

Watershed Committee of the Ozarks, Inc.
Monthly Meeting Minutes
August 7, 2015
Midtown Carnegie Library
Meeting Called to Order at 7:30 AM

Watershed Committee Update—Mr. Bratcher opened the meeting. Mr. Kromrey said the Watershed Summer Gala was a success and funds raised will be used to start on repairs to the boardwalk and fishing piers and keep up with expanding education programs.

Roll Call

Review of Minutes –July Meeting was cancelled because of 4th of July weekend and June Minutes will be reviewed in September.

“Roadtrip with a Raindrop”—Gayle Harper — Ms. Harper stated she has been a travel photographer and writer for over twenty years, starting her career as a photographer when Branson was emerging, she also traveled internationally until 2001. When she came back to America her love of the Mississippi River was rekindled and she felt drawn to visit towns and cities along the river, photographing and interviewing locals. She was amassing a growing body of work but wasn’t sure what she should do with it until she learned that a raindrop falling into the Mississippi headwaters would travel the river for 90 days to reach the Gulf of Mexico. She knew then her journey was to travel with a raindrop she called “Serendipity” along the Mississippi, from the headwaters in Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico in Louisiana. Ms. Harper played a short video highlighting her journey. She said she called in advance to the towns she would stay in along the way and asked for any free lodging and was amazed at the generosity. She stayed in everything from a fisherman’s cabin, to a downtown loft, a tug boat converted into a B&B and a mansion. Her stories of the people she met along the nearly 2,400 mile journey along with her photographs are inspiring and insightful. Ms. Harper says *Roadtrip with a Raindrop* is a celebration of America, the Mississippi River, and the people who live along its banks.

Natural Resources Conservation Service Update—DeDe Vest — Ms. Vest said the NRCS focuses mainly on agriculture and there is \$24M in state-wide cost share funding through their programs. There is also an emerging watershed program that will remove log jams and other problems located at bridges and roads. The National Envirothon was held in Springfield and she thanked WCO staff for their involvement.

Regional Issues—Tim Smith said there is a survey on the City website for public input for new roadway construction projects. Gopala Borchelt said Ozarks Water Watch and Table Rock Lake Water Quality have the Onsite Septic System Remediation Project which will help repair and replace failing septic systems in the White River Basin including the Upper James River. Ted Hillmer said this is the 154th Anniversary of the Wilson’s Creek National Battlefield and the park will host a free weekend and next year is the 100th Anniversary of the National Parks Service. Mr. Kromrey said WCO staff will be relocating to the C.W. Titus Education Facility by October 15th due to City Utilities remediating the 320 N. Main locatioc which includes tearing down the building.

Other Business— none

Meeting adjourned 8:30 a.m.