

Austin Lake Governmental Lake Board (ALGLB) Meeting Minutes-FINAL – 23Mar17

Location: Portage City Hall Council Chambers
(Publically noticed: City of Portage and austinflakeportage.com)

Call to Order: 1:10 pm by Chairman Brian Johnson

Members present: Brian Johnson, Pat Crowley, Nasim Ansari and Jim Pearson. Scott McGraw arrived at 1:15 pm. Also present were 17 members of the public. The meeting audio recording was delayed until 1:34pm for technical reasons.

Minutes of the March 2, 2016 ALGLB meeting were unanimously approved.

Chairman Johnson opened the meeting by stating that the purpose is to receive and discuss an Austin Lake Riparian Board (ALRB) recommendation. They proposed that the ALGLB continue the aeration/bioaugmentation project with equal assessment on all riparian properties. ALRB representatives were present to answer questions.

Chairman Johnson also reported that the cost to run the system with Lake Savers would be reduced from \$44,500 to \$38,350 per year with a 5-year contract renewal. Discussion on operational costs followed.

Pat Crowley stated that the primary purpose of the project was muck reduction. It turned out that muck measurement was harder to determine than originally thought with results subject to various interpretations. Secondary improvements such as invasive weed reduction, good vegetation proliferation, and foul smell abatement were observed.

Citizens asked if a weed reduction only program could be implemented. Others asked about expanding the project to other areas of the lake if all riparian properties are equally assessed. Scott McGraw stated that changing the scope of the project from muck reduction to weed control or changing the project area would require a new project request and approval process that could take a year to complete.

Jim Pearson asked for clarification as to whether the ALRB is requesting a muck reduction project continuation, a weed control program or a combination of both. ALRB President Gary Hahn stated that the ALRB recommendation is to continue the current muck reduction project with hope to seeing other benefits like weed control.

Several citizens spoke in favor of continuing the project with lake-wide equal assessments, while others spoke in favor of continuation with the existing differential assessment formula. Some suggested using a less costly herbicide approach like West and Long Lakes if the main focus turns to weed control.

A citizen stated that various lakes in Michigan start aeration projects within a section of a lake and later expand to the entire lake. Pat Crowley offered that some lakes in Michigan continue aeration projects without measuring muck since it seems harder to measure than once thought.

ALRB President Gary Hahn and other representatives communicated that over 200 riparians are on the organization's email list. They offered to forward all riparian email comments to the ALGLB in the spirit of open dialog. Chairman Johnson accepted the offer and thanked President Hahn.

After no further comments or questions from those assembled, Chairman Johnson stated that the next ALGLB meeting (Practicability Hearing) will be held on *April 17th at 7pm in Portage City Hall Council Chambers. The purpose will be to hear a summary of the 2016 aeration/bioaugmentation season and an overall summary of the 5-year project by consultant Jennifer Jermalowicz-Jones (Restorative Lake Sciences) and take public comment.

Motion by Crowley, seconded by Pearson to adjourn (2:21 pm). Passed 5-0.

Submitted by Jim Pearson,
ALGLB Secretary

Postscript:

*April 17th meeting was re-scheduled for May 10th due to Inland Lake Act newspaper timeline publication requirements.