# **Muskegon River Watershed Assembly**

Board Minutes – June 16, 2014 Brooks Township Hall

\*\*\*These minutes are not official until approved at the next regular meeting.\*\*\*

**Present:** Chair Greg Mund, Vice-Chair Cindy Fitzwilliams-Heck, Treasurer Ken Johnson, Secretary Doug Trembath, Jean LaLonde, Wayne Groesbeck, Ron Kadelsik, Don Henning, Nancy Burmeister, Executive Director Gary Noble, Program Director Terry Stilson and Project Manager Dixie Ward. Absent: Kurt Ray.

Chair Mund convened the meeting at 5:21 p.m.

### Consent Agenda -

Groesbeck motioned to accept the consent agenda with Burmeister supporting the motion. Motion passed.

# **Executive Director's Report** – distributed earlier.

- Mund asked whether FACF would be approached concerning the Cedar Creek projects and Noble responded yes.
- Fitzwilliams-Heck asked about the Higgins Lake project and who the researchers were. Stilson
  responded that the project involved UofM and MSU researchers studying lake levels and Cut River
  levels and determining the effects of those levels if the dam was removed.
- Noble noted the GLRI paragraph in the Director's report that a nine month extension had been granted. The Board had approved a six month extension but the EPA had advised a longer extension. The MRWA will target an internal six month extension.
- Johnson reported that the Voyage of Discovery trip down the Hersey and Muskegon Rivers went well.
   He noted that there are quite a number of cattle along the Hersey River.

### **Old Business**

### MRWA Endowment Fund (continued from last month)

- Noble reiterated what has been discussed at previous meetings.
- Stilson added that she had contacted the CFFMC who told her that if the MRWA began taking the 4-5% annual grant amount, it will affect the total amount available to the MRWA. Of course, future donations and the interest rate will also affect it.
- Mund asked what members thought.
  - Kadelsik and Johnson were both in favor of taking the annual 4-5% from the fund.
  - Noble stated he would like to see the MRWA wait until the end of the year before deciding.
     Then, (all or portion of available funds) could be withdrawn to add to the Keep it Cool campaign money.
  - LaLonde responded that some of this funding could pay for a marketing plan, i.e. Henning's survey.
  - Kadelsik stated that if we wanted to withdraw the annual amount, it would have to be done before the end of the year.
  - o Burmeister said she thought LaLonde's idea was a good one.
  - Henning responded that he agreed (about LaLonde's plan) but we don't necessarily need money to market the organization.
  - Groesbeck advised caution about withdrawing any amount and asked where any funding could get 12% interest a year. This money is contributing to sustainability.
  - Fitzwilliams-Heck said she favored LaLonde's idea.
  - Trembath stated that he felt similarly we need a plan on where to use it before we take any out.
  - Stilson responded that, whichever way, she didn't feel taking existing money from an account was in the spirit of what the Keep it Cool campaign is supposed to be.
  - Ward said she was in the middle and saw both sides of taking out an annual amount or keeping the total available amount until the MRWA needed it.

Mund said he felt when we have a fire it would be okay to withdraw some, but we don't have a
fire now. We need to wait until we get an updated 2015 budget. That will need to be done
before the end of November.

Noble will contact Ray to get a Finance Committee meeting scheduled.

## **Financial Sustainability Planning**

- Fundraising Contact List send additional names to Noble. He is particularly in need of corporations and foundations and small businesses (in addition to individuals/ organizations).
- "Keep It Cool" campaign materials Noble distributed color printed items to Board members for their use.

# The next Meeting-at-Large will be held on September 9 at Velma Matson Upper Elementary School in Newaygo.

- A rain garden tour and AIS Boat Washing demonstration will begin at 5:30 pm with the meeting beginning at 6:30 pm.
- If the membership votes not to change the organization to a directorship, then the membership would need to elect officers and approve Strategic Plan changes.
- Noble noted the Meeting-at-Large presentations:
  - School rain garden planning/installation
  - o AIS Boat Washing in lower watershed
  - o GLRI project lower watershed update
  - o Keep it Cool Campaign
- Stilson replied that the AIS coordinators will also be giving a NIPP (Newaygo Invasive Plants Project) report with the AIS presentation.
- LaLonde felt it may be good to have the meeting like a workshop pick two out of the four sessions to participate in.
- Mund said he would rather not do it that way.
- Stilson said she felt the Keep it Cool Campaign presentation may be a better fit in the earlier business part of the meeting.

### A meeting agenda will be available at the next meeting for discussion.

# Potash Mining (continued from last meeting) - information distributed earlier

- Noble reiterated some of the information.
  - o DEQ had no knowledge of any mining planned for the Haymarsh.
  - No permit (applications) have been received concerning drilling (in the Haymarsh State Game Area).
  - Disposal would be the same as it is in Hersey (if mining were to occur in the Haymarsh State Game Area).
- Mund asked whether the MRWA wished to take a stand on this issue and make a policy. He furthered
  that there are controversial issues out there should we be neutral or move forward with a policy? He
  said we really need an ad hoc Policy Committee and asked if any director was interested (in chairing
  the committee).
- LaLonde replied that maybe we could recruit another person (director).
- Groesbeck stated that he doesn't know, since we base our decisions on science, whether science exists for all these issues. He furthered that they are emotional reactions. If science doesn't exist, we can't say we have a position.
- Burmeister replied that it seems as if we need to keep our eyes open and pay attention. Maybe we
  wouldn't necessarily need policies but people would be more careful if they knew others were paying
  attention (to their actions).
- LaLonde responded that our survey may indicate what the concerns are.
- Mund responded that they may identify the issues but should the MRWA have a policy (on that issue)?
   If we already had policies, then staff would know how to answer when questions arose.
- Fitzwilliams-Heck stated that she thought the Resource Committee should address the questions.
- Mund responded that we could get scientific information from them but we still need a Policy Committee.

The policy issue was tabled until a later meeting.

### **New Business**

**Education Committee** – LaLonde reported that some committee members worked on getting rain barrels ready for the workshop scheduled for June 19. Fitzwilliams-Heck is obtaining more.

• Henning responded that we have been trying to get barrels donated but maybe we could get funding from some business to purchase barrels.

Finance/Human Resources, Resource, Development, Action Committees – next meeting TBD.

**Transition Team** – next meeting targeted for late August/early September.

Action Committee – met on May 29. Henning reported:

New committee structure – distributed earlier

- Basis coming from recommendations from the Johnson Center of Philanthropy
- Noble noted a few edits.

Henning motioned to approve the new structure as edited with Fitzwilliams-Heck's support.

• Groesbeck cautioned that the Executive Committee needs to make recommendations to the Board and not just the Executive Director.

#### Motion passed.

Bylaws – Henning reported:

- As the MRWA is proposing a transition from membership to directorship, revised Bylaws will be needed.
- Bylaws were distributed earlier.
- Some minor edits were noted.

Burmeister motioned to accept the Bylaws as edited with Henning supporting the motion. Motion passed. (These Bylaws are effective if the membership votes to make the MRWA a directorship organization).

Marketing next steps – Henning reported:

• From surveys returned by directors it appears we should proceed. Most marked they would have "active involvement" or "increased participation".

Henning will provide a presentation at the August Board meeting about this subject.

Henning encouraged Directors to look at the Johnson Center website for an example of a good website. **Stilson will send the link.** 

Marketing discussion is tabled until the August Board meeting.

## **Other**

**Muskegon County Water Fair Fiduciary** – Stilson reported that the MRWA has been asked again to be fiduciaries of the Muskegon County Water Fair. Last year was the initial year it was held. This year the event will be two days and funding will be sought from several sources.

LaLonde motioned to support the Muskegon County Water Fair as fiduciaries, reimbursing staff for time to administer/manage the grants. Burmeister supported the motion.

• Stilson will figure the time it will take her to manage the funding and provide that to the person in charge of the water fair.

Motion passed.

<u>Next Meetings</u> – the next meeting will be a conference call on July 21 at 5:30 pm. The August meeting will be held on August 18 at 5:30 pm in Big Rapids. The August meeting may be a mid-year social time.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Terry Stilson Program Director