

PEORIA LAKES BASIN ALLIANCE
Wednesday, August 14, 2019 at 1:00 pm
456 Fulton Street, Suite 401
Peoria, IL 61602

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Ingram called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

Attendees:

The Nature Conservancy:	Jason Beverlin
Heartland Water Resources Council:	Tom Tincher, Wayne Ingram
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission:	Eric Miller, Reema Abi-Akar, Michael Bruner, Russ Crawford, Ray Lees

2. Public Comment

No public comment.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes for July 17, 2019

Crawford moved to approve the July 17, 2017 minutes.

4. Heartland Water Resources Presentation

Tom Tincher presented about his Heartland Water plan. He said that this document, which he brought and distributed to each member in binders, aims to establish an institutional framework for the future. He sees this as the beginnings of a future PowerPoint or Executive Summary.

Tincher said that the concept is to make Peoria Lake the centerpiece of the Illinois River. There are nine elements, as shown in the cover sheet:

1) Illinois River Center and Campus

Tincher said he has been working with cities and interfacing with local tourism groups regarding the regional strategy. He said it will improve the linkage of the region through the scenic byway.

Tincher said the Edgewater Building would house the Illinois River Center, which would include education, training, and entertainment. He said it could house numerous organizations such as TCRPC, TNC, riverboats, and cruises under one roof.

2) Rivertowns USA Network Alliance,

3) Scenic Byway Network Alliance, and

4) Illinois River and Peoria Lakes Improvement Alliance

The focus here, Tincher said, is to bring portal communities together through planning, facilitation, and programming. In #4, there is a list of important components and entities that could be converged.

5) Illinois River and Peoria Lakes Improvement Projects

Tincher mentioned the establishment of a comprehensive conservation in-lake improvement plan. He discussed mixing biosolids and sediment in the far-south side riverfront planning area. This could be a gateway project, he said, and improve the community's marketability.

6) Nature-Based Tourism Projects

Tincher said that there are 60 million people within a day's drive to Peoria. He mentioned developing the frontage of Kickapoo Creek Conservation Area and restructuring the creek. He said that Par-A-Dice is the centerpiece of Shoreline Village. He said that the Edgewater building is a redevelopment project waiting to happen.

Tincher noted that the Peoria Park District has committed to making marinas at Detweiller into conservation areas. He described a nature-based tourism area in the Woodford County Conservation Area Expansion.

7) Riverfront and Lakefront Development Alliance

This group, Tincher said, will cooperate not only with ideas, but also with development interest.

8) Riverfront and Lakefront Development Projects

Tincher noted that these are projects that are already underway.

9) Scenic Byway Enhancements and Community Revitalization Projects

Tincher said that this planning wouldn't be done in isolation. For example, the development of a sports skills training and tournament center where Taft Homes are.

Tincher opened the floor for comments from the group.

Beverlin asked Tincher to clarify what he expected out of the group. Tincher said that he is seeking interest to move forward to establish an institutional approach to collaborate. Miller commented that there doesn't necessarily have to be a "center" building to house the project; people may view this negatively as another layer of government. He said that there are lots of problems mentioned here that the PLBA will not have the capacity to address, such as social justice and community issues. Entities may not necessarily be able to support the entire plan since the scope is so large. Certain organizations may possibly be able to support specific sections at a time.

Miller asked if the City of Peoria would be supportive of these big changes, and has the public had a say? Tincher said that this is not a finished document. He said that he has purposely not pursued all avenues without a broader understanding of what commitment means. He said that a city individual told him that it is necessary to go through the USACE first. Tincher said that he has now done that through the PLCCP.

Bockler said that last year the group mentioned selecting 5-10 projects in the plan to move forward with, and he asked for the status on those. He said that there are opportunities in Tincher's plan, but there are not enough risk-takers to get it done. He said, "This area needs 20 Blickinstaffs."

Miller brought up the CEDS, and that the process needs to be a bottom-up approach to really work, since a top-down approach will not be viable.

Beverlin said that in terms of the front page, it's a good concept. But TNC would not be able to support the entire plan as-is because the scope is just too wide. He said TNC is willing to sit at the table though, as they do in PLBA meetings. Plus, he added, there could be a conflict between nature and development groups. He said that the PLBA exists to form these discussions, but not to follow through on large developmental plans such as this.

Miller said that the focus of the PLBA is the river. He said that the Chambers of Commerce, CEO Council, and EDC are the ones to talk to regarding economic development as listed in this Heartland plan. Tincher said it is problematic to move away from subjects such as these, as doing so could create conflict.

Bockler said that it sounds like the group agrees on the global components but cannot necessarily agree on the local components. Each community is only able to speak and decide for their own community. Beverlin said, "I know we don't want it to be siloed, but it's going to be."

Tincher suggests walking through specific projects. Miller said that his first questions are how much does it cost and what are we giving up to support this. Tincher said that the group is not at that point yet. Beverlin asked if projects such as rerouting the Kickapoo Creek have been modelled, and if there is science to back it up. Tincher said no. Beverlin said that TNC cannot support a project that hasn't been backed up by science. Tincher said that the current plan is not about technicalities; it's about philosophy and visioning.

Bockler mentioned that Bayview Gardens is creating a Riverview Economic Development group. He also echoed Miller's previous statement saying that the PLBA is not the best group that should facilitate this project to make sure it is kept on the front burner.

Miller said that with any plan, there must be public input, and this Heartland plan has not met that requirement. Ingram said that before it is brought to the public, there must be science to back up the plan. Tincher said that he has been doing that (going through the public), but Miller said that it is necessary to ask more groups than just the PLBA.

Beverlin said that in its current state, this Heartland plan does not contain enough information to move forward. Bockler said that it's not a case of seeking support; it's a case of communicating it to different groups and bodies. Tincher said that he has never gotten to the point of talking about specific projects, and that he has taken this same approach with projects over 40 years.

5. Old Business

Bruner touched on the status of different projects that are ongoing, completed, or on the horizon. With IDNR engagement, Lees explained that Colleen Callahan said that she will attend the sediment workshop. Lees described the purpose of the upcoming sediment workshop on September 4 and 5, saying that all the major players have been contacted.

Bruner discussed the HREP FWIC Mississippi River meeting and the Illinois call-in. Lees said that he has not heard an update regarding the McCluggage Bridge. In terms of the ADM Dry Dock

Dredging, Lees said that Chuck Burlingame made him aware of this issue, and that Paul Rosenbohm has picked up some of the dredged material and is now testing it at PDC.

6. New Business

Bockler talked about choosing five items from the PLCCP and looking at both the PLCCP and the Heartland plan to see if there are any overlapping points.

Lees said that there will be an IDNR meeting tonight regarding the Asian Carp proposed incentive program.

7. Member Reports

- a. Tri-County Regional Planning Commission
There will be a water supply planning meeting coming up next week regarding water and power in the region. There will be a speaker from Exelon.
- b. The Nature Conservancy
No update.
- c. Heartland Water Resources Council
No update.

8. Other

- a. **Next scheduled meeting(s)**
 - i. 11 September 2019 (Emiquon)
 1. Meet at TCRPC at 8:30 am
 2. Caravan departs at 8:50 am
 3. Meeting/tour starts at 10:00 am

9. Adjournment

Ingram adjourned the meeting at 3:44 p.m.