



PROGRESS REPORT

2017



Milwaukee
Water
Commons

COMMUNITY WATER ASSEMBLY

In 2017 Milwaukee Water Commons launched the City's first Community Water Assembly (CWA). This diverse group brings together representatives from each of the six initiatives along with representatives for future generations and the water. This group has gathered quarterly to break bread and break silos; to issue our first resolution in support of clean lead-free drinking water; and to stand together as community with the power to heal ourselves as we heal our waters. The CWA is designed to foster good decision making, accountability, community leadership for our water future and to advance the six Water Agenda Initiatives presented at the May 2016 Confluence gathering. The assembly will work to advance the Water City Agenda using a collective impact approach, looking for synergies and opportunities across Milwaukee in all sectors, neighborhood, non-profit, governmental, and academic.

The CWA is proud to present its first Water City Agenda progress report.

MEMBERS

Ann Brummitt
Brenda Coley
Fidel Verdin
David Dragseth
Joe Fitzgerald
August Marie Ball
Kirsten Shead
George Olufosoye
Deidre Peroff
Antonio Garcia
Nicole Carver

Barbara Richards
Lawarrell Cain
Cheryl Nenn
Todd Brennan
Jayme Montgomery
Huda Alkaff
Dale Olen
Reggie Hart (TK)
Rodney Sanchez
Alejandra Hernandez



DRINKING WATER

We know our city cannot claim to be a model Water City as long as all community members do not have safe, clean and affordable tap water. Our goal is to lead and catalyze community action regarding the public health risks inherent in lead pipes; to educate the community about the risks of lead pipes delivering our tap water and to advocate for an equitable plan for lead lateral removal; and to conduct community education on the short-term and effective solution of filtration.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Met with City officials including Mayor Barrett, Common Council President Hamilton, Milwaukee Health Department and Water Quality Task Force Chair Bohl and submitted recommendations for community education, filtration, transparent community-based decision making and long term replacement of lead laterals.

Hosted meetings of community members and city officials.

Participated in community and national panels on replacement of lead laterals.

Wrote an Op-Ed "Get the Lead Out of Milwaukee's Drinking Water" that ran in local news outlets.

Succeeded in getting initial funding to support our advocacy.

Built a mobile model sink for hands-on demonstration of water filtration.

KEY MEMBERS

Brenda Coley - Co-Chair

Kirsten Shead - Co -Chair

Terry Wiggins

Diane Dagelen

George Olufosoye

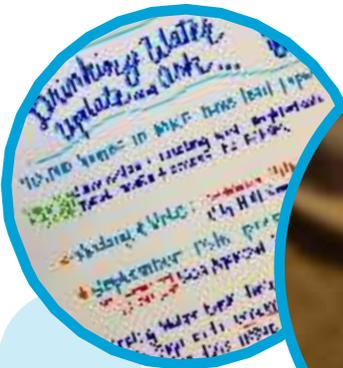
Matt Dannenberg

Huda Alkaff

WE ASK

Join our initiative.

Invite us to speak at your community gathering.



BLUE/ GREEN JOBS

The Blue Green Jobs Initiative seeks to eliminate gaps between employment, training, and sustainable careers in the water and the environmental sectors. We advocate for clear, equitable, and inclusive pathways between job seekers and employers in the Blue Green jobs sectors in Milwaukee.

We will identify gaps and barriers preventing communities in Milwaukee from connecting with job opportunities in the Blue Green sectors.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Began to define Blue Green jobs in a meaningful way for job seekers and employers. This includes Blue Green practices within traditional jobs sectors.

Identified and interviewed key stakeholders from Groundwork Milwaukee, Menomonee Valley Partners, Walnut Way, LIUNA, Local 113, MMSD, The Water Council, Employ Milwaukee, MATC, Cream City Conservation Corps, and Milwaukee County Parks to understand existing perspectives on blue green jobs in Milwaukee and to plan for collaboration moving forward. We have laid the groundwork for a strategic gathering of constituents.

Began to identify existing pathways, barriers, and gaps for both job seekers and employers. This includes the entire spectrum of employment, from entry level to advanced professional careers.

Supporting the development of the Milwaukee Youth Green Jobs Summit in Spring 2018, which will connect 300 Milwaukee youth to career paths in the local STEM industries and environmental stewardship organizations.

Catalyzing a very young, but overdue, conversation.



KEY MEMBERS

August Ball - Co-Chair

Kirsten Shead - Co-Chair

Brenda Coley

Joe Fitzgerald

Antoine Carter

WE ASK

Summit: Be a host work site for city of Milwaukee youth in their first Blue Green jobs experience. Contact Cream City Conservation Corps for more information.

Contact a committee member to share your expertise or join our committee.



EDUCATION & RECREATION

Milwaukee borders one of the largest freshwater lakes in the world and is rich with recreational water activities, yet many residents do not have any connection to it. To become a model water city, we must ensure that all community members are able to safely and equitably interact with, appreciate, and steward water for future generations.

Our goal is to empower every child and adult in Milwaukee to have more meaningful, safe experiences with water. We would like to launch a comprehensive effort to teach every child in Milwaukee to swim.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Organizing a public water safety campaign that includes a Water Safety Week in 2018, and a "Five to stay alive" swimming program.

Research on what makes swimming programs accessible (financially, geographically, etc.)

Mapping pool closures in Milwaukee.

Interviews and partnerships built with Wisconsin Sea Grant, Urban Ecology Center, UW-Milwaukee School of Freshwater Sciences, 16th St. Community Health Center, Milwaukee Recreation Department, Milwaukee Community Sailing Center, Wisconsin Green Muslims.

MEMBERS

Brenda Coley-Co-chair

Deidre Peroff-Co-chair

Tony Garcia

Barbara Hughes

Elizabeth De Leon

Karen Hunt

Nicole Jacobsen

Huda Alkaff

Jimmy Camacho



WE ASK

Contact a committee member to share your expertise or join the initiative.

Please share information on other adult/youth safety initiatives.

We need experts on public safety campaigns. Join us!

ARTS & CULTURE

We are a group of creatives interested in connecting Milwaukee to its waters through our various artistic mediums. We support the other initiative areas and help them amplify their work through artistic channels.

We support our 2016 Water City Agenda goal of branding Milwaukee as a Water City and are also concerned about the dramatic erosion of water protections at the local, state, and national levels which impacts us all. While state and federal decision-making threatens to erode progress, there is still tremendous opportunity at the local level to reconnect our communities and our waters and to build a base of support for water care. The arts are a critical part of this effort, helping to explore our disconnections, heal our divisions, and educate and connect people in ways that words alone cannot.



ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Held our 4th annual We Are Water celebration with over 350 people in attendance at Bradford Beach. The theme was The Great Lakes are our Home - and we welcomed all nationalities and groups to express their belonging in their native language.

Supported Jenny Plevin's partnership with American Rivers to make the film Alice's Garden.

Supported art projects at four Water School sites in partnership with the Mary Nohl Fund.

Created a network of artists to tackle water issues from Still Waters Collective, TRUE Skool, Doc/UWM, Red Crane Film, Overpass Light Brigade, MWC, One Drum Arts along with individual artists.



KEY MEMBERS

Fidel Verdin - Co-Chair

Ann Brummitt - Co-Chair

David Dragseth

Jenny Plevin

Laj Waghray

Lane Hall

Melanie Ariens

Eddie Daniel

Jahmes Finlayson

Susan Simensky-Bietila,

Saehee Chang

WE ASK

Share your artistic talents with us. Join us. Photographers, poets, spoken word, dance, radio, sculpture, digital...

Support the arts!

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Neighborhoods are key to addressing Milwaukee's water infrastructure problems. Increasingly erratic weather patterns are causing flooding, basement backups, and poor water quality in our rivers and lake. Green infrastructure projects can and should harvest rainwater where it falls in every neighborhood in the city. Urban gardens, rain barrels, cisterns, and other water capturing methods can keep water out of Milwaukee's overloaded sewer systems and help to preserve and protect our waters.

Our green infrastructure initiative, Think Blue/ Think Green, will visit every Milwaukee aldermanic district to a) inform and connect the community to already existing green infrastructure community organizations that will educate, design, and/or install green infrastructure and b) elevate green infrastructure models that showcase possibilities for new community-based projects.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Think Blue/ Think Green project launched on August 27 at Alice's Garden with support from Healing our Waters.

Secured funding from the Joyce Foundation in support of our work.

Established a partnership with the City of Milwaukee Promise Zones.

Partnering with Victory Garden Initiative, SWWT, MMSD, ReFlo, Groundwork Milwaukee, Wisconsin Green Muslims, UW-extension, Clean Wisconsin, Friends of Lincoln Park, Great Lakes Training LLC, Kompost Kids, Milwaukee Food Council, 16th Street Community Health Center, Walnut Way-Growing Healthy Soils, Friends of Milwaukee's Downtown Forest, and Alice's Garden.

MEMBERS

Barbara Richards-Co-chair

Nicole Carver-Co-chair

Pam Ritger

Kate Morgan

Ann Brummitt

Justin Hegarty

Pete Hill

Matt Rudman

Huda Alkaff

Elizabeth Hittman

WE ASK

Seek invitations from churches, neighborhood groups to promote Think Blue / Think Green. Do you have a contact person for us?



WATER QUALITY

The Water Quality initiative is focusing on several areas where not much work has been done locally.

We are working on a city-wide campaign to plant trees to protect waterways, reduce runoff, address tree death from emerald ash borer, improve our quality of life and mitigate the health hazards of pollution and climate change.

We are also improving awareness of our rights and desire for clean, swimmable water by hosting an open water swim event in Milwaukee.

Our overarching goal is to foster all our community members' stake in clean, fishable and swimmable waters.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Set up a team and started planning the first-ever open water swim event in the Milwaukee River Estuary in 2018.

Started the Branch Out Campaign, a tree planting effort, in keeping with our strategy of collective impact. MWC will act as a hub and catalyst for a community wide-campaign.

For the Branch Out Campaign, conducted interviews with the City of Milwaukee Forestry Department, Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful, Milwaukee County Parks, Victory Garden Initiative, Friends of Milwaukee's Downtown Forest, MMSD, City of Milwaukee ECO Office, City of Milwaukee Department of Public Health, Urban Ecology Center, The Park People, the Greater Milwaukee Synod of the ELCA

Researching model tree planting programs across the US.

MEMBERS

Ann Brummitt
Co-chair

Cheryl Nenn
Co-chair

Todd Brennan

Aaron Zeleske

Jim Wasley

Joe Fitzgerald

Dennis Grzezinski

Conner Andrews

Lindsay Frost

Lilith Fowler

WE ASK

Contact a team member with your expertise or consider joining the 2018 Open Water Swim or Branch Out campaign.



Milwaukee
Water
Commons

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