

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of The Miami Conservancy District (MCD) sitting as the Board of Directors of The River Corridor Improvement Subdistrict (RCIS) was called to order at 11:13 a.m. by Michael H. van Haaren, President, with Beth G. Whelley, Vice President, and Mark G. Rentschler, member, present. The meeting was held at MCD headquarters located at 38 East Monument Avenue in Dayton.

Members of the staff in attendance at the regular meeting: MaryLynn Lodor, General Manager/Board Secretary; James B. Casper, Manager, Operations and Maintenance; Ginger Clark, Manager of the Great Miami Riverway; Michael P. Ekberg, Manager of Monitoring and Analysis; Sarah Hippensteel Hall, Manager of Communications, Outreach, and Stewardship; Kenneth P. Moyer, Treasurer; Donald P. O'Connor, Chief Engineer; Christina M. Pfeiffer, Executive Assistant; Shannon E. Phelps, Manager of Administration; and Barry M. Puskas, Chief of Technical and Engineering Services.

Legal counsel in attendance at the work session: Lee A. Slone, McMahon DeGulis LLP.

Guests in attendance at the regular meeting: Lori Kershner, LMK Advocacy; and Phillip Hayden, True North Thinking, LLC.

COMPLIANCE WITH SUNSHINE LAW AND BYLAWS

The meeting was held in compliance with the Sunshine Law and MCD and Subdistrict Bylaws. The meeting information was posted on MCD's website. Miami Valley news media and individuals requesting such notification were notified of the meetings by electronic mail dated September 9, 2025.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting of June 25, 2025, were provided to members of the Board for review and comment.

M 2025-238

The Board of Directors, on motion by Ms. Whelley and seconded by Mr. Rentschler, unanimously approved the meeting minutes for June 25, 2025.

First, Mr. Puskas provided information regarding low head dams along the Great Miami River.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY RELATED TO LOWHEAD DAMS

Low head dams present a significant safety hazard to individuals who encounter them, particularly recreational users of the river such as kayakers, swimmers, and anglers. Despite their modest appearance, these structures create powerful recirculating currents often referred to as "drowning machines" that can trap and submerge even strong swimmers. The hydraulic forces at the base of a low head dam are deceptively dangerous and difficult to escape once entered. Numerous incidents across the country have highlighted the urgent need to address these risks through public awareness, improved signage, and structural modifications. As we

continue to evaluate the future of our river corridor, prioritizing safety around low head dams remains a critical concern.

On July 31, the Miami Conservancy District (MCD) hosted a roundtable discussion and site tour at MCD and Riverscape, welcoming members of the Hamilton Vision Commission. Attendees included the City Manager, City Engineer, a City Councilmember, the Director of Butler County MetroParks, representatives from the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, Hamilton Community Foundation, Travel Butler County, and other Commission stakeholders.

The roundtable featured presentations and shared insights from regional partners including the City of Dayton, Five Rivers MetroParks, West Carrollton, Miamisburg, Dayton Area Chamber of Commerce, the City of Troy, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These contributions were instrumental in informing Hamilton's strategic planning efforts regarding the future of the river corridor and the management of low head dams.

This gathering provided a valuable platform for exchanging updates and best practices among communities actively engaged in improving safety and accessibility around low head dams.

Please find below a summary of current low head dam activities along the river for your review and reference.

Troy – Great Miami River

The Miami Conservancy District (MCD) is playing a central role in the Troy Great Miami River Dam Removal & River Improvement Project, with a focus on protecting the city's levee and long-term flood resilience. MCD's hydraulic modeling shows that the "Troy Low Dam" removal is expected to improve flood conditions, and the project will include levee stabilization, habitat restoration, and new recreational connections. MCD remains committed to safeguarding Troy while helping shape a healthier, more vibrant riverfront.

Piqua – Great Miami River

The project is funded by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency, Water Resource Restoration Sponsor Program (WRRSP), H2Ohio, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) programs for the removal of the low head dam in Piqua and modifying the associated sheet pile dam known as the "Piqua Low Dam" to restore the Great Miami River's ecosystem and improve recreation. The dam is no longer useful for its original purpose and potentially causing harm through oxygen depletion and dangerous currents. The project will allow for better fish passage, increased recreation opportunities, and habitat restoration.

Dayton – Great Miami River

MCD worked with the University of Dayton River Stewards on a river safety project at "Island Low Dam." MCD provided funding (\$5000) and technical support of the 2025 Senior Project which identified the need to improve safety information and signage near the low dam. While the City of Dayton owns the dam, MCD owns or controls the adjacent riverbanks and built and maintains the portage on the left bank. Working with the City, Five Rivers MetroParks (FRMP), MCD, Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) and others, the students led the project's purpose, design, and implementation. New signs were installed in 2025.

West Carrollton – Great Miami River (owned by MCD)

MCD executed an agreement with West Carrollton in 2024 to facilitate the City's economic development plan to create a river district with dam safety improvements to the low head dam. The City of West Carrollton is set to enter into a nearly \$2.8 million professional services agreement with Muller Engineering Company, advancing plans for the highly anticipated West Carrollton Whitewater Park along the river near the "South Montgomery County Low Dam." MCD Chief Engineer is serving on the City's selection committee of the Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR).

Miamisburg – Great Miami River

MCD is in discussion with Frontier Group, who now owns the former Dayton Power and Light Company (DP&L) "Hutchings Station Low Dam." MCD owns or controls parcels on both sides of the river upstream of the low dam. Frontier, along with their consultant, is interested in using MCD land to access mitigation credits to support Frontier Group's Hutchings Station Dam Removal project. MCD will follow-up with Frontier to explore the next steps with MCD, including:

- Land configuration and setback options on both sides of the Great Miami River.
- Vegetation types of interest that are permitted along the river.
- Potential use of new modeling software to evaluate project details.

Hamilton – Great Miami River (two dams, owned by MCD)

MCD and the City requested the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to complete a feasibility study for the MCD-Hamilton Hydraulic Evaluation of Modifications to the Great Miami River. The report includes four alternative configurations or modifications of the two low dams – known as the "Hamilton Low Dam" and the "Two Mile Low Dam."

Removal or modification of low dams' goals included:

- Improve flood protection
- Study river sediment accumulation and migration
- Increase recreational availability
- Recreational safety
- In-stream habitat

The study identified two recommended options for further investigation. This study demonstrates that modifying the low dam(s) is feasible, but comprehensive validation of the hydraulic impacts on the MCD Hamilton Flood Protection and sediment transport is necessary for future options.

Recently, MCD has learned that the Two-Mile Low Dam has been prioritized by Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) as a candidate for mitigation credits and ODOT is awaiting an appropriation to authorize design. Based on current projections, it is possible that Two-Mile modification may be in design in 2026-2027. MCD will continue exploring options with Hamilton for the Hamilton Low Dam.

Covington – Stillwater

The Village of Covington is leading the "Stillwater River Low Dam Project | 2024" on a dam known as the "Covington Low Dam." The project is being advanced in collaboration with the Village of Covington, USFWS, and ODNr Division of Wildlife. USFWS secured a grant from its National Fish Passage Program to fund engineering design work, with a consultant now engaged in design development. The next steps include completing design and securing permits, after which USFWS plans to pursue a grant for the actual dam removal.

MCD is actively supporting this initiative. Specifically:

- MCD provided \$2,500 under its APS (Aquifer Preservation Subdistrict) program for developing a conceptual design for the removal.

FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS

During their December 18, 2024, meeting, the Board members set the following dates for the remaining 2025 regular meetings of the Board of Directors of The Miami Conservancy District:

Wednesday, December 17, 2025

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned on motion by Ms. Whelley and seconded by Mr. Rentschler at 1:38 p.m.

ATTEST:


MaryLynn Lodor
General Manager/Board Secretary

APPROVED:


Michael van Haaren
President