

OFFICE OF THE IL LT. GOVERNOR, JULIANA STRATTON
RIVERS OF IL COORDINATING COUNCIL
Quarterly Meeting
May 1, 2019 Minutes

Agency	Name	Present	Phone	absent
Lt. Governor's Office	Lt. Gov. Juliana Stratton	x		
Dept. of Agriculture (all)	Brian Rennecker	X		
DCEO (all)	Wendy Bell	X		
IEPA (all)	Christine Davis	x		
IDNR (all)	Steve Altman	X		
IDOT (all)	Thomas Brooks	x		
IHPA (MS)				x
Soil and Water Cons Dist (all)	Stephen Fulling	X		
The Nature Conservancy (IL)	Doug Blodgett	X		
Marquis Energy (IL)	Danielle Anderson		x	
CFM, Illinois Valley Flood Resiliency Alliance (IL)	Matthew Stafford		x	
Hanson Material Service (IL)	Darren Melvin	X		
Shedd Aquarium (IL)	Allen LaPointe	X		
Science Advisory Committee Chair (IL)	Bhowmik, Nani G	X		
Illinois Coal Association (W&O)	Phil Gonet	X		
UMWA Rep working at Cook Coal Terminal (AEP Operated) (W&O)	(Michael) Jason McNeill			
Cairo Mayor (W&O)	Tyrone Coleman			x

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Agency	Name	Present	Phone	absent
Eastern Illinois University (W&O)	Dr. Gordon C. Tucker			x
Illinois Environmental Council (MS)	Lindsay Keeney	X		
President Great Rivers and Routes Tourism Bureau (MS)	Brett Stawar			x
Great River Road (MS)	Reed Wilson			x
Illinois Farm Bureau (MS)	Wendell Shauman		x	
Illinois Farm Bureau (MS)	Lauren Lurkins	X		
Illinois Farm Bureau (MS)	Lyndset Ramsey			x
ARTCO – ADM (MS)	Brent Nissen	X		
National Great Rivers Research and Education Center (MS)	Ted Kratschmer	x		
	Guest			
Sierra Club	Jack Darin	x		
Waterways Council	Paul Rohde			x
	Staff			
	Charles Watkins	X		
	Dartesia Pitts	X		
	Janelle Gurnsey	X		

18 members present. Quorum determined.

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1. Approval of Meeting Minutes from December 5, 2018.

Lt. Governor Stratton announced that a copy of draft minutes from the December 18th meeting could not be located due to transition. She allowed for approval at future meeting if found.

2. Lt. Governor Stratton Remarks

Lt. Governor Stratton again thanked everyone for attending today's meeting. She announced that she is honored to chair and committed to serving and leading as we move forward. She noted the importance of our waterways economically and acknowledged that we have real issues to discuss and address in this work.

She stated that her goal is to run efficient, inclusive, relevant and robust meetings. She called on the experts in the room to help shape policy to improve the state of Illinois and noted that she is relying on the wisdom in the room amongst us to do so.

Lt. Governor Stratton mentioned that Governor Pritzker and she have productively crossed the 100-day benchmark. During the last 120 days, she has been listening and learning. As chair of the Rivers Council, she wants to play a different role empowered through the partnership with Governor Pritzker.

As a reminder, each member must complete both the ethics training and the sexual harassment training yearly. If you have any questions, please contact the Lt. Governor's general counsel, Dartesia Pitts.

The next two meetings of the Council will be held on August 21 in Chicago at the Shedd Aquarium thanks to our member Allen LaPointe. The fall meeting will take place on November 20 and she is open to other member invites to host. If you have suggestions or questions, please contact her office.

Lt. Governor Stratton introduced her staff: Charles Watkins, Chief of Staff, Janelle Gurnsey, Community Outreach Coordinator, and Dartesia Pitts, General Counsel and Legislative Liaison.

3. New Business

Lt. Governor Stratton asked everyone in the room and on the phone to quickly introduce themselves, provide their organizations, how many years they have served on the council and share their most important issue related to the waterways. She discussed the survey that her office took prior to the meeting to gauge the priorities of the council for planning the future of the council. The top 5 issues shared in the survey of the council were as follows:

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- 1.) Asian Carp
- 2.) Status of Lock and Dam Infrastructure
- 3.) Flood Plain Floodway Management
- 4.) Silting
- 5.) Conservation

She stated she has been on a listening tour throughout the state learning about many issues. She wanted to take this opportunity to continue the listening session. The Lt. Governor also wanted to acknowledge the “wisdom is in the room” and how important it is to hear from everyone present. Her staff would take notes.

Members physically present:

Wendy Bell, Asst Deputy Director of Office of Community Development at DCEO: 3 years of service on council. CDBG Funds from her office are utilized for water and sewers as well as economic development grants used for businesses along waterways. Disaster response program, critical due to waterway flooding in the event that there isn't a Presidential Declaration for disaster relief.

Lindsey Keeney, Environmental Council: She is a new Member this year. Silver Carp and Conservation Work are most important to her.

Jack Darin, Director, Sierra Club Illinois Chapter: He believes water quality problems are really infrastructure problems and addressing Infrastructure will improve water quality. He wants to prioritize communities most at risk. He discussed a bill to increase access to individuals to getting into the trades in Senate Bill 2146.

Steve Fulling, Soil and Water Cons. District – Southeaster: Conservation is his biggest concern. He wants to keep things where they belong, so they don't move downstream. He's been on the council for 3 Years.

Brian Rennecker, Acting Bureau Chief for Land and Water Resources, Department of Agriculture: He is a new member. NLRs Strategy as well as minerals and conservation are priorities of dept of Ag.

Darren Melvin, Manager of Marine Operations, Hanson Material Service: He indicated that what is important to his agency is the lock and dam (Brandon Road issue) as well as the Des Plains River Flooding. He has been on the council for 3 years.

Brent Nissen, ARTCO ADM : He is from the barge and boat division of American River Transportation Company. He is concerned with how the infrastructure is maintained for waterway commerce. He is new to the board and replaced a retiring member.

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Steve Altman, IDNR: He manages the division of resource management in his office. His most important issues are aligned to the top 3 of the survey, Asian Carp, Brandon Road and flood plain management. This is his first time on council.

Allen LaPointe, Vice President Environment Quality, Shed Aquarium: He served under former Lt. Governor Simon on her science advisory committee as well under former Lt. Governor Sanguinetti. He is most concerned about the Chicago River, water quality, nutrient loading, sediment loading and silting.

Phil Gonet, President of the Illinois Coal Association: He has 3.5 years of service. He uses waterways to get his product to end-users. There are coal fields bounded by Mississippi and Ohio and the water levels are a challenge. He is also concerned about the lock and damn issues. He appreciates the opportunity to serve.

Doug Blodgett, Nature Conservancy: River Conservation is important to him. He has 15 years of service on the council. He is most concerned with flood plain management. He believe it is the challenge and solution to many of the issues on the list including storing flood waters, managing sediment, and the preservation of wildlife. He indicated that waterways are under appreciated by the public and believes that there needs to be a call to improve the wisdom of the public.

Nani G. Bhowmik, Science Advisory Committee (SAC): He is a community member. He has a Civil Engineering Background from University of Illinois. He is concerned about the water quality, rivers for transportation, flood plain management, ecological aspect of the rivers and waterways, factor it into the management. He discussed the mission of the SAC. It is to work closely and advise the members on matters related to the scientific issues of the rivers and basins in Illinois.

Christine Davis, Manager of Watershed Management Division at IEPA: She has served as a substitute member of the council for 3-4 years. She agrees with all survey issues.

Tom Brooks, Natural Resources Unit Manager, IDOT: Department is complying with environmental rules and regulation. He has served on the council for the past 8-10 years. The issues he is most concerned with the DOT is building of the bridges over the rivers. Those are scenic byways. The DOT deals with administrative rules for scenic routes around rivers.

Ted Kratschmer, Manage Field Station and Special Projects, Lewis and Clark Comm College: He manages special projects for great rivers and watersheds. He is most concerned with nutrient loss reduction, sustainability (in the broad sense), the uses of the rivers and conservation.

Phone Members:

Wendell Shauman, Illinois Farm Bureau: He has been a member since the 90s. He is a farmer. He stated that the Mississippi River is the highway to the world for those in Agriculture to get

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production out of Illinois as exports. He is most concerned with balancing commercial with ecological concerning waterways.

Danielle Anderson, Marquis Energy: Her industry is biofuel and this is her first time on the council. She is most concerned about the lock and damn infrastructure.

Matthew Stafford, Code enforcement official, City of Ottawa: This is his first time on the council. He is most concerned with flood plain management. His city is experiencing flooding currently. He had to get off the phone to address.

New Member Joined physically at 10:30AM

Lauren Lurkins, Illinois Farm Bureau

Lt. Governor Stratton thanked everyone for sharing his or her thoughts.

4. Member Updates and Reports

- **Doug Blodgett - Nature Conservancy**

Provided an update on the Upper Mississippi Restoration Program 1986. It is a new round of habitat rehab projects.

This is a program partnership with both Federal and State (upper Miss. states including Wisconsin, Minnesota and Illinois)

Accomplished about 56 projects. Invested about 500 million federal dollars.

In Illinois, the program has completed 13 projects, totaling \$112 in costs. There is 155 million dollars allocated for 7 future projects.

There are 6 field stations in the upper Mississippi region – 2 of which are in Illinois – with over 20 million dollars in those stations funded by the Federal Government.

New generation of projects - call to get our foot in the door to capture those dollars (conference in IOWA)

Invited the Illinois Rivers Council for a field trip and meeting of a world class wetland. We will coordinate with the Lt. Governor's office.

- **Darren Melvin**, Manager of Marine Operations, Hanson Material Service: Provided an update on River carriers; future meeting topic.

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- **Tom Brooks**, Natural Resources Unit Manager, IDOT: had an update and was going to provide the information to the Lt. Governor's office.

Lt. Governor requested presenters for future meetings to members

There were no phone member updates.

- **Allen LaPointe**, Vice President Environment Quality, Shed Aquarium: Encouraged everyone to make it to the next meeting. He will provide a behind the scenes tour of the facility which is a great incentive to join.

Christine Davis, IEPA:

Draft Upper Mississippi improvement act - formulated - white paper copy - info coming out for proposal

Nutrient Science Committee - Numeric Nutrient Standards for aquatic life and human uses. Public comment period has just ended and there will be a summary coming. Changes in standards - for water quality. Takes years to implement new standards.

Il. Nut. Loss Red. Strategy - biannual report released in Fall - workshop or conference end of year in Champaign - req. details.

Wants to reduce nitrogen from Agriculture industry into waterways. This will include how to help people understand how to maintain and apply nutrients appropriately, so they aren't all lost. It is cost saving and responsible from a conservation standpoint.

5. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

6. Adjournment

The Lt. Governor stated that she is happy to travel throughout the state of Illinois and she welcomes all invitations. If you need any assistance, please contact her staff.

Doug Blodgett made the motion to adjourn. It was seconded by several members. The meeting adjourned at 11:03 am.

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