discussion from the timing on the ORBA meetings to their content. HM noted that the plan will be completed, so the structure of the ORBA meetings will be different. RH said that this meeting will be about implementation of the actions from the Strategic Plan, and will still be time intensive. HM made the point that the schedule needed to be structured without overlap so that ORBA members could attend as many working group sessions as they wanted. HS agreed that each working group would need at least one hour on the schedule, and that, as we identified the leaders for the working groups, we will allow the leaders to determine how the hour will be used. Some working group leaders will use the time as a report-out, and other leaders will use the time to organize the collaboration around their goal. This meeting will be a key time for launching the work of each working group. RH reiterated the need for a meeting of the working group leaders to talk about both finalization of the plan, and to start the work of implementing the plan. HS noted that two off-line meetings were needed; one (including HM, CS, CL and HS) to talk about the planning for the summit, and the second one (including the presumptive working group leaders) to talk about what we want to accomplish at the summit.

RH reported that John Hoopingarner with Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District had been in discussions with RH and HS to make a \$5,000 contribution in support of ORBA's work. RH suggested that this contribution could be in support of the ORBA summit.

- e. Seeking Partnerships with Mitigation Banks

- f. **ORBA Steering Committee Terms; working groups and group leaders** – [second order of business taken up on this call] the working groups that have been in place have been extended until the point at which new working group leaders are selected and the new working groups are stood up. Working groups will align directly with the top-line goals in the ORB Strategic Plan. HS has produced a draft charter. CS asked for discussion of the timing of nominations and standing up new committees. HS noted that the ORBA bylaws indicate that the working group leaders are to be appointed by the Steering Committee. The working groups should have specific expertise in the goal areas and should be comprised of people for whom the working group goal is strategic. CS and HS have had off-line discussions about who would be a good fit for each of the working group leader positions, and HS has asked several people for their permission to be nominated as a working group leader. HS offered to make nominations, but wanted SC members to make additional recommendations. CS opened the nominations for working group leaders and proposed that we finalize the selection of the leaders on the next SC call. There were no objections to the “quasi motion” that the nomination period was opened on this call, and that the nomination period would be closed and the selection of working group leaders finalized on the next regular SC call.

HS made the following nominations:

- Jordan Lubetkin (National Wildlife Federation) for Restoration & Protection
- Heather Mayfield (ORSANCO/FORE) – for Knowledge Informed Decision Making, i.e. Research and Education
- Richard Harrison (ORSANCO) – for Abundant Clean Water

CS asked if it was appropriate to ask people on the phone to speak to their nominations. HS noted that there might also be people on the call who wanted to self-nominate. CS called for further nominations, either self-nominations or to nominate someone else. David Wicks (DW) self-nominated for the Nature-Based Recreation Goal, but offered to step aside if there was someone with a more strategic position in basin-wide recreation.

CS asked Jordan Lubetkin (JL) to speak to his nomination. JL is the Communications Director for the NWF Great Lakes Regional Center in Ann Arbor, MI. The national office has taken a great interest in ecosystem restoration in the Ohio River Basin. JL is a veteran of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, having worked on it from the first day. That initiative has resulted in over \$3B of investment in the Great Lakes, and NWF would like to see that investment in the Ohio River Valley. JL believes that this is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to spur significant investment in the ORB.

CS asked for comments from Heather Mayfield. HM thanked the group for the nomination. She has been a member of the SC since 2018, and worked with Chris Lorenz (CL) to establish the initial charter for the Research & Education working group. She has worked on the ORB Strategic Plan and will align the goals of the

working group with the final plan. HM believes in the collaboration and will work hard to make it successful. HM also commented that her expertise is more in education than in research, and that she would look forward to support from CL and researchers. HS commented that the intention is to have co-chairs for each of the working groups to be nominated and elected by the ORBA membership. HM specifically noted the intention to keep CL involved as an elected member of the SC and co-chair of this working group.

CS asked for comments from Richard Harrison. RH said that this nomination really engages ORSANCO as a whole. He has been active in ORBA since the early days and will continue to be. RH also expressed the hope that a representative from the Tennessee River basin could serve as a co-chair or as an active member of the working group.

CS noted that the nominations remained open, and asked SC members to consider making further nominations. [**NOTE added** during transcription of the minutes – I realize that I should have asked David Wicks to comment on his nomination for the lead of the Nature-Based Recreation working group. My apologies to David for the oversight!]

g. Steering Committee Talking Points and Guidance

9. New Business

- a. Next SC Call – normally 25 May 2020. Discussion regarding holding the call on the Memorial Day holiday? [this was the fourth topic for discussion] CS asked the SC to comment on whether they would like to go ahead with the call on the regular day, or to re-schedule. RH proposed rescheduling. HM agreed. HS requested to move the meeting up to May 18th. CS noted that a meeting on the 18th would shorted the working group leader nomination by one week. There were no comments of concern regarding the shortening of the nomination period. CS asked for comments or concerns regarding an 18 May meeting date. Hearing no objections, the next SC call was scheduled for 18 May at 1:00 PM EDT.
- b. Other – Laura Mattingly (LM) noted that the comment period for the ORB Strategic Plan document would close on 15 May 2020. CS, on behalf of ORBA, thanked LM for all of her efforts on the basin plan. Thanks also to Harry Stone for the tremendous amount of effort that he invested in the completion of the plan. Thanks to Richard Harrison and ORSANCO for the organizational and budgetary support for the planning process. Thanks to Carey Johnson for his efforts in arranging the match funding from the State of Kentucky.

RH asked for official approval regarding the payout to Harry Stone as WIK.

10. Adjourn – at approximately 2:00 PM EDT, 27 April 2020