

ORBA Steering Committee Notes

August 27, 2018

Items for Discussion:

- Call to order
- Roll call
- Adoption of agenda
- Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting
- Chairperson's Report
- Reports from the other committee members
 - update from Financial Chairperson (Brian Farkas)
 - update from Website Team (Megan Thompson/Chuck Somerville/John King)
 - update from AWI Liaison (Chuck Somerville) –
 - update from ORBCRE Liaison (Chris Lorentz)
- Research and Education Working Group
- Reports from the working group leaders
 - Sustainable Growth And Competitiveness (Harry Stone)
 - Water Quality, Availability and Management (Ted Lozier/Richard Harrison)
 - Restoration and Protection (Sarah Hippensteel Hall/Chris Lorentz)
 - Enterprise and Infrastructure (Kari Mackenbach)
- Unfinished business
 - Planning for 2018 ORBA Summit
 - Outreach plan to engage more organizations/individuals in ORBA to collaborate on high priority challenges
 - Status of proposal for Ohio River Basin Initiative
- New business
 - Identifying our priorities and shaping our communications
 - Proposed change to bylaws
- Adjourn

Call to Order

Roll Call

Present: Harry Stone, Chuck Somerville, Sarah Hippensteel-Hall, Harry Stone, Chris Lorentz, Mike Steinmaus, Jim Lazorchak, Richard Harrison, Heather Mayfield, Megan Thompson, Jim Lazorchak, Brandon Brummett

Adoption of Agenda

The agenda was adopted by consensus.

Approval of Minutes

Voting needs to take place on the minutes from April and June and July, approval was tabled until next meeting.

Report from the Chairperson

A meeting was held on July 31 in Frankfort, KY with Harry Stone and Chuck Somerville (ORBA), Carey Johnson, Peter Goodman, and other Kentucky folks, Amy Babey, Andrew Reed, Cullen Grasty (USACE), and Richard Harrison (ORSANCO) to continue partnership discussions with Kentucky for a possible USACE PAS study to complete the initial strategic planning for the Ohio River Basin Restoration Initiative.

Harry participated in the Aug. 6 - 7 Benthic Cyanobacteria and Cyanotoxins Workshop (USEPA and USACE). Jim Lazorchak helped lead the workshop. Key insights were that benthic cyanobacteria can cause cyanotoxin issues.

ORBA's Chairperson met with COL Jason Evers (August 17, Huntington, WV). COL Evers provided an introduction (by e-mail) to COL Andrew Short, Commander of the Pittsburgh District replacing COL Lloyd.

ORBA's Chairperson has been recruiting potential nominees to fill out the Steering Committee, with special focus on geographic and industry "holes" - TN, PA, and energy sector. Harry expressed thanks to Steering Committee Members who are seeking to "re-up".

It was noted that there are no nominees for Vice-Chairperson.

Reports from other committee members

- Update from Financial Chairperson (Brian Farkas)
 - No report.
- Update from Website Team (Megan Thompson/Chuck Somerville/John King)
 - No report.
- Update from AWI Liaison (Chuck Somerville)
 - AWI has separated from TNC as a 501(c)(3). Fundraising is the current focus. A case statement for fundraising is being prepared. An agreement is being reached with a marketing firm that will research how the previous report card was used.
- Update from ORBCRE Liaison (Chris Lorentz)
 - Chris reported on the planning for the conference. Currently between 40 and 50 people are registered. It was confirmed that the Working Groups will meet separately in breakout sessions on Thursday and present a summary from their breakout groups on Friday at the end of the conference.
 - Chris reminded everyone to register for the conference soon. Early Bird expires on September 3.

Reports from the working group leaders

- Sustainable Growth And Competitiveness (Harry Stone)
 - Harry reported that the SG&C Working Group has not met recently. Very few attended the previous call and no regional collaboration has been identified for economic development or recreation. However, in the prior call, there was an identified need to gather data related to the role of natural resources on economic development and recreation. Harry indicated that Donna Foster, Landscape Architect, US Forest Service, informed him of the FY2019 Landscape Scape Restoration Grants that must occur in OH, PA, or WV. Forest Action Plans for all three states have language related to promoting and increasing recreational opportunities. Harry asked about contacting the State Foresters to explore potential for ORBA, with ORSANCO sponsorship, to collaborate on a regional initiative gather data and plan promotion to grow recreation-based economies associated with the forests. This could provide multi-state collaboration focused on our goal of regional nature-based recreation. Steering Committee comments were positive. Harry will contact the State Foresters.
- Water Quality, Availability and Management (Ted Lozier/Richard Harrison)
 - No report.
- Restoration and Protection (Sarah Hippensteel Hall/Chris Lorentz)
 - Sarah stated that she is planning to have an R&P Working Group teleconference prior to the Summit.
- Enterprise and Infrastructure (Kari Mackenbach)
 - No report. Harry stated that Marty Hettel will be nominated for an additional term. Marty is a long-time ORBA Steering Committee Member with outstanding connections in the waterways navigation/transportation world. Marty is wrapping up his tenure in May as the Chair of the Inland Waterways User's Board and hopes to be able to dedicate more time to ORBA after May.

Unfinished business

- Planning for 2018 ORBA Summit
 - Harry committed to contact Steering Committee Members to get their “reservations” for the Wednesday evening dinner. By consensus, ORBA Steering Committee Members will pay for their own meals, estimated to be about \$15.
- Outreach plan to engage more organizations/individuals in ORBA to collaborate on high priority challenges
 - The Chairperson discussed plans to communicate with leadership in Tennessee and Pennsylvania, possibly visiting those locations, to try to engage leaders from those regions in ORBA. The Chairperson invited nominations from both states, as well as from EPRI, for the Steering Committee in an effort to expand the geographic and topical breadth of the leadership.
- Status of proposal for Ohio River Basin Initiative
 - (See Chairperson's report.)

New business

- Proposed change to bylaws
 - The proposed amendments to the bylaws were discussed. By consensus, the Treasurer would be elected by the Steering Committee; the Treasurer would be an ex officio Steering Committee Member and would serve indefinitely at the pleasure of the Steering Committee. The Chairperson will make changes to the proposed amendments to reflect the consensus, and resubmit to the Steering Committee.
- Proposed addition of a Research and Education Working Group
 - Chris and Heather Mayfield, Foundation for Ohio River Education, described discussions with Terry Chang, ORBCRE, and Rich Cogan (Ohio River Foundation) are interested in proposing the creation of a Research and Education Working Group within ORBA. The intent is not to replace the functions of any of these groups, but to facilitate collaboration across the groups as input to ORBA's efforts to create a unified voice. Their goal is to have something formulated by the Summit. The Chairperson will support Chris and Heather in drafting a charter for the Steering Committee to consider.
- Identifying our priorities and shaping our communications
 - The Chairperson noted that ORBA is starting to be heard as 'one voice' for the Basin. ORBA needs to consider seriously how do ensure consensus in the shaping of public communications regarding Basin priorities, strategies, and actions steps. For example, Harry anticipates speaking on priorities and actions at the Ohio River Basin Inspection Tour in November and ORBA is likely to join others in speaking to the Ohio River Basin Congressional Caucus in the spring. The Chairperson has provided the Steering Committee a PowerPoint of collaborative priorities and a summary statement.

The straw man summary of priorities, intended to be short, memorable, but comprehensive is:

- Maintain 9-Foot River Pools - (critical for navigation, ecological flows, water for human needs)
- Feed the Farms, Starve the Streams - (addresses nutrients critical for productive farms, while reducing nutrients in streams responsible for harmful algal blooms, Gulf anoxic zone, and toxins; also 'starving the streams' of pollutants)
- Stop Invasions - (critical to prevent introduction and decrease impact of invasive species)
- Sustain Healthy Ecosystems and Economies - (critical for restoration and protection of ecosystems (including those necessary for threatened and endangered species and attraction and growth of businesses)
- "Learn Things" and "Be Prepared" - (critical to capture data, share information, and identify and address non-linear changes such as floods, droughts, and risks to economic security; includes government, academia and citizen science, as well as the breadth of education)

Discussion of communications and messages was tabled.

Adjourn