

Muskegon River Watershed Assembly

Board Minutes – February 18, 2014
Brooks Township Hall

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

Chair Mund convened the meeting at 5:04 p.m.

Agenda – no changes.

Consent Agenda –

Fitzwilliams-Heck motioned to approve the consent agenda with LaLonde supporting the motion. Motion passed.

Executive Director's Report – distributed earlier.

- Noble stated that the Wege meeting was positive. He met to get them up to speed on things and discussed closing out the challenge match fund, the discussion and decisions about the Ferris partnership, fundraising campaign progress, and fund development training.
- Noble stated that they are potentially looking at an extension for the GLRI project. They are still discussing it with partners and no decision has been made yet.
- Mund asked about GLRI funding for the Cedar Creek project. Noble responded that the funding is AOC focused (and he understands Cedar Creek is outside the Muskegon Lake AOC boundary). Mund responded that there is education (setbacks, ordinances, etc.) that needs to be done on Cedar Creek.
- Kadelsik stated that the meeting with the Nartron Corporation representative was good. The representative wanted to gather information from us and see what is available financially to remove the Nartron dam. They are interested in the removal but they are still looking into the possibility of using it to generate power.
- Noble stated that he sent a cover letter (with campaign materials) to a Dogwood Foundation family member requesting a \$45,000 contribution toward the fundraising campaign.
- Noble stated that he has good news. The Frey Foundation approved the (\$4,455) grant application for the Hersey River Habitat Improvement project. Noble stated that he is optimistic that the MRWA will get more funding from the Frey Foundation and this will give the MRWA a funding history with them.

Old Business

Fundraising Contact List – Board members gave their lists to Noble and will **send him any additional names.**

- Noble stated that he will have our clerical student make a master list and when he reaches out to someone (for funding), he can recruit the person (who knows them) to go with him.
- LaLonde replied she would host a gathering of people she knows but doubts that she could raise a very large amount.
- Noble stated that there is a sense of urgency and we need to have funding by this summer.
- Johnson asked about having a fundraising event or something to that effect.
- Noble answered that that isn't the way to get big bucks. It takes money and time to have a fundraiser and we may not gain that much.
- **Noble will mail the contact list to Ray for his input.**
- **(Groesbeck will complete the contact list and send it to Noble).**

Keep it Cool campaign materials – Noble distributed the materials earlier via email and reviewed:

- Case statement is the first four pages and references the first five addendums.

- Noble reiterated the case statement and addendums and distributed/discussed two versions of a revised addendum 4.
- (The first revised addendum 4 aligns with the case statement budget, but now provides more detailed income information to match the level of detail for expenses, and now displays more bottom line information).
- (The second revised addendum 4 presents updated actual numbers for 2012 and 2013 and updated projections for 2014-2016, which show different, improved bottom line results).
- Noble told Board members and staff that they could use the materials as a whole or whatever pieces they want (to raise funds).
- Mund asked that dates be put on all the materials to know what version they have.

Noble will resend the materials after inserting the dates on each.

- Addendum 6 – missing – is the self-addressed envelope.
- Stilson stated that she has received a quote for the envelopes and board members gave her other businesses to get quotes from.

2014 Status Quo budget breakdown by month

- Stilson explained that this was done last November so there has been some changes. She did not have the wage rates at that time and this added \$11,719.99 more in expenses. She also read in the Director's report that the GLRI project may be extended 9 or 12 months. If it is extended 12 months, then that would be a decrease of \$13,541.70 in oversight reimbursement income (for 2014 with the same amount of income moving into 2015). This would mean the bottom line would be a negative amount unless we get more fundraising dollars. She also noted the benefit reserve amount which could be over \$20,000. She noted these things because she feels the Board should have a plan in the worst case scenario.
- Kadelsik asked about the endowment fund and if these monies could be used.
- Stilson responded that only the earnings and not the principal.
- Noble responded that we could get these funds in a couple weeks. He furthered that Ray wanted this (budget breakdown by month) report to see if there would be deficits in any month. Noble stated that the MRWA's (cash flow) is in good shape (for each month) and he is devoting most of his time to bring in organizational funding.

New Business

2014 Membership and Donations – Mund stated that he is encouraging Board members to pay their membership fees and provide donations if possible.

Education Committee – LaLonde reported:

- Met on January 28 and the next meeting is February 25.
- Nice news article in the *Pioneer* about the March 27 rain barrel workshop.

Finance/Human Resources Committee – next meeting TBD.

Resource Committee – winter conference call cancelled – next meeting this spring.

- Mund thought this meeting should have an update on the Maple Island project.

Development Committee – met on January 29 and next meeting will be in March.

Transition Team – targeting February/early March for the next meeting.

- Trembath indicated the next meeting will need to be mid-late March.

Action Committee – Henning reported:

- Met on January 16.
- MRWA Marketing Plan overview:
 - Strategy to promote MRWA
 - A formal plan

- Raise awareness of the organization
- Develop advocacy and find new people to support the MRWA with funding and volunteering
- Use social media
 - Two mainstream marketing tools – Facebook and LinkedIn
 - Facebook gets people’s attention and directs them to the MRWA website to give support
 - MRWA website is not marketing oriented and not personal
 - To be effective, Facebook needs to have a driving force
- FAF will have a workshop on social media in April.
- Noble stated that a Ferris student is writing a public relations plan for the MRWA.
- Henning stated he would like to see our website have a personal article (on the homepage) – a blog.
- Mund stated that maybe there could be a quiz on the website with the MR book as a prize.

Strategic Plan Revision – tabled until next meeting.

Next Meeting – the next meeting will be held on Monday, March 17 at 5:30 pm and will be a conference call.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Terry Stilson,
Program Director