

John O'Meara, P.E.
Executive Director



DRAFT FULL ARC MEETING SUMMARY
ALLIANCE OF ROUGE COMMUNITIES
November 20, 2023, 1:00pm – 2:30pm
Via Teams

1. Welcome (Doug Moore, Chair)

a. Roll Call /Determination of Quorum - Roll call was taken. The 33 members listed below were in attendance, which was sufficient for a quorum.

ARC Member	Attended Y/N	ARC Member	Attended Y/N
Auburn Hills	Y	Oakland County	Y
Beverly Hills	Y	Oakland County Road Commission	Y
Bingham Farms	Y	Oak Park	Y
Birmingham	Y	Orchard Lake	Y
Bloomfield Hills	N	Plymouth	N
Bloomfield Twp.	Y	Plymouth Twp.	Y
Canton Twp.	Y	Redford Twp.	Y
Commerce Twp.	Y	Rochester Hills	Y
Dearborn Heights	N	Romulus	Y
Farmington	Y	Schoolcraft College	N
Farmington Hills	Y	Southfield	Y
Franklin	Y	Troy	Y
Garden City	Y	University of Michigan-Dearborn	N
Henry Ford College	N	Van Buren Twp.	Y
Inkster	Y	Walled Lake	Y
Lathrup Village	Y	Washtenaw County	Y
Livonia	Y	Wayne	Y
Melvindale	N	Wayne County	Y
Northville	N	Wayne County Airport Authority	N
Northville Twp.	Y	West Bloomfield Twp.	Y
Novi	Y	Westland	Y
		Wixom	N

Others in attendance were: Chris O'Meara, Tennille Newsome, John O'Meara, Emily Levine and Noel Mullett – ARC Staff; Marie McCormick, Lauren Eaton - Friends of the Rouge (FOTR); Leah Medley, EPA; Jack Cotrone, Kathleen Sexton – EGLE; Dan Gold – GLWA; Nate Jessee – RCOC; Donald Carpenter – Drummond Carpenter PLLC; Brendan Koziol – Arch Environmental Group; Erma Leaphart-Sierra Club

b. Additions or Changes to the Draft Meeting Agenda

There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

c. Approval of April 6, 2023 Meeting Summary

The motion was made by Northville Twp, to approve the April 6, 2023 Full ARC meeting summary. The motion was seconded by Novi and passed unanimously.

Cooperating Partners:

Cranbrook Institute of Science
Friends of the Rouge
Great Lakes Water Authority
Rouge River Advisory Council
SEMCOG
Southeastern Oakland
County Water Authority
The Henry Ford

2. ARC Executive Director and Technical Services RFP and Habitat Restoration RFP

ARC Executive Director and Technical Services RFP:

Karen Mondora reported there was a summary included on page 3 of the agenda packet of the RFP results. Karen stated 5 years ago the ARC went out for RFP using quality based selection criteria to receive proposals for Executive Director Services. Karen highlighted the following:

- The current contract is expiring which is why the ARC went out for bid again.
- The selection committee for the RFP of officers and chairs of the ARC is included on the summary
- The RFP was posted on MITN and went to 358 registered vendors. There was one submission for the ED Services, which was ECT. The selection committee reviewed the package and submitted scores which are included in the packet on page 4. Karen concluded that it was there was overwhelming response to continue with ECT and the recommendation to the ARC was to proceed with a contract with ECT as long as successful negotiation was reached.

Karen asked if there were any questions, there were none.

The motion was made by Wayne County, to proceed with contract negotiations with ECT for the Executive Director Operational and Technical Support Services. The motion was seconded by Inkster and passed unanimously.

Rouge River AOC Habitat Restoration RFP

Karen Mondora gave background information on why Farmington Hills lead posting and receipt process of the RFPs. Karen reported that page 5 of the agenda packet includes the summary of the Habitat Restoration RFP responses. Karen stated that in order to be in compliance with EPA funding requirements and policies it was important to procure this service and keeps thing cleaner with EPA being independent of Executive Director Services. Karen highlighted the following:

- The RFP was posted on MITN and went to 381 vendors.
- Qualifications were due on October 2nd and a total of 3 submissions were received and they were EA Engineering Science and Technology, ECT and Stantec. The same selection committee reviewed and scored each package independently and submitted scores to Karen Mondora. The selection committee met on October 30th to review the scores and make a recommendation to the Executive Committee. Karen reported the high score went to ECT and it is the selection committee's recommendation to proceed with contract negotiations with ECT.

Karen asked if there were any questions, there were none.

The motion was made by Wayne, to proceed with contract negotiations with ECT for the Rouge River AOC Habitat Restoration Services. The motion was seconded by Inkster and passed unanimously.

Karen also mentioned that ECT partnered with Hubbell Rothe & Clark so there is additional value to their RFPs.

3. Executive Director Report

a. MS4 Permit Update

John O'Meara reported the permit applications for the collaborative plans were submitted. Comments were received from EGLE at the beginning of November and a meeting was held last Friday (Nov 17th) to discuss their comments. ECT is planning to hold another meeting with EGLE in early January. John stated after additional meetings the collaborative plans would be revised as necessary. John reported before they are submitted the ARC members will be able to review for comments.

John asked if there were any questions, there were none.

b. Investigational Sampling Update

Emily reported the following:

- Livonia has a couple sites that are in process; ECT is looking at building plans
- Beverly Hills has been dye tested; hope to do more sampling later

- Dearborn Heights, needs more maps from City
- Novi, looking at further sampling and dye testing

John asked if there were any questions. Erma Leaphart asked Emily if the results typically result from septic issues. Emily stated they are not in areas that have septic systems, they are in areas with sanitary lines. Emily stated she is checking for incorrect connections.

c. Grant Status Report

John O'Meara reported the following: (page 7 in agenda packet is grant status summary)

- 10 active grants: 1 with State, 1 with USDA, 8 with EPA, 1 Erb Family; most habitat projects are in process of completing construction; grants totally \$7M
- HFE Fishway project was opened in August and is functional as some fish have been noticed moving upstream already
- 14 active projects ongoing

John asked if there were any questions on specific projects to let him know. Updated information on projects is also available on the ARC's website.

John reported the following grants that the ARC had submitted.

- EPA Environmental Justice Underserved Communities in Inkster with Wayne County Parks grant is still in discussions. The EPA is working internally for a decision and funding.
- EGLE Watershed Council Support grant was not awarded
- USDA Forest Services Urban & Community IRA was not awarded

d. Call for Projects

John O'Meara reminded the members of the [form that is available on the ARC's website](#) if you have potential projects in your community that you would like the ARC to keep in mind when grant opportunity's open up.

Eileen Harryvan (Southfield) stated (through Teams chat) that there is a small issue with storms over the last couple of years that caused a log jam of upstream wood debris and eroded the banks causing more trees to fall into a bend of the river located at the NW corner of Southfield Township and if there are funds to assist with this she would like to know more.

John asked if there were any questions.

Patrick Cullen stated the County is having a struggle between water quality and flood control. They are working in both directions on a lot of their projects and that ECT has been working with the ICD on Johnson Creek in Northville and Plymouth Twp on a project where they have EPA funding. They are getting more inquiries from residents regarding drainage issues on natural water courses. He stated the County has the ability to address those types of situations on designated County drains but not on natural water courses. He just wanted to get the situation out there and see how they can look at it holistically moving forward and if there is any funding available or projects to be implemented especially since the August 24th storm significantly impacted western Wayne communities.

Tom Rowland mentioned that currently the State has required Redford Twp to build two CSO basins so they are looking for any funding that is out there and whether or not the ARC has any ideas. He stated the projects will exceed \$110M and they are usually not funded. Currently, they are looking for money. Redford Twp looks to receive a \$20M grant from the State. They hope to not have to put it out to the residents on the water and sewer rates. John thanked Tom and indicated he would keep an eye out as well.

e. Great Lakes Restoration Celebration at The Henry Ford 9/22/23

John O'Meara reported that the ARC hosted the 4th Annual Great Lakes Restoration Celebration at The Henry Ford on September 22, 2023. This event showcased the restoration projects in Southeast

Michigan. Chris Korleski, GLNPO Director and Teresa Siedel, Head of EGLE WR were speakers. John stated Teresa Siedel will now take over Chris Korleski's position as he is retiring. Unfortunately, the congressional delegation was not in attendance, however, Senator Stabenow sent a video message. There was also a rededication of the Oxbow on THF property with THF Academy students involved in a fish restocking. NOAA brought a sculpture that is one of three in the world called "Happy Fish" which travels across the country promoting open fish movement. THF Academy students, Chris Korleski and Julie Simmons with NOAA also attended the restocking.

3. Treasurers/Finance Committee Report

a. A/R, A/P and Profit/Loss Reports

Rebecca Runkel reviewed the A/R, A/P and profit/loss reports.

b. 2023 Member Dues

Rebecca Runkel reported Dearborn Heights and Wixom are currently the only two communities that have not paid their 2023 dues. Chris O'Meara asked if they had any questions or needed an extra copy of the invoice to let her know.

c. 2022 Single Audit

Rebecca Runkel reported that the 2022 single audit is included in the agenda packet and there were no issues. Chris O'Meara asked if there were any questions to let her know. There were no deficiencies or any issues found.

The motion was made by Farmington to accept the 2022 Single Audit as presented by the Finance Committee. The motion was seconded by Livonia, and passed unanimously.

d. Ratify E-mail Votes

Rebecca Runkel reported on the following email votes to ratify by the Full ARC:

- 4/19/23: 22 yea 0 nay – Adding budget amendment FC2 in the amount of \$50,000 to 2023 budget to conduct investigational sampling in the Evergreen-Farmington Sanitary Sewer District.
- 5/3/23: 23 yea 0 nay – Adding Work Order 2023-3 for \$50,000 to ECT's contract to complete the sampling work in the Evergreen-Farmington Sanitary Sewer District.
- 6/12/23: 23 yea and 0 nay – Adding budget amendment FC3 EPA grant in the amount of \$365,000 to 2023 budget for EPA12 Merriman Hollow Restoration and EPA13 Wallaceville West Restoration and the associated ECT Work Order 2023-4.
- 8/4/23: 29 yea 0 nay – Adding budget amendment FC4 \$894,273 (with \$30,000 in 2023 and remainder in 2024) to EPA7 in grant funds and extending the grant to 12/31/24 and associated revision to ECT Work Order 2020-5 adding \$100,000 for activities related to the amendment.
- 8/4/23: 25 yea and 0 nay – FC5 adding budget amendment PIE3 Media Support in the amount of \$17,500 for marketing activities to promote ARC and member activities along with the associated ECT contract amendment adding Work Order 2023-5 for the associated activities by Near Perfect Media.

The motion was made by Wayne, to approve the ratification email votes of 4/19/23, 5/3/23, 6/12/23, and two for 8/4/23. The motion was seconded by Southfield and passed unanimously.

e. 2023 Budget Amendment FC6-ERB2 Monitoring & Training Grant

John O'Meara reviewed the Erb Grant of \$375,000 that the ARC received in September. The grant activities will not take place until 2024 the ARC received the first installment of the funds so the acceptance of the work plan needed to be included in the 2023 budget.

The motion was made by Oakland County, to approve the 2023 Budget Amendment adding FC6-ERB2 Monitoring & Training Grant as presented by the Finance Committee. The motion was seconded by Commerce Twp and passed unanimously.

f. 5-Year Plan for 2024-2028

John O'Meara reported the ARC is in the next 5 year general cycle associated with permit activities in addition to other ARC activities. The 5 year plan is on page 24 of the agenda packet and shows detailed information of the plan.

The motion was made by Southfield, to approve the 5-Year Plan (2024-2028) as presented by the Finance Committee. The motion was seconded by Farmington, and passed unanimously.

g. 2024 Budget Recommendations

John O'Meara reported that based on the 5-year plan the 2024 budget is presented and activities will be similar to 2023. John asked if there were any questions to let him know. Chris O'Meara asked if there were any questions about individual budget recommendations to let her know.

The motion was made by Inkster, to approve the 2024 Budget Recommendations as presented by the Finance Committee. The motion was seconded by Wayne County, and passed unanimously.

h. 2024 ECT and FOTR Work Orders

The 2024 ECT and FOTR work orders were reviewed and are based on the activities planned for 2024. John O'Meara reported the contracts and work orders will be effective January 1, 2024 as part of the budget for general non-grant based activities.

Friends of the Rouge

John O'Meara mentioned this is for \$10,000 a year for support of the monitoring for stonefly and spring bug hunt as presented and approved by the ARC.

ECT

John O'Meara mentioned ECT's new contract for 2024 for the Executive Director Services, PIE Services, Technical Services, Erb grant. John O. also mentioned all breakdown details are in the work order in the agenda packet.

John O. asked if there were any questions to feel free to reach out.

The motion was made by Southfield, to approve the 2024 ECT and FOTR Work Orders as presented by the Finance Committee. The motion was seconded by Inkster, and passed unanimously.

4. Standing Committee Reports

a. Organization Committee

Trisha Gabriel reported that there have been no activities under the Organization Committee.

b. PIE Committee

Jacy Garrison reported the following:

- The Rouge River Ours to Protect Watershed road signage project has wrapped up and 141 signs were installed. A map of all installed signs is on page 79 of the agenda packet.
- Based on results of the public ed survey that went out the past year the new topic brochure, static display and ad graphic will be combined on the topic of what the sources of water pollution are and general watershed activities. Items to be drafted this month and will be sent out to the committee for review.
- There are plenty of public education items that are available to members at no cost. These include: recycled tire jar openers, pet waste bags, brochures, booklets. Let Chris O'Meara or Tennille Newsome know or you can order from the ARC's website.

- If you are an ARC member participating in collaborative PEP you need to display the seasonal posters. It was noted that Oak Park needs to display the posters. Kara Grisamer noted in the chat that "the City of Oak Park has been displaying the seasonal posters since 2022".

c. Technical Committee

Karen Mondora reported that sampling is still in process for:

- Beverly Hills
- Novi
- Livonia
- Dearborn Heights: currently waiting on updated maps in order to continue the investigation
- Inkster: tap that had been identified has been ruled out and is not an IDEP source

Karen asked if there were any questions, there were none.

Karen Mondora reported that she is taking on a different role at the City of Farmington Hills which means she will step aside as the Tech Committee chair and that Tyler Sonoga from the City is an Environmental Engineer and has been with them for 3 years and has expressed an interest in taking over that role. If anyone else is interested, to let the Chair know.

John O'Meara thanked Karen for all her work with the ARC and that it has been greatly appreciated. She has helped the ARC become what it is along with other members. John indicated if there is no interest by the end of the year then the ARC will transition Tyler into the position.

5. Report from Cooperating Partners

Friends of the Rouge

Marie McCormick reported:

- Board meeting and annual elections will be December 13th at 5:00pm and if you are a member, please be sure to vote
- Website is near completion after year; hope to launch in early 2024
- Starting 5 year strategic planning process. FOTR will reach out to key ARC members to participate as stakeholders as they ask for input into the future of the organization
- Native plant and rain barrel pick date is Saturday, May 18, 2024; pickup location is TBD. Marie asked if any communities were interested in hosting the event to reach out to Marie. Chris O'Meara added that as part of their collaborative PEP that the ARC is required to have communities host an event when possible and you will meet your permit requirements.
- Stonefly search is fully funded with ARC dues and hosted on January 20, 2024. Chris O'Meara will send out the information. FOTR will have information on website, social media and newsletter.
- Two bug hunts; FOTR is looking for assistance from ARC communities to host.
- FOTR is doing welcome and introduction sessions in person post-COVID. There will be 3 different events in 2024 and would like one of the ARC communities to host. FOTR anticipates 100-125 volunteers per event. Need enough tables, chairs, microphone, screen and projector; FOTR will provide refreshments. These will be approximately two hours long. Please let Marie know if interested in hosting.

Marie also reported current projects that are in partnership with RRAC, ARC and community support:

- Tree planting project in coordination with the ARC; FOTR hosted 30 workdays, 350 volunteers and 1200 hours of volunteer time. They planted over 4,000 trees and over 1,800 weed mats have been installed. There was 83.9 acres reforested with that support.
- Full Rouge Watershed Report Card through the University of Maryland with funding from the Erb Family Foundation. She mentioned a handful of ARC members have been asked to complete a stakeholder engagement. The anticipated roll out of April 2024. FOTR values any input received. John O'Meara stated the email that was sent out to provide thoughts and if the members could get comments to Chris O'Meara sooner than later would be appreciated.

- FOTR received \$360,000 National Fish and Wildlife Federation grant making green stormwater infrastructure work for public spaces in southeast Michigan. With that, FOTR will be installing a rain garden in Redford and a natural playground at an elementary school in Dearborn and in addition, adding master raingarden courses. Marie will send the information to Chris to send out.
- FOTR received a grant from Michigan Invasive Species grant program to continue invasive swamp crayfish surveys. Frog surveys will be in Oakland and Wayne Counties.
- FOTR has received funding from DNR for fish and habitat partnership to do culvert inventories in the lower Rouge.
- FOTR received funding through the EGLE non-point source watershed council support grant to grow their chloride monitoring throughout the watershed.

Great Lakes Water Authority

Dan Gold reported GLWA continues to work with members through their watershed hub. GLWA is working on the regional E.coli monitoring program for GIS. GLWA plans to have a webinar in February/March 2024 to share work with regional partners. GLWA finalized an agreement with USGS to continue their regional E.coli monitoring program that was part of their 2020 wastewater master plan. In 2021, GLWA started funding three different sites on the Rouge River and over the course of the next two years they are going to phase in five more sites on the Rouge River that will be funded permanently through USGS. If anyone has any questions you can reach out to Dan.

Marie McCormick stated she is excited that they are looking to add more monitoring sites. Marie asked if Dan would be willing to share where the locations would be. Dan shared his screen to show where the potential sites would be.

RRAC

John O'Meara reported the focus over the next year is associated with diversity equity inclusion training to help expand membership in RRAC.

Chris O'Meara stated that if anyone wants to attend an RRAC meeting to let her know and she will add you to the email list.

6. Report from Counties

Oakland County

Jacy Garrison, reported the following:

- The 19th annual kids calendar contest was held and had 600 entries. The calendar focuses on stormwater education and pollution prevention awareness for the younger age group and helps others meet their public education requirements for MS4 permit. There are about 5,500 copies printed which are distributed throughout the communities. They will be available in mid-December. If you would like more than 15, send Jacy an email and she will get them to you.
- Oakland County updated their 24-hour pollution hotline brochure and if you would like copies of those to email Jacy. The link to website with the information is here:
<https://www.oakgov.com/government/water-resources-commissioner/stormwater/24-hour-pollution-hotline>

Chris O'Meara mentioned if you have the hotline numbers on your websites, you will meet permit requirements.

Wayne County

Patrick Cullen reported the following:

- The County was notified by EGLE that they will receive roughly \$1.4M of funding to help mitigate the cost for next round of improvements in Rouge Valley's LT project.
- Dearborn Heights completed sewer separation project on outfall 34 which is a shared regulator outfall with the City of Inkster. It was a frequent SSO source on the Rouge.

- A lot of money has been spent on the interceptive system on lower rouge and middle rouge to eliminate SSOs to improve water quality. This includes sewer lining, manhole rehabilitation work and replacing siphons.

7. Report from EGLE

Kathleen Sexton reported EGLE reviewed the revised collaborative plans and EGLE sent comments to the ARC on November 9th and had a meeting with ARC and ECT on November 17th to discuss the requested revisions. Most revisions are IDEP and TMDL focused. EGLE expects a more active role from permittees in those areas of IDEP and TMDL. EGLE will work with the ARC in the next coming weeks. Once plans are finalized, they should be uploaded to my permit application in MiEnviro and the ARC will provide those plans when approved. EGLE is also working through permit applications and should get initial comments to all permittees by the end of this year.

8. Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no public comments.

9. Other Business

John O'Meara reported Mike Buiten with the City of Wayne is retiring. Mike has been an active member since the beginning and has been a great supporter. The ARC thanks him and wishes him well. Mike appreciated the opportunity to work with the group. Doug Moore congratulated Mike.

10. Summary of Actions of the Full ARC

- The motion was approved for the Full ARC meeting summary of April 6, 2023
- The motion was approved to proceed with contract negotiations with ECT for the Executive Director Operational and Technical Support Services as presented by the RFQ selection committee
- The motion was approved to proceed with contract negotiations with ECT for the Rouge River AOC Habitat Restoration Services as presented by the RFQ selection committee
- The motion was approved to accept the 2022 Single Audit as presented by the Finance Committee
- The motion was approved for the ratification of email votes from 4/19/23 for budget amendment FC2; 5/3/23 for ECT's work order 2023-3; 6/12/23 for budget amendment FC3 and ECT work order 2023-4; 8/4/23 for budget amendment FC4 and ECT work order 2020-5; and 8/4/23 for budget amendment FC5 and ECT work order 2023-5
- The motion was approved for the 2023 Budget Amendment adding the Erb Family Foundation grant and line item ERB2 Monitoring and Training
- The motion was approved for the 5-Year Plan (2024-2028)
- The motion was approved for the 2024 Budget Recommendations
- The motion was approved for the ECT and FOTR Work Orders

11. Adjourn

The motion was made by Wayne to adjourn the Full ARC meeting. The motion was seconded by Inkster and passed unanimously.