

Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission  
111 Liberty Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215

Natural Resources Assistance Council  
Meeting Notes – FY 2025 –Scoring Session

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October 7, 2024, 10:00 am

Members Present

Ryan Andrews, PWIC  
Stephen Farst, City of Grove City  
Nathan Johnson, OEC  
Matt Brown, Franklin County Engineers  
Office  
Shannon Sorrell, DNR

Chair, Kyle Wilson, FSWCD  
Terry Seidel, TNC  
Steve Studenmund, Metro Parks

OPWC Staff Present

Jennifer Hufford, OPWC

MORPC Staff Present

Edwina Teye

**1. Meeting Called to Order at 10:00 am.**

**2. Approval of June 24, 2024, Minutes**

Member Ryan Andrews made the motion to approve the meeting minutes. Member Terry Seidel seconded. Motion carried..

**3. Available Funds**

The current balance available for FY 2025 is \$6,446,629. This amount includes administrative costs.

**4. Other Business**

NRAC Vacant Seats

MORPC Staff provided an update to the Committee on vacant seats with Members Shannon Sorrell and Jim Palus stepping down. The Committee has 3 vacant seats needed to be filled with 1 from any of the eligible categories, 1 from category 4 (Ag & Forestry), and 1 from category 5 (Business/Planning/Realtor).

Chair, Kyle Wilson thanked Member Sorrell for her work on the Committee.

WorksWise non-submittal

As part of the district 3 application policies, applicants are required to submit final applications through the WorksWise portal on the date of the application deadline. However, the Columbus & Franklin County Metro Parks submitted final applications for two projects – Georges Creek Acquisition and Little Darby Acquisition directly to the district's liaison without submitting it through the application portal.

Chair Wilson led the NRAC to deliberate on whether to accept the submissions. Member Matt Brown made the motion for the NRAC to accept both applications submitted by Metro Parks on the deadline but not in the acceptable format as defined by the D3 NRAC Policies. Member Nathan Johnson seconded the motion. Motion carried, 1 abstain.

### OPWC Guidance

Chair Wilson reiterated the OPWC guidance on ethics sent by the Director and disseminated to the NRAC. The guidance states that while NRAC members are not subject to the conflict-of-interest law but are subject to the restriction on ability to profit, NRAC members who have applications in front of the NRAC must take cautionary measures. These members should not score or vote on their organization's application and should also have another member of the organization present to address any questions.

Additionally, members are required to maintain consistency while scoring applications to ensure fairness.

Member Nathan Johnson asked if there was a policy around Letters of Support Request. OPWC Rep. Jennifer Hufford stated that if there was no financial gains and interest in projects, organizations may submit Letters of Support.

Member Shannon clarified that ODNR is no longer able to submit letters of support on behalf of other state agencies.

## **5. Review and Scoring of Applications**

MORPC staff and D3 Liaison, Edwina Teye reviewed the application scoring process, including sections scored by staff and sections agreed on by consensus reached by the Committee. The D3 application is divided into 4 sections:

**Section 1: Project Emphasis.** This section has thirteen questions scored between 0 and 5 and is based on each member's judgement. The raw scores are weighted.

**Section 2: Local Coordination and Support.** This section covers both matching funds, which is scored by staff, and cost effectiveness, which is determined through an NRAC consensus.

**Matching Funds**

| App ID | Applicant      | Project Name                                    | Total Project Cost | Local Match Dollars | Match % | Clean Ohio Amount Requested | #14 Match |
|--------|----------------|---|--------------------|---------------------|---------|-----------------------------|-----------|
| 25-01  | Columbus       | Cooke Woods Preservation Project                | \$1,202,380        | 360,715             | 30%     | \$841,665                   | 5         |
| 25-02  | Columbus       | Whitethorne Woods Protection                    | \$991,250          | \$297,375           | 30%     | \$693,875                   | 5         |
| 25-03  | City of Dublin | Waterways Maintenance Program, Year 2 – Site 28 | \$268,310          | \$68,310            | 25%     | \$200,000                   | 0         |
| 25-04  | Metro Parks    | Georges Creek Acquisition                       | \$530,000          | \$212,000           | 40%     | \$318,000                   | 15        |
| 25-05  | Metro Parks    | Little Darby Watershed Acquisition              | \$2,390,000        | \$597,500           | 25%     | \$1,792,500                 | 0         |
| 25-06  | Prairie Twp.   | Hellbranch Run Preserve                         | \$1,784,000        | \$446,000           | 25%     | \$1,338,000                 | 0         |
| 25-07  | Westerville    | Walnut Ridge Run Restoration Project            | \$1,250,000        | \$375,000           | 30%     | \$875,000                   | 5         |
|        |                |   | <b>\$8,415,940</b> | <b>2,356,900</b>    |         | <b>\$6,059,040</b>          |           |

**Cost Effectiveness**

The Chair also led a discussion on the cost effectiveness of the projects and asked for a recommendation based on the cost per acre and current market rates within the framework of a project being an acquisition or a restoration project.

Member Steve Farst made the motion for the following scores.

Application 25-01 Cooke Woods Preservation Project classified as high earning 0 points.

Application 25-02 Whitethorne Woods Protection classified as low earning 6 points

Application 25-03 Waterways Maintenance Program, Year 2 – Site 28 classified as low earning 6 points  
Application 25-04 Georges Creek Acquisition classified as medium earning 3 points  
Application 25-05 Little Darby Watershed Acquisition classified as low earning 6 points  
Application 25-06 Hellbranch Run Preserve classified as medium earning 3 points  
Application 25-07 Walnut Ridge Run Restoration Project as low earning 6 points

| App ID | Applicant      | Project Name                                    | Total Project Cost | Local Match Dollars | Clean Ohio Amount Requested | Total Acres | Clean Ohio Cost Per Acre | Total Linear Feet | Clean Ohio Cost Per LF | #20 |
|--------|----------------|---|--------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-----|
| 25-01  | Columbus       | Cooke Woods Preservation Project                | \$1,202,380        | 360,715             | \$841,665                   | 6.14        | \$137,078.99             |                   |                        | 0   |
| 25-02  | Columbus       | Whitethorne Woods Protection                    | \$991,250          | \$297,375           | \$693,875                   | 49.3        | \$14,074.54              |                   |                        | 6   |
| 25-03  | City of Dublin | Waterways Maintenance Program, Year 2 – Site 28 | \$268,310          | \$68,310            | \$200,000                   |             |                          | 558               | \$358.42               | 6   |
| 25-04  | Metro Parks    | Georges Creek Acquisition                       | \$530,000          | \$212,000           | \$318,000                   | 11          | \$28,909.09              |                   |                        | 3   |
| 25-05  | Metro Parks    | Little Darby Watershed Acquisition              | \$2,390,000        | \$597,500           | \$1,792,500                 | 118         | \$15,190.68              |                   |                        | 6   |
| 25-06  | Prairie Twp.   | Hellbranch Run Preserve                         | \$1,784,000        | \$446,000           | \$1,338,000                 | 57.26       | \$23,367.10              |                   |                        | 3   |
| 25-07  | Westerville    | Walnut Ridge Run Restoration Project            | \$1,250,000        | \$375,000           | \$875,000                   |             |                          | 1300              | \$673                  | 6   |
|        |                |   | \$8,415,940        | 2,356,900           | \$6,059,040                 | 241.7       |                          | 1858              | 1031.4229              |     |

Member Matt Brown seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

**Section 3: Additional Criteria.** This section is made of six questions and includes the economic condition of the community. Earned points are determined through the per capita income of the community based on the 2020 American Community Survey.

**Economic Condition**

| App ID | Applicant      | Project Name                                    | Community        | Per Capita Income | Score |
|--------|----------------|---|------------------|-------------------|-------|
| 25-01  | Columbus       | Cooke Woods Preservation Project                | Columbus         | \$30,056          | 8     |
| 25-02  | Columbus       | Whitethorne Woods Protection                    | Columbus         | \$30,056          | 8     |
| 25-03  | City of Dublin | Waterways Maintenance Program, Year 2 – Site 28 | Dublin           | \$60,152          | 4     |
| 25-04  | Metro Parks    | Georges Creek Acquisition                       | Canal Winchester | \$42,841          | 6     |
| 25-05  | Metro Parks    | Little Darby Watershed Acquisition              | Grove City       | \$37,557          | 6     |
| 25-06  | Prairie Twp.   | Hellbranch Run Preserve                         | Prairie Twp.     | \$31,683          | 6     |
| 25-07  | Westerville    | Walnut Ridge Run Restoration Project            | Blendon Twp.     | \$32,231          | 6     |

**Section 4: Communications with Landowners.** Staff scores the type of communication that has occurred between the applicant and landowner(s) with scores ranging between 5 and 20.

Application 25-02 (Whitethorne Woods Protection) earned 5 points for establishing contact with the landowner through email.

The following Applications earned 20 points for securing a signed contract/ owns the property.

- 25-01 Cooke Woods Preservation Project
- 25-03 Waterways Maintenance Program, Year 2 – Site 28
- 25-04 Georges Creek Acquisition

25-05 Little Darby Watershed Acquisition  
25-06 Hellbranch Run Preserve  
25-07 Walnut Ridge Run Restoration Project

**Adjournment.**