

Wixom Lake Improvement Board (WLIB)
Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2023

Meeting called to order at Billings Township Hall by Terry Walters at 6:00 pm

Pledge of allegiance recited.

Roll call of board members. Board members present: Carol Ayers, Larry Woodard, Ray Drumright, Robert Kelley, Don Zakett, Terry Walters, Tami O'Donnell
Board Members Absent: Joe Sova, Jeanette Snyder
Others in Attendance: Lucy Zeestraten from Gladwin County Drain Commission, Paul Hausler from Progressive AE, Casey Shoaff from PLM Lake & Land Management Corp., and approximately 20 members of the public.

Approval of agenda. Agenda was presented with an opportunity to add items. Terry Walters asked to add a time for discussion of an email from Monty Wiseman to the communications section of the agenda. Don Zakett made a motion to accept the amended agenda. The motion was seconded by Larry Woodard. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of minutes from 9/9/23 Public Hearing for continuation of the Wixom Lake Improvement Project. Tami O'Donnell made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Carol Ayers. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Financial Matters. Terry Walters presented the financial statement showing a balance of \$114,832.48. Carol Ayers made a motion to receive and file the financial report which was seconded by Tami O'Donnell. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously. A number of invoices were presented for payment: 1)Midland Daily News (account #00057898, dated 9/30/23) with net charge of \$939.53; 2)Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes (invoice 14942, dated 10/2/23) for \$4612.09; 3) Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes (invoice 15623, dated 11/1/23) for \$36.00; 4)Progressive AE (invoice 00194954, dated 10/5/23) for \$15,633.13; 5) PLM Lake & Land Management Corp (invoice 6000275, dated 8/30/23) for \$5,000; 6) PLM Lake & Land Management Corp (invoice 6000323, dated 9/25/23) for \$31,562.50; 7) PLM Lake & Land Management Corp (invoice 6000327, dated 12/13/23) for \$2,025; Carol Ayers made a motion to pay the invoices and the motion was seconded by Robert Kelley. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Paul Hausler presented a 2024 contract proposal between Progressive AE and the Wixom Lake Improvement Board for nuisance bottomlands management, project administration, and website building and publishing at a cost of \$25,900 to be paid in quarterly installments. After discussion, Don Zakett made a motion to accept the contract and this was seconded by Larry Woodard. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Paul then presented a document titled 'Wixom Lake Bottomlands Activity Summary' detailing the 'big picture' actions taken in 2023. As Paul talked through the document with the board, he identified a few minor inaccuracies and clerical errors which he will correct prior to posting the summary document. Paul also provided the board with a detailed spreadsheet titled 'Project Work Journal' which amounts to a running ledger of 2023 work with dates of treatments and other activities, herbicide names & volumes, acres treated, and costs.

Monty Wiseman spoke about an email that he sent to some board members in the early morning of 12/14 titled 'Agenda Item Submittal for December 14, 2023 WLIB Meeting'. Monty is concerned about short term rental properties (e.g. Airbnb) in the WLIB district that advertise use of the bottomlands for recreation and include maps where vegetation has been cut to create trails for ATVs. He questions whether those properties are assessed properly given apparent commercial activity.

Don Zakett spoke about mowing of areas already treated with herbicide and his desire for additional mapping of lakebottoms by drone for facilitation of communication with mowing contractors. He proposed a test of drone mapping in the winter to see if it can provide information on the height of standing vegetation. Much discussion ensued about whether there would actually be a benefit to this proposed mapping or if existing maps coupled with manual spot inspections is good enough for now to engage contractors and get bids for mowing work this winter. Don made a motion for approval to engage Progressive AE for testing of winter drone mapping on a small area of the bottomlands for an estimated cost of \$1500. Larry Woodard seconded the motion. Voice Vote. From the voice vote it was not immediately clear whether the motion passed or failed so the vote was repeated as a roll call vote. Ayers – yes; Drumright – no; Kelley – no; O'Donnell – no; Woodard – yes; Walters – yes; Zakett – yes. Motion carried 4 to 3.

Tami O'Donnel provided the board with a list of mowing contractors that she has identified. Most are local. She will be seeking bids for mowing of the canal bottomlands. Tami made a motion to approve spending of up to \$60,000 for mowing in the canals which was seconded by Carol Ayers. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Casey Shoaff indicated that a new EGLE permit will be needed for herbicide treatments in 2024. Don Zakett made a motion to have PLM seek permit renewal and also preapprove payment of the \$1600 renewal fee. Robert Kelly seconded the motion. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment:

Bill Blain – Venice Subdivision. Worried about the ability to mow vegetation in his canal because of all the standing water.

Monty Wiseman – Wants to make sure that WLIB and WLA mowing activities are coordinated and that his canal gets mowed. He commented on a test that he and neighbors did with a string trimmer in the canal: areas that were chemically treated where plants are now dead chopped up very easily as compared to areas where plants are just dormant that were more difficult to deal with.

Mike Flatt – 1120 Oakwood Dr. Interested in dredging and tile installation. He has talked with staff at office of US Senator Gary Peters. Mike stated that there is potentially grant money available from Army Corps of Engineers. Board explained that WLIB had no jurisdiction to do dredging. Mike will follow up with his county commissioner, FLTF, and drain commission. Tami O'Donnel indicated that she will seek clarity from Senator Peters staff.

Summer Johnson – sought clarity on where the data presented on the maps in the activity summary came from; asked for explanation as to why it is necessary to spray herbicide and mow the same areas; inquired if there would be grinding of stumps on the lake bottom.

Casey Shoaf – PLM Lake management. Indicated that PLM now has access to a large drone capable of spraying herbicide, which could be very useful for applications in difficult terrain.

End Public Comment

Scheduling of next meeting: A motion to meet on Feb 7, 2024 was made by Terry Walters and seconded by Tami O'Donnell. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously. However, further discussion led to opinion that we should meet earlier in the year to avoid missing a potential opportunity to execute mowing work on a frozen lake bottom. As such, Robert Kelley made a motion to rescind the Feb 7 meeting date and instead meet on January 11, 2024. This motion was seconded by Larry Woodard. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Tami O'Donnell, seconded by Carol Ayers. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously. 7:56 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ray Drumright