

**SUMMARY NOTES**  
**Yahara CLEAN Compact Executive Committee**  
**Friday, February 25, 2022**  
**8:30-10:00 A.M.**  
**Zoom Meeting**

## **Attendance**

Present: Alison Lebwohl (facilitator), Paul Dearlove, Luke Wynn, Coreen Fallat, Matt Diebel, Mark Riedel, Greg Fries, James Tye

## **Anticipated Outcomes**

Decision on approval of:

- Executive Summary
- *Renew the Blue: A Community Guide for Cleaner Lakes & Beaches in the Yahara Watershed* (aka, Yahara CLEAN 3.0 Plan)
- Direction for Signing Statement content/purpose/process
- Foreword

Shared understanding of next steps for Compact transition

## **Welcome and Check In (Chaired by Mark Riedel)**

Meeting was convened at 8:34 a.m. ***Summary notes from the 1/14/22 content-editing workshop with SmithGroup were unanimously approved.***

Riedel announced the exciting milestone of this being our last scheduled Executive Committee meeting. The primary focus of the meeting is to get formal acceptance of the new content additions. Those additions include a signing statement, new executive summary, and a foreword authored by Lebwohl. Also on the agenda is discussion of next steps as we transition from plan development to a public-rollout and implementation phase.

An updated income-expense report will be prepared and distributed upon closing out the month. Dearlove said that project income and expenses are still tracking as anticipated. We are nearing the end of contracted expenses, with probably the second to last invoice received by SmithGroup.

## **Executive Summary**

Referencing the online straw-polling results, Lebwohl announced that the executive summary drafted by Clean Lakes Alliance was approved. Votes were split between “I love it” (green) and “I like it” (yellow) on the gradient of agreement with a majority of the Executive Committee participating. Members were next invited to share observations before calling for a final vote.

## **Round Robin Comments**

Diebel: Really nice job taking it from outline to draft. Likes it overall and believes we're 95% there. Has some suggested edits for a few sentences in the introductory paragraphs, but no major changes to request. Speaking for Laura Hicklin, he said she would prefer to have a little more time to help craft some suggested language to ensure that the right tone is communicated in a couple sentences.

Fallat: Well done. Thinks people will want to read the summary and will find it very understandable. Suggests revisiting the use of the possessive "our" when describing the lakes. The lakes are really their own entity and different people will have different relationships with them. Not sure how to frame it, but the current language does not capture that nuance. Overall, the content of the summary was excellent. Feels only two sentences could benefit from being re-written.

Riedel: Offered that Dearlove could share his (Riedel's) tracked changes. He said he suspects some of the County's hesitations would likely be alleviated with the minor wordsmithing he proposed. He explained that his comments related to one or two places where some minor editing could improve the tone as perceived by certain stakeholder groups. Overall, he felt it did a really good job of summarizing everything.

Fries: Likes it. There was nothing from the City's perspective that surprised him. Said he intended to refrain from any wordsmithing since it is not his strong suit. Thought the document was well put together.

Tye: Thinks the tone is correct. Said he is making that assessment after talking to Clean Lakes board members and donors who read the draft summary. Wants to be fair and balanced without sugar-coating anything to appease a particular stakeholder group. Our objective should be to document what is happening in the watershed and that is supported by the science. Happy to listen to feedback but hesitates making revisions that downplay important findings. Also unclear how to proceed in addressing Fallat's comments absent any specific editing recommendations.

Dearlove: Passed on commenting given that he was the primary author. Appreciates everyone's thoughtful feedback. Wants to walk away from this meeting with clear direction on edits so this can be brought to an acceptable conclusion in a timely fashion.

### **Open Discussion**

Lebwohl recommended the Executive Committee vote to indicate its approval of the executive summary, with minor edits, and to confirm there are no deal-breakers.

**Action Item:** *Members agreed to submit proposed editing refinements to Dearlove by the end of the day on Wednesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, using Riedel's tracked changes as a starting point. A revised draft will then be sent for Executive Committee review and approval. The target date for sharing a revised draft is Wednesday, March 9<sup>th</sup>. Unless any deal-breakers are explicitly mentioned by March 2<sup>nd</sup>, the assumption is that members are good with the signing statement and executive summary. An online vote will then be administered by Friday, March 11<sup>th</sup>.*

**Decision:** *Approve the Executive Summary as drafted and the process for accepting and approving editing refinements as described under "Action Item" above. (All in favor)*

# Renew the Blue: A Community Guide for Cleaner Lakes & Beaches in the Yahara Watershed

Lebwohl recommended that the Executive Committee vote on the full plan. The following questions and issues were raised in advance of that vote.

## Progress-Tracking Tools Table

Diebel said the County had some technical edits it wanted to make to the “Progress-Tracking Tools” table. Tye agreed to work with the County to address any issues. The intent of the table is to provide an overview of the different ways progress is proposed to be measured and tracked in the watershed. It was also intended to call out any identified needs or suggested improvements to those methods. He said he and Dearlove would be happy to discuss corrections or clarifications that the County might like to suggest.

## Full Plan

Riedel: WDNR staff had reviewed the draft plan and no deal-breakers were raised. However, a comment received from one of the fish biologists gave him pause. That comment implied the Compact and the plan fell short in actively engaging local fishing organizations or sustenance fishing communities. If these groups don’t see their representation, concerns or thumbprint in the plan, there may be serious pushback when we reach out to them.

Lebwohl: This is something the group has previously talked about. There was an understanding that public engagement could not be as robust as we would have wanted it, but that efforts would be made going forward to try to be more inclusive. (Asking if this issue represented a potential deal-breaker to the Executive Committee, the opinion was that it would not.)

Dearlove: This was never supposed to be an “everything” plan. The Compact went through an involved process of deciding what groups to invite as official members, who to reach out to through the public-engagement process, and what specific goals and objectives to focus on. In the end, we purposely agreed to steer away from issues such as chlorides, aquatic invasive species, water levels, weed management, fisheries management, etc. when defining our scope.

Tye: How would they want to be involved moving forward? His instinct is that some groups are wishing they had their stamp on this work now that we’re nearing completion. Hearing this and knowing what the next round of Yahara CLEAN planning might look like, he felt there will be future planning opportunities to involve interest groups like fishing organizations. Suggests its time to close this chapter of planning. We can then think more about how to engage additional groups and deal with other issues/interests in a subsequent chapter.

**Decision:** *Approve Renew the Blue: A Community Guide for Cleaner Lakes & Beaches in the Yahara Watershed. Approval based on agreed-upon edits and content additions being incorporated into the final version, including the new signing statement and executive summary upon Executive Committee acceptance. With this approval, it is our collective opinion that the body of work, as a whole and without constituting specific endorsement of any individual recommendation or proposal, faithfully represents the purpose, vision, values, and work of the Yahara CLEAN Compact. (All in favor)*

## Signing Statement

Diebel: Suggested edit to last sentence of first paragraph so it reads: “We are proud of our prior work and investments to protect and enhance these assets, but more needs to be done for the lakes to meet their potential.”

**Decision:** *Approve the signing statement of Renew the Blue: A Community Guide for Cleaner Lakes & Beaches in the Yahara Watershed as drafted, and with the edit proposed by Diebel. (All in favor)*

Tye: Next, we will send the revised signing statement out to everyone so it can get in front of the appropriate executives from our respective organizations. We are still discussing what will happen at the May 18<sup>th</sup> signing event and its general format. One concern is how to give Compact member leadership adequate stage and podium time. Clean Lakes Alliance is extending official invites to all the Compact signatories. Discussion is also underway on how to move the established Compact partnerships forward, such as by bringing back the Committee on Strategic Implementation. Ongoing partnership meetings can also start to address the things we didn't get to that we want to expand on in the future.

**NOTE:** *The Executive Committee approved a final version of the signing statement and executive summary through an online vote that closed on 3/16/22. (All in favor)*

## Optional Foreword

Lebwohl, as the author of the Foreword, temporarily excused herself from the meeting so the Executive Committee could freely discuss the idea of including it in the *Renew the Blue* guide. Tye then explained that he had asked her to draft something that could be considered by the group. The intention of adding a foreword is to better capture the heart behind the effort. He felt Lebwohl was uniquely positioned through her facilitator role to offer unique perspective and context. While it stylistically turned out a little different than he expected, he thought it would likely resonate with a larger audience.

### Round Robin Comments

Fallat: Likes a lot about it but thinks it can be shorter and more focused. Suggests presenting the challenges first and then maybe not going so much into the details.

Riedel: I think the tone will speak to a lot of people.

Fries: It's a very different tone compared to the rest of the document which was probably the intention. It's more of a conversational narrative. Would not generally ask for it in a report but is ok with it being there.

Diebel: It provides a nice reflection on what happened. It helps to have been written by someone who was so involved.

Dearlove: It is written in a unique, diary-like style that can work well as a foreword. She makes a lot of good points and observations that wouldn't otherwise get communicated within the body of the larger document.

Tye: Thinks it will be nice for the people to see this and have a better appreciation for the process. It offers some nice historical context for how our group formed and worked together. He will talk to Lebwohl to see if there may be opportunities to shorten it.

**Decision:** *Approve Clean Lakes Alliance to work with Alison Lebwohl to finalize the Foreword for insertion into Renew the Blue: A Community Guide for Cleaner Lakes & Beaches in the Yahara Watershed. (All in favor)*

Tye: Expressed his appreciation for Lebwohl's role in the effort. She was the embodiment of money well spent and a big asset to the effort. (Those reactions were shared by the other members as well.)

As far as overall project disappointments, Tye expressed frustration with the quality of the public-engagement deliverables we received, especially given the amount of additional dollars Clean Lakes Alliance invested for that sub-consultant work.

## Next Steps

Lebwohl returned to the meeting and led the Executive Committee members through a final round. Members were asked to share their reflections as the work of the Compact starts to shift from planning to implementation.

Riedel: Always enjoyed serving on Clean Lakes Alliance's Committee on Strategic Implementation that worked to get projects going. Looking forward to that type of effort continuing and getting recommendations implemented.

Diebel: This has been a great way to get to know all the groups and collaborators. When Dane County looks to new projects, the guide will be a great resource and touchstone.

Fallat: Super excited as a resident and user of the lakes. The guide lays the foundation for work that will make a difference and can serve as a model for the rest of the state.

Fries: Props to Diebel for all his incredible work and leadership on the science team. Looking forward to implementation.

Wynn: Huge honor and privilege to be a part of the effort.

Dearlove: Given the magnitude of the effort, is thankful for the congenial and collaborative nature of the team. Found the whole experience very fun and rewarding. Members brought their own unique sets of complementary talents and contributions.

Tye: It is a huge lift to shepherd a project like this to completion. There are so many individuals to call out and thank. Special thanks to Dearlove for serving as managing director and editor.

## Close

See everyone at the official signing ceremony on May 18<sup>th</sup>! Meeting ended at 9:59 a.m.