



## Steering Committee Minutes

**Time and Date of Meeting:** April 26, 2021 1:00 PM

**Next Meeting:** May 24, 2021 at 1:00 PM

**Attachments:** Chairperson's Report

**Call to Order:** Approximately 1:00 PM

**Steering Committee Members Present:** Harry Stone, Chuck Somerville, Richard Harrison, Caren Glotfelty, Carey Johnson, John King, Annie Quinn, Jeff Thomas, Jim Lazorchak, Jordan Lubetkin, Kari Mackenbach, Heather Mayfield, Sarah Hippensteel Hall

**Excused:** Marty Hettel, Chris Lorentz, David Wicks

**Absent:** Mekayle Houghton, Robin Peak

**Advisors Present:** Jim Lazorchak, Charles Goad, Sally Gutierrez

**Staff:**

**Adoption or Modification of Agenda:** Agenda approved by consensus.

**Approval Minutes:** Minutes of March 22 were tabled until the next meeting

### Unfinished Business

- CORBA Communication: Richard Harrison arranged a call with the Executive Director of CORBA for April 28. Craig Butler will host the call.
- Media release for ASCE: Infrastructure needs (Craig Butler)
- Briefing for Legislators (Craig Butler, Richard Harrison) - A call is scheduled to talk with the Congressional Caucus Co-chairs' staffs to plan next steps.

### New Business

- The draft letter of support for a bipartisan infrastructure bill was approved by consensus (with minor edits to explicitly include locks and dams). Richard Harrison offered support distributing the support letter by email to the legislative offices from Tracey Edmonds, Administrative Assistant to ORSANCO's Executive Director.

- By consensus it was approved for Harry Stone to draft a letter of support for the *Connecting America's Active Transportation System Act* that will encourage inclusion of explicit funding water trails in the bill. The draft will be distributed to the Steering Committee before it is delivered to appropriate legislators.
- Stakeholders for ORBIT - The USACE is planning an Ohio River Basin Inspection Tour to seek stakeholder input on the needs of the Ohio River Basin where USACE can provide value. ORBA has the opportunity to recommend stakeholders that can speak to specific Basin needs. Harry has asked that the Steering Committee Members provide recommended stakeholders - name, organization, contact information - by May 5.
- Speaking for ORBA - There was discussion of who can speak for ORBA, under what circumstances, and how this can be coordinated and we can keep track to ensure a communication target is not getting (unwanted) communications from multiple ORBA leaders. At times there will be benefit to legislators receiving multiple communications, there just needs to be a plan and coordination. It was noted that referring to the website and to the Plan for the Ohio River Basin as the source for communications ensures consistency with the ORBA message. Chuck Somerville suggest that we update previous ORBA guidance on speaking to the press. (Previous guidance is distributed with these minutes.)
- ORBA Support - There was a first reading of guidelines for ORBA support for projects/proposals submitted from the Knowledge Informed Decisions Working Group. The draft guidelines will be vetted at the next Steering Committee Meeting.

## Reports:

*Chairperson: (Harry Stone)*

- See attached report.

*Treasurer: (Kari Mackenbach)*

- The balance in the ORBA account as of March 31 was \$6885.08.

*Water WG: (Richard Harrison)*

- A meeting needs to be scheduled between Richard Harrison, Sarah Hippensteel Hall, and Jordan Lubetkin to coordinate the work of the three working groups (water, ecosystems, and flooding).

*Ecosystem WG (Jordan Lubetkin)*

- The Working Group held its first meeting April 15. They are working on a framework for plan for ecological restoration. May 20 will be the next meeting on structure for plan.

*Flood Risk WG (Sarah Hippensteel Hall)*

- The Working Group held its first meeting. They Elected a co-chair and a person to take minutes. They are developing a plan of attack to set goals and plan around goals. The next meeting is scheduled.

*Knowledge WG (Heather Mayfield)*

- A meeting was held April 12th and the minutes were distributed to the ORBA Steering Committee. With consensus endorsement from the Knowledge Working Group and approval of the Steering Committee, a letter of support for the Ohio River Monitoring Network proposed by Ohio University was submitted by ORBA.

*Recreation WG*

- No report.

*Transportation and Commerce WG (Harry Stone for Marty Hettel)*

- An important meeting with the Central Ohio River Business Association is planned. This may be helpful in moving forward the focus on increasing commerce that can utilize the Basin's river navigation and ports.

*Diversity Equity and Inclusion Subcommittee (Sally Gutierrez)*

- The Subcommittee is meeting every two weeks. They are currently formulating a charge and goals. They have an early draft speaking to the goals based on discussions.

*Elected Officials (Craig Butler)*

- Discussions continue with the staff of the Congressional Caucus Co-chairs toward a briefing on the *Plan of the Ohio River Basin*.
- The ORBA overview trifold and sent to the US Conference of Mayors. The Conference is sending information to all mayors. ORBA will be invited to provide an update for the US Conference of Mayors meeting.
- ORBA is moving to build a stronger focus on connections with mayors. This will include Connecting with a smaller group of mayors in the Ohio River Basin.

*GIS working with USACE (Richard Harrison)*

- This work continues utilizing the follow-on PAS. USACE has expressed interest in a leadership role for the GIS platform.

**Adjourned** at 2:00pm



## Chairperson's Report 16 March 2021

- The Chair participated in several Working Group and subcommittee virtual meetings.
- A virtual meeting was held on 23 FEB with the USACE PAS Project Manager and staff working on the three follow-on studies: *Plan to Establish and Sustain an Ohio River Basin-wide GIS*; *A Study of Basin-scale Water Resource Management*; and *Study and Planning for Ohio River Water Trail*.
- The Chair has followed up on the funds from the Summit. With help from Dr. Terry Chang, ORBCRE, and Dr. Tamara Sluss, University of Louisville, all funding has now been received.
- The Chair participated in a Community and Restorative Justice - Covington webinar facilitated by ORBA's Pam Mullins.
- The chair attended part of a USEPA Webinar Series entitled *Managing Harmful Algal Blooms in Tribal Waters*
- The Chair presented ORBA and the *Plan for the Ohio River Basin* and participated in a call facilitated by Dr. David Wicks with Eric Oberg, Midwest Regional Director and other leadership of Rails to Trails Conservancy to discuss the *Plan for the Ohio River Basin* and *Connecting America's Active Transportation System Act*.
- The Chair attended a virtual *Ohio Wildlife Diversity Conference*.
- The Chair prepared a media release announcing the funding received by Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge for access ramps and road resurfacing that was partially credited to the *Plan for the Ohio River Basin* and ORBA.
- The Chair drafted an ORBA letter for inclusion in the documents sent to the Ohio River Basin Caucus Co-chairs and other documents were reviewed and comments provided to Richard Harrison.
- The Chair had several communications with the Sister Francis Maag, Chairperson for the Environment Committee of the Northern KY Justice and Peace Committee.
- The Chair has had several communications with USACE Division on a variety of topics including the planning of a quarterly leadership meeting and engagement in the ORBA Summit.
- The Chair drafted a concept for mayoral engagement that was provided to Craig Butler for consideration by the Communications to Elected Officials Subcommittee.
- Sally Gutierrez, USEPA and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Subcommittee leader, facilitated a call, and the Chair participated in the call, with the EPA Region 5 Environmental Justice (EJ) leads - Kathy Triantafillou and Kathleen Kowal. Near term EJ grants were discussed along with how EPA could be of benefit to ORBA. The Chair subsequently participated in a public engagement call to determine if ORBA should pursue the EJ grant opportunities. Because the grants were for local projects, the funding was determined not to be appropriate for ORBA.
- The Chair is invited to present the *Plan for the Ohio River Basin* at a virtual meeting of the Beaver County [PA] Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs on Friday, April 9, 8-9 AM.
- Shoshannah has actively updated the Facebook page to keep it fresh and interesting. She has also been very helpful with a variety of administrative challenges.