

Austin Lake Riparian Board of Directors

Minutes from Meeting Held June 15, 2011

DRAFT

Present: Kirk Wolf, Brian Johnson, Steve Higgins, Jim Pearson, Win Larsen, Brett Grossman, Gary Hahn, Larry Pio and Don Mordas (alternate).

Also present: Dani Kinder, Norm Young, John Crago, Seth Giem, Lynn Elliott

Absent: Dar Levy

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

Approval of Minutes from April 12, 2011 and May 16, 2011 (Annual) Meetings

The minutes from the April 12, 2011 and May 16, 2011 (Annual) meetings were approved by the Board and will be posted on the website.

Treasurer's Report (Pio)

The Treasurer's Report (attached hereto) was circulated by Larry Pio. The report includes line item figures for the General Fund, Lake Improvement fund and Social Fund. The report was approved unanimously by the Board.

Larry indicated that due to receiving a tax identification number (EIN) the Board would need to file a 990-N form for calendar year 05/1/2010. After the meeting, Larry sent an email indicating that the Board also needed to file for years ending 04/30/09 and 04/30/08. Since the 990-N form cannot be used for overdue forms, Larry circulated a copy of the completed 990-EZ forms submitted for the above-referenced calendar years.

Newsletter/Website Report (Young)

a. Aeration article from Portage Gazette

There has been a few articles in the Kalamazoo/Portage Gazette regarding the proposed aeration project. It was agreed that, with the assistance of Norm, the Board would post links to these articles on our website.

b. Newsletter in color

Norm obtained pricing quotes for the Board's annual newsletter in color. The action plan in this regard is set forth in the attached write-up. The Board unanimously agreed to increase the prices in advertising to produce next year's newsletter in color. 430 copies will be printed.

Social Committee Report

The pancake breakfast took place and over 200 pancakes were devoured. \$110.00 was donated to SPCA due to the generosity of the riparians who attended.

July 30, 2011 will be the annual boat parade starting at 3 or 4pm. A dinner will follow at the Kinder residence along with a band. There will be prizes for best decorated boats.

On August 21, 2011 the Austin Lake Brunch will take place in the cove unless wind levels make the launch area more desirable.

Old Business

a. Austin Lake Burgees (Wolf)

At the time of the meeting, 63 more burgees needed to be purchased in order for the board to “break even” on the up front purchase. Board members were encouraged to support this effort by buying burgees for their watercraft and passing the word on to other lake residents.

b. Eurasion Water Milfoil

The presentation by Paul Hausler of Progressive A/E at the April 12, 2011 meeting was discussed. The Board’s consensus was to hold off on further action at this time.

c. Purple Loostripe

Ten Beetle plants would be planted around the lake in late June/early July. This purchase was previously authorized by the Board. Gary will contact Chris Linder about recommended locations.

New Business

a. Election of Officers

The following slate of officers were nominated and approved unanimously by the Board: President - Kirk Wolf, Vice President - Brian Johnson, Treasurer - Larry Pio, Secretary - Brett Grossman.

b. Recommendation of aeration assessment

The lion’s share of the meeting was spent discussing the Austin Lake Governmental Lake Board’s (ALGB) request for Riparian Board input on an assessment for the south bay aeration project. The ALGB had voted 4-1 to move forward with the project but had not yet determined how same would be paid for through an assessment on riparian owners.

The first line of discussion centered around whether the Board should make an assessment recommendation to the ALGB. After much deliberation, the Board voted six (6) in favor (Higgins, Wolfe, Johnson, Pearson, Hahn and Pio) and two (2) against (Larsen, Grossman) to make a recommendation. Those casting votes in favor of making a recommendation felt it was important for the riparians to have proactive input in the assessment amounts. Those casting votes against believed that any assessment would leave at least some riparians unhappy and that the fallout from assessment costs should fall upon the ALGB, since the ALGB had approved the project, instead of the Riparian Board.

Since the Board voted in favor of making a recommendation to the ALGB, discussion then focused on the types of property owners which should be assessed. Identified potential “stakeholders” in the project were identified as follows: riparian property owners, the City of Portage, Kalamazoo County, back-lot owners, Pfizer, The Edge, etc.

Several initial assessment scenarios were presented. By consensus the Board agreed to eliminate any assessment scenario which included assessments on back-lot owners (who would arguably see no benefit to the project) or increased assessments to Pfizer or the Edge. These latter two entities would be assessed the same as any other property owner. It was agreed, however, that both the County and City should realize a “perceived benefit” through increased property (taxable) value and these entities should be included in a recommended assessment.

This left four (4) separate scenarios for an assessment recommendation. All scenarios were based on a projected cost of \$100,000.00 per year for the next five (5) years or \$500,000.00 total:

Scenario #1: 128 southwest bay properties would pay \$781.25/year (i.e. project cost paid for by these properties only).

Scenario #2: 128 southwest bay properties would pay approximately \$592.00/year and the remaining 302 properties would pay fixed-rate of \$80.00/year.

Scenario #3: 128 southwest bay properties would pay approximately \$766.00/year, the County of Kalamazoo would pay \$1,000.00/year (1% of project cost) and the City of Portage would pay \$1,000.00/year (1% of project cost). Other properties would not be assessed.

Scenario #4: 128 southwest bay properties would pay approximately \$579.00/year, other properties would pay approximately a fixed rate of \$80.00/year and the County/City would each pay \$1,000.00 year.

Each scenario was discussed in detail. Most discussion was focused on scenario #4 in which all property owners would contribute, however, the risk of increased assessments would fall to the southwest bay property owners due to a fixed assessment of \$80.00 on other owners and \$1,000.00 each to the City/County. In other words, any fluctuation (increase/decrease) would fall on the amount assessed to the southwest bay properties.

After additional discussion, Brian Johnson made a motion that the following assessment scenario be presented to the ALGB: Properties outside of the SW Bay would pay a maximum of \$80.00/year; the City/County would pay \$1,000 each/year and the remaining cost of the project would be borne by the 128 southwest bay property owners (again, estimated at \$579.00/year).

The Board voted seven (7) in favor and one (1) against (Larsen) in making this assessment recommendation. Win did not vote in favor of this scenario as he believed that the differential assessment sets a potentially unfair precedent for future lake improvement projects.

The Board also discussed recommending a criteria to the ALGB to determine if the project is successful. After three (3) years it was felt that the ALGB should determine whether or not the project should be “deemed a success.” Criteria for “success” is as follows: muck reduction of less than two (2) feet would be deemed a failure; muck reduction of more than 2.5 feet would be deemed successful and any reduction between 2-2.5 feet would be seen as warranting further evaluation before continuing the project.

As such, the Board unanimously agreed to recommend for the ALGB to make a determination as to whether this project could be deemed a success after three (3) years. If the project is a failure (as defined above), it should be discontinued. If the project is a success, it should be continued. If the project results in a reduction of 2-2.5 feet, the ALGB would need to determine whether further aeration should continue.

c. Education of stopping organic inputs

The Board spoke in generalizations as to how some efforts/costs associated with the aeration project (i.e. other than project implementation/operation) should be shared equally by all properties. For example, education on reducing/stopping organic inputs into the lake should be shared equally by all property owners as all owners have an interest in reducing organic sediment.

Discussion then centered on how to educate riparians as to the importance of limiting inputs into the lake. Ideas included an “instruction manual” for new property owners and an article in the newsletter. Other lake boards should be contacted to determine if they have developed any literature dealing with reduction of inputs into lake. County data will also be consulted.

d. Lake bottom disruption

Kirk discussed a type of “power blasting” which was done by property owners to reduce muck/organic growth in front of individual properties. It was confirmed that this type of “self-help” course of action required permitting from the DNR and was not legal.

e. Recap of annual meeting

It was felt that the annual meeting went well. Next year the Board will attempt to secure a larger

room as the meeting seemed to be well attended. The Board will consider hosting the meeting at other locations.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Brett Grossman
Secretary

DRAFT

At the April 12, 2011 board meeting I was asked to develop a price schedule for ads in our newsletter. The following are assumptions:

- We would be printing in color on glossy paper (recommended by printer)
- The ad prices would pay for the printing and mailing, but not more (if we want to make money on the ads then we would increase the below prices).
- The Spring 2011 newsletter was used to create the estimates; that is:
 - About ½ of the newsletter were ads
 - There were a total of 6 sides (8 ½ x 11).
 - Eight business card ads
 - Three ¼ page ads
 - Three ½ page ads

- LAKE MICHIGAN MATTERS
- COLONIAL PRINTERS

I propose charging the following for color and grayscale ads:

Width x Height (inches)		Color Price	Current Grayscale Price
3.25 x 1.75	Business card	\$ 40.00 (new)	\$25.00
3.25 x 4.5	¼ Page	70.00 (new)	50.00
6.5 x 4.5	½ Page	100.00 (new)	70.00
6.5 x 9.0	Full Page	170.00 (new)	120.00 (new)

430
Ads

Based on the above color prices we would have received \$830. in ad revenue had we printed our Spring 2011 newsletter in color. Estimates from the printer and mailer indicate it would have cost \$815. to print and mail in color.

We did print in grayscale and received \$560. in ad revenue. It did cost us \$475. to print and mail.

Norman Young