

Note: These minutes are not official until approved by the Union / Virgil Ditches & East Branch of the Kishwaukee River Watershed Steering Committee at a subsequent meeting. Please refer to the meeting minutes when these minutes are approved to obtain any changes to these minutes.

**UNION /VIRGIL DITCHES & EAST BRANCH OF THE KISHWAUKEE RIVER
WATERSHED STEERING COMMITTEE MINUTES**

September 10, 2014

The Union /Virgil Ditches & East Branch of the Kishwaukee River Watershed Steering Committee (WSC) met on September 10, 2014 at 3:00 p.m. in the Conference Room East of the DeKalb County Administration Building, in Sycamore, Illinois. In attendance were Committee members Dean Johnson, Nathan Schwartz, Roger Steimel, Karen Miller, Adam Orton, Paul Miller, Donna Prain, and Anita Zurbrugg. Also in attendance were Jeff Wickenkamp and County staff Rebecca Von Drasek.

1. Roll Call – *Jeremy Lin was noted absent.*

2. Approval of Agenda – Ms. Zurbrugg requested that the Agenda be amended to include potential projects.

Mr. Schwartz moved to approve the amended agenda, seconded by Ms. Prain, and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Approval of Minutes – Ms. Prain noted a few typos within the draft minutes.

Ms. Prain moved to approve the minutes as amended from July 9, 2014, seconded by Ms. Zurbrugg, and the motion carried unanimously.

4. Recommendation of Adoption of Watershed Plan by Regulatory Agencies

Mr. Johnson highlighted the final draft of the *East Branch of the South Branch of the Kishwaukee River (including the Union and Virgil Ditch Systems) Watershed-Based Plan* (Plan) has been delivered by Hey & Associates, and is available for inspection on the County’s website, www.dekalbcounty.org on the Planning, Zoning and Building page under “Watershed Information.” He noted that the Watershed Steering Committee is requested to recommend to the governmental agencies with regulatory authority within the Watershed boundaries that the Plan be adopted and its recommendations integrated with the other plans and regulations related to water quality and stormwater management.

Mr. Miller provided the Committee with copies of the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) approval letter, noting that the Plan was officially accepted by the IEPA. He noted that the Executive Summary was now posted on the Watershed web site. Mr. Miller suggested Committee Members consider the draft resolution for adopting the plan. If the Committee so moved, the draft resolution would be forwarded to the DeKalb County Stormwater Management Committee for their recommendation to the County Board. Mr. Miller emphasized that this draft resolution may also serve as a template for use by other governmental entities within the watershed boundaries.

Mr. Steimel expressed reservations on the effects of the Watershed Plan’s best management practices on the agricultural community. Mr. Miller responded that the Plan was a cooperative

approach to addressing water quality concerns, and requires working with the Drainage Districts and property owners in order to be effective.

A brief discussion followed regarding the importance and functions of the Drainage Districts.

Ms. Zurbrugg moved to include a statement within the Executive Summary about the benefits to agricultural productivity from the channelization process, seconded by Mr. Schwartz, and the motion carried unanimously.

The Committee noted a few additional typographical errors to be corrected.

Ms. Prain moved to recommend adoption of the East Branch of the South Branch of the Kishwaukee River (including the Union and Virgil Ditch Systems) Watershed-Based Plan as amended, seconded by Ms. Zurbrugg, and the motion carried unanimously.

5. Adoption Procedure

Mr. Miller explained that the adoption of the Plan would need to be recommended and supported through both Counties' boards, as well as each of the municipalities and the drainage districts within the Watershed.

Mr. Wickenkamp of Hey & Associates observed that in his experience the Watershed Plans are an important tool for staff for planning and guidance for development.

Ms. Miller reported that Kane County has adopted similar watershed-based plans. She noted that the successful plans have a supporting group.

The Committee discussed the methods to build an active coalition and the need for Steering Committee Members to actively approach municipalities within the Watershed to support adoption by the jurisdictions.

Mr. Johnson, Ms. Zurbrugg, and Ms. Prain volunteered to work with the Town of Cortland and the Village of Maple Park advocating adoption of the Plan.

Mr. Johnson noted that the Soil Water Conservation District (SWCD) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) might host a workshop for the Drainage Districts to explain the applicable aspects of the Plan.

6. Discussion - Potential Projects

The Committee discussed when future projects and implementation of projects within the Plan would begin.

Ms. Zurbrugg explained that she wanted the Plan (after adoption) to hit the ground running with a project to highlight the applicability and benefits of the Plan.

Ms. Prain agreed that there were numerous educational action items within the Plan that could have immediate impact.

Ms. Prain, Mr. Johnson, and Ms. Zurbrugg agreed to form a sub-committee to discuss potential projects following adoption.

Mr. Miller observed that the Plan's conclusions which he felt were easy to make an impact were the encouragement of riparian buffer strips and an effort to increase the number and quality of wetlands within the watershed.

The Committee also discussed identifying an appropriate "pilot" project to apply for a grant.

The Committee concluded that the initial focus would be to see the Plan adopted throughout the watershed with an eye on prospective projects that would could be used to further demonstrate the benefit of watershed-based approach to watershed planning.

7. Next Meeting -- The Steering Committee will next meet on Tuesday, October 21, 2014 at 3:00 pm in the Conference Room East.

8. Adjournment -- *Mr. Miller motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Prain, and the motion carried unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

Dean Johnson
Chairman, DeKalb County Union Ditch/Virgil Ditch Watershed Steering Committee

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