



Maumee AOC Advisory Committee  
*February 13, 2025, 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm*  
**Virtual Meeting**  
**Minutes**

Attendance: Cherie Blair, Jesse Stock, Kris Patterson, Jenny Carter-Cornell, Mary Winkle, Brandon Heaney, Beth Landers, DJ Mears, Amber Bellamy, Edith Kippenhan, Bill Burkett, Mike Pniewski, Kristopher Barnswell, Amanda Kovach, Zuri Carter, Beth Sparks-Jackson, Ryan Allison, Regina Collins, Corey VanStratt, LaShawna Weeks, Shawn Duke, Ashlee Decker, Joe Cappel, Jeanie Brancho, Janet Deardorff, Sara Guiher, Matt Kovach, Ross St Clair, Andrew Timmis, Bryan Hinterberger, Josh Miller, Jenny Keffer, Vanessa Steigerwald, Melissa Hopfer, Jeanna Meert, Kevin Laughlin, Alex Peters

**1. Call to Order**

**Mike Pniewski, Chair**, called the meeting to order at 1:03p.m.

**2. Approval of Previous Minutes**

Mike called for a vote on the December minutes. He requested a motion to accept the minutes as presented. DJ made the motion, Bill seconded, and the motion passed.

**3. US AOC Conference – Sept. 16-18, 2025**

**Kris Patterson – Ohio Lake Erie Commission**, provided an update on the status of the conference, sharing that all conference plans and materials are being reviewed by U.S. EPA and stating that no information will be shared publicly until feedback from U.S. EPA is received. Jesse reported that venues for the evening socials are still being explored, with no bookings finalized yet. Field trip registration should be available soon, and participants are encouraged to sign up early due to limited space. Jesse also asked committee members to assist with check-in, registration, and other general tasks. Anyone interested in helping can reach out to Jesse or Cherie for field trip support. Sponsorship opportunities are available, and those interested should contact Jesse. Kris wrapped up by requesting that project implementers and leads update the DMDS, particularly with photos, and have the updates ready before March 1. Kris also announced that Cherie will be a plenary speaker at the conference. Mike offered support from the engineer's office, and Brandon Heaney expressed interest in offering help and potential sponsorship.

**4. Project Spotlight**

**Kevin Laughlin - City of Northwood**, updated on the Nature Trails Park Riparian Restoration and Wetland Creation (CeC-1.0). A project overview was shared via Google Map. The project bid was awarded in April 2024 to Davey Resources Group and Marks Construction and construction was completed fall 2024. The project aims to improve water and habitat quality in Dry Creek and the watershed. The project was divided into two areas, A and B, and involved minor trail adjustments in the upstream portion, along with floodplain

restoration and adding topographic features near Northwood City Schools. Key takeaways from the project included the importance of communication with project partners and landowners. Mike praised the project as a positive contribution to Northwood.

## **5. U.S. EPA Task Force Leader Report**

**Leah Medley – U.S. EPA GLNPO**, was not in attendance. Cherie Blair provided an update, stating that the resolution is still in progress, with focus on grants and contracts. Currently, there are not many updates. She mentioned that federal partners may experience delays in responding due to communication blackouts. Cherie asked committee members to email Leah if necessary but noted that responses may be delayed.

## **6. Ohio EPA AOC Coordinator Report**

**Cherie Blair – Ohio EPA**, presented her Maumee AOC Coordinator Report. ODNR is working towards completing the final WildMAP project by 2025, with the last update to the Summary Table available on the Maumee AOC website. The AquaMAPs, addressing fish populations, benthic populations, and fish habitat, have seen progress since the December meeting, with one completed project by the City of Oregon, several projects substantially completed, and a few expected to begin soon. RFPs are anticipated for some upcoming projects. The SedMAPs, focused on contaminated sediment, continue to progress, with data collection ongoing for Swan Creek and remedial designs underway for two Lower Maumee River sites. Additionally, sediment sampling in the Ottawa River is planned for the end of the year, with remedial action expected in 2026. For BUI 4 (Deformities & Tumors), a full evaluation is underway, while BUI 8b (Eutrophication) will be updated at a future meeting, and BUI 10a (Beach Closings) is nearly complete, pending one season of data. The Ohio AOC Program is collaborating with USFWS to evaluate the Lacustrary Target, with a sampling event planned for this summer.

Finally, the Ohio AOC Summit is tentatively scheduled for April 1, with AOCs invited to send five attendees. Kris asked for additional leadership at the Ohio AOC summit, and those interested in joining should reach out to Jesse or Cherie. Mike and Jenny expressed interest in participating. Kris will share any additional updates before April 1.

## **7. Facilitating Organization's Report**

**Jesse Stock – PCS**, presented the facilitating organization report. As of December 2024, \$16,642 was spent since, from a total budget of \$209,000. The Awareness, Outreach and Education (A.O.E.) Team has been meeting regularly to work on initiatives to increase public awareness and engagement. Implementers are encouraged to contact Mary Winkle for assistance in promoting local events and projects to raise the visibility of the Maumee AOC. The next team meeting will be held virtually on April 10, and all members are welcome to join. An electronic copy of the MAAC 2024 Annual Report will be published soon. A potential tour of MAAC sites in Toledo is being planned for the summer.

## **8. Partner Updates**

**Corey VanStratt – Ducks Unlimited**, provided an update on the Camp Sabroske project, a 25-acre coastal restoration project is in progress, with tree and brush clearing completed in December and January. They are preparing for construction, with 50% of the design engineering plans finished. Phase one of the project will be contracted out, with summer construction expected. Cherie offered to share an RFP email list to broaden contractor outreach.

**Zuri Carter – Metroparks Toledo**, shared that notices were sent to agencies in early February regarding the impending start of construction at the Audubon Islands Restoration project. Cherie mentioned that leftover and temporary materials from the Clark, Delaware/Horseshoe Islands restoration project will be used at the Audubon Islands and other nearby projects, promoting reuse of materials.

**Edith Kippenhan – City of Toledo**, informed that Bandore Park is moving forward with a signed contract, and a site visit is scheduled for Friday, February 21. Construction mobilization is set for March 3, with earth-moving activities starting March 10. The Jermain Park project is now moving forward after initial funding questions were resolved. Construction mobilization is scheduled for late February/early March.

**Kris Patterson – OLEC**, shared that the Lake Erie Protection Fund grant cycle is expected to open soon, with applications due by mid-June. Up to \$50k will be awarded for 3-4 projects. The Commission meeting is tentatively set for March 12 in Toledo, hosted by TMACOG. Kris will provide updates if there are any changes due to schedule conflicts.

**Melissa Hopfer – TMACOG**, introduced herself and shared that the road salt project with UT and PCS wrapped up at the end of 2024. The Lake Erie Starts Here mass media campaign focused on water quality education efforts on 13abc is live, with different messaging on water quality over the course of several months.

## **9. Public Comments**

None

## **10. Meeting Adjourned at 2:00 p.m.**

**Next meeting: May 1, 2025, in hybrid format, 1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.**