

# TMACOG Agriculture Committee

## Meeting Notes

February 19, 2020

9:00 a.m.

TMACOG Boardroom

### Attendees:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>AFFILIATION</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>AFFILIATION</u>
R. Jay Finke	Ottawa County Farm Bureau	Laura Campbell	MI Farm Bureau
Doug Darling	Michigan Farmer	Rick Johnson	Ag Technology
Mark Stahl	Ottawa County Commissioner	Scott Chalfin	Sandusky County Farm Bureau
Pat Wright	LEW/ACLE	Mark Coppeler	Ottawa County Commissioner
Don Sahloff	Whiteford Twp.	Jim Slattery	Rotary Water Commission
Andy McCain	MSU/MCCC	Alan Sundermeier	OSU Extension
Jim Carter	Wood SWCD, Vice-chair, AG	Marjorie Mulcahy	LEW/ACLE
Catherine Acerboni	Monroe Conservation District	Jon Eckel	Chair, TMACOG WQC
Mike Libben	Ottawa SWCD, Chair AG	Jenny Carter-Cornell	Hull & Associates
Kevin Czajkowski	University of Toledo	Tim Brown	President, TMACOG
Joy Minarcin	Administrative Asst., TMACOG	Megan Grammar	Sandusky County

### Welcome and Introductions:

Mike Libben, Ag Committee chair, welcomed everyone. Round table introductions were made. Those in attendance are so noted in the table above.

### Meeting Minutes:

Mike Libben asked for a *motion to approve* the meeting minutes from the November 6, 2019 Ag Committee meeting. Megan Grammar *moved to approve* and R. Jay Finke *seconded*. **Motion carried.**

### Michigan Farm Bureau - Update on grants and practices:

*Laura Campbell, Michigan Farm Bureau*

*Dave Thompson, Monroe County*

*Doug Darling, MI farmer*

Laura Campbell discussed MI CLEAR (Michigan Cleaner Lake Erie through Action and Research) that is a coalition of groups working to improve Lake Erie and the water quality of the Western Lake Erie Basin. Campbell discussed the goals and key messages of the partners. The outreach and communication portion of the plan are key. Campbell gave an overview of the media campaign that took place in 2019 and where the group is headed moving forward. In 2020 the group would like to organize a farm & lake media tour. Campbell also noted that the Governor of MI have proposed legislation for \$10M to restart the CRP program in Michigan.

Dave Thompson talked about various practices and programs available to Michigan farmers. Thompson explained the program drain commissioners have begun to implement that would benefit the ag community by lowering their property assessment co-efficient. He also gave a brief overview of the Michigan Municipal Wetland Alliance program. Thompson noted that water environments to the north need to be addressed due to Lake Erie being at the receiving end of the waterways. The goal is to provide balance between business, lake, and water quality.

Doug Darling gave an overview of best practices used. His farm is mainly a no-till operation. Darling expressed the importance of soil testing for proper application of nutrients. Mr. Darling also explained the benefits of enrolling in the voluntary MAEAP (Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program).

Followed by Q&A.

### **Status of H2Ohio and the Ohio Agriculture Conservation Initiative**

*Mike Libben, Ottawa Soil & Water Conservation District*

*Jim Carter, Wood Soil & Water Conservation District*

Various grant opportunities available to Ohio farmers within the TMACOG service area were reviewed. The grants covered included: Portage and Toussaint GLRI; Turtle Creek Nutrient Trapping Program; Portage River Nutrient Trapping Program; Headwaters Tenmile Creek AG BMP; Maumee AOC; H2Ohio. Mike Libben gave a brief description of each grant, showed the county and area covered within the county, what type of best management practice or structure covered, and the amount awarded by the funding agency with dollar amount match required.

An in-depth overview was given for the Maumee AOC and H2Ohio. Jim Carter reviewed criteria specified for the first seven out of ten best management practices as determined by the Department of Ag. Those practices include, voluntary nutrient management planning, variable-rate fertilization, subsurface nutrient application, manure incorporation, conservation crop rotation, cover crops, and drainage water management. The various requirements for each practice along with cost-share were reviewed. Program requirements for all practices must be within the 14-county designated program area, have a Voluntary Nutrient Management Plan, may not be participating in other programs on enrolled acres, and may be enrolled for up to 4 years. Various flyers and information sheets were included in the meeting packet.

Followed by Q & A.

### **Review – Agenda for Agriculture:**

The Agenda for Lake Erie was explained. The Agriculture Committee needs to update the Ag policy portion. A copy of the Ag portion was included in the meeting packet. The update needs to be complete by the end of the year. There will be a Michigan portion as well as Ohio. Please review and send any comments to Kari Gerwin. An in-depth review/edit will be done at the next Ag meeting.

**Staff Report:**

- Refer to the TMACOG flyer of upcoming events that list what is being planned within all TMACOG departments
- The next TMACOG Water Quality meeting will be a panel discussion on Lake Erie and tourism. More information to follow
- The next Ag Committee meeting is being planned as a tour of Hirzel Canning in Northwood. More information to follow

**Future Meetings:**

April 15, 2020 – Locations to be determined.

**Public Comments:**

None

**Adjourn**