

July 2025 Minutes: CARD Meeting

[20250701 CARD Monthly Meeting](#)

Date: Tuesday, July 1, 2025 **Time:** 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM **Location:** Via Zoom

Moderator: Jack Eaton

1. Call to Order - Welcome The meeting was called to order by Roger Rayle at 6:06 PM. Roger welcomed everyone, noting the meeting was being recorded and would be posted to YouTube. He recommended using gallery mode for optimal viewing during screen sharing.

2. Approval of June Minutes Beth Collins presented the draft June 2025 minutes Roger Rayle noted that the draft minutes were initially generated by Google's Gemini AI, and while generally well-structured, emphasized the need for human review. **Motion:** (Motion to approve the June minutes) was made by Roger Rayle. **Discussion:** A comment was made that the AI-generated minutes looked good and were a pretty accurate representation, though caution against over-reliance on AI was advised. **Vote:** All in favor. No opposition. The minutes were approved.

3. US EPA Update - (20 minutes)

- **a. Superfund Site Designation Update (EPA representative)**
 - No EPA representative was present at the meeting.
- **b. Congresswoman Debbie Dingell's team (Georgia Frost)**
 - Georgia Frost reported on Congresswoman Dingell's opposition to the proposed EPA budget cuts, which include a significant 47.4% reduction in funding for the Superfund program. This is seen as contradictory to the administration's stated goal of accelerating Superfund cleanup. She emphasized that these cuts would impact personnel, leading to slowed progress across federal agencies.
 - A question was raised by Roger Rayle regarding whether the strategy might be to increase the number of delisted Superfund sites, even if the problems aren't fully resolved. Georgia Frost stated that while the previous administration attempted deletions by solving problems, she finds it hard to believe they can be more productive with fewer dollars and staff.
 - Vince thanked Georgia for the update, acknowledging the confusion caused by contradictory statements from the administration regarding Superfund acceleration versus budget cuts.
 - James thanked Georgia and Congresswoman Dingell for their work, advocating for an "all of the above strategy" to clean up the site.
 - Roger Rayle inquired about a potential government shutdown if the Senate and House cannot agree on a budget. Georgia Frost explained that there is time until September for this appropriations package to pass. She detailed the political complexities, including the President's desire for a win, resistance from the

Freedom Caucus, and lack of Democratic support, all of which make the budget's passage uncertain.

4. EGLE Updates - (Chris Svoboda) (30 minutes)

- Chris Svoboda was not present at the meeting. Roger Rayle provided an update based on information received from Chris earlier in the day.
- **a. New draft Monitoring Plans:** The link for the 2024 Surface Water Sampling.pdf was updated. Roger noted that the first five to seven items had "nothing to report."
- **b. Sampling results from last near surface water testing:** Slauson School sampling was mentioned at 22 ppb. West Park pond is now at 2.2 ppb.
- **c. New GSI plan for the Western Area:** No specific report was given.
- **d. New Contingency Municipal Water Hook Up Plan:** No specific report was given.
- **e. New Marshy Area Feasibility Study/ Remediation Plan:** No specific report was given.
- **f. Update on MS4 violation and WCWRC/ EGLE enforcing elimination of this illicit discharge into the Allen Creek drain:** No specific report was given.
- **g. New exploration of WRD permitting this illicit discharge into the Allen Creek Drain with an NPDES?:** No specific report was given.
- **h. Geothermal at Slauson School?:** Roger Rayle stated that news regarding test wells at Slauson School for geothermal installation was positive, as it would lead to more sampling in that area.
- **i. New GSI-Downgradient work plan for Allen Creek drain system:** No specific report was given. CARD reiterated its request for more testing and monitoring in the West Park area (near surface water testing/permanent MW's/wet basement testing).
- Roger also inquired about the promised database update from EGLE, which was supposed to include all data through 2024 and residential sampling, as he needs it for visualizations.

5. Old Business/ Action Items - (40 minutes)

- **Washtenaw County**
 - **1. Board of Commissioners/ Environmental Council/ Legal update (Yousef Rabhi):** Yousef Rabhi reported that the county is in a "holding pattern" awaiting the appeal decision on their court case. He expressed gratitude for the dedication of CARD members to environmental work.
 - Jack Eaton asked for clarification on what was under appeal. Yousef Rabhi stated his text indicated "no updates while the appeal is still pending," and would provide more detail later if Kristen didn't have it.
 - **Kristen Schweighofer (Washtenaw County Health Dept):** Kristen clarified that it is the ongoing complaint the health department has with Gelman, which has been volleyed back and forth for over three years. She stated there was nothing new.
 - **2. Any update from WCWRC:** No update from WCWRC was provided.

- **3. Wash Co Health Dept & EGLE Homeowner Well Sampling results from June (WC staff):** Kristen from the Washtenaw County Health Department reported that 117 residential dioxane samples were collected the week of June 9th. New detections were found due to EGLE's laboratory revising their reporting limit from 0.5 ppb down to 0.2 ppb. All results are still under 3 ppb. Letters were sent out to residents late last week or yesterday, and broader sharing of results will occur once residents receive them.
 - A survey on water treatment was sent to 140 residential dioxane samplers, yielding only 7 responses. The low response rate made broad conclusions difficult, but it suggested most people are unaware of their home water treatment systems. The Health Department may provide more general water treatment information.
 - Mike inquired about the number of additional new detections attributed to the change in sampling method by EGLE. Kristen did not have the exact number but stated a more comprehensive summary would be available in August.
 - Kathy Knol asked for information on where the new detections were located. Kristen stated she could not provide this until residents received their results, but it would be included in the August report.
 - Roger Rayle raised concerns about EGLE's difficulty uploading data to the database, suggesting a need for a more efficient method than manual updates, especially with 127 readings. Kristen stated she could not speak to EGLE's internal database processes.
- **4. Geothermal Application at Slauson School:** Kristen reported that there is interest in installing permanent monitoring wells at a couple of borings at the Slauson School location.
- **5. Other issues:**
 - Vince discussed potential problems with increased housing densities in Ann Arbor and the city's past refusal to use Great Lakes Water Authority water. He expressed concern about future drinking water needs in townships if contamination spreads and urged monitoring capacity for townships.
 - Rita asked Kristen about the impact of federal budget cuts on county-level environmental work. Kristen stated that they are already seeing implications, including federal grants being "clawed back," leading to unfilled staffing positions in environmental health and other public health programs. She anticipates additional cuts and concerns but is monitoring the situation closely.
 - Jack Eaton mentioned a Culligan filter claiming to filter "forever chemicals" and asked Kristen to look into it. Kristen stated that PFAS has NSF-certified residential treatment, but 1,4-dioxane does not. She noted that while some carbon or reverse osmosis filters might offer "some removal," there's no rigorous scientific study to support it for 1,4-dioxane. NSF is regularly checked for updates on 1,4-dioxane filtration.

- **Ann Arbor Township**
 - **1. Other issues:** No issues were reported.
- **Scio Township**
 - **1. PFAS response and update on Dino Dr. (Kathy Knol):** Kathy Knol reported no new information.
 - **2. Fire Suppression Well on the old Gelman Site:** (Discussed under Chair Updates)
 - **3. Other issues:** No other issues were reported.
- **City of Ann Arbor**
 - **1. Update on Ann Arbor's 1,4-dioxane (Patti McCall) (Erin Donnelly):** No one from the City of Ann Arbor was present. Roger Rayle referred to an email update that summarized the last meeting's discussions. He noted that 154 pounds of dioxane were removed over two months, but at that rate, it would take decades to remove the estimated 20,000 pounds remaining.
 - **2. Comprehensive Land Use Plan Draft and 1,4 dioxane (James D'Amour/ Erin Donnelly):** James D'Amour provided an update on the comprehensive land use plan. He reminded the group about concerns regarding growth, water infrastructure, and the need for the Gelman plume to be referenced in the plan, especially if future reliance on wells becomes necessary. He noted that there was no specific reference to dioxane in the initial draft, which is why CARD testified. A second draft is being reviewed tonight by the planning commission, and James will keep the committee advised on its contents.
 - **3. Other issues:** No other issues were reported.
- **Executive Board**
 - **1. Yale Superfund Research Program update (Dr Loch-Caruso/ Dr Vasiliou):** Rita reported that she had recently emailed Dr. Vasiliou and had not yet heard back, but the last she heard was "not good," suggesting similar challenges as elsewhere.
 - **2. Subcommittee on the Allen Creek MS4 Violation? (Jack, James, Roger):** Jack Eaton noted that the subcommittee had not yet met, and he expected the chair to schedule it.
 - **3. Other issues:**
 - James D'Amour reported that Senator Irwin and Representative Morgan have reintroduced a "polluter pay package" in the Michigan Senate (SB 391, SB 392, SB 385) and House (SB 386, SB 393, SB 387). These bills aim to hold polluters accountable for site cleanup, require more pollution reporting, remove cleanup exemptions, mandate cleanup before land/water use restrictions, update standards based on health data, and expand residents' ability to seek damages, including medical monitoring costs and extended statutes of limitations.
 - James testified on behalf of CARD, presenting the resolution passed last December, urging the legislature to pass this package. The Senate hearing was favorable, and there is quiet optimism it will pass out of

committee and possibly the Democratic-controlled Senate. Passage in the House is less certain.

- Yousef Rabhi explained that splitting the bill into multiple packages is common practice to include more legislators as sponsors, increasing popularity and allowing for broader amendments beyond just the initial premise of polluter pay. He cited past instances where such packages included a dozen or more bills.
- Roger Rayle expressed surprise and excitement about the legislative movement, given the past difficulties.
- Yousef Rabhi gave a pessimistic outlook on the bill becoming law this term, estimating less than a 5% chance. He noted that the Senate is currently focused on the budget and is likely to adjourn for the summer. He suggested that even if it passes the Senate, it's unlikely to pass the House, and the Governor may not sign it. However, getting it voted out of the Senate would still be a significant win for the movement, planting a flag for future efforts. He reiterated the long-term nature of the fight, comparing it to a marathon.

6. Chair Updates (Roger Rayle) - (30 minutes) [07/01/2025 CARD Meeting-Chair notes](#)

- **a. latest news and observations [20250701 Chair Notes]:** Roger Rayle encouraged attendees to review the summary of the last meeting for key items. He reiterated the significance of geothermal wells at Slauson School providing new sampling opportunities and EGLE's lab being able to detect down to 0.2 ppb. He is interested in the latest sampling results to see new detections in homeowners' wells.
- **b. Refugia Festival and possible CARD attendance/ table:** Alexis Lamb, founder and artistic director of the Refugia Festival, which takes place on Sunday, September 28th, in Nichols Arboretum, presented. The festival focuses on conservation efforts using arts as a catalyst. They are seeking partnerships with organizations for tabling, requesting interactive displays. Roger Rayle mentioned sharing dioxane maps with Alexis. The festival operates on a "pay-as-you-can" model. Alexis also mentioned seeking volunteers and launching a "Field Residences" community-curated arts gallery, open to various art forms, suggesting the dioxane maps could be part of the gallery. Roger encouraged interested CARD/SRSW members to contact him about representing the organizations at the festival, noting he would be unavailable that day.
- **c. Fire Suppression Well:** Roger discussed the Smith property development (Scio View Development) and the potential use of a fire well on the old Gelman site for fire suppression. This well is still active, unlike other production wells that were shut down without final sampling. This fire suppression well is as deep as some of the highly contaminated production wells from early days. Roger stressed the need for sampling from this well before approving its use, noting it could be a significant omission if not sampled, or a major issue if sampled but hidden from the public.
 - **Kathy Knol:** Kathy reported attending a meeting with Mark Smith, Scio Township utilities director, and EGLE representatives. EGLE will be involved in the analysis

and permitting of anything regarding this well, and testing is underway, though no timetable was provided.

- Roger noted that this portion of the Gelman site is not subject to institutional controls.
- **d. CARD Secretary Position:** Beth Collins outlined the tasks involved in the CARD Secretary position, estimating 6 hours per month, including meeting attendance. Roger Rayle proposed restructuring the duties to make it less daunting for new volunteers and suggested using AI for initial minute drafting. He emphasized the critical nature of the role and the need to find a new candidate when Beth steps back, offering her the role of "secretary emeritus." Roger also mentioned pursuing a CL graduate project with a school of information to develop an ongoing project to help with archiving and using AI tools.
- **e. Fourth Consent Judgment Monitoring Wells:** Roger provided an update on the Fourth Consent Judgment monitoring wells. He showed a map indicating planned well locations from 2020 and which ones have been installed (marked with a dot) versus those still missing (red ovals). He noted that some planned wells are still not in place, even years after the CJ's implementation. He suggested adding a specific agenda item to the next quarterly meeting with EGLE to inquire about the missing wells and their status.
- **f. Scio View Development and Wetland Remediation:** Roger reported on a new issue regarding the Scio View development (old Smith property). An acquaintance with a farm across the road from the development reported that a permit for wetland remediation on a corner of the development has altered surface water flow. This has caused water to build up and flow across the road onto his farm, making part of his land unusable. Roger visited the site and confirmed the issue, observing the waterlogging. He expressed concern that if this holding pond or area becomes contaminated with dioxane, it would be a significant problem. He noted that the new subdivision has city water, but properties on the south side of Liberty Road do not, relying on wells, and these areas could be at risk if the dioxane plume spreads, especially with altered water flow. He also mentioned that several monitoring wells on the development were shut down because they were in the footprint of new houses and have not been replaced. One well (MW128) near the border was still high (1.2 ppb in 2021) and another (50 feet deep) was 4 ppb in 2018. Roger emphasized the ongoing magnitude of dioxane contamination, with high levels still in the marshy area and potentially heading towards this direction. James D'Amour confirmed the Scio View development is approved and under construction, with Lombardo Homes as one builder.

8. Reminder: Next CARD Meetings (Zoom)

- Tuesday, August 5th at 6:00 PM
- Tuesday, September 2nd at 10:00 AM - CARD/ EGLE Quarterly Meeting

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM

Minutes edited by Beth Collins, CARD secretary

