



RIVER RAISIN WATERSHED COUNCIL

804 N. Evans Street
Tecumseh, MI 49286
517-662-8755
admin@riverraisin.org
www.riverraisin.org

**River Raisin Watershed Council
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
May 20, 2025 - 10:00 a.m.
RRWC Tecumseh Office - AJ Smith House
804 North Evans Street, Tecumseh MI 49286
In Person/Google Meet/Conference Call**

Roll Call

Chair Harry Sheehan called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Executive Committee members present: Harry Sheehan, Sybil Kolon, John Calhoun, Mike Ayre, Phil Kittredge.

Executive Committee members absent: Stella Kirby, Dave Hoffman.

Others present: Sean Dennis – RRWC Executive Director, Benny Woith - RRWC Administrative Coordinator (Virtual), Ivy McClelland - RRWC Administrative Assistant, Timothy Miles - Dundee Township Representative (Virtual), Matt Knoblauch - Blissfield Township Representative

1. Approval of Agenda - May 20, 2025

- a. Motion by Calhoun, second by Kolon, to approve the May 20, 2025 agenda with the addition of 6.f., Strategic Plan. **MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.**

2. Approval of Minutes - April 15, 2025

- a. Motion by Calhoun, second by Ayre, to approve the April 15, 2025 Minutes as presented. **MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.**

3. Treasurer's Report

- a. The Treasurer's Report for the period April 1 - April 30, 2025 was distributed and reviewed by Ayre. At Premier Bank: Revenue – **\$0**; Disbursements -**\$315.00**; balance: **\$36,094.65**. At County National, Revenue - **\$13,675.50**; Disbursements - **\$25,064.59**; balance - **\$32,690.38**. The Treasurer's report was received and filed.
- b. Approve Disbursements for Outstanding Bills - Report on File. Dennis reviewed the check detail for bills to pay. \$25,000 was transferred from the Premier account to the County Bank account so all checks can be written from the County Bank account. An advance of \$101,395.88 was received from EGLE in May for the Brooklyn dam project, allowing us to pay two back invoices from Niswander in the amount of \$99,877.14. Those bills were added to those included in the check detail, bringing total bills to be paid to \$153,675.82. EGLE is now expected to advance us enough to pay large grant amounts, since we don't carry a big enough balance to cover those expenses before reimbursement, which is EGLE's normal process. Motion by Calhoun, second by Kolon, to pay these invoices. **MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE**

4. Public Comment

- a. Tim Miles had followed up on our discussion last month on the process for dealing with major log jams. Miles had met with the landowner of the area where Macon Creek reaches the River Raisin in Dundee Township. A very large log jam is present there. They met with EGLE, who said they could get a permit for that work. The property owner has equipment he is willing to use. The owner asked if his fuel and other incidental expenses could be covered. RRWC does not have adequate resources to fund log jam removal throughout the river. There was general agreement that we could justify some financial contribution under these unique circumstances. Miles will request an estimate of how much those expenses would be, which we will consider at our next meeting.
- b. Kolon informed the group that Legacy Land Conservancy's Iron Creek Preserve will have its grand opening on June 28. RRWC wrote a letter of support to Legacy for a grant that funded the work required to open the preserve to the public.

5. Business

- a. Canoe Launch in Manchester Area
 - i. Sheehan suggested we should ask for a meeting with the City of Manchester and Washtenaw County to discuss the planned canoe livery in the stretch of the River Raisin between Sharon Mills Park and the River Raisin Park in Manchester. Sheehan will contact the city.
- b. Camp Liberty
 - i. Kolon had attended an event at Camp Liberty, a nonprofit with property on the River Raisin that serves disabled veterans.
- c. Chainsaw Training
 - i. RRWC is hosting a chainsaw training class for women to be taught by Dr. Carley Kratz, who is certified. Dennis will contact our insurance agent to obtain a rider for this event.

6. Executive Director Updates

- a. 2025 Membership Updates
 - i. Municipal dues have been coming in more slowly than in the past, when we required payment of dues before our spring meeting, which we are no longer having. We have received 44 so far, we usually have about 52 paid municipal members. It was suggested that we send an email to the delegates for each municipality asking them to become individual members. Ayre agreed to draft the email.
- b. 2024 Audit Update
 - i. Dennis sent the final documents needed by the auditor to complete the audit, which is nearly done. There will be recommendations from the auditor about our procedures. Dennis is working on these. Dennis is already preparing to provide the documentation needed for 2025. The auditor will attend our next meeting virtually.
- c. Smith House Lease Agreement
 - i. Our lease with the City of Tecumseh will expire in September. Dennis spoke with Sarah Gilmore, who agreed to extend our lease at the current level through the end of this year. He provided a proposal to Gilmore with a proposal to extend the lease for two to three years with a gradual increase in the rent from the current \$550 per month to \$750.

The flooring needs to be refinished. That is being considered. Availability of parking is an issue that needs to be addressed when we have bigger events. Dennis will discuss proposals with Gilmore to give us options for year to year or a longer-term lease.

- d. Brooklyn Dam Removal/New Grant Proposal MDNR - Contact - Update
 - i. Dennis received approval of the recently submitted quarterly report from EGLE and USF&WS, the first of these he has submitted.
 - ii. Niswander cannot apply for the permit to restore the connectivity of the river until road engineering hydraulic analysis is completed. It may not be submitted until July. EGLE will have thirty days to decide on having a public hearing. We are planning our own public information meeting, likely not before September.
- e. Strategic Plan
 - i. Dennis met with Megan Motil yesterday. A draft of the strategic plan should be available soon. He will discuss fundraising with her later this week. Dennis hopes to increase corporate and member giving to meet our operational expenses.
- f. Monroe #4 Dam Removal
 - i. We now have a contract to provide public outreach support for this project.

7. Water Stewardship Coordinator - Updates - Sheehan reported for Lopez

- a. Spring delegate event: May 13 in Tecumseh
 - i. This was the first year we didn't have a business meeting in the spring, due to the change in our bylaws, allowing us to carry out all of our annual business functions at our fall meeting. We need to improve on our notification efforts in the future. It was a successful event with a focus on stream monitoring in Evans Creek at Kiwanis Park. About 15 people monitored the creek, with others on the shore. More people attended the indoor portion at the AJ Smith Recreation Center where information on the stream search and the RRWC was provided and a meal served.
- b. New grant
 - i. We expect to receive the Saline-Macon Watershed Planning grant from EGLE. Requirements for these grants are more specific than our watershed-wideplan from 2005. We will receive \$25,000 for our portion, starting in October, over two years, out of a total of \$125,000 for the entire grant. Limnotech is the consultant that will manage the grant.
- c. New grant
 - i. We expect to receive our fourth watershed grant from EGLE for \$40,000 to implement three priorities from our strategic plan, starting in October, for one year.

8. Administrative - Update

- a. Woith is still currently working on the 2024 Annual Report. Waiting on a few for finishing information.
- b. Woith continuing to create flyers and registrations for upcoming events and updating the website as needed.
- c. Woith to meet with Megan Motil later this week about a strategic plan RRWC branded sheet to hand out.

9. Committee Reports - none

10. Public Comment - 3 Minutes - None

11. Adjournment

Motion by Kittredge, second by Calhoun, to adjourn at 11:28 a.m. **MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.**

Next Meeting


Executive Committee - June 17, 2025 - 10:00 a.m. - 804 N. Evans Street Tecumseh MI 49286

Action Items for Next Meeting

Respectfully submitted by Sybil Kolon - Secretary

Date: June 12, 2025

APPROVED:

Secretary: 

Date: June 17, 2025