

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of The Miami Conservancy District (MCD) sitting as the Board of Directors of The River Corridor Improvement Subdistrict (RCIS) was called to order at 11:02 a.m. by Mark G. Rentschler, President, with Beth G. Whelley, Vice President and William E. Lukens, member, present. The meeting was held at MCD headquarters.

Members of the staff in attendance: MaryLynn Lodor, General Manager; James B. Casper, Manager, Operations and Maintenance; Michael P. Ekberg, Manager, Water Resources Monitoring and Analysis; Sarah Hippensteel Hall, Manager of Communications, Outreach, and Stewardship; Kenneth P. Moyer, Treasurer; Donald P. O'Connor, Chief Engineer; Christina M. Pfeiffer, Executive Assistant; Shannon E. Phelps, Manager of Administration; Barry M. Puskas, Chief of Technical and Engineering Services; and Rhonda K. Snyder, Secretary.

Legal counsel in attendance: John M. Hoopingarner, McMahan DeGulis LLP, and Lee A. Slone, McMahan DeGulis LLP.

Guests in attendance: None

**COMPLIANCE WITH  
SUNSHINE LAW AND BYLAWS**

The meeting was held in compliance with the Sunshine Law and MCD and Subdistrict Bylaws. The meeting information was posted on MCD's website. Miami Valley news media and individuals requesting such notification were notified of the meeting by electronic mail dated December 4, 2023.

**MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting of September 18, 2023, were provided to members of the Board for review and comment.

**M 2023-221**

The Board of Directors, on motion by Ms. Whelley and seconded by Mr. van Haaren, unanimously approved the meeting minutes for September 18, 2023.

Next, Mr. Moyer reported on contributions/donations received since the September 18, 2023, Board of Directors meeting.

**CONTRIBUTIONS/DONATIONS**

**River Corridor Improvement Subdistrict – River Reflection Station**

MCD is installing a new amenity in Troy funded in part by The River Corridor Improvement Subdistrict (RCIS) and contributions from The Troy Foundation. The River Reflection Station honors retired Board members, William E. Lukens and William H. Hobart, for their service to The Miami Conservancy District (MCD) and the citizens of the Miami Valley.

**River Reflection Station**

**Amount**

The Troy Foundation

\$1,000

**River Corridor Improvement Subdistrict – 50th Anniversary Sign at First Mile of Bike Trail in Miami Valley**

MCD installed a new sign commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the First Mile of Bike Trail in the Miami Valley.

<u>50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sign at First Mile of Bike Trail in the Miami Valley</u>	<u>Amount</u>
The Troy Foundation	\$1,000

**M 2023-222**

The Board of Directors, on motion by Mr. van Haaren and seconded by Ms. Whelley, unanimously voted to accept receipt of \$1,000 from The Troy Foundation for the River Reflection Station in Troy and \$1,000 collected from The Troy Foundation for the 50th Anniversary Sign at the First Mile of Bike Trail in the Miami Valley (River Corridor Improvement Fund 200).

Next, Dr. Hippensteel Hall requested ratification of a grant funding request.

**GRANT FUNDING RATIFICATION**

In December 2022, the Board of Directors passed a resolution authorizing staff to submit grant funding applications for various purposes. Staff has submitted the following grant requests:

**Project Title:** *Navigational Aids*

**Description:** To obtain replacement warning signs at low head dams in Hamilton and West Carrollton to alert river users to the safety issues of the dam.

**Total Project Cost:** \$6,680.00

**Grant Amount Requested:** \$6,680.00

**Source:** Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), Division of Watercraft

**The Miami Conservancy District Match:** \$0

**Other Participants:** N/A

**Status:** Application was submitted on November 1, 2023.

**M 2023-223**

The Board of Directors, on motion by Ms. Whelley and seconded by Mr. van Haaren, unanimously ratified staff action regarding the grant funding request.

Next, Mr. O'Connor gave the following update on RCIS projects:

## RIVER TRAIL PROJECTS

A significant number of River Corridor Improvement projects are in process that will address asset needs related to recreation. In recent years, MCD obtained almost \$6M in state and federal grants to fund improvements to trails and other river corridor amenities. The following is a summary of active projects:

### Dayton: Webster Station Ramp Connector

Construction was completed in September on this project, managed by the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). The trail was opened on October 1 and MCD used social media to promote enhanced access and trail opening.

### Dayton: South River Walk Improvements

Design is ongoing and being performed in-house. Civil & Environmental Consultants, Inc. (CEC) consulting engineers finished property surveying work and found that MCD does not have rights on all the property needed for the project. CEC is now working on right-of-way plans to meet ODOT requirements. This project continues to be behind schedule. An additional budget will likely be needed in 2024 for right-of-way acquisition. Construction is scheduled for 2025. This project is partially funded by Miami Valley Regional Planning Authority (MVRPC) grant funds.

### Dayton: Old North Dayton Levee and Alternative Transportation

Construction is approximately 80% complete. The contractor has placed all of the clay fill material to thicken and strengthen the levee, completed drainage work, installed the new trail except for the surface course of asphalt, and started removal of concrete revetments. This project is partially funded by U.S. Economic Development Administration disaster recovery funds.

### Dayton: Old North Dayton Trail, Segment 2 (Keowee Street to Heid Avenue)

Design is being performed by Choice One Engineering and is about 60% complete. Stage 2 was submitted to MCD and ODOT on November 6. ODOT is requiring a hydraulic analysis to ensure the project won't cause a rise in flood elevations. MCD authorized Choice One to move forward with that work on November 16. CSX railroad is reviewing our request for the trail to pass under their railroad bridge. There is no guarantee that they will allow this, but preliminary communications are promising. Construction is scheduled for 2025. This project is partially funded by MVRPC grant funds.

### Montgomery County: GMRRT ADA & Safety Improvements

Choice One Engineering was authorized to begin design work on November 1. Construction is scheduled for 2026. This project is partially funded by MVRPC grant funds.

### Dayton: GMRRT Carillon Reconstruction

LJB, Inc. consulting engineers was selected to be the design engineer. Design is expected to start in 2023 with construction scheduled for 2027. Staff have met with the City of Dayton, City of Moraine, and Dayton History about including road work and additional funding in the project.

The City of Dayton is planning to apply for Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) funding to help with construction for the road portion. Dayton History expressed a willingness to participate in design and construction funding to support parking and pedestrian improvements on the south side of the road that would directly benefit Carillon Historical Park. Currently, LJB

plans to begin survey and design while evaluating the feasibility of different right-of-way cross sections. If the partners can contribute to the design of the full road project, LJB's design agreement will have to be amended. This project is partially funded by MVRPC grant funds.

Dayton: Stillwater Trail Resurfacing

Design is scheduled to begin in 2024 with construction scheduled for 2028. This project is partially funded by MVRPC grant funds.

Dayton: Old North Dayton Trail, Segment 3 (Heid Avenue to Eintracht Park)

Design is expected to begin in 2025 with construction scheduled for 2029. This project is partially funded by MVRPC grant funds.

Next, Dr. Hippensteel Hall presented the Great Miami Riverway report.

## **THE GREAT MIAMI RIVERWAY**

The Great Miami Riverway continues to make progress on the strategic priorities of the coalition and build strong partnerships with its members and the broader public. Below are the strategic priorities (SPs) of the coalition and the progress made this quarter. With the retirement of Dan Foley, MCD is working closely with the coalition members to finalize the job description with plans to have interviews in early 2024.

### **SP1: Build identity and awareness of the Great Miami Riverway.**

Wagner Subaru Outdoor Experience Festival: Thanks to MCD staff and Riverway Coalition members, the Great Miami Riverway booth and Spin Art Bike were on display at the 2023 Wagner Subaru Outdoor Experience Festival at Eastwood MetroPark. More than 500 people visited the booth and made spin art during the weekend.

Ohio Chamber of Commerce's Impact Ohio: Facilitated by MCD's General Manager, Riverway served as panelists to discuss the economic impact of the Great Miami Riverway at the Ohio Chamber of Commerce's Impact Ohio seminar in early October. Also on the panel: Pat Ford, from Frontier Industries, who is redeveloping the former Hutchings Station power plant in Miamisburg; Todd Duplain, from Woodard Resources, who is heading up the West Carrollton River District project; and Niki Woodruff, owner of Greenhaus Coffee in Sidney.

The Great Miami Riverway Fall Food-n-Brew Challenge: A passport program that took place from September 15 to November 15. The challenge encouraged use of the Riverway App and visits to Riverway places and events. The Fall Challenge focused on local food and craft beer options along the Riverway. Participants logged over 230 visits. Top locations included Five Rivers MetroParks' Second Street Market, Winans in Piqua, Municipal Brew Works in Hamilton, Crooked Handle in Piqua, and Star City in Miamisburg.

Other activities to build awareness this quarter included:

- Distributed regular Riverway newsletters to subscribers via Mailchimp software.
- Managed an ongoing Search Engine Marketing campaign on Google with Great Lakes Publishing.
- Worked with Cincinnati Magazine on a two-month digital campaign.
- Presented at the October 16 Rotary Club of Dayton's meeting at Sinclair Community College.

- Participated in a panel discussion at the Ohio River Way Coalition Summit in Madison, Indiana, on October 26.
- The Great Miami Riverway was named as a finalist for the Ohio Travel Association Ruby Awards at their October conference in Wooster, Ohio, but was not selected for an award.
- Met with Mark Knoll, Director of the Ohio River Way, and Tali MacArthur, manager of the Pennsylvania Water Trail program, to share information about the work to promote the economic and quality of life impacts of water trails.

**SP2: Advocate and nurture connections between Riverway Communities.**

Planning continues for the 2024 Great Miami Riverway Summit to be held Friday, April 19 at the Fort Piqua Plaza Hotel. Meetings were held with Chris Schmiesing, Piqua’s Community and Economic Development Director, and virtually, with the Summit Planning Committee.

The Riverway Events Committee meeting met October 24 at MCD. The Events Committee recommends to the Coalition which events the Great Miami Riverway should host or sponsor in the following year. The committee identifies events that have the broadest level of support among the Riverway Coalition and help plan to give them the best chance to succeed. After seeking feedback at the November 30 Coalition meeting, the Events Committee will meet to finalize the 2024 event schedule.

MCD staff met with Shaun Tate of Tater’s Kayaks to discuss potential involvement with Tater’s for events such as the Great Float as well as opportunities for other floats on the river when those opportunities arise.

MCD continued to provide support to the City of Monroe and MetroParks of Butler County to assist the City with some difficult engineering challenges on a section of a yet to be constructed but funded portion of the Great Miami River Recreation Trail north of Bicentennial Park in Monroe and south of SR 73. This section of trail will help connect Middletown, Monroe, Trenton, and Hamilton, so it is a critical gap to fill in on the Great Miami River Recreation Trail (GMRRT). To help fund potential streambank mitigation fixes to the site, MCD submitted an H2Ohio grant application to the state to support the trail construction, but it was not chosen for funding.

**SP3: Build investment in riverfront development along the river and in our communities.**

MCD engaged in several activities related to riverfront development:

- Featured potential development sites along the Great Miami Riverway for sale, including commercial and residential properties, on the LinkedIn page.
- Met with Karen Hesser and Carrie Scarff of Five Rivers MetroParks for an update on the Dayton Riverfront Master plan.
- Met with officials from the City of Moraine to discuss how the Great Miami River fits into their plans as they embark on a new comprehensive plan.
- Attended the ribbon cutting for the new Atomic City Bridge crossing the Great Miami River, and part of the Great Miami River Recreation Trail in the City of Piqua.

- Participated in planning and feedback sessions for the Great Parks of Hamilton County western Blueway program. They seek to implement four to five new water access sites on the Great Miami River in Hamilton County, as well as the potential extension of the Great Miami River Recreation Trail from Hamilton south to the Ohio River.

### **Potential new riverfront developments**

The City of Franklin has begun construction of a \$13.4 million downtown streetscape initiative. Key features of the project include extending the sidewalks on both sides of the street and removing street parking; widening corners; installing new curbs and gutters; installing a lighting and sound system; and installing a chandelier lighting feature over the intersection of Fourth and Main streets with lights that can be synced to music.

This is the first phase of the City's efforts to improve their downtown area and will lead to future design and development of a riverfront park along and near the Great Miami River Recreation Trail.

The City of Miamisburg is constructing a \$6M upgrade to Riverfront Park including a new amphitheater with tiered seating with improved access and visibility to the bike path and overlook of the Great Miami River. The park will feature a nature-based playground, inclusive play spaces, a curved bike path, additional parking spots and other improvements.

### **SP4: Restructure the Riverway Coalition and broaden the funding platform**

A meeting of the Great Miami Riverway Coalition was held on November 30 at West Carrollton City Hall to discuss regular business and hear updates on the proposed \$10M whitewater modification to MCD's South Montgomery County Low Dam and the planned River District development led by Woodard Development and Dillin LLC.

The opportunity to join the Great Miami Riverway Coalition was shared with the City of Moraine, but no response has been made to date. MCD/Riverway is serving on the city's comprehensive planning committee.

### **FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS**

At the September 2023 meeting, the Board members set a date for a special meeting on January 11, 2024.

The Board set the following dates for their 2024 regular meetings of the Board of Directors of The Miami Conservancy District: February 29, June 5, September 18, and December 18, 2024.

### **ADJOURN**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on motion by Mr. van Haaren and seconded by Ms. Whelley at 12:35 p.m.

**ATTEST:**

  
MaryLynn Kodor  
General Manager/Interim Board Secretary

**APPROVED:**

  
Mark G. Rentschler  
President