Wixom Lake Improvement Board (WLIB)
Meeting Minutes
August 22, 2024

Meeting called to order at Billings Township Hall by Norma Stuart (proxy for Chairman Sova) at 6:00 pm

Pledge of allegiance recited.

Roll call of board members. Board members present: Carol Ayers, Ray Drumright, Robert Kelley, Tami O'Donnell, Don Zakett
Board Members Absent: Jeanette Snyder, Joe Sova, Terry Walters, Larry Woodard
Others in Attendance: Norma Stuart, Deputy Midland County Drain Commissioner; Lucy Zeestraten Deputy Gladwin County Drain Commissioner (proxy for Treasurer Walters); Rick Buteyn from Progressive Companies (via video link); Doug Hill, Wixom Lake Association President; approximately 10 members of the public.

Approval of agenda. Agenda was presented with an opportunity to add items. Date in title of agenda (Aug 22, 2023) on agenda corrected to show appropriate year (2024). Don Zakett asked to add discussion of phragmites to new business portion of agenda. Lucy Zeestraten made a motion to accept the amended agenda. The motion was seconded by Tami O'Donnell. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of minutes from 7/25/24 WLIB meeting. Robert Kelley made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Lucy Zeestraten. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously with O'Donnell and Ayers abstaining due to their absence from the July WLIB meeting.

Financial Matters. A financial statement showing a balance of $281,730.85 was presented by Norma Stuart. Carol Ayers made a motion to receive and file the financial report which was seconded by Robert Kelley. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Several invoices were addressed. An invoice (00199048) for $4786.25 dated 7/30/24 from Progressive AE for drone photography was presented. Carol Ayers made a motion to pay the invoice which was seconded by Don Zakett. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

An invoice (22372) for $1138.00 dated 8/1/24 from Fahey Schultz Burzych Rhodes PLC for attorney fees related to review and finalization of a contract between Wixom Lake Association (WLA) and WLIB for mowing of lake bottom was presented. Lucy Zeestraten made a motion to pay the invoice which was seconded by Tami O'Donnell. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

An invoice (6000602) for $1600.00 dated 8/1/24 from PLM Lake & Land Management Corp. for processing and sending treatment notices was presented. Tami O'Donnell made a motion to pay the invoice which was seconded by Carol Ayers. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

An invoice for $141.50 dated 7/31/24 from Record and Clarion for publishing WLIB meeting schedule was presented. Robert Kelley made a motion to pay the invoice which was seconded by Lucy Zeestraten. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

An invoice for $98.50 dated 7/12/24 from Midland Daily News for publishing WLIB meeting schedule was presented. Carol Ayers made a motion to pay the invoice which was seconded by Robert Kelley. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

General Business

Rick Buteyn described the successful mowing that has occurred north of Estey bridge on the west side. Three invoices for this work from Wixom Lake Association were presented. Invoice W-011 dated 8-21-24 for $34185.00, invoice W-012 dated 8-19-24 for $5300.00, and invoice W-013 dated 8-21-24 for $7552.50. Ray Drumright made a motion to pay the invoices which was seconded by Robert Kelley. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously.

Rick indicated that mowing was continuing targeting woody species and bypassing weeds and grass.

Doug Hill indicated that the mowing work will now shift to the east side from the northern WLIB border to Estey bridge. After that they will continue to work south. Some areas that have been encountered are very challenging. Wet areas, areas with trees 5-8 inch diameter at base, etc. Areas that can't be addressed now will be skipped and returned to in the future with different equipment. Any areas that have been mowed in last year will likely be skipped unless there is strong compelling need due to abundance of woody species. Doug is pleased with interactions with Paul Hausler (Progressive AE) and wants to maintain the single point of contact and avoid multiple channels of communication and the confusion that would likely introduce. It would be exceptionally helpful if property owners would move or at least flag cement blocks, large rocks, stumps, etc. These items damage equipment and slow progress. Doug closed by providing board a copy of insurance policy.

Don Zakett spoke about phragmites. He brought in specimens to share with meeting attendees. Native phragmites have red stem when leaf pulled back; Invasive phragmites have green stem when leaf pulled back. Both grow to about 12 feet tall and aggressively spread. Mowing is OK but it does not kill them. Best to treat them with herbicide and do so before they go to seed. Don requested that people call their respective drain commission offices if they are aware of large stands (e.g. room sized) of phragmites so that treatment areas can be identified quickly.

Public Comment:

Jim Kalahar, 5181 Wixom Dr. He and several of his neighbors in Gladwin County did not receive notice of potential herbicide treatment. He would like to know where and when treatments will occur so that he can time personally funded mowing appropriately.
Discussion ensued in several directions. Lucy determined that Jim's address was incorrect on mailing list. Lucy will follow-up with township to correct this inaccuracy and attempt to find out if there are other situations where addresses are incorrect.
It was also shared that treatment maps are posted to the WLIB website.
https://www.wixomlakeimprovement.info/plant-control

A few questions were directed at Doug Hill
Does WLA own the equipment doing the mowing? Answer is no, the work is subcontracted. WLA does own some light homeowner type equipment used small scale volunteer work.
Can you mow the wet areas in winter? Answer is yes, unfortunately last winter the ground never froze enough to allow equipment into the wet areas.
Is mowing worth it if the lakes don't come back? It is a high probability that the lakes will come back. If mowing/treatments delayed while waiting for 100% certainty, the scope of the lake bed preparation work would become exceptionally costly.

End Public Comment

Adjournment:
Motion to adjourn by Robert Kelley was seconded by Carol Ayers. Voice vote. Motion carried unanimously. 7:03 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Ray Drumright