

Austin Lake Riparian Board of Directors

Minutes from Meeting Held February 11, 2010

DRAFT

Present: Kirk Wolf, John Crago Jim Pearson (via teleconference), Brian Johnson, Brett Grossman, Seth Giem, Gary Hahn, and Larry Pio.

Absent: Don Mordas.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. by Board President, Kirk Wolf.

Approval of Minutes from August 12, 2009 Meeting

The minutes from the August 12, 2009 were approved unanimously by the Board.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report (attached hereto), was circulated Larry Pio. The report was approved unanimously by the Board. The expenditures since the last meeting consist of one check in the amount of \$78.00 to the Michigan Riparian Magazine and another check in the amount of \$20.00 to the State of Michigan for the Corporation's Annual Report. The Board's bank account shows a current balance of \$4,696.28.

Discussion concerning Non-Profit/Tax Status

The Board discussed the current corporate status of the Corporation. As suggested by Larry Pio, the Corporation needs to file an annual report each year with the state of Michigan to maintain good standing and recognition under state law. Discussion was held as to whether or not the Corporation has a tax identification number with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Based on Larry Pio's review of materials, no tax identification number was found.

Discussion was then held as to whether or not the Board should obtain a tax identification number. Assuming that the Corporation has no tax identification number, there is no annual reporting to the IRS. Obtaining a tax identification number would likely trigger an annual reporting of some sort. Discussion was also held regarding the steps necessary to become a non-profit corporation under the IRS Code. If, in the future, the Board decided to seek non-profit status under the tax code, a tax identification number would be needed at that time. Given the amount of donations (or lack thereof) to the Lake Improvement Fund, the Board unanimously decided to not pursue a tax identification number at this time.

Since donations to the Lake Improvement Fund/Board are not tax-deductible, this caveat will be noted in the newsletter and in any future solicitations from lake residents.

Governmental Lake Board Update

The last meeting of the Austin Lake Governmental Lake Board was held on October 28, 2009 at Don Mordas' house. Minutes from that meeting have not been finalized but Kirk Wolf indicated he would circulate the draft minutes to all members after the meeting (which was done on February 12, 2010). The next meeting of the Governmental Lake Board is scheduled for Monday, March 1, 2010 at 8:00 a.m. at Portage City Hall.

This upcoming meeting will focus on the steps necessary to further investigate or implement the much discussed aeration project in the south bay (i.e. engineering reports, studies, legal services, etc). The Board unanimously agreed that it would be beneficial to have a presence (if possible) at the next meeting and that the meeting date/time/location should be posted on the website. Individual board members indicated that they would attend the meeting to monitor the Board's discussions and keep lake residents posted regarding the proceedings.

Annual Meeting

Discussion was held concerning the date and time for the Board's annual meeting. Consistent with past practice, the meeting will be set for Monday, May 17, 2010 at 7:00pm. May 10, 2010 will be the back-up date. Brett Grossman will call Lake Center School to confirm availability of the school for the meeting.

Possible agenda items for the annual meeting include the following: GLB update, purple loosestrife control efforts, use of lake improvement funds, etc.. It was also suggested that Kalamazoo County Drain Commissioner Pat Crowley be invited to the meeting. Kirk Wolfe indicated that he would ensure that Ms. Crowley was informed of the meeting and would also invite her to speak at it.

Annual Newsletter

The Board then discussed various issues concerning the Annual Newsletter. The Board agreed that the newsletter should be sent out in mid to late April in advance of the Annual Meeting. Kirk Wolf discussed some options for content in the newsletter which would include an update on the status of the Governmental Lake Board. Kirk will follow-up with Norm Young regarding content and layout of this year's newsletter.

The Board also discussed contacting various businesses which have advertised in the past in the Newsletter. Past advertisers include Nelson Hardware, Realtors Melody Stirk and Barb Silverman, Right-Way Rental and Daane's. Jim Pearson volunteered to contact these advertisers to see if they would be interested in again placing an advertisement (\$50.00 for quarter page, \$70.00 for half page). Depending on space allotment and layout, Brian Johnson and Brett Grossman also indicated their businesses would be willing to place an advertisement. Kirk Wolf will also be following-up with the folks at Double L Bait and Marine and Gary Hahn indicated he would stop by the new bait shop on Portage Road (Fishtails) to ascertain their interest in buying an ad.

Social Committee Update

The Social Committee (chaired by Dani Kinder) met and discussed various ideas for a social get together for lake residents. Ideas including rental of the Moose Lodge, a volleyball tournament or a gathering at Lakeview Park. The Social Committee will be meeting again soon to determine more specifics. The Board agreed that it would encourage some type of gathering/event in the near future; perhaps this social event can be announced by the time of our Annual Meeting.

Purple Loosestrife Program

Last year the Board did not participate in a purple loosestrife program which is essentially an investment in purchasing "beetle plants" which are covered in insects which feed on Loosestrife. Members of the Board do believe that this program has been effective in the past and that it would be a good idea to revisit the purchase of plants, especially given the fact that no plants were purchased last year.

Gary Hahn will look into the purchase of same on behalf of the Board. Kirk Wolf will provide Gary the information necessary in this regard. It was estimated that the plants cost \$35.00/ per plant and the Board tentatively agreed to a purchase of 10 plants from the Board's bank account.

As a side note, Larry Pio indicated that the Garlic Mustard plant was crowding out natural vegetation around the lake and that lake residents should be encouraged to remove this weed in an effort to control it.

Public Access Renovations

The DNR-led renovations to the public access site on the east side of the lake have been completed. Despite representations from the DNR that the Board was provided notice of these renovations, the Board did not receive any such notice.

Kirk Wolf will be following up with the appropriate DNR representative to ensure that the Board is provided Notice of future projects. This will allow the Board to put the information on the website and keep lake residents informed of the nature/scope of any Project.

Oakland Weir Issue

Discussion was held regarding the Oakland Weir. Along with the Sunset Lake Dam, the Weir was formerly controlled by the owners of the Lee/Fox River Mill in Vicksburg. The paper mill has not been operational for several years. Control of the weir is potentially important to Austin Lake because excess water can be diverted from the Sugarloaf Lakes into West Lake and, by extension, Austin and Long Lakes. As it stands, it has been several years since West Lake has received any water from this system. Instead the owners of the former Mill property have been diverting any excess water to Gourneck Lake which eventually runs into Sunset Lake.

Since the Mill is no longer in operation, the Village of Vicksburg has expressed an interest in taking control of the Sunset Lake Dam. It is unknown if the Village would also seek control of the Oakland Weir.

Last month John Crago sent a letter to Pat Crowley, Drain Commissioner which expressed a desire for the Drain Commissioner's office to assume control over the Weir, if possible. John indicated that it would be beneficial to have the Drain Commissioner control this Weir (as opposed to the Village of Vicksburg or another third-party) so that water could be diverted to West/Austin Lake in the future. John had not received a response to his letter as of the date of this meeting.

The Board then unanimously agreed to support the position reflected in John's letter, namely that the Drain Commissioner assume control of the Oakland Weir. Maintaining water level (especially in the late summer months) is a major priority. Kirk Wolf indicated that he would send a quick letter or an email to Pat Crowley to inform her that the Board supported the sentiments expressed in John's earlier letter.

Miscellaneous

John Crago indicated that he felt it was important to facilitate lines of communication with the Presidents/Officers of the other Lake Boards in the area. Kirk Wolf indicated that he would look into setting up a meeting with these individuals.

Seth Giem passed around pictures of boat and lake user traffic in his area of the lake. The Board agreed that it would continue to encourage people to be respectful for the property of others.

Although a subscription to the Michigan Riparian magazine was purchased, several of the Board Members have not received any issues of this publication.

Next Meeting

Kirk Wolf anticipates holding one additional meeting prior to the Annual Meeting in May. This will allow the Board to understand that status of the aeration project in front of the GLB and set agenda items for the Annual Meeting. The date/time/location of the next meeting will be placed on the website.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Brett Crossman
Secretary

**Austin Lake Riparians
Financial Report
2/11/2010**

Last Balance	\$ 4,774.28	As reported 8/08/09 for Board Meeting		
Additions:	0			
Subtractions:	-78	1/10/2010	Michigan Riparian	
	-20	1/10/2010	Dept of Energy, Labor, and Economic Growth	still outstanding
Column Totals	4676.28			
New Balance	\$ 4,676.28			

Bank Balance as of 1/25/10	\$ 4,696.28
Additions since balance date	0
Subtractions since balance date	0
Current Bank Balance	\$ 4,696.28

Donations for Lake Improvement Fund (included in the above totals)	
balance at 5/18/09 meeting	250
additions (all prior to 8/8/09 report)	200
Current balance	\$ 450.00