Wixom Lake Improvement Board (WLIB)
Held at Billings Township Hall
Thursday January 16, 2025

Meeting called to order by Joe Sova at 6:00pm.

Pledge of Allegiance led by Joe Sova

Roll call present board members: Don Zakett, Carol Ayers, Robert Kelley, Joe Sova, Terry Walters and Tami O'Donnell.
Board Members Absent: Jeanett Synder and Larry Woodard
Others in Attendance: Norma Stuart, Midland Couty Deputy Drain Commissioner, Lucy Zeestraten, Gladwin County Deputy Drain Commissioner, Paul Hausler form Progressive Companies, Casey Shoaff from PLM Lake and Land Management Corp. and about 25 members of the public.

Joe Sova announced that Ray Drumright the boards secretary has resigned, and we are waiting on Edenville Township to appoint a new board member. They have a board as well so it might take some time.

Election of officers:
Motion by Terry Walters to nominate Joe Sova as board Chair Seconded by Carol. All in favor. Motion carried.

Motion by Tami O'Donnell to nominate Carol Ayers for Secretary. Carol declined nomination. Motion by Carol Ayers to nominate Robert Kelley for Secretary. Robert Kelley declined nomination. It has been deiced to wait till they have all board members present. Terry Walters offered Lucy Zeestraten to be Secretary for tonight and no one on the board objected.

Motion by Joe Sova to nominate Terry Walters as Treasurer. Seconded by Tami O'Donnell. All in favor. Motion carried.

Review and set the agenda: Motion by Tami O'Donnell to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Terry Walters. All in favor. Motion carried.

Approval of minutes from October 24, 2024: Motion by Carol Ayers to approve the October 24, 2024, minutes. Seconded by Tami O'Donnell. All in favor. Motion carried.

Treasurer report: The treasurer report was presented by Joe Sova with a balance of $165,393.55. Motion by Tami O'Donnell to receive and file. Seconded by Carol Ayers. There was some discussion on assessments received. All in favor. Motion carried.

Approval of invoices: Joe Sova presented the invoice from Progressive from November 29, 2024, in the amount of $3,291.25. Motion to pay Progressive invoice by Carol Ayers. Seconded by Terry Walters. All in favor. Motion carried.

Discussion on pre-approval of invoices under contract. Joe Sova presented that the board to preapprove invoices that come in the were already authorized work for the vendor/contractor isn't waiting a month or months to get paid because we haven't had a meeting. We can authorize payment after Progressive has inspected and confirmed that the work was performed. Tami feels that if the board already approved the funds for the work to be done then it shouldn't have to come back to the board to get paid. If it's already been an approved amount under the contract, then it should get paid. Sova states the invoice should go to Progressive, then send it on approved then the contractor should get paid without the board's approval. This would streamline things and not doing things outside the control of the board. Paul stated that there was a couple of invoices that came in the site yesterday that he was going to present to you tonight. Sova states if its work is authorized already then, they could get paid next week based on Paul's approval. Don Zakett asked how much has been preapproved at this point. Paul 60,000 main lake and 60,000 for the canals last year. Still going, not all the money has been used. There was another 50,000 approved. Zakett states that the Wixom Lake Association (WLA) contract ended on December 31, 2024. It needs to be renewed. It seems the preapproval applies to 2024 and not 2025. There was discussion on the WLA contract ending in 2024. There was further discussion on the funds that were approved in 2024 for work to be done in 2024 that carried over into 2025. Also, discussion on how to move forward to preapprove invoices that are inspected and approved by the consultant, so the contactors do not have to wait 1, 2 or 3 months to get paid. There was $30,000.00 allowed at the last meeting to spray Phragmites. Sova states that if we are doing it contract by contract bases, then we are backing down on the preapproval of all invoices. It will be invoice by invoice bases or contract by contract bases. Doug Hill discussed with the board the extending the Wixom Lake Association contract. Tami agrees that we should revisit the preapproval of invoices at another meeting.

Paul Housler from Progressive presented the board with a 2024 summery report of actives that were performed. Paul presented the board pictures of the treated and mowed areas. 410.2 acres were mowed in 2024 and 36.8-acres herbicide treatment. Paul stated they do a summary report each year and post it on the website so the public can see what has happened.

Paul discusses the potential bidders for mowing. Paul stated that there were a couple of companies interested in bidding for mowing. Right the weather is perfect for mowing especially those canals that are usually to wet to mow. Paul doesn't feel we should delay mowing the canals. Once the meetings have been set, then we can solicit the bids to be ready before the next meeting and then you can act on it. There was talked to extend WLA till the March. Doug Hill stated that if the WIB is going to go to open market then they are bowing out. They are not getting paid to do this. They hold the contract, and it doesn't matter who they hire. He will entertain using those guys for what they are needed for. Don brings up that we are trying to get caught up on mowing. Don asked if we are caught up? No! Tami states that we might be halfway. Paul confirms that there are a few areas that need to be addressed. Twin Lake Canals has a lot of cattails and Phragmites. Heron Cove has tall trees and Phragmites. Then between Lockwood and Venice still needs a lot of work. It has Phragmites, trees and then an area south of Musselman Island has trees. Its to wet to mow. John states what he had mowed. Don brought up how

things grow back after the lakebed is mowed and what shouldn't be mowed. There is a contour line that was set that would not be mowed. Don feels they should give the people an idea of what the lakebed should look like. Don said it shouldn't look like a golf course. He doesn't feel we should mow the lakebed every year it the water comes back. Don is getting feedback there are a lot of Phragmites showing up in the lakebed. According to EGLE, MDNR and US Fish and Wildlife Services and all the other conservation groups are concerned about this. Phragmites will grow quickly and have issued guild lines on how to control it. If let, go it will impenetrable. It will grow in 3ft. of water. The drone people states that the chemicals used for treating the Phragmites should be strengthen. Casey is going to talk to EGLE about it. Casey gave an overview of how the Phragmites grow and description of how they are spread. Casey talked about the best way to treat them and getting the trees out makes it easier to treat them. They must stay 200 feet off the drip line because oak could be impacted because of their roots. June is the best time to treat. Casey goes on to explain what happens when they are not treated when the water comes back. Casey talked about the difference between boots on the ground and drone spraying. The price of the permit when up from $875.00 to $1,000.00. Tami asked from the Island north that has been mowed you will start to see the Phragmites growing in the spring and it will be easier to attack them in the spring vs went we were attaching them in woody brush? The treated Phragmites were mowed. Paul states doing a June treatment and then we will see. There was more discussion on the Phragmites in the lakebed and how to address the treatment and budget for that treatment. There was more discussion on the drones and how much they can treat at one time.

Doug Hill from WLA said they put a lot of the WLA money into the pot to mow. He tells John instead of going out there and doing hit and miss, he tells him to the mower on the ground and start mowing. He they leave trees in the lakebed that is supplemented from the WLA. As far as the Phragmites go, get it identified and spray it so it can be mowed. Doug states identify where the problem areas are and go back to them. It's hard enough to not mess up the areas that EGLE and Fish and Wildlife doesn't want touched. That's the biggest challenge.

Don gave an update on the Heron Cover appeal. Circuit Court ruled in favor of FLTF. Heron Cove claimed that the assessment district was put together in proper. There are similar claims that remain in Federal Court against the Gladwin County Commissioner's and Midland County Commissioner's. They must be resolved be move forward with the assessment. Don has spoken to the attorneys about this and was told it's a state issue and state appeal court had no solid grounds. The same claims were raised in Federal court and since it's a state issue the attorney that Don spoke to feels that Federal Courts are likely to follow the direction given by the state court. It just a matter of them giving their ruling. FLTF can't go out for funding until the rulings are made.

Joe reflects on the bidders and WLA. Letting WLA can also bid on the mowing. Tami states that WLIB felt it was a better fit to have WLA who has already been on the lakebed with their contactors and the board didn't want to have a bunch of different contractors on the lakebed mow in all different directions. That's why the board choose to sign the contract with WLA. WLA has a broader area where they can mow vs WLIB. Doug Hill is not interested in bidding as a contractor not getting paid. Tami O'Donnell motion to extend the current contract from 2024 with WLA until the end of March to continue to use the 2024 funds that were approved. There was some discussion. Seconded by Terry Walters. All in favor. Motion carried.

Paul Hausler presented the board with a new contract to provide services for 2025. Tami O'Donnell motions to approve the 2025 contract with Progressive. Seconded by Carol Ayers. All in favor. Motion carried.

Tami O'Donnell motions to approve PLM work order for permit fees for 2025 for $37.50 and $1,000.00 with the total of $1,037.50. Seconded by Carol Ayers. All in favor. Motion carried.

Monty Wiseman gave an update on the mowing in Venise Sub. Monty, WLA and John Marsh met up and John bought a 54 horsepower John Deer tractor and a brush hog that can handle 150 horsepower. Went to Pleasure Island and mowed about 80% of the island. Venise mowed about 2 acres. They went to Pary Drain and got it mowed. They have been able to get into areas that they weren't able to get into. Monty explained the areas where there are trees in the canals that are bad and couldn't get to. Doug stated they will be out Monday to cut. Monty is asking to take care of this this year. WLA has a work order to go to Venise Sub area next week. Doug talked about areas that the WLA has been able to get into when this all started and now, they are able to into them. Monty gave another area that needs to be looked at.

Approve of 2025 meeting schedule. There was discussion with the board on which Thursday of the month will be best for everyone. Tami is only available the first or fourth Thursday of the month. Midland county has a conflict on the third Thursday of the month. The board decided to set February's meet and set the rest of the schedule at the February meeting. Tami O'Donnell motions to set the next meeting Tuesday February 25 at 6pm. Seconded by Robert Kelley. All in favor. Motion carried.

Public Comment:

Mike Flatt – Asked Don about the 2 cases that are still pending on the FLTF. Don stated that they are hoping the Federal judge will rule the same as the Circuit Court judge did. Sova asked can they still appeal to the Supreme Court. Don said they can. Sova also commented on the way that FLTF did the assessments and it will be hard to rule against the mythology and how it was done. Wixom Lake could be 2027. Tami let everyone know when the next webinar is January 22 at 5pm and encourage everyone to sign up. Mike asked about mowing the lakebed in front of his place. He was encouraged to do so if he wanted.

Doug Hill let the board know he will continue to do what he's doing. He is not interested in competitive bidding.

Motion to adjourn by Don Zakett. Seconded by Robert Kelley. All in favor. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35p.m.