Wixom Lake Improvement Board (WLIB)
Meeting Minutes
August 3, 2023

Meeting called to order at Billings Township Hall by Norma Stuart at 6:00 pm

Pledge of allegiance recited.

Roll call of board members. Board members present: Carol Ayers, Jeanette Snyder, Larry Woodard, Ray Drumright, Robert Kelley, Don Zakett, Terry Walters, Tami O'Donnell
Board Members Absent: Joe Sova
Others in Attendance: Norma Stuart from Midland County Drain Commission, Paul Hausler from Progressive AE, Casey Shoaff from PLM Lake & Land Management Corp., and approximately 30 members of the public.

Approval of agenda. Agenda was presented with an opportunity to add items. Terry Walters made a motion to accept the agenda, seconded by Tami O'Donnell. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of minutes from 7/13/23 WLIB meeting. Larry Woodard made a motion to approve the minute, seconded by Tami O'Donnell. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Matters. Norma Stuart presented the financial statement showing a balance of $181,930.96 and commented that there are currently no outstanding invoices. Carol Ayers made a motion to receive and file the financial report, seconded by Robert Kelley. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Paul Hausler presented a budget proposal for 2024-2028 Wixom Lake Bottomlands Management Program. The total proposed budget is $246,400 per year broken down as $190,000 for vegetation management such as herbicide treatments and mowing, $34,000 for consulting services, surveys, and project oversight, and $22,400 for administration and contingencies. Paul commented about the initial focus of the work under the program being control of vegetation for the purposes of getting the lake in shape for refill but then transitioning to aquatic nuisance weed control in the in later years of the program when the lake is expected to be full. Comments were made by Paul, Norma, and board members about the size of individual assessments. Annual assessments are expected to be approximately $140 for lakefront properties and $70 for backlot properties and assessed on the winter tax roll. A motion to accept the budget proposal for the 5 year plan from Progressive AE was made by Tami O'Donnell and seconded by Robert Kelley. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.
A public hearing for assessment reinstatement will be held on Saturday September 9th at 10AM at Beaverton High School.

Paul Hausler also spoke about recently completed aerial drone mapping of canals in the WLIB district. The drone mapped from height of approximately 300 ft and obtained good resolution between woody vegetation and cattails / weeds. Paul brought poster sized pictures showing the results of the canal survey. Paul's initial assessment is that there is a wide variety of situations to address in the different canals. He will assemble treatment plans individualized for each canal and present the board with a prioritized recommendation including estimation of costs. Paul and the board addressed a few questions from the public about path forward and timing for addressing issues in canals.

Monty Wiseman, representing Venice subdivision spoke about a modified proposal to treat parts of Pary drain with herbicide and then coordinate volunteer and Wixom Lake Association mowing of the area this

coming winter. He provided the board with a detailed written proposal and color-coded map. Don Zakett made a motion to accept the proposal, seconded by Terry Walters. After discussion with the board and Paul Hausler, it was determined to be wise and cost effective to amend the proposal to treat a larger area than presented (approximately 10 acres instead of 5 acres). Don Zakett and Terry Walters rescinded their original motion and made a new motion. Don Zakett made a new motion to accept the amended proposal for herbicide treatment of ~10 acres in the Pary drain of Venice Subdivsion and instruct Progressive AE and PLM to act on it. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Don Zakett discussed quotes for forestry mulching. He has received 2 bids from contractors with heavy duty forestry mulching equipment. The bid based on hourly rates from Britt Heinz Tree Service and Landscaping was higher than the bid from Kappen Tree Service. Don proposed forestry mulching of dead trees in parts of the areas treated earlier this year with helicopter herbicide spray. The proposal is to start in shallow areas and go out to where the lake would normally be 12-15 ft deep. Don estimates that this would be about 300 acres of the 630 acres that were sprayed. Based on hourly rates for 2 forestry mulchers, fees for moving the mulchers from one site to another, and potentially fees for extracting stuck equipment, Don estimates that this work would total $60,000 or less. Don Zakett made a motion to authorize Kappen Tree Service to execute forestry mulching of dead trees and vegetation in areas previously treated with aerial applied herbicide for a total cost not to exceed $60,000. The motion was seconded by Jeanette Snyder. Voice Vote. Motion carried with Carol Ayers, Jeanette Snyder, Larry Woodard, Ray Drumright, Robert Kelley, Don Zakett and Terry Walters in favor and Tami O'Donnell opposed.

Public Comment:
Doug Hill – Wixom Lake Association (WLA) president. The WLA has committed to spend $50,000 mowing lake bottom within 80 feet of shoreline. The will be using 3 contractors: Shoreline; John Marsh; Britt Heinz Tree Service and Landscaping.
Doug commented that he felt it was inappropriate to have a separate fee for equipment retrieval from the lake bottom (removing stuck equipment) as that could encourage risky / inappropriate behavior by operators. Instead, he feels that such expenses should be explicitly factored into hourly rates.
Doug encouraged property owners to be generous with granting permission to use access points to mowers/mulchers.
Doug would like to find ways to financially collaborate with WLIB especially in areas like Muddy Bay and the end of Heron Cove where Britt Heinz will be using matts and cranes to get in and out.

Monty Wiseman, Venice Subdivision: Acknowledged and thanked Don Zakett for all the work he has done / is doing with various organizations all with goal of restoring Wixom Lake.

Scott Able, Davids Drain. Highlighted issues on Davids drain due to current height of trees, depth, steepness of bank, and overall difficulty accessing area. Worried that waiting to address issues will exasperate problem and make it more difficult to deal with later. Worried that WLIB priorities for existing funds misaligned. Estimates 40-50 acres of trees in David's drain. Does not want aerial herbicide treatment due to fear of impacting old Hemlock trees on property. What will happen if funds exhausted and assessment not reinstated?

Various comments between members of public with sporadic comments directed toward board, Paul, and Casey Shoaff. Paul Hausler summed up the situation around treatment of areas such as that described for Davids drain nicely: There is urgency but we also need to make sure to do it right.

End Public Comment

Adjournment:
Motion to adjourn by Don Zakett was seconded by Carol Ayers. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously. 7:56 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ray Drumright