BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE WASHTENAW COUNTY BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS PLEASANT LAKE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Wednesday, April 10, 2019

Freedom Township Hall
11508 Pleasant Lake Road
Manchester, Michigan 48158

Board Member Present: Dries, Jefferson, Maciejewski, Pratt, Schmidt, Smith, Walz

Board Members Absent: Mekjian

Staff Present: Michelle Katz, Water Resources Coordinator
               Theo Eggermont, Public Works Manager
               Lauren Koloski, Washtenaw County Environmental Supervisor

Others Present: See attached lists for other attendees (Public)

1. CALL TO ORDER
   The meeting was called to order by Chair Dries at 7:03 p.m.

2. AGENDA
   Motion by Schmidt, supported by Pratt, to approve the agenda as presented.
   Motion carried.

3. PURPOSE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT, PRESENTED BY LAUREN KOLOSKI, WASHTENAW COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL SUPERVISOR
   Koloski reviewed housekeeping items such as: instructions for public comment portion of the hearing, public interest in Special Assessment Appeal process, and inquiries about individuals' specific assessments.

   Koloski reviewed the history of the current project and identified that the goals of the identified lake management plan are to improve the recreational capabilities and monitor biological diversity. She reviewed that all parcels that have deeded access, commercial and residential, are part of the assessment district. She discussed that a budget has been developed with a third-party consultant and an assessment structure per individual parcel was developed. This was all assessed under Public Act 185, which allows a multi-jurisdictional partnership.

   Koloski reviewed the steps for implementation of the project, and identified that currently they are at Step 7 of the process.

   Koloski reviewed the assessment amounts: Non-waterfront residential properties with lake access are assessed at $125; waterfront residential properties are assessed at $325; and commercial properties with lake access are assessed at $425. Koloski shared website information where the public can find more information about the project and various other resources available to the public.

   Koloski discussed Management Level Zones 1 and 3. Management Level Zone 1 addresses Pondweeds, Hybrid Pondweeds, and Milfoil which are treated with contact herbicides and algaeicides. Highly selective management agents are applied in Zone 1 with the objective being to focus on only a single species or two, the Ebrid Watermilfoil and Curley Leaf Pondweed.
The focus of Management Level Zone 3 is generally to prevent the weediest species from growing at nuisance levels near home and commercial developments. Lake access is the critical focus in Management Level Zone 3 and selectivity is a subordinate priority.

Koloski presented more information regarding Pleasant Lake, including that fifteen different plant species were observed in Pleasant Lake in 2017; that aggressive management of one or more species is the direction in which they are heading; Ebrid Watermilfoil growth is expected to reach nuisance levels after the Memorial Day Holiday; Wild Celery was identified as a dominant plant in the lake, and since there is no known control strategy for Wild Celery, no action will be taken at this time. Data shows that conditions are worsening in the lake and Ebrid Watermilfoil needs to be addressed to improve lake conditions.

The cost allocation of the project was identified by Koloski. The lake management specialist is 12 percent; lake herbicide applicator is 70 percent; weed harvesting is 5 percent; and project development is 12 percent. The cost-per-year budget is estimated to be $40,675, which takes into consideration a worst-case scenario situation. Budgets over the past 5 years have provided surplus into the next project planning period eliminating the need to borrow.

4. OPEN PUBLIC HEARING

1. Betty Schneider, 11577 Pleasant Shore, Freedom Township passed.

2. Julie Johnston, represented 11978 Elmdale, Freedom Township as her mom could not be present. She indicated Purple Strife has been seen in the lake, which is not native to the lake. She inquired if spraying is going to be in certain areas, as her area didn't get sprayed last year and they couldn't get their boat out due to the amount of weeds. She expressed that when they cut the weeds, they floated and got stuck in the lily pads and ended up with blue-green algae for the first time.

3. Mike Schaible, 10795 Pleasant Lake Road, Freedom Township passed.

4. Charlotte Stewart, 5264 Happy Hollow Road, Freedom Township wants the lake sprayed.

5. Jerry Schmidt, 5176 Happy Hollow Road, Freedom Township stated he believes the lake is in the worst shape it has ever been due to the weed growth, which impedes recreational activities on the lake.

6. Catherine Roberts, 11485 Pleasant Shore Drive, Freedom Township stated she has been very happy with what has been happening, but that the east end of the lake is a mess; thick with weeds. She inquired if anyone is finding a cure for Eel Grass. Dries stated this will be followed up. She also inquired if lily pads can be addressed because they are native plants, as they are getting overwhelming as well.

7. Gerald Swartout, 11631 Pleasant Shore Drive, Freedom Township stated that every 3 to 5 years there should be competitive bidding, and because there is no competitive bidding for the project, he would be against it.

8. Mark Langen, 5035 Happy Hollow Road, Freedom Township passed.

9. Chris Mikesell, 11866 Hieber Road, Freedom Township stated she supports the program and would like to see it continue, but wants to make sure she's getting best bang for her buck; specifically stated concerns about the culvert by her home that drains from the farm field into the lake. This creates concerns for her about water quality. She has addressed this with the township but wants everyone working with the lake to be informed. She stated she would put in rain gardens to help slow down the flow of the water, but would need help. She invited the Board to come by and look at it first-hand.

10. Beth Heuser, 11254 Hieber Road, Freedom Township expressed her thanks for coming, because other ways to address the problem were not liked or were not thought to be beneficial. She is thankful for this being managed by this body, as opposed to random people just willy-nilly dumping any kind of chemicals into the lake. She agrees with Mikesell regarding a buffer on the other side of the road regarding the farmer's land,
which possibly could be funded by part of the Lake Erie Watershed, as they are part of that.

Heuser agrees with Schmidt about the lake. She stated that Johnston figured something out about the temperature, and invited Johnston to come back up to speak.

Johnston stated that the temperature was 41, so it should have been frozen and wasn't, and expressed that this is due to the fast water flow coming in from that culvert. Johnston stated she knows this lake very well as she's been coming here since the '60s, and can tell that the lake has changed dramatically.

Heuser resumed her comments. She commented that with the water being so open this year, it attracted more water fowl, which leads to more droppings in the lake, which leads to more weeds.

11. John Heuser, 5929 Lima Center Road, Freedom Township stated he has access to the lake. He agrees there has been a big improvement in the lake in the last few years and would like to continue.

12. Steve Milkey, 4754 Fletcher Road, Freedom Township stated he does not live on the lake, but he has a property off of the lake and a 15 foot access so he can get to the lake. He stated that he has been double taxed, once for his access and then for his house off the lake. He said the Pleasant Lake School, which his family owns, got assessed for access to the lake, and they don't have access to the lake with the school, but that was taken away. Koloski concurred it was taken away.

Milkey further stated there is a problem with Pleasant Lake, but that the problem is that the drain fields drain into the lake. He stated there is no weed problem; that there are no more weeds now than there were when he was 8 years old. He believes there is a health concern regarding the chemicals being put into the lake. He stated his grandkids went to go swimming and couldn't because they put the poison in the lake a few days prior.

He expressed that he is concerned that residents are being charged to pay to spray for a weed that isn't even in the lake. He expressed his concern that the company in charge of checking the lake, is also the same company that would be paid to fix it, and is ripping them off. He inquired why there is not an independent body checking the lake.

13. Peggy Watson, 11761 Pleasant Shore Drive, Freedom Township agreed with others about the concern regarding chemicals being put into the lake and the long-term effects it could have that are currently unknown, and she would like information on the long-term effects. She doesn't like getting taxed for something she doesn't agree with. She agreed it's a difficult situation as people want to enjoy recreational activities on the lake, but would like a different route taken to achieve this.

14. Annette Zsenyuk provided a letter to the board pre-hearing, and Dries stated it will be included in the record.

15. Don Whitsitt, 11040 Hieber Road, Freedom Township stated in the last four years that he's been here the Eurasian Milfoil has become a very big problem. If it is not addressed sooner rather than later, by midsummer there will be 20 foot columns of weeds everywhere. The current program in place meets its original goals and believes the staff involved to be capable and thoughtful, and he and his wife support the renewal of the program.

5. CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

6. BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS DISCUSSION

Schmidt thanked everyone for coming and appreciates public input when decisions are being made.

Dries addressed the concern of the culvert. Pratt discussed what has been investigated regarding the culverts and drainage. Very little of the surrounding area actually drains to the lake other than the residential properties.
There is a corner of the Horning farm field that drains into the lake. Pratt and Koloski visited the Horning farm and looked at their operations to make sure no pipes were draining into the lake and that manure was being properly stored and applied. Pratt discussed that they cannot force someone to do something on their private property. Pratt responded to concerns of a third-party. He expressed that Dr. Pullman, who could not attend this hearing, is paid as a third-party to oversee the party to whom the application contract is awarded after competitive bidding has occurred.

Pratt further expressed that although they have not yet reached the ecological success they would have liked thus far on the lake, he hears that residents are reporting that they are able to enjoy lake recreation activities more. Pratt stated they will address the certain areas of the lake that people have expressed haven't reached the same benefit as other places.

Pratt expressed that Dr. Pullman usually comes out the week before Memorial Day, and he invited people to go on the boat ride with Dr. Pullman. This information will be posted on the website.

Dries addressed comments about industrial discharge from Consumer's Power and cooling water. Pratt responded they have no ability to manage that under this Board's authority.

B. Heuser adds that it was the light and noise from Consumer's that was bothering people. She inquired of the plant managers and higher ups, and they stated they didn't have any idea about the temperature, but they were able to get that information to them. They are using the compressors more now in the reconstruction, and that may have been why there was more water going in, but she thinks if they slowed it down that would make a difference, because people were not able to enjoy winter activities on the lake due to ice not freezing on the west end of the lake.

K. Flahie said Consumer's will not be using the water from the lake for their cooling in about 3 years. Consumer's is trying to find other temporary units to use that would not use water for cooling, as the current units are extremely old and therefore noisy and also currently use water.

Schmidt inquired of Koloski about the possibility of the two additional species mentioned this evening, the Purple Loosestrife and Eel Grass, being addressed in this project or addressed by Dr. Pullman. Koloski said they would look at the invasives versus the natives and their nuisances levels.

Maciejewski requested Koloski to describe how they decide what to treat for when they come out. Koloski replied that Dr. Pullman is looking for the Management Zone Levels, the nuisance level of the weeds; the health and biodiversity of the lake to ensure that it is stable and healthy. Maciejewski expressed she was just pointing out the discrepancy between the public hearing notice and the project description itself.

Dries expressed that there is competitive bidding for the application contract through the county's purchasing department. Pratt added that typically that gets done on a 5 year cycle, but doesn't want to say it's already been done or not been done.

Walz added that the new state legislation that encourages and/or requires people to wash their boats when going from one lake to another may help mitigate some of the transfer of the plants from lake to lake.

Dries added that the next hearing is to confirm the special assessment row, and if people have questions/comments about that, please attend the next meeting, which will be at this location on Wednesday, May 15 at 7:00 p.m.

7. APPROVE/DENY RESOLUTION ON PLEASANT LAKE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT TO ESTABLISH THE SECOND PUBLIC HEARING

Schmidt moves the resolution establishing a second public hearing with one modification in the project description attachment to indicate, "Including, but not limited to," for clarification, "Eurasian Milfoil and
Starry Stonewort." Supported by Pratt. No discussion

Roll Call Vote
Smith: Yes
Pratt: Yes
Dries: Yes
Schmidt: Yes
Maciejewski: Yes
Walz: Yes.

Motion carried.

8. SUMMARY/NEXT STEPS
Dries stated again that the next meeting is Wednesday, May 15 at 7:00 p.m. Pratt stated that the assessment concern shared tonight will be looked into and will contact that property owner prior to the next meeting. He reiterated that anybody who feels like they should not be in the district would need to put something in writing to preserve appeal rights to tax tribunal. Dries stated it was a pleasure to meet here and see the public whom they are trying to serve.

9. ADJOURNMENT
Meeting adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

[Signature]