

OHIO RIVER VALLEY WATER SANITATION COMMISSION

MINUTES
241st Commission Meeting
Embassy Suites RiverCenter
Covington, Kentucky
Thursday, February 13, 2025

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OHIO RIVER VALLEY WATER SANITATION COMMISSION

MINUTES

**241st Commission Meeting
Embassy Suites RiverCenter
Covington, Kentucky
Thursday, February 13, 2025**

Chair David Flannery, Presiding

Call to Order

Commission Chair Flannery called the 241st meeting of the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission to order at 9:00 A.M., Thursday, February 13, 2025.

Executive Director Dinkins led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Quorum Call

Commissioner Conroe certified that a quorum was present (see Roster of Attendance, page 10).

Report of the Chair

Commission Chair Flannery welcomed and thanked everyone for participating in the meeting. It has been a great meeting. You will hear reports from various speakers. The Technical Committee was outstanding and we had a series of presentations on the Ohio River Basin Restoration Plan yesterday and very much appreciate Jordan Lubetkin and Craig Butler for joining us. It is an exciting time for ORSANCO. There is a lot going on at the federal level. A new EPA Assistant Administrator for Water was just announced, Jessica Kramer. There is also a lot going on at state level. We welcome new Commissioner Clint Woods from IDEM and Jason Minnich who is proxy for Acting Secretary Jessica Shirley at PA DEP. He then gave a shout out to ORSANCO staff. Jason Heath puts an incredible amount of work into the Technical Committee meeting and many of you in attendance were speakers and gave an outstanding set of presentations. Annette Shumard also unveiled the Communications plan which was also outstanding.

He acknowledged our New Executive Director Sam Dinkins and congratulated him on a great start. He then requested Sam assist with recognizing the staff members that reached milestone years of service and expressed appreciation to them.

Sam Dinkins – 30 years

Jamie Tsiominas – 5 years

Commission Chair Flannery recognized outgoing Commissioner Rockensuess and Commissioner Harrison presented the following resolution:

RESOLUTION 1-25 RECOGNITION OF SERVICE BRIAN ROCKENSUESS

WHEREAS: Brian Rockensuess has served as a Commissioner to the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission from 2021 to 2024, representing the State of Indiana, and

WHEREAS: Mr. Rockensuess has provided faithful and diligent service to the Commission, and

WHEREAS: Mr. Rockensuess has earned the esteem and friendship of his fellow Commissioners, and

WHEREAS: Mr. Rockensuess has devoted his efforts to the cause of environmental protection while serving as the Commissioner of Indiana Department of Environmental Management,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The Commissioners of the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission express their heartfelt gratitude for Mr. Rockensuess' service, and wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Kupke, second by Commissioner Proxy John Lyons and unanimously carried, to adopt Resolution 1-25 as presented.

Report of the Executive Director

Executive Director Sam Dinkins reported on several items:

The office is going through a bit of a transition right now with a fair amount of turnover. We will have had seven departures in an eight month period which is pretty substantial. Some were retirements and anticipated departures along with a series of great opportunities that have come along for staff which all occurred in a compressed timeframe. We wish them all the best and see this as a positive outcome in that we have staff with some great opportunities ahead of them and we look forward to watching them as they go through their careers.

Greg Youngstrom and Lila Ziolkowski were recently promoted. They have been at ORSANCO in excess of 20 years and now join our management ranks. Lila will be overseeing our Source Water Protection and Emergency Response programs and Greg will be heading up our Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment programs.

Another notable departure was our Director of Finance and Administration, Jenny Coldiron. She recently left at the end of January so we are going through the process of filling that position. We have received numerous applications and have a solid set of qualified applicants. We will be doing interviews shortly, so we can get that process rolling and get a new Director of Finance in place as soon as possible.

On the congressional funding front, we have some legislative amended language that we're going to propose in the near future for the Water Resources Development Act. This proposed amended language, if adopted, would make ORSANCO eligible to receive funding through the US Army Corps of Engineers. That's one of the big challenges we've had all along when it comes to federal funding. ORSANCO often don't qualify for the different pots of money out there because we're not a state, a federal entity, a water utility, or other eligible entity. We often slip through those cracks because they don't have a provision in the legislative language for interstate compact commissions. So we are proposing to move forward with some language there that may help us be eligible for additional federal funding in the future.

We had the discussion yesterday during the roundtable regarding the Ohio River Basin Restoration Initiative. There may be some additional opportunities there as well. The legislation introduced in December to Congress would establish a restoration program through U.S. EPA. The current proposed language, however, doesn't read in a way that makes it clear that ORSANCO would be eligible for federal funding through the restoration initiative. So here again we are proposing some additional legislative language to ensure, that should the restoration initiative successfully receive congressional support, ORSANCO would at least be eligible to receive funding through that mechanism.

On the funding side, Lila Ziolkowski reported to the Technical Committee yesterday that our efforts to receive congressionally directed spending grant funds were successful in landing a \$688,000 award through former Senator Sherrod Brown's office. These funds will be used to replace our Organics Detection System stations that are located in Ohio. Coming up in this next congressional funding cycle, we are looking to propose additional ODS equipment replacement. There's a number of stations in West Virginia that could use improvements. We will be submitting a funding request to replace or upgrade our ODS stations in West Virginia, along with some additional equipment requests, such as a new boat and tow vehicle. The congressionally directed spending grants do not cover staff time, but can be used for equipment purchases.

We have a number of utilities that have been contributing over the years for our source water protection programs. I mentioned this briefly at the Technical Committee meeting. I've received notice that we received an additional check, so I want to make sure to recognize all that have contributed. We appreciate the financial support we have received from Pennsylvania American Water, West Virginia American Water, the Louisville Water Company and Greater Cincinnati Waterworks for their contributions. We've just received those in the last six weeks totaling \$180,000 from those four utility systems collectively. We are very appreciative for their support of our organic detection system and our source water protection programs.

Lastly, Sam Dinkins finished with a thank you to Tracey Edmonds for walking him through this process and getting everything together for these Commission meetings. He gave a second thank you to Nick Guthier, noting in the absence of a Director of Finance, Nick has single handedly taken care of the Commission's finances, keeping our accounts payable, accounts receivable, and payroll up to date and making sure we have everything we need financially through this challenging time with very limited staff.

The following is an update on NPDES discharge permit reviews completed in January 2025. Regular reporting on permits reviewed is a condition of the Pollution Control Standards Implementation Procedures instituted in 2019. No issues were identified with the permits reviewed which include the following:

1. Wheeling-Nippon Steel, Inc. (WV0004502) at ORM 70.35
2. Reed Minerals, LLC (WV0117366) at ORM 113
3. APO AEP Mountaineer Plant (WV0048500) at ORM 242
4. ALCON Research LTD (WV0115398) at ORM 300.5
5. City of Huntington (WV0023159) at ORM 304.6
6. Precoat Metals (KY0092118) at ORM 725.6

Action on Minutes

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Conroe, second by Commissioner Joe Harrison and unanimously carried, that the minutes of the 240th meeting of the Commission, be adopted.

Report of the Audit Committee

A draft 2024 Independent Auditors' Report was distributed to Commissioners at the Commission meeting.

Clark, Schaefer, Hackett Certified Public Accountants performed a general-purpose financial audit for fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, which was their 8th consecutive audit performed.

Commissioner Hoopingarner then introduced Kerry Roe from the audit firm Clark Schaefer Hackett and invited Mr. Roe to provide a brief overview of the audit outcomes.

Kerry Roe, of Clark Schaefer Hackett, met with the Audit Committee on Wednesday, February 12, to present and discuss the audit findings with the Committee and respond to any questions or concerns. Audit Committee members include Commissioners Branin, Bruce, Hoopingarner, Christmann, Conroe, Kupke, and Miracle. Staff was represented by Sam Dinkins and Nick Guthier.

In the auditor's opinion as Kerry just reported, the general-purpose financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of ORSANCO as of June 30, 2024. No material weaknesses were identified in internal control, nor were there any material instances of noncompliance noted. A significant deficiency in internal control was noted regarding the timely reconciliations of monthly financial statements. A corrective action plan has been implemented to ensure reconciliations be completed in a timely manner.

The audit report is an "unmodified" report. The Commission's financial status remains fundamentally sound, with no specific concerns at this time.

With accounting staff changes on the horizon, for continuity and support for possible new staff, it appears appropriate and reasonable to retain Clark, Schaefer, Hackett & Co. to perform the June 30, 2025 audit. Therefore, the Committee requests authorization of the Commission to engage Clark, Schaefer, Hackett & Co. to perform the June 2025 financial audit. The June 30, 2024 audit was the eighth audit performed by Clark, Schaefer, Hackett & Co. The audit firm also periodically rotates the assigned audit manager to provide new oversight of the audit.

MOTION: Motion by Commissioner Hoopingarner, second by Commissioner Conroe and unanimously carried, to accept the Independent Auditor's Report and to authorize the engagement of Clark, Schaefer, Hackett & Co. to perform the June 30, 2025 financial audit.

Report of the Treasurer

Commissioner Douglas Conroe reported that a revised Treasurer's report as of December 31, 2024 has been provided for this meeting.

The report indicates a balance of \$1,276,538 in accounts receivable due the Commission. The balance represents \$1,100,725 due from federal sources, \$74,600 due from signatory states, and \$101,213 due from other sources.

Additionally, the report indicates receipts of \$2,237,826 plus carryover of \$3,873,293 totaling \$6,111,119 through the end of December 2024. Of that amount \$2,074,260 was expended on programs, leaving \$4,036,859 available for the continuation of ORSANCO's programs. We have yet to receive the 2025 federal 106 award. Region 5 is currently reviewing the technical close out reports of the 2024 award. The FY24 financial close out reports have been submitted and all available funds have been drawn down. New York has paid the FY25 dues of \$14,200 in October 2024 and Ohio paid their FY25 dues of \$396,200 in December 2024. West Virginia has sent the first and second quarter dues in October and November 2024, and have \$74,600 due to the Commission. As of December 31, 2024 the Commission's cash balance was \$2,791,452.

Report of the Technical Committee

Technical Committee Chair Scott Mandirola requested Commissioner Michael Wilson make the following report since he sat in as Technical Committee Chair this meeting for him. Commissioner Wilson reported the Technical Committee held its 234th meeting over the past two days. Seven states, two federal agencies, and four advisory committees were represented. A summary of the meeting follows:

Good morning Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, guests and staff. The Technical Committee held its 234th meeting over the past two days. All eight states, three federal agencies, and all advisory committees were represented. A summary of the meeting follows:

The Technical Committee convened for its 237th meeting over the last two days. All eight states, three federal agencies, and all six advisory committees were present.

Item 3: Groundwater Quality in Abandoned Underground Coal Mine Aquifers Across West Virginia

This item was cancelled due to presenter illness. We hope to reschedule this for the June TEC meeting in Morgantown, West Virginia.

Item 4: Ohio River Water Quality Update: 2024 Water Quality Conditions

ORSANCO staff discussed 2024 monitoring activities and observations on water quality of the Ohio River and major tributaries. Flows were generally below long term average flows. In general, it was a typical year for Ohio River water quality. Criteria exceedances varied for parameters including E. coli and fecal coliform, temperature, dissolved oxygen, iron, and mercury. There was a localized, Microcystis HAB event on the Ohio River in Louisville, which generated a Recreational Public Health Advisory.

Item 5: Update on Proteus Real-time Bacteria Monitoring

Stacey Cochran presented an update on the status of the real-time Bacteria Monitoring Pilot Project which was funded by a WV 604b grant. This project is evaluating whether a real-time monitor for E. coli bacteria is viable for the Ohio River. Work was completed over the 2024 Contact Recreation Season to collect real-time readings with the Proteus instrument, along with water samples being analyzed for E. coli in the lab. The Proteus company is currently working on an algorithm for the data collected during the 2024 season, which is necessary to translate tryptophan readings to E. coli concentrations.

ORSANCO was awarded a continuation of our WV604b grant for FY2025 and will add the Fluidion ALERT One instrument to this Pilot Project. This instrument collects in situ water samples and analyzes for E. coli. A summary report of the comparison of all three methods (Colilert, Proteus, and Fluidion ALERT One) will be generated after the 2025 season data has been collected and evaluated.

Item 6: Understanding the Ohio River HEC-RAS Community Model for Estimating Ohio River Flows

This agenda item was cancelled.

Item 7: Update on Ohio River HABs Research and Monitoring through the ORSANCO, EPA-ORD, and Neptune and Company Partnership

Chris Nietch, USEPA-ORD, provided an update on partnership facilitated research activities since the Ohio River HABs risk characterization tool was brought online during the 2022 bloom season. R&D completed since then has included the implementation of a 14-day ahead HABs occurrence forecast, an update of the original scripts used to produce the web application, an exploratory analysis to bring remotely sensed data related to HABs into the risk characterization, and sampling campaigns designed to help evaluate the underpinning hypothesis to the original HABs risk model, assess newer analytical methods, and to survey the extent to which benthic cyanobacteria may pose risk to river water quality and safety. This work is providing valuable research on Ohio River HABs processes and application to Ohio River risk characterization and predictive modeling.

Item 8: Analysis of Long-term Temporal Trends of the Ohio River and Major Tributaries

ORSANCO Environmental Scientist, Riley Lanfear, detailed plans to complete a temporal trends analysis of Ohio River water quality parameters. She highlighted methods and findings from similar analyses completed in prior decades using ORSANCO data. The new analysis will incorporate these prior methods, like the Seasonal Kendall test, in addition to more modern regression techniques. The results of these trends analysis will be shared with TEC at future meetings.

Item 9: Biological Programs Update

Biological staff (Rob Tewes, Erin Linko, and Ryan Argo for Ryan Hudson) provided a summary of the content reviewed by the Biological Water Quality Subcommittee during their January meeting, including preliminary fish index scores, staff participation in National Rivers and Streams Assessment surveys, and plans for the 2025 field season. Aquatic Biologist, Ryan Hudson also reviewed an investigation into functional diversity measures and their potential for use in assessing Ohio River fish populations. ORSANCO staff presented results from the 2024 field season including probabilistic surveys of Montgomery and Newburgh pools, the conclusion of the 2023-2024 cycle of National Rivers and Streams Assessment surveys, and preliminary results from those assessments and special studies.

Item 10: Source Water Protection and Emergency Response Programs Update

Lila Ziolkowski, ORSANCO staff, reported that ORSANCO was awarded congressionally directed spending funding through Senator Sherrod Brown in the amount of \$688,000 to procure two new GCMS systems for Ohio based Organics Detection Systems (ODS) sites and procure a portable GCMS unit for use in rapid response surveillance instances to support Emergency Response and other source water response initiatives. Remaining funds will be used for integration into existing ODS network data management platform and to support creating a new spills notification database and platform to streamline communications and disseminate spills related information. There were no emergency response actions from ORSANCO, other than routine notification protocols, since the last Technical Committee meeting.

Item 11: Monitoring Strategy

Jason Heath, ORSANCO staff, presented results of work by the Monitoring Strategy Committee to develop priorities for future monitoring initiatives, as well as a revised monitoring strategy document.

This committee has been very active over the last two years, is well attended, and provides valuable input on ORSANCO's monitoring programs. Higher priority monitoring initiatives include PFAS, HEX Chromium, river-wide bacteria monitoring, plastics monitoring, mussel surveys, metals on tributaries, and addition of fish contaminants parameters following EPA's new guidance. A draft Monitoring Strategy was reviewed by the committee and has been submitted to EPA Region 5. The Monitoring Strategy Committee will continue to meet on a regular basis to continue discussions on priorities and monitoring programs.

Item 12: New Draft National Recommended Criteria for PFAS

The USEPA recently issued draft National Recommended Human Health Criteria for three PFAS constituents, including PFOS, PFOA, and PFBS. Jason Heath, ORSANCO staff, provided an overview of the draft criteria, and how they compare to ORSANCO's 2021 Ohio River PFAS survey. Ohio River concentrations of PFOS and PFOA from the 2021 survey were generally above the draft National Recommended Criteria, while all PFBS concentrations were well below the criteria. The draft National Recommended Criteria are currently out for public comment.

Item 14: Ohio River Basin Restoration Initiative/Restoration Plan

Jordan Lubetkin, with National Wildlife Federation, discussed the status of the Ohio River Basin Restoration Plan. The initiative was born from a recognition that several large watersheds receive significant federal funding for water resources improvement, while the Ohio Basin receives none of this funding. The main purpose of the restoration plan is to make a case that federal funding is necessary for water resources improvements in the Basin. The plan addresses nine key areas, including water infrastructure, nonpoint source pollution, hydrologic modification, legacy and emerging contaminants, mining issues, habitat and species protection, invasive species, extreme weather and flooding, and communities impacted by pollution/environmental harm. Next steps include release of the restoration plan for public comment next month, and finalize the plan based on public input. The plan seeks to achieve bipartisan federal legislation, possibly as soon as later this year.

Report of the Personnel Committee

Commissioner George Elmaraghy, Personnel Committee Chair, presented the following report:

The Personnel Committee met on December 11, 2024 to discuss several staff recommendations to deal with recent staff departures. The first recommendation is to realign the technical program organizational structure to increase the number of manager positions from 2 to 3. Based on this recommendation, the Technical Program management group would be realigned as follows: the first group would be Biological programs, the second group Source Water Protection and Emergency Response and the third group Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment. The FY25 budget allowed for the addition of two new staff positions – an Administrative Coordinator and a Database Coordinator. Staff has recommended not to fill these two positions at this time based on forecasted need and looming financial challenges. The Personnel Committee reviewed this proposed action and supports the recommendations. Implementing the recommendations would result in budget savings of approximately \$176,000 per year. Commissioner Elmaraghy thanked the staff and the committee members for their effort to implement these recommendations.

Report of the Water Users Advisory Committee (WUAC)

Chris Bobay, Committee Chair, presented the following report to the Commission:

The Water Users Committee last met on January 28-29, 2025, in Wilder, Kentucky.

Source Water Protection/Spill Response

Water Users remain focused on source water protection and emergency response efforts. Consider this: during our time together this week, we had two reported incidents, a diesel tanker spill near Pittsburg and styrene barge collision near Paducah. This underscores the importance of the ODS network and the critical role ORSANCO plays in supporting the drinking water community in spill notification and response.

ODS Network

ORSANCO staff and ODS sites reported no river VOC detections in the past quarter. A few of the ODS sites reported operational issues due to cold weather and freezing sample lines. ORSANCO staff updated the Committee on the status of the CDS grant to fund improvements of the ODS network which include two new GCMS installations and 1 portable GCMS to support field activities, as well as enhancements to data management and notifications within the network. We commend ORSANCO staff for their work to secure this funding and look forward to supporting them on implementation in 2025.

Emerging Contaminants

Water Users also remain focused on emerging contaminants, in particular those that have potential to threaten the quality of drinking water supplies, or those that are otherwise challenging to treat and remove effectively through conventional means. During our last committee meeting, we devoted a good portion of our agenda to the topic of micro- and nanoplastics. We invited national experts to present on the state of science with respect to analytical methods and instrumentation and emerging standards for classification and numeration of different plastics. Additionally, many of our members are actively involved in national research on method development and are working to understand challenges associated with the separation and quantification of plastics in water samples. Note: a 2024 NAS study on nanoplastics found that bottled water contained 20,000 particles per liter, orders of magnitude more than tap water.

PFAS Update

We also remain laser focused on PFAS. Committee members discussed recent PFAS trends from routine samples collected at drinking water intakes. Recent Ohio River GenX trends are very concerning and, if unmitigated, could threaten water system compliance with the new PFAS MCLs. I shared these results with the Technical Committee yesterday and would invite all of you to view that presentation. I've had some very constructive and encouraging discussions with many of you about this over the past few days and look forward to working with you to explore opportunities for additional protections for drinking water systems, including notification of permit exceedances and additional sampling. Water Users expect there to be further updates on this important issue which we will be monitoring closely over the coming months.

Next Meeting

The Committee will meet again on May 20 and 21, 2025. This will be a joint meeting with the POTW committee.

Report of the Public Information Programs Advisory Committee

Betsy Mallison Bialosky, Committee Chair, gave the following report:

PIACO met in late January and again this week to review the new strategic communications plan that Annette Shumard debuted yesterday at the Roundtable. PIACO has spent considerable time over the last year in discussing this communication plan and providing input into various outreach strategies. We acknowledge and salute Annette's efforts to get the plan done. It was no small feat and we are behind it 100 percent.

We believe that the communications plan will bring consistency and improvement to ORSANCO's reputation. The plan includes the formation of a new Task Force that will combine the efforts and knowledge of our partners, stakeholders and river communities to help spread the word about ORSANCO's activities and expertise. We also believe there is a wealth of information to be mined from the technical committee and its efforts should be actively intertwined with the efforts of the Task Force and communications efforts.

PIACO will continue to work with the communications staff to review and refine this communications strategies as time goes along and look forward to its implementation.

Report of the Watershed Organizations Advisory Committee (WOAC)

Heather Hulton VanTassel, Committee Chair, started her report.

Thank you for the time and consideration when it comes to hearing from the Watershed Organizations across the Ohio River Basin.

We would like to thank ORSANCO for expanding their focus on plastics and PFAS as emerging contaminants and increasing efforts around those contaminants. The Watershed Organizations across the basin would like ORSANCO to consider reaching out to those organizations conducting plastics, PFAS, or other novel contaminant work to amplify and utilize the work and data of those organizations when monitoring funds are limited. Our data could also be used to help support ORSANCO's efforts to seek additional funds to expand their monitoring.

As a collective, we will continue to advocate for the Ohio River Basin Restoration Plan and federal designation. We would like to emphasize the importance of recognizing the threats and challenges of our basin, including legacy and current industrial pollution in our watersheds. While it can be politically challenging to bring light to these ongoing pollution sources, we cannot come together as a watershed to resolve these issues without first addressing the problem. The Ohio River Basin is worth restoring and protecting, and addressing industrial pollution is a necessary step towards progress.

We also recognize the uncertainty when it comes to federal funding at this time. We encourage ORSANCO to continue to put efforts towards environmental justice in their monitoring and educational efforts across the basin. Additionally, there are organizations still working on environmental justice issues, and we encourage ORSANCO to utilize those organizations as resources during this time.

Thank you for your time and consideration of these comments from the Watershed Organizations Advisory Committee.

Report of the Publicly Owned Wastewater Treatment Works Advisory Committee

Reese Johnson, Committee Chair, reported that the most recent POTW Advisory Committee Meeting was held on Thursday, January 23, 2025. ORSANCO hosted a virtual meeting and representatives from SD1 of Northern Kentucky, Cincinnati MSD, and Louisville MSD participated virtually.

The committee's main agenda item was to hear the details of a demonstration project for low-cost water quality sensors with internet access points that ORSANCO is working on with the Cleveland Water Alliance and Limno-Tech. Ed Verhamme from Limnotech and Ebie Holst from Cleveland Water Alliance presented an overview of their work. They have built a network of sensors and gateways to collect data on water quality parameters such as chlorophyll, dissolved oxygen, and temperature. The data is used by utilities, research institutions, and recreational users. The team also discussed their work on oil and chemical spill detection and response, with a focus on identifying high-risk areas and deploying sensors to monitor for hydrocarbons. The Cleveland Water Alliance has an open innovation challenge to promote the development of new sensor technologies with the goal of creating a smart, connected sandbox for IoT technologies to improve water quality monitoring and disaster response. The presentation led to a discussion about the deployment of water quality monitoring devices on the Ohio River, particularly in the Cincinnati/Northern KY region. The initial timeline for the project has a deadline of June 30th for the deployment of devices. We discussed the potential for raising funds to continue the project beyond this deadline, as well as the potential for expanding the project to include more stakeholders. Cincinnati MSD has followed-up already to explore joining the collaboration with the addition of a water quality sensor near the mouth of the Mill Creek into the Ohio River and ORSANCO staff asked about current monitoring technology for E. coli. The presenters responded that they are still searching for a hardy device for natural environments and all agreed on the challenge of finding a real-time E. coli sensor.

Our second agenda item was an update on ORSANCO's Water Quality Monitoring Program. ORSANCO staff member Stacey Cochran gave a quick update on the Proteus water quality monitoring sonde pilot study. She shared that they had completed all 35 rounds of sampling for the pilot study and were waiting for an update of the algorithm from the manufacturer, as the initial attempts to correlate the data were weak. A full report-out was provided separately at the TEC meeting. ORSANCO also purchased a Fluidion, a new technology for water sampling, and planned to run it side by side with the Proteus. It has its pros and cons, but the search for an effective E.coli sensor continues in earnest.

Finally, in preparation for our next POTW Advisory Committee meeting, which we are planning to hold jointly with the Water Users Advisory Committee in May 2025, we members discussed our experience with PFAS sampling to date. Both Cincinnati MSD and Louisville MSD have done some proactive testing to explore the presence of PFAS in their wastewater, and SD1 of NKY will be collecting samples from their collection system soon. So, we are beginning to get a picture of what PFAS regulation could impact at our plants, and look forward to discussing this in more depth with our colleagues at our upcoming joint meeting.

Report of the Chemical Industry Advisory Committee (now Industry Advisory Committee)

Kathy Beckett, Committee Chair, gave the following report:

The committee has been communicating regularly via emails, but elected not to meet in advance of this meeting. There has been a fair amount of transition issues that are impacting the regulated community, as you might guess through the change of various administrations. We will be deciding to meet later before the next meeting in June. We will have an additional report to you at that time. The committee applauds the monitoring strategy work that is ongoing and finds extraordinarily valuable the PFAS characterization of the Ohio River. This is a significant policy issue and regulatory dilemma that industry is trying to prepare for as to how best to manage the industry.

The Committee recommends dropping the chemical adjective because this industry group is more than chemical. It has been discussed that the name doesn't match the context of this committee so we recommend it be updated.

Finally, the committee applauds the heavy lifting of the Strategic Communications Plan and looks with interest at the 501 of the organization. Often times the industry has a number of grant funding opportunities that are limited to 501c3 and we see an opportunity for synergy there. So we be looking into the future to see if we can find ways to collaborate.

Commissioner Herschlag asked if there would be a motion to change the name now or at the next meeting. It was noted that the Bylaws do not specifically name the Chemical Industry Advisory Committee and there was no reason why they couldn't approve the name change and asked for a motion.

ACTION: Motion by Commissioner Elmaraghy, second by Commissioner James Jennings and unanimously carried, to change the name to Industry Advisory Committee.

Comments:

Commissioner Wilson appreciated that the Regulated Community Advisory Committee has thrown out a feeler to mention that they may be able to support activities financially with 501c3 groups, which would include the Foundation. In response, Commissioner Wilson would like them to think about a couple of issues that would fit into the interests of ORSANCO, the Foundation, specific other committees and the restoration plan and so on. Two areas he feels there's been a significant lack of discussion or research on is the conversion of spent petroleum wells to geothermal energy. It is just getting some discussion in recent time, but some of us have been talking about it for up to 16 to 20 years. Then there are spent petroleum wells that have served their useful purpose and could offer the possibility of conversion. The number one financial issue of converting of having geothermal energy is the drilling and installation of the wells in the first place. Petroleum wells are somewhat small compared to geothermal energy wells, but since the well is already drilled, there needs to be some attempts to look deeper into this topic, which could be quite a win for the industry and society as a whole.

We also have enormous amounts of coal waste in the basin and these waste piles from coal contain rare earths, as well as some of the adjoining geological layers. We are in competition with China and others for rare earth materials for our computing industries and so on. So again, it would be interesting to see industry join with other groups, ORSANCO, the Foundation, the Basin Restoration Plan and so on to look at this issue. Would these attempts be successful? No, we don't know, they are cutting edge but they hold terrific promise. These are some places where the regulated community could engage with us and others. He just wants to encourage that and is really pleased to see that our creation of a commission committee has been productive in engaging discussion.

Chair Flannery thanked Commissioner Wilson for his comment and will make a note of that and follow up to document that further and get that communication out so it can be considered.

Upcoming Meetings

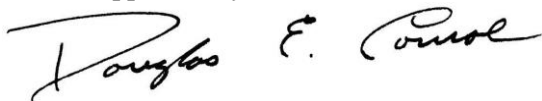
Chair Flannery noted the following schedule for upcoming Commission meetings:

- June 10-12, 2025 – Morgantown, West Virginia
- October 7-9, 2025 – TBD
- February 10-12, 2026 – TBD

Adjournment

The 241st meeting of the Commission was adjourned at 10:13 A.M.

Minutes approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Douglas E. Conroe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Douglas" being the most prominent.

Douglas Conroe, Secretary/Treasurer

Prepared by staff

ROSTER OF ATTENDANCE
241st Commission Meeting
February 13, 2025

Commissioners

Illinois	James Jennings Toby Frevert
Indiana	Martha Clark Mettler (PROXY for Commissioner Clint Woods) - virtual Joseph Harrison, Jr. John Kupke
Kentucky	John Lyons (PROXY for Lt. Governor Jacqueline Coleman) Sarah Gaddis (PROXY for Secretary Rebecca Goodman) Spencer Bruce - virtual
New York	Mike Wilson - virtual Douglas Conroe
Ohio	John Hoopingarner Holly Christmann
Pennsylvania	Jason Minnich (PROXY for Interim Acting Secretary Jessica Shirley) – virtual Bruce Herschlag - virtual
West Virginia	David Flannery Ron Potesta - virtual Scott Mandirola (PROXY for Secretary Harold Ward)
Virginia	Jeff Hurst (PROXY for Director Michael Rolband) Lou Ann Wallace - virtual
Federal	George Elmaraghy Tom FitzGerald - virtual
Legal Counsel	Aaron Herzig

Executive Director

Sam Dinkins

Staff

Ryan Argo, Alexis Brandenburg, Bridget Borrowdale, Daniel Cleves, Stacey Cochran, Tracey Edmonds (virtual), Nick Guthier, Emilee Harmeling (virtual), Jason Heath, Riley Lanfear, Adam Scott, Annette Shumard, Rob Tewes, Jamie Tsiominas, Greg Youngstrom, Lila Ziolkowski

Guests

Duke Adams	PA EPA - virtual
Kathy Beckett	Industry Advisory Committee
Betsy Mallison Bialosky	PIACO - virtual
Chris Bobay	WUAC
Joe Gilligan	Retired staff - virtual
Reese Johnson	POTW
Kerry Roe	Clark Schaefer Hackett
Ryan Sherman	PA DEP - virtual
Heather Hulton VanTassel	WOAC - virtual