

*Protect-Preserve-Enjoy*

**Little Manistee Watershed Conservation Council**

Minutes of the trustee’s meeting held April 7, 2018 @ Elk Township Hall, Irons, Michigan

**EXECUTIVE ACTIONS:**

President Tim Phillips called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM.

**Attendance**: Tim Phillips, Jim Squier, Armas Soorus, David Spruance, Dale Downes, Greg Block

**Absent**: Joe Rogers, Evelyn Furman, Joyce Durdel, Steve Bishop, Dan Sernick

**Guests:** Jackie McKellars and granddaughter Alexis

Minutes from the March 3rd meeting were reviewed and approved.

**Treasurer’s Report:** No Treasurer’s report

**PROJECT STATUS:**

1. NFS erosion sites — Nothing to report. Tim Phillips reported that the U.S. Forest Service is treating the Little Manistee river as a Wild and Scenic River in spite of no such official designation. This dictates a “hands off” policy for USFS.
2. Syers Dam — CRA has begun the permitting process for the dam removal. One permit has requested for the de-watering of the lake behind the dam, and another for the construction of the replacement. Work is expected to begin this spring with a scheduled completion date of late summer. Funding has been secured for the total cost of the removal and replacement. Residents have been informed that they are responsible for the construction costs of a roadway over the new structure. LMWCC has committed $10, 000.00 to the project.

3. Volunteer projects — The Macro-invertebrate study, undertaken in conjunction with MCD (lower 3 sites — Johnson Bridge, Cool Creek, Six Mile Bridge) will take place May 19. Joyce Durdel and her volunteers will conduct a survey May 12 at Queen’s Highway, M-37 (Old Grade), and Indian Bridge.

The Water Quality Survey will be done on July 9.

Faded LMWCC signs at river crossings will be replaced this summer.

4. The fish habitat project in Section III of the Trout Unlimited “Habitat Assessment” will begin as soon as the final permit is issued. The project will be completed as soon as permits are issued. This is the “Jorgensen Project.”

5. David Spruance has provided GPS coordinates to Nate Winkler of CRA for the selected site in section III for a channel restoration project below Johnson Bridge. Nate will survey the site and begin the permitting process for a possible 2018 beginning and seeking monies to fund the project.

6. Erosion sites — Permit applications for severe sites #42, #50, #66, #67, (Kops/Young Mirandette/Paul) have been submitted. Six moderate sites on state land (#’s 2, 3, 12,14,15, 18) are in the permitting process for work this summer. 7 private sites (19, 31, 32, 35, 39, 48, 51) are on hold for future work. Sites 24-26 on Indian Club property are being consolidated into one project by CRA for permitting purposes and are on hold pending the issuing of those permits.

7. The grant request to AHGP for $40,000 for converting dead ash trees along the river’s upper corridor should be approved or rejected by April 26. LMWCC will contribute $4000.00 should the project be approved.

**Jackie McKellars** requested recognition, and she expressed the frustration that the Cool Lake Owners Association has been experiencing since 2012 in being unable to secure funding to address the two road crossings over Cool Creek and the sedimentation and flow blockage they cause. The LMWCC is totally supportive of the efforts, and Elk Township has spent considerable money to fund an engineering survey of the problem. But as it is a transportation problem neither CRA nor LMWCC can assume the lead on funding efforts to raise the necessary $430,000. Board members suggested several avenues for Jackie and her group to pursue.

**WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN:**

Armas Soorus reported that a draft of Chapter I of the Plan has been completed and will be posted on the web site. Currently in draft form is the Implementation Structure.

There will be a meeting of the steering committee on April 19th at Elk Township Hall when Networks Northwest is expected to present the first draft of the completed plan. It is hoped that Networks Northwest will post the draft on their web site.

An initial payment of $4000 has been made to Networks Northwest by AES.

The first public meeting to elicit reactions and input into the plan will be held May 24th from 6 – 8 PM at the Luther Lions Club.

A discussion followed about the best means of publicizing the notification of public meetings to attract as broad a base as possible. If at all possible, no one should be able to say,” I was never informed of public meetings.” Among the ideas were press releases and mass mailings, and Armas will pursue a bulk mailing to all riverfront property owners.

**GRANTS:**

See #7 under “Projects” above.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

1. **Membership:** Dale Downes has up-dated the membership mailing list, and that will be available for mailings in the immediate future.
2. **Annual Meeting:** Josh Fields, forester with MCD will be the speaker at this year’s meeting.

Raffle prizes will be: **A)** 2 drone operated cameras; **B)** 2 days guided fishing and 1 night’s lodging courtesy of D-Loop outfitters; **C)** 4 one day ski lift tickets courtesy Crystal Mountain Resort; **D)** carpeting for 2 12x12 rooms.

Jim Squier will see to permits and the printing of raffle tickets

A call for donations to the bucket raffle and silent auction will be posted in the Spring/Summer newsletter asking that all items be delivered to Skinner Park after 5 PM on Friday the 6th of July while the board is setting up the hall for the next day’s members’ meeting.

1. A decision on hiring an outside web site management firm was tabled.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. Jim Squier will represent LMWCC at the MCD Earth Day Event on April 21 and plans to attend the northern Michigan Watershed Summit in Gaylord on April 20.
2. USFS has expressed interest in installing thermographs in the river to monitor water temperature fluctuations. LMWCC will provide no financial support.

Meeting adjourned at 11:50 AM.

Next meeting: May 5, 2018 10 AM @ Elk Township Hall

Respectfully submitted by David L. Spruance April 9, 2018