



QUARTERLY MEETING

March 13, 2025

10:00am

Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments (TMACOG)

300 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive

Toledo, OH 43604

MEETING MINUTES

Commission Members Present:

Anne Vogel, Director, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, OLEC Chair
Kirk Hines, Designee, Ohio Department of Agriculture
Steve Gray, Designee, Ohio Department of Natural Resources
Scott Ryan, Designee for Lydia Mihalik, Director of Department of Ohio Development
Gene Phillips, Designee for Bruce Vanderhoff, Director of Ohio Department of Health
Danielle Giannantonio, Commissioner
Kate Bartter, Commissioner
Crystal Davis, Commissioner
Michelle L. Burke, Commissioner

Absent Commission Members:

Richard Hylant, Commissioner

Staff Present:

Joy Mulinex, OLEC
Sandra Kosek-Sills, OLEC
Kris Patterson, OLEC
Hannah Boesinger, OLEC
Nicole Knab, OLEC

Public: 12 people

Welcome and Agenda Overview: Director Anne Vogel, Ohio EPA, Commission Chair

- Director Vogel welcomed everyone and asked for roll call.
(roll call)
A quorum was declared, and the meeting came to order at 10:03 a.m.

Welcome from Meeting Host:

- Executive Director, Sandy Spang, made the welcoming address from TMACOG.

ACTION: Approval of December 4, 2024, Meeting Minutes

- Motion to approve by Scott Ryan, seconded by Danielle Giannantonio. Motion carried with no dissent.

ACTION: Approval of the Nomination of Anne Vogel to serve as Chair

- Motion to approve by Kirk Hines seconded by Steve Gray. Motion carried with no dissent.

ACTION: Approval of the Nomination of Mary Mertz to serve as Secretary

- Motion to approve by Anne Vogel seconded by Scott Ryan. Motion carried with no dissent.

ACTION: Approval of Lake Erie Protection Fund (LEPF) Grant Allocation for FY-25

- Motion to approve by Danielle Giannantonio seconded by Steve Gray. Motion carried with no dissent.

Special Reports:**Mark Warman, Emerging Contaminants Specialist, Ohio State University Extension Program**

- Presented information on microplastics in Lake Erie.

Jesse Stock, Executive Director, Partners for Clean Streams

- Presented information on plastics found the streams and beaches during beach cleanups.

Ohio Lake Erie Commission Office Report**Joy Mulinex**

- Continued Federal Coordination efforts:
 - Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Act of 2025 (S.52H/R. 284). Last year the Commissioners passed a resolution of support for reauthorization.
 - Great Lakes Fishery Research Reauthorization Act (H.R. 1809)
 - Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Amendments Act of 2025(S.9/H.R. 644)
 - Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2025 (S.524)
 - Invasive Carp Barrier is paused.
- Traveling Life on Lake Erie Photo Exhibit continues from Cleveland Boat Show to Lake Erie Nature & Science Center, Maumee Bay State Park, Lake Erie Shoes & Islands Welcome Center, Cleveland Metroparks CanalWay, and National Museum of the Great Lakes.
- Budget request for LEPF will remain the same in the next biennium, will close out state fiscal year with no concerns on budget.
- Started providing testimony for FY 26-27 budget

Sandra Kosek-Sills

- New License Plate now available "Life on Lake Erie/Kayak." Plate sales are flattening out, new plate may hold sales.
- Nutrient Reduction Actions:

- Completed Ohio DAP in 2024, and working now on implementation activities. Ohio EPA completed Maumee Nutrient TMDL Biennial Report and Nutrient Mass Balance Report available on their website.
 - Annex 4 Subcommittee Adaptive Management documents available at binational.net
 - H2Ohio Annual Report available and includes implementation actions being done by Ohio.
- Grant Programs available Lake Erie Environmental Justice Grant Program and Lake Erie Protection Fund available at lakeerie.ohio.gov

Kris Patterson

- Subawards made for the Lake Erie Communities & Coastal Resiliency Grants.
- Lake Erie Protection & Restoration Plan required by statute to be published in odd years and guides LEPF Grants. Requires coordination of state agencies. Final plan to be presented to Commissioners in June, with the final plan due to legislature in July.

Hannah Boesinger

- Areas of Concern significant milestones include:
 - All management actions are completed for the Black River AOC. One AOC project remains for Sunset Pier Park project with additional funds to be utilized for engagement and boat launch improvements. State focus has shifted to Biological BUI evaluations, and three BUI's remain.
 - The Cuyahoga River AOC is focused on two Great Lakes Legacy projects including the Gorge Dam, and contract has been selected. US EPA is conducting an additional review of contract. West Creek Flume project is complete and removed a fish barrier and restored habitat. U.S. Army Corps sediment sampling is complete and will help inform restrictions on navigational dredging BUI.
 - Four habitat projects completed in the Maumee AOC, and seven others are starting constructions. Great Lakes Legacy Act projects continue to be a priority with Remedial Design happening for Lower Maumee River. Ottawa River sampling data review is underway.

Commissioner Reports:

Kirk Hines, Designee, Ohio Department of Agriculture

- H2Ohio Program expanded throughout the state. ODA has the goal of 2 million enrolled acres to have nutrient management plans. March 24 – August 15 will be in 10 counties to expand signup. The average soil test phosphorus in the Western Lake Erie Basin is decreasing.
- RFPs out to help with phosphorus removal structures program as part of H2Ohio.

Steve Gray, Designee, Ohio Department of Natural Resources

- Expressed support for GLRI block grants to capitalize on money coming to Ohio/Great Lakes States and maximize dollars.
- H2Ohio Statewide Manager for H2Ohio, Eric Saas present to answer questions.
- Highlighted the birding trail map that includes 90 sites and Birding Ohio Day at Magee Marsh.

Scott Ryan, Designee for Lydia Mihalik, Director of Ohio Department of Development

- Recognized multiple divisions that administer over 90 programs which help economic development and retention.
- Visit ohio.org for the 2025 Travel Guide.

Gene Phillips, Designee for Bruce Vanderhoff, Director of Ohio Department of Health

- Preparing for beach monitoring, contracts are being put in place and hiring staff for sampling.

- Updates made to BeachGuard website: publicapps.odh.ohio.gov/beachguardpublic/

Crystal Davis, Commissioner

- Noted she's the fiscal Co-Chair for Healing our Waters and that she and 75 people from Great Lakes states went to D.C. advocating for reauthorization of GLRI, investing in Great Lakes restoration and water infrastructure.

Danielle Giannantonio, Commissioner

- Hosting utility resource fair to help lower income residence in Greater Cleveland Area apply for utility assistance (March), and STEM Event participation (May).
- Applying for a FEMA grant to help support dam projects.
- In the process of purchasing lab equipment from IJJA Containments Funding to help analyze PFAS
- Planning West Creek Flume completion event for July, 2025.
- Attending Water Week in D.C. in April to advocate for reauthorization GLRI, Cyber Security, and more.

Michelle L. Burke, Commissioner

- March 19, Ohio Marine Trade Association is hosting state-wide legislative conference in Columbus. In attendance will be 47 lawmakers and two legislative panels speaking on water quality and tourism.

Anne Vogel, Director, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, OLEC Chair

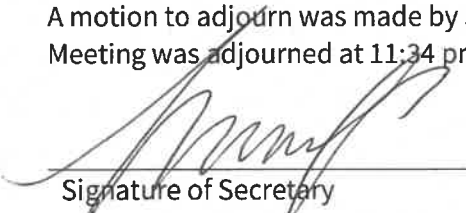
- Attended State of the State and noted the Governor's strong theme on how to get people back into the workforce.
- Ohio EPA submitted flat funding for H2Ohio and received support back from legislators.

Public Comment

- None

Adjourn Business Meeting

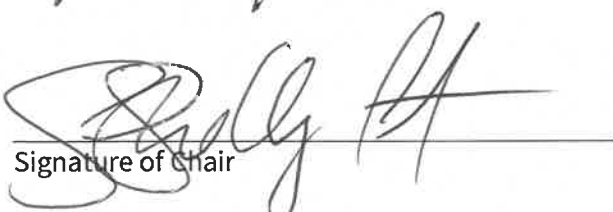
A motion to adjourn was made by Steve Gray and seconded by Scott Ryan. The motion passed.
Meeting was adjourned at 11:34 pm



Signature of Secretary

6/11/2025

Date



Signature of Chair

6/11/2025

Date