

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

Tuesday, November 19, 2024, 12:00 p.m.  
Nahant Marsh Education Center  
4220 Wapello Ave  
Davenport, IA

Council Members in Attendance

Ms. Heather Bishop  
Mr. Larry Burns  
Mayor Barb Cray  
Mr. Rob Danielson  
Mr. Greg Ludwig

Mr. James Peterson\*  
Mr. Greg Schaapveld\*  
Ms. Brittany Wells

*\* Current QCRFC Officers*

Others in Attendance:

Mr. Colin Shirk  
Mr. Zach Sutton

1. **Call Meeting to Order** The meeting was called to order by Mr. Peterson at 12:05 p.m.
2. **Approval of the September 24, 2024 QCRFC Meeting Minutes.** Mr. Burns made a motion to approve the September 24, 2024 minutes as written. Mr. Danielson seconded, and the meeting minutes were approved.
3. **Presentation.** Mr. Shirk welcomed the members to Nahant Marsh and gave the group a presentation on the Marsh's mission and the activity at the Marsh that has taken place in recent years. Mr. Shirk first presented on the history of the site, which had previously been a gun club. When the gun club closed, it was found that the area had been contaminated with lead, which was causing significant environmental damage. This spurred the creation of the Nahant Marsh nature center in 2000. From the original 78 acres in 2000, the marsh has expanded to 382 acres in 2024, also building an education center in 2015 and recently building an extension to that building. This extension has been accompanied by new equipment and 2 new educators for the center. The expansion of the Marsh has been spurred in part by its participation in a restoration and mitigation bank, in which if wetland is destroyed by construction, the construction company must pay to restore wetland in another location, preventing the net loss of wetland habitat. He then discussed the Marsh's current efforts and future plans. The Marsh hosts on-season field trips daily for local schools and also has a program whereby college students in environmental fields can work on research projects at the site. The Marsh is planning to add 3 miles to their existing 2.25-mile trail network, completing a loop around the existing area and adding trails in the Rockingham Bottoms section, which has just been opened to the public. Mr. Shirk also highlighted the Marsh's importance in terms of floodwater retention, with the Marsh taking on approximately 908 billion gallons of floodwater during the record flood of 2019. At the end of his presentation, Mr. Shirk was asked if the Marsh had plans to expand beyond its current boundaries in the future. He responded that there is a desire to expand to the west when possible, but for now the immediate focus is to work on developing the land currently owned by the

marsh. He was also asked how the railroad merger or Canadian Pacific Kansas City and subsequent increase in rail traffic had affected operations at the marsh. He responded that since the CPKC tracks effectively bisect the marsh, the increased train traffic had disrupted operations to some degree. These operations will be further disrupted in the future, as the crossing on Wapello Avenue is set to be closed by the railroad, leaving only one open railroad crossing, on Concord Street. The presence of the tracks also presents a potential hazard at the marsh, as was demonstrated in 2023, when 21 railroad cars derailed in the marsh.

4. **Individual Riverfront Reports.**

- *Rock Island County* – Mr. Burns reported that the county’s forest preserves saw improved traffic this season.
- *U.S. Army Corps of Engineers* – Ms. Bishop informed the members that dredging in Sunset Marina (Rock Island) was completed in October. Additionally, the new LeClaire mooring cell has also been completed.
- *LeClaire* – Mr. Danielson informed the council about upcoming events in LeClaire, including Christmas in LeClaire (first weekend in December) and Eaglefest (January 18). Additionally, the city expects to begin work on phase II of its sidewalk extension project soon. Mr. Ludwig added that the new I-80 bridge plan includes a bike/pedestrian trail, and that the Wisconsin Street survey is ongoing. The city will also be choosing a new city administrator soon.
- *Scott County* – Mr. Schaapveld said that the Cody Shooting Range would be opening soon, and that camping season in the county was winding down.
- *Bi-State* – Mr. Sutton told the members that the Illinois Bike Path grants had been awarded, with Rock Island Forest Preserve receiving one to resurface their section of the Mississippi River Trail (MRT) between Port Byron and Cordova.
- *Port Byron* – Mayor Cray reported that Port Byron had also received a bike path grant for their section of the MRT. Also, Mid-American is changing gas lines in Port Byron, necessitating more work on Main Street as a result. A new multi-purpose building will be coming to downtown in the near future, which is expected to hold a restaurant, an ice cream shop, and an event center. Port Byron is also making preparations for its Christmas celebrations.
- *Visit Quad Cities* – Ms. Wells said that the bike rentals would be ending the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. The holiday train will also be stopping in the Quad Cities in December.

5. **Next Meeting.** Mr. Sutton told the members that the next meeting will be held on January 28 and asked for suggestions for the location. Ms. Bishop suggested that the meeting be held at the Mississippi River Project office at Lock and Dam 14. The other members expressed their support for this idea.

6. **Other Business.** None.

7. **Adjournment.** Mr. Danielson moved to adjourn the meeting, and Mr. Burns seconded. The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.