

**Minutes of the
QUAD CITIES RIVERFRONT COUNCIL (QCRFC)**

Tuesday, September 26, 2023, 12:00 p.m.

Council Members in Attendance

Ms. Heather Bishop
Mr. Larry Burns
Ms. Barb Cray
Mr. Tim Knanishu

Mr. Justin Parchert
Mr. James Peterson *
* *Current QCRFC Officers*

Others in Attendance:

Major Matthew Fletcher
Mr. Zach Sutton

1. **Tour of Lock and Dam 15.** A tour of Lock and Dam 15 was conducted by Ranger Mike McKean of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Mississippi River Visitors Center. Ranger McKean began the tour with a brief overview of the history of Lock and Dam 15, as well as an explanation of how the system works. He then led the group onto the dam, where the group observed a barge beginning the process of entering the lock. The group was then shown the roller dam mechanism and informed that the dam is the largest roller dam in the world. Ranger McKean then gave some more information about the locks, including how their design helps to prevent barges from becoming stuck, while leading the group back over the footbridge back onto the island. The group observed the aforementioned barge enter the lock, and then crossed the street to the building adjacent to the clock tower building to begin the meeting.
2. **Call Meeting to Order.** The meeting was called to order by Mr. Peterson at 1:07 p.m.
3. **Approval of the July 25, 2023 QCRFC Meeting Minutes.** Mr. Burns made a motion to approve the July 25, 2023 minutes. Mr. Knanishu seconded, and the meeting minutes were approved.
4. **Individual Riverfront Reports.**
 - a. *US Army Corps of Engineers* – Major Fletcher began by welcoming the council to the Arsenal. He then gave a series of updates related to the Corps’ activities. Major Fletcher informed the council that the three lock & dam systems under construction downriver were almost complete. NESP was also authorized which allows for construction on seven locks on the Mississippi and two on the Illinois. These new locks will be 200 ft long, reducing the necessity for barges to have to split up and go through a lock in separate pieces. Construction will also be taking place on a mooring cell at Lock & Dam 14, the steamboat island restoration project has broken ground, and there will be dredging in the Pool 16 channel. Major Fletcher also brought work that would be done on the Andalusia island complex, after which Mr. Parchert asked for further clarification.
 - b. *Andalusia* – Mr. Parchert outlined Andalusia’s plans to place rip rap in their dock area in the near future. He also discussed issues in Andalusia stemming from debris from the spring

floods. Cleanup is still ongoing and the debris has also hampered maintenance of the village's levy.

- c. *Mercer County* – Mr. Peterson informed the council that Mercer County is currently struggling with low water levels on the Mississippi, with currently no access to the main river channel except by using additional boat ramps. Despite issues with the water level on the Mississippi, however, the Keithsburg Wharf upgrades have been successful.
 - d. *Bi-State Regional Commission* – Mr. Sutton informed Mr. Parchert that applications for the Boat Area Access Development grant, one of which Andalusia submitted in May, were still being reviewed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, with a final decision hopefully coming by the end of the year. Mr. Sutton also informed the council of the upcoming Upper Mississippi River Conference, hosted by River Action at the Rock Island Holiday Inn October 18-19.
 - e. *REDEEM* – Mr. Knanishu said that East Moline had received a \$25 million RAISE grant to connect its hotels to downtown with a series of ped/bike pathways as part of its efforts for downtown revitalization.
 - f. *Port Byron* – Mayor Cray told the council that Tugfest was a success for Port Byron. She also reported that businesses in Port Byron had been having a few issues with the railroad company placing sand on the tracks and to build a fence on either side of the tracks. The former issue is leading to sand being blown into the businesses' properties, and the latter would restrict access to the riverfront. Mayor Cray also that Port Byron was waiting for a permit to treat water for Manganese. This prompted a larger discussion about water testing and treatment, and how the expensiveness of testing water for PFAS was putting some towns in a position to have to sell their water systems to private companies. Mr. Parchert mentioned that this had happened to Andalusia when they agreed to sell to Illinois American Water.
 - g. *Rock Island County* – Mr. Burns said that work was about to begin on Rock Island's historic courthouse square, turning the site of the old courthouse into a public greenspace, and that Illiniwek and Loud Thunder campgrounds were winding down their seasons. Additionally, Niabi Zoo will be closing for the season on October 29, and will be closed on Mondays from now up until that date.
5. **Next Meeting.** There was a general discussion about future council meetings, including the next one on November 29, 2023. Mr. Knanishu expressed his and Mr. Burns' desire to have more meetings at locations that would have some sort of informational tour about the site, as was the case with both the July and September meetings. This sentiment was echoed by the others in attendance. The location for the November 29 meeting is still TBD.
6. **Other Business.** None.
7. **Adjournment.** Mr. Burns moved to adjourn the meeting and Ms. Bishop seconded it and the meeting adjourned.