

Austin Lake Riparian Board of Directors

Minutes from Meeting Held May 27, 2009

Present: John Crago, Kirk Wolf, Jim Pearson, Don Mordas, Brian Johnson, Brett Grossman, Wes Carpenter, Larry Pio, Seth Giem, Gary Hahn (Alternate), Norm Young (News/Website Editor).

Absent: None.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:02 p.m. by Board President, John Crago.

Election of Officers for Board of Directors

The first order of business was the nomination and election of officers for the Board of Directors of the Austin Lake Riparian Board. John Crago indicated that he was no longer interested in serving in the capacity as President and would be stepping aside from this role. It was also noted that the Board needed to appoint a Secretary and Treasurer due to vacancies in these capacities.

Don Mordas indicated that he was not interested in the office of President but would be willing to retain his current role as Vice-President of the Board of Directors.

After some discussion, Kirk Wolf was nominated by Don Mordas as the new board President for calendar year 2009-2010. This nomination was supported and affirmed by the members of the Board.

After discussion, Larry Pio was nominated by Brian Johnson as the new board Treasurer for calendar year 2009-2010. This nomination was supported and affirmed by the members of the Board.

Finally, after some additional discussion (and silence for lack of volunteers) Kirk Wolf nominated Brett Grossman as the new board Secretary for calendar year 2009-2010. This nomination was supported and affirmed by the members of the Board.

The slate of officers for the Board of Directors is as follows:

Kirk Wolf - President
Don Mordas - Vice-President
Larry Pio - Treasurer
Brett Grossman - Secretary

John Crago indicated that he three (3) boxes of materials to pass along to Kirk Wolf, as the incoming president. John Crago also indicated that he would e-mail an updated list of all members and officers and suggested the outgoing Secretary and Treasurer make arrangements to transfer any materials associated with these positions to the new officers.

Aeration Project in South Bay

The next order of discussion concerned the proposed Aeration Project in the South Bay. Essentially, the project is “on hold” pending the appointment and consideration of the Austin Lake Governmental Lake Board (“GLB”).

Don Mordas did inform the Board that two (2) vendors had been considered for the project prior to learning that this project would need to be submitted to the GLB. Board members indicated their hope that the work done by the Austin Lake Riparian Board and the residents of the South Bay would be put to use by the GLB as it considers this Project.

Later on in the meeting, there was some discussion about how the process of aeration works, its benefits, and other area watercourses which have used this process. The Board recognized that the aeration project was essentially in the hands of the GLB at this time. The scope, subject matter and cost of the aeration project would be determined by the GLB. For this reason, it will be important to present the aeration project to the GLB in a very specific, straight-forward fashion.

There was some discussion concerning how the aeration project would be submitted to the GLB for its consideration of same. It was decided that the Board would reconvene at the time the GLB was formed to discuss on how best to present the aeration project to the GLB for its consideration.

Status of the Austin Lake Governmental Lake Board and Nomination of Potential Residential Member on Board

A great deal of discussion took place concerning the status of the GLB. Don Mordas indicated that the City of Portage Mayor Pro Tem Ed Sackley and Councilwoman Elizabeth Campbell were appointed to the board on behalf of the City. Pat Krause (Kalamazoo County Drain Commissioner) and John Zull were the other two members.

A fifth member would be selected by the four members, listed above. This fifth member would be a resident of Austin Lake, per the statutory requirements for Governmental Lake Boards in the State of Michigan. The Board agreed to select three individuals to present to the GLB for their consideration. With regard to this selection process, John Crago suggested that the Board consider residents of the Austin Lake who were not members of the Austin Lake Riparian Board. After some discussion, the majority of the Board favored nominating current members of the Board in this selection process.

After further discussion, the Board agreed to submit Don Mordas, Gary Hahn and Brian Johnson to the GLB for their consideration as the fifth GLB member. Kirk Wolf indicated that he would communicate these submissions directly to Mr. Sackley and Mrs. Campbell.

Later on in the meeting, the Board discussed the GLB’s ability to fashion pro-rata assessment districts based upon perceived benefit. In other words, residents of Austin Lake could be assessed for improvements by the GLB in different amounts, depending on the value of the

perceived benefit to each particular property owner.

Water Level of Austin Lake

The board discussed the current water level of Austin Lake. The current water level appears to be quite adequate and should be sufficient for the low-water, late-summer months. Inquiry was made as to whether Pfizer was diverting any water into Portage Creek as opposed to Austin Lake.

Voluntary Donation Fund

John Crago indicated that there was approximately \$400.00 in funds (of about \$4,000.00 total in the Board's bank account) which had been donated to the Board voluntarily by residents of Austin Lake. Some discussion was had about what type of restrictions should be placed on uses for this fund. It was asked whether weed control was one of the anticipated uses for these proceeds.

It was then suggested that the Riparian Board would seek the input of lake residents for potential uses of these funds. This could be done through a targeted mailing or through the use of Board's website. Kirk Wolf suggested setting up a committee of Board Members to propose recommendations for the use of these funds.

Eventually the Board agreed to table any further conversation in this regard until the GLB was formed. The implementation of a functional GLB may prove to require the usage of these funds in other capacities and this issue will be revisited at that time.

Website

Don Mordas suggested shortening the website from its current name: austinlakeriparians.org. It was mentioned that the current website domain name was lengthy and confusing (*e.g.* ".org"). It was suggested that Norm Young look into changing from that domain name to austinlake.com or austinlakeportage.com.

A great deal of discussion was held about utilizing the website to inform residents concerning the activities of the GLB including the date, time and location of meetings. It was also decided to put the State of Michigan's manual on the operation of GLBs online.

Zebra Mussels

There appears to be zebra mussels in Austin Lake. The mussels were not noticed during previous years. The Board Members will monitor this situation and not take any further action regarding this issue at this time.

Concerns Related to the Giem Property and Dam Area

Seth Giem discussed the long-time issues he has experienced with lake users, residents and watercraft parking in front of his property during the summer months. He mentioned specific

examples of how people had intruded upon his property (which, according to Mr. Giem, include the bottomlands extending from his shoreline) and the continued interference with his use of his own property. He expressed frustration that the Board had done little to assist him with these issues in the past.

Various members of the Board acknowledged Mr. Giem's concerns in this regard but questioned what, if anything, the Board could do to address these issues. After additional discussion, Mr. Giem was asked to submit language which could either be posted on the website or in the Board's newsletter, asking lake residents to refrain from unreasonable interference with Mr. Giem's usage of his property. The Board will then review the proposed language and vote on whether or not to include it in the next newsletter and post same on the website.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brett Grossman
Secretary