

Meeting Agenda/Brief Recap
8pm Monday May 6, 2013



Marion Township Library -Chickasaw, OH

Attending the meeting: Jared Ebbing, Bill Knapke, Jim Keller, Terry Mescher, and Brother Nick Renner. Milt Miller was unable to attend.

This was a follow up meeting to a lunch meeting held on April 19. Jim Keller, Terry Mescher, Milt Miller and Brother Nick Renner gathered to discuss leadership and direction of Ag Solutions. Various ideas were discussed with the consensus that leadership could be provided by the right individual with many questions surrounding structure and financing. This group felt that a follow up meeting which included Jared Ebbing who could intellectually provide insight into a private/government structure/funding arrangement and Bill Knapke who could provide ideas to get buy in from Ag Businesses.

Many approaches were discussed. Following are the highlights:

- Terry Mescher brought a brochure reflecting a proposed Lake Facilities Authority. This “Authority” if structured properly could replace both the LRC and Ag Solutions. Discussion ensued about how this would be structured regarding financing. Could farmers and watershed residents be taxed to provide funding?
- Discussed the type of person that would make an effective leader. Group felt someone who had lots of ag experience and was respected and trusted in the farm community. Perhaps a person close to retirement but who still has energy and a passion for the cause.
- Terry noted that this leadership position would have a tougher sell with his constituents since the lake people are all “gung-ho” about getting the lake fixed. The farmers will not be so interested since they will perceive any restraints on their use of nutrients as negative to their bottom line. Terry felt that in the end some of the required changes will actually cost farmers money. This will be a tough sell. One approach might be to convince them

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that unless they are proactive in their approach, the forthcoming regulations will onerous to their operations.

- Terry noted that his office had given farmers the contact info for land owners who could use their swine manure. He is not aware of anyone who has used this information to transport their manure out. Terry further added that future state regulations could very likely only allow 50ppm of phosphorous in the soil. Brother Nick added that 50ppm is enough to grow a good crop. This led to an extensive discussion about transporting swine manure out of the watershed with all feeling that an organized approach to brokering this manure has the potential to work but it requires some hard work, bringing folks together. A great place for a dynamic leader to start.
- Bill Knapke felt that perhaps some rearranged assignments at Soil and Water might work. A person could be assigned to work exclusively on the challenges Ag Solutions has been dealing with. Long discussion ensued as to how that might work. Everyone felt that this approach had possibilities as long as it could be done without the interference of government bureaucracies. The state contributes to Milt's salary; will they contribute to this position as well under the proper arrangement? This S&W approach is certainly worth further consideration.
- The meeting concluded by agreeing that we should put together a list of potential ag businesses that might donate to the cause. Jim Keller volunteered to do that.* Jim also volunteered to prepare a "position paper" which could be used to state our position and needs to these businesses.
- Meeting adjourned around 9:50pm.

*On Tuesday May 7 Jared forwarded a donor list which had been prepared for another fund raising project. The list contains many non-ag businesses and does not include contact info.